



Pause → Acknowledge → Refocus → Clarify → Collaborate

PAUSE

(Create space. Regulate. Don't react.)

- “Thank you for getting in touch - I want to look into this properly and get back to you.”
- Thank you for your message - I'll look into this and get back to you shortly.”
- “I want to give this proper attention. Can we reconnect after class/tomorrow morning?”
- “I hear this is important. I'll respond when I have more information.”
- “I'd like a bit of time to gather the full picture before responding.”
- “Can we reconnect tomorrow so I can give this my full attention?”
- “Thank you for bringing this to my attention. Let me check that information and get back to you.”



ACKNOWLEDGE

(Name the emotion without agreeing or defending.)

- “I can hear that you’re concerned/frustrated/worried.”
- “I can see this has been upsetting.”
- “It sounds like this really matters to you.”
- “I understand you’re worried about how this has affected your child.”

REFOCUS

(Shift from emotion to shared purpose.)

- “Let’s look at what we both want for your child.”
- “Our shared goal is supporting your child’s learning and wellbeing.”
- “Let’s focus on how we can move forward from here.”
- “I’d like us to work through this calmly and constructively.”



CLARIFY

(Make the goal explicit. Reduce assumptions.)

- “What outcome are you hoping for?”
- “What would feel like a good resolution for you?”
- “Can you tell me what you’re most concerned about right now?”
- “What’s the most important thing you’d like addressed?”

COLLABORATE

(Problem-solve within clear boundaries.)

- “Here’s what I can do next.”
- “Here are the options available to us.”
- “Let’s agree on the next step together.”
- “I’ll follow this up and let you know by [time/day].”
- “Here’s what’s within my role, and here’s where leadership may be able to support further.”