

Education: Pre-Expulsion Meeting

- Briefing* Shin is a Year 10 student. His father is in a meeting with the school principle Ms Frost about the impending expulsion from school.
- ENG Good morning, please have a seat. [6]
- J Thank you, Ms Frost. I am Takamatsu, Shin's mother. I tried to speak to you on the phone the other day, but I couldn't explain myself clearly. I was very distressed after reading the letter you sent. What is going to happen if Shin is expelled from this school? Where can he go? I have spent tons of money to send Shin to Australia to study abroad and I don't know what to do. [74]
- ENG Well, it is a requirement by law for the school to advise parents of a student formally in writing about a possible expulsion. My understanding is that Shin has assaulted a boy from another school who is also a Japanese national. I am afraid that this is a very serious matter and, as a school principal, I have to think about safety and welfare of other students. I have had the host mother calling us and blaming the school's coordinator about what kind of student's do we place in a family stay as the police arrived at 2 am and the whole neighbourhood is now talking! These things tend to affect the school's reputation and I must take some urgent measures in order to restore the community trust in use as an educational institution. [134]

J Yes, I agree it is very serious and unacceptable and I am very sorry that the police arrived in such an odd hour and caused distress to the home-stay family. I did knock on the family's door yesterday when I arrived from Japan but I think they are very upset about what has happened so no one answered the door. But can I ask if you were aware that Shin was bullied by that boy? The boy kept posting awful text about Shin saying things like his English sucks and so forth. My boy was very upset about it! [99]

ENG No, I didn't know this. Do you have any evidence of those text messages? Were they posted on social network sites like Facebook? And most of all, since when did Shin start experiencing the bullying and did he tell anybody about it?[42]

J Well, Shin told me that his friends suddenly turned cold and stopped texting him and talking to him. I think he changed when another boy from Japan arrived to his school. He just wouldn't hang out any more with Shin like mates do. I think that Shin felt rejected and potentially jealous about this new friendship between the two boys. I know that Shin missed 2 days of school because he was so distressed and couldn't bring himself up to attend classes because of this but I think given the circumstances it is understandable. I mean Shin has only been here for 8 months and having a fellow friend from the same country meant a lot to him. In other words, losing a good friend came as a shock. [129]

ENG Well, his teacher did inform me about his absence but she didn't notice any major changes in his behaviour, apart from being very quiet at times. Shin has been adjusting to new environment so we are fairly lenient in our judgments

on his behaviour. I wonder why Shin didn't see the school counsellor? [53]

J It is not in our culture to go and talk to the councillor. I have always taught my boy to sort out things himself and to be independent and self-reliant. That is why I sent him abroad to study at this young age. I want him to be strong and resilient. But that has backfired! I think Shin had bottled up his feelings for a long time and eventually exploded on this boy and punched him in the head. I feel strongly responsible as a parent. I will ensure that Shin learns how to express himself better and verbalise his feelings instead of turning to physical violence. [107]

ENG Right...I will speak to Shin and see if he could give me text messages you mentioned. I have also received 2 letters from his primary school's teachers that talk about his scholastic ability and good character and no history of violent behaviour whilst in Japan. I will take all these into account when considering his expulsion. I will get back to you within a couple of days probably on the phone. [71]

J I understand. I will wait for your call then. Thank you Ms Frost. [13]

LOTE 422
ENGLISH 306