Example of a structured conversation:

Blue- explore

Green- focus

Red- plan

Purple- review

Teacher: We are here to discuss Hannah and her progress and consider ways that we can all support her to move forward. We have 45 minutes, **what would need to happen for you to walk away feeling that this time was well spent?**

Parent: I guess, we would have a plan in place and some ideas to help Hannah at home and we will know how she will be helped in school.

Teacher: Okay, let’s start by thinking about where we are now. **What are your concerns about Hannah?**

Parent: I worry that she is struggling in maths and she seems to really hate the subject because she thinks she is rubbish at it. We really battle at home with maths homework and times tables.

Teacher: So Hannah does not enjoy maths and does not want to do any maths work at home.**What have you tried so far?**

Parent: We have a times table poster in her room and we ask her times tables in the car but she doesn’t want to do this. She always says no and gets cross. Homework- we have tried to help but she doesn’t want to do it and we are not always sure how to help her with it. I’m worried that forcing her to do her homework and the battles are making her hate maths even more.

Teacher: Okay, so what you are saying is that you are worried about Hannah’s progress in maths and how she feels about maths but are concerned that maths homework is making this situation worse?

Parent: Yes, I’m not sure how to improve this situation.

Teacher: I understand that this is an area that we need to consider further and I think that this could for part of our action plan at the end of this session. **Do you have any other information about Hannah that you think we should discuss in the meeting today?**

Parent: Yes, I am worried that she does not get enough sleep. She often doesn’t fall asleep until 10 o’clock and she is then tired at school. This doesn’t help her concentration at school. I struggle to get her up each morning. She doesn’t eat breakfast because she wakes up so late. She also argues all the time at home with her brother and sister and seems cross all the time.

Teacher: I understand, so you are worried about Hannah’s lack of sleep and how this is impacting on her focus at school and her relationships with her siblings. **Is that right?**

Parent: Yes, it makes her miserable and the rest of us to be honest.

Teacher: Okay, let’s focus on a few of these concerns a little more. **From the things we have discussed so far, which are of most concern to you? Which** **would you like us to explore further?**

Parent: the maths homework and how she feels about maths and her lack of sleep.

Teacher: Okay, let’s start with the maths homework and times tables at home. You say that for times tables, you have a poster at home and that you have tried times table testing but that Hannah is reluctant. **What alternatives might there be to that approach?**

Parent: I’m not sure if there is a way to make times tables more fun so that she doesn’t mind doing them so much. Can you think of a way that we can make it more fun for her?

Teacher: Have you tried times table Rockstars on the computer? Many of the children like this approach to times tables. Because it is on the computer and there are games and competitions, it makes times table learning more enjoyable.

Parent: No, I’ve not heard of that. How do I get on to that?

Teacher: *Talks more about accessing times table rockstars and how she will send home the login details.*

Parent: Okay, that sounds good. I can try that.

Teacher: **Tell me more about homework. What are the barriers/ difficulties?**

Parent: It is just so upsetting for her. She gets upset and cross and doesn’t want to do it. We then get cross because she is refusing to do it.

Teacher: What might help? Do you have any ideas?

Parent: Can the school help her with her homework? Does she have to do it at home? I know you are all busy but is there a way that she can do it in school?

Teacher: We do want her to do some homework at home as this will help her to become more independent and she will need to complete maths homework at secondary school. However, we could work towards that goal in small steps. Perhaps initially for the first term, we could try doing her maths homework with her in school during a break or a lunchtime. The adult could then support her with this and praise her and try to build her confidence levels with maths in the school environment. Then in term 2, we could start her off in school on the homework and talk her through it, go through a few examples and then send it home for her to finish off at home. It might be a good idea for her to complete it at home on that evening as soon as she gets home so that it is fresh in her mind-we can discuss this with her. Eventually, after trying this for a while, we might be able to reflect and assess and if it is going well, perhaps we can move to her being completely independent with maths homework. We will probably need to see how this is going. **What do you think of this plan? Can you see any problems or barriers?**

Parent: No, this sounds like it is worth a try and we can always see if it works. If it doesn’t work, we can think of something else?

Teacher: Yes, let’s try it and we can discuss whether it has been successful at the next meeting. We will action this. What else can we do to help her with maths?

Parent: Can the school help her with her confidence in maths?

Teacher: Yes, we will obviously support with the homework as mentioned a moment ago. We will also try some pre-teaching of concepts before each lesson to help her feel more successful and try to build her self-esteem and resilience in maths. *Teacher explains a bit more about pre-teaching.*

Parent: That might help- thanks.

Teacher: So the other main concern was Hannah’s sleeping. **What have you tried already?**

Parent: We’ve tried putting her to bed early but she takes so long to switch off. We have tried sleep music but this doesn’t work.

Teacher: What does she do before she goes to sleep/ before bedtime?

Parent: She usually watches TV in bed. She likes to watch youtube on her smart tv.

Teacher: Could this perhaps impact on her ability to sleep?

Parent: Maybe. Perhaps it’s actually waking her up and she’s getting excited about what she is watching?

Teacher: So you are concerned about the amount of sleep that Hannah is getting and are wondering whether her routine needs to change to help with that? **What could you change about this routine?** **What might be better?**

Parent: *Parent provides a few options.*

Teacher: **Which of these options do you think might be best?**

*Parent and teacher select an option to try differently during the bedtime routine to try and evaluate later.*

Teacher: In terms of breakfast, is there a way that we could coax her to eat breakfast in the morning?

**Is there anything that we can do to help with this?**

Parent: She does say that she wants to come to breakfast club. Perhaps we could try this? Maybe she will eat better at breakfast club. This will help her concentrate better at school.

Teacher: Okay, that sounds like a good idea.

Teacher: Let’s now review what we have said that we will try and record these actions so that we are really clear about what we are doing.

* So you have said that you will try to help Hannah with times tables by regularly using times table rockstars at home.
* In school- we will continue to work with her on times tables – the TA will support with this a few times a week.
* For the first term, Hannah can complete maths homework in school at lunchtime with an adult to help her but she will complete all other homework at home.
* After the first term, we will reduce the support for maths homework in school. We will start her off and do a few questions with her in school, but then at home you will continue with the homework and you will try to do this on the same evening that it is set- Friday.
* School will try some pre-teaching support for Hannah to improve her confidence in maths.
* You will try the changes to the bed time routine at home to help with the sleeping.
* In school, Hannah can come to breakfast club and we will encourage her to eat breakfast and will monitor this and let you know how this s going.

All these things are then actioned in the last column of the structured conversation record sheet.

Copies are given to the parent and a copy is kept in SEN folder.