



Core signals

“It’s OK to raise this.”

“You don’t need to have the answer.”

“We can think this through together.”

“Thank you for saying that.”

“Let’s slow this down for a moment.”

“It’s fine to be unsure.”

“Say more about that.”

“I’m glad you mentioned it.”



How safety is signalled

Signals we use

- Tone that is calm and curious
- Time and space to speak
- Listening without interruption
- Neutral responses to concerns

Signals we avoid

- Dismissing or minimising
- Rushing past discomfort
- Defensive explanations
- Silence or withdrawal



SAFE-TO-SPEAK SIGNALS

Small signals that make it easier to speak up.

What This Tool Is

A shared clarity tool that helps teams notice and use small signals that make it easier for people to speak up.

Why This Tool Helps

Because people speak up when it feels safe to do so

Psychological safety is built through everyday interactions, not policies or one-off statements.

Because safety must be visible to be trusted

Small, consistent signals show that speaking up is genuinely welcome.

Because fear silences early warning signs

Reducing fear helps concerns surface before they become bigger issues.

Because early voices prevent escalation

When people speak sooner, problems are easier to address.

Because silence is rarely agreement

Unspoken concerns often signal uncertainty, not alignment.

Because trust is built through everyday behaviour

How conversations are handled matters more than what is said once.

Who This Tool Is For

Anyone working in a busy school environment who wants conversations to feel safer, clearer, and more open.



When to Use This Tool

Use when you notice:

- Hesitation, silence, or holding back
- Concerns being softened or avoided
- Questions not being asked
- Issues being raised late
- Discomfort in conversations

Ideal moments:

- During team discussions or meetings
- When someone looks unsure or hesitant
- After mistakes or misunderstandings
- When pressure or pace is high
- Before problems escalate

How to Use Safe-to-Speak Signals

1 Notice the moment

Pay attention to hesitation, silence, or uncertainty.

2 Choose a signal

Use a simple phrase, tone, or response that shows it's OK to speak.

3 Respond without judgement

Listen without rushing to fix, explain, or dismiss.

4 Keep the conversation open

Allow time and space for the issue to be explored.

5 Repeat consistently

Safety is built through repetition, not one-off conversations.

Important to remember:

- * Safety is created through behaviour, not intention
- * Small signals matter more than big statements
- * Silence often signals uncertainty, not agreement

Notice. Act. Prevent.

Small signals that make it easier to speak up.