

Applying the Blank Language Scheme **to managing issues of behaviour**

It is worth mentioning at this point that when emotional and behavioural incidents occur which need intervention from an adult i.e. discussion, restorative justice, conflict resolution etc. it is level 3 and level 4 questions which are often needed to find out what happened and move forward with a solution. If a student does not have language skills at this level this will have a significant impact on how they respond in such situations.

It is essential to consider a student's level of understanding when managing issues of discipline. The aim in these circumstances will be to find out what happened, look at other people's perspectives and feelings, explore why it happened, discuss what should happen next and explore what might happen should a similar incident occur in the future.

If the student is functioning inconsistently at level 3

- Don't ask 'why' type questions
- Don't ask the student to suggest solutions to a problem
- Ask the student to describe the event, say how people felt and report on what was said – use comic strip conversations to sequence the event clearly.
- Using the Comic Strip Conversation explain to the student
 - Why it happened
 - Why he shouldn't have done it
 - Why the other person acted as they did
 - What he/she should do another time

A student functioning inconsistently at level 4 will find it hard to answer questions such as;

- Why did you do that?
- Why did that happen?
- Why shouldn't you have done that?
- What makes you think that this is acceptable?
- Why do you think he did that to you?

- What should you have done?
- What could you do another time?
- What should your friend have done?

Use Comic Strip Conversations to draw out the event – put in colour coded thought bubbles and speech bubbles to show the emotion in the thoughts and words spoken. To consider ‘why’ type questions, initially ask the question and model the answer which helps the student understand the format needed. Practice problem solving skills in group work and role play using non-emotional situations. This provide essential practise in dealing with more difficult events.

Comic Strip Conversation

Colour Coding:

Green – good ideas, happy, friendly

Blue – sad, uncomfortable

Purple – proud

Yellow - frightened

Black – facts, things we know

Orange – questions

Combinations of colours – confused

Red – bad ideas, teasing, anger, unfriendly

Brown – comfortable, cosy

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