

No offence!

Scripts and sentence starters for a respectful, open and honest culture.

To be used with Solutions:

- *If you offend someone, are you in the wrong?*
- *'I didn't want to upset them.'*
- *OK with uncomfortable*

When you're the one who's caused offence

I didn't express that well. Let me rephrase this. What I really mean is....

I wasn't aware of what you'd been through. My intention was to make a useful suggestion. I didn't realise how ignorant that would sound to you.

I apologise if my words upset you, I can assure you that wasn't my intention. What I meant was.... Perhaps we can discuss this afterwards.

NB Make sure you mean it when you talk about your intention. It's easy to say 'That wasn't my intention.' It matters that the other person believes you mean it.

If it's OK with you, I'd like to take some time to think about this and carry on the conversation later when I'm a bit clearer?

When you anticipate others taking offence

*It's difficult for me to say this, because [I'm not as senior or as experienced as you], but I think it's important you're aware of [what happened yesterday].
My intention here is to act with integrity - ultimately for the good of the pupils.*

When you're the one who takes offence

To move away from blame, from saying or implying the other person is wrong, we need to move towards [We both count](https://www.solutions.peopleintelligence.com), explaining, clarifying and understanding more about awareness and intention.

Raise awareness + question intent

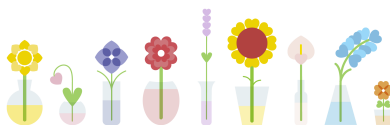
You may or may not be aware that....

I'm wondering why you say that / ask that?

I'm wondering why you didn't say that / ask that at the time?

What's behind that comment?

What are you really saying? What do you really mean by that?



I take exception to that. I think that's an unfair decision.

I disagree. We don't share the same opinions here. We need to find some common ground going forward.

I felt put down by what you just said. I don't think you intended that but it doesn't sit well with me and I'd appreciate you saying / doing [this] instead.

When you're the one who feels offended, it's your responsibility to own it, [process it and act on it](#).

When someone is aware and intends to hurt

It's not acceptable if someone knows what they say is offensive and chooses to say it anyway. Awareness with the intention to hurt someone's feelings should not be tolerated.

- Call out the behaviour / the words.
- Reference the school values, team ways of working.
- Request the person apologises and restates what they mean.
- Follow up with the person(s) involved.

Let's stop there. What you just said was disrespectful. It goes against our school values and the way we've agreed to conduct ourselves as a team. You can either apologise and restate what you meant to say respectfully, or, we can pick this up and find a resolution later today.

I accept you are angry about this Mr/s [parent's name] but speaking to me in such a disrespectful way goes against our school values. I will not tolerate verbal abuse. I will discuss the important points you're raising at a time when we can be respectful to one another.

To function well in society, individuals need to experience reality and to be able to cope with the reality they face. All of us (adults and pupils) need to learn [how to get over hurt feelings](#), how to take action when something is wrong, how to speak up when points need to be made - even when those around us don't receive it well.

Useful clarifications

offensive: something that causes resentment, anger or hurt feelings.

offended: a reaction to words, actions or beliefs that you perceive as an insult or slight against you; a violation of personal boundaries.

to take offence: to feel hurt, angry or upset because you think someone has been rude, disrespectful or insulting to you.

rude: impolite, discourteous, offensive, insulting; failure to respect social norms or the feelings of others.

