

## Teaching the Topic

Meetings and contact with teachers can be stressful enough in our own language. Parents want to know how the child is doing at school, and if there are problem areas. Scheduled parent-teacher interviews are short, and teachers are busy. If a parent needs to talk to a teacher because there is a problem, the parent needs to make another appointment. They can take an interpreter. Parents also need to talk with other school staff – nurses, dental nurses, the office staff.

### Resources

Notices from school about date, time and place of interviews; children's profiles and work sent home for parental feedback; notes from the dental clinic; white pages for the school's details; school website for details.

### Activities

- Talk about if or how parent-teacher interviews happen in the learner's country. What are the parents' expectations of the interview? What information can a parent expect to get or be required to give in the short time?
- Discuss topics that might be discussed – subjects, oral communication, team work, behaviour, achievement levels in tests, reading age, language development, independence. The focus is different for younger children – for older children the focus is more on subject achievement.
- The learner prepares questions they want to ask.
- Focus on listening skills, reflecting what the learner heard, clarifying if necessary, checking when they don't understand.
- Role play an interview. It is important that the tutor has some idea of what happens in these interviews. If the tutor has no children, or is older, they may need advice – ask a New Zealand parent for help if necessary.

### Language

- School subjects and activities, *social interaction, above/below average, progress.*
- Question forms, open and closed questions.

## Using the Worksheet

*A possible introductory activity:* Has the learner talked to school staff, not just the teacher, for example, the nurse, dental nurse or office staff? What does the learner do if their child is sick? Have they ever rung the school and talked to the office staff in this situation? What might be other reasons for ringing the school?

The worksheet is a phone conversation to practise calling the school when the learner's child is sick. Put in the name of the learner's child's school. The parent's words are missing. The learner writes in the missing words and reads the conversation with the tutor, paying attention to pronunciation and clear speech. The learner might not know the room number but might know the teacher's name. It is important to identify the class correctly to get the information to the right teacher. After a couple of times, the learner might want to try the role play in a less structured way – perhaps adding in the teacher's name as well.

### Main learning points

Introduce yourself on the phone and state clearly the purpose for ringing. Give names clearly. Respond to questions.

### What else could be learnt?

Talk to other school staff. What could the learner ask the nurse or dental nurse? Role play possible conversations. What other reasons are there to ring the school office? Role play possible conversations, for example, a small accident that will make a child late, lost possessions, a query about Teachers' Day.





## My child is sick

**School Office Receptionist:**

\_\_\_\_\_ School.

Ann speaking.

**Parent:**

Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_.

My son/ daughter can't come to school today.

He / She is sick.

**School Office Receptionist:**

What's your son's / daughter's name?

**Parent:**

\_\_\_\_\_.

**School Office Receptionist:**

What class is he / she in?

**Parent:**

He's / She's in Year \_\_\_\_\_, Room \_\_\_\_\_.

**School Office Receptionist:**

Thank you for letting us know.

I'll tell his / her teacher. Good-bye, Mrs / Mr \_\_\_\_\_.

**Parent:**

Good-bye.

