

**Table 5.3** At-a-glance guide to the structured conversation

<p><b>1. EXPLORE</b> – Opening up to explore and understand</p> <hr/> <p><b>Key features:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-verbal cues of the teacher put parents at ease</li> <li>• Teacher is attentive, listens actively</li> <li>• Silence is used to allow parents thinking time</li> <li>• Teacher paraphrases what a parent has said to check understanding</li> <li>• Teacher shows empathy</li> <li>• Teacher asks questions to gain parents' hopes and aspirations for their child.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggested questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you consider are the needs of your child?</li> <li>• What do you want for your child in school?</li> <li>• What have been the barriers to your child achieving?</li> <li>• What has worked well in the past to help your child learn?</li> <li>• What do you feel are the limits to your child's potential?</li> </ul>	<p><b>2. FOCUS</b> – Narrowing the point of focus on key issues</p> <hr/> <p><b>Key features:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being explicit about the nature of aspiration and need</li> <li>• Teacher summarising to draw themes and key points together, to prevent the discussion straying from the focus</li> <li>• Enabling parents to raise an issue or topic (prioritising)</li> <li>• Teacher avoiding using 'How' and 'Why' questions at this stage</li> <li>• Teacher phrasing questions as positive statements, to get key information from parents</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggested questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you tell me something more about when your child ...?</li> <li>• What could you do differently at home with your child next time ...?</li> <li>• Have you any idea why the approach you suggest might work better?</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. PLAN</b> – Actions to address key issues and priorities</p> <hr/> <p><b>Key features:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher gives parents information on their child's provision, progress and achievements to enable them to make a decision as to whether the SEN provision is OK or needs changing</li> <li>• Agreed targets set which have a level of challenge</li> <li>• Parents consulted on how they feel they can help their child at home</li> <li>• Teacher clarifies what strategies and interventions are being put in place at school</li> <li>• Parents consulted on timescales and success criteria to evaluate impact of provision</li> <li>• Teacher clarifies the ongoing assessment of the child's progress</li> <li>• A plan is produced as an outcome of the conversation, which is clear, concise and includes long-term and short-term goals.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4. REVIEW</b> – Summary of key points and clarify next steps</p> <hr/> <p><b>Key features:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher summarises the main points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– We have talked about these things today</li> <li>– We've identified the areas we agree are important to target for improvement</li> <li>– This is the agreed plan to put in place</li> <li>– Do you feel the plan will work?</li> <li>– Can you see a difference in your child?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Teacher agrees on how a parent wishes to communicate for follow-up</li> <li>• Dates for next meetings are agreed</li> <li>• Named contact in school provided</li> <li>• Teacher seeks parents' feedback on how they felt the discussion went today.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggested questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well do you feel today's meeting has gone?</li> <li>• Is there anything else you want to tell me or add?</li> <li>• Have we missed anything important?</li> <li>• Do you feel we have listened well enough, understood and appreciated the issues you raised?</li> <li>• Is there anything else you want to ask about the next steps or the outcomes from today's meeting?</li> </ul>