Trust and respect in school start with better conversations.

Conversations that matter!®

A practical programme for leaders, staff and pupils that helps everyone talk honestly, listen well and handle difficult moments with confidence.

Key Stage 1 | Key Stage 2 | Key Stage 3



The Laid Bare Company

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

Too many young people don't feel safe enough in school to stay.

When young people feel seen and heard, they feel they belong, and that's when real learning happens. Yet hardly anyone in school, adult or child, has been shown how to talk to each other when it really matters.

126,000+

children in England are now home educated.

9 in 10

students say positive teacher communication motivates them to come to school.

+3 months

average academic progress a year from social and emotional learning.

£125bn

a year: the cost of 1 million+ young people not in education, employment or training.

Schools that start now will be ready for 2028.

The new Inclusive Mainstream Fund backs whole-school approaches to inclusion, SEND reform brings inclusion training for every member of staff, RSHE guidance from September 2026 names courage and kindness as outcomes, and oracy joins the curriculum from September 2028.

Sources: DfE elective home education, autumn 2025; Words Matter, 2026; Education Endowment Foundation; Milburn Review interim findings, 2026.

How our programme works for leaders, teaching staff and pupils.

01 **Leaders set the tone**
Senior leaders take a focused version of our leadership programme first, so the way the school talks changes from the top. Especially recommended for secondary schools.

02 **Staff learn by doing**
Bite-size eLearning, guided reflection, group sessions and one-to-one mentoring, practising on the conversations they're already having.

03 **Pupils learn in class**
Staff deliver structured sessions that slot into PSHE, RSHE and oracy time, so nobody has to learn a whole new system.

04 **Older pupils support younger ones**
In Key Stages 1 and 2, older pupils become buddies and role models close to their own age.

05 **Built to last**
The skills sit with your own leaders, staff and pupils, so they stay in your school long after the programme ends.

PILOTS NOW RUNNING

KS1 KS2 KS3 KS4 KS5

Be one of the first schools.

We're piloting across Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, plus a youth version for Key Stages 4 and 5, gathering impact data as we go. If you'd like your school to be part of the next round, we'd love to talk.

OUTCOMES AND MEASURES

What pupils gain, and how we know.

	KS1 6 lessons	KS2 6 lessons	KS3 12 lessons
Speaking	Share one clear idea	Explain ideas clearly	Explain why a view matters
Listening	Show they're listening	Listen so others feel heard	Listen without distractions
Questioning & reasoning	Ask to find out more	Build on others' ideas	Challenge assumptions
Discussing & disagreeing	Disagree kindly	Disagree respectfully	Give honest, kind feedback

How we know it's working

- Pupils rate their own skills before and after
- Teachers observe speaking and listening in class
- At KS3, an anonymous survey asks if students feel safe to speak up

Designed for every pupil from the start

No separate versions for pupils with additional needs: staff and pupils agree what works for each child.

Supports the new oracy requirements, coming from September 2028.

WHAT CHANGES

What changes for your pupils, your staff and your school.

For pupils	
Belonging	Safe enough to come in and stay.
Learning	Safe to say “I don’t understand”, ask questions and learn from mistakes.
Oracy and RSHE	Listen well, express needs and boundaries, and manage disagreement kindly.
Pupil voice	Confidence to speak up, share ideas and ask for help.
Peer support	Older pupils support younger ones and become role models.

For staff	
Inclusion and SEND	More confidence understanding what lies behind behaviour.
Behaviour	Clear boundaries and strong relationships, at the same time.
Wellbeing	Protected time to reflect, and tools to stay calmer under pressure.

For your school	
Leadership and culture	Leaders model the conversations they want to see.
Lasting change	The way the school communicates changes from the top down.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

What schools ask us.

Which key stages is it for?
Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, with content shaped to each age group. A youth version for Key Stages 4 and 5 is in pilot.

Do leaders need to take part?
We recommend it, especially in secondary schools. When leaders model the approach, it's much easier for staff and pupils to follow.

How much training time will staff need?
12 weeks (one term) of bite-size eLearning and half-day workshops, designed for the biggest impact in the least time.

Is this something else for teachers to learn?
It fits into PSHE, RSHE and oracy time, so there's no new system to get your head around.

Does it work for pupils with SEND?
Yes. Every pupil follows the same programme, and staff agree with each child what works for them.

Does it count towards CPD?
Yes, for staff and leaders. How it's recorded depends on your school or trust.

LED BY PEOPLE WHO'VE LED



Suzanne Hayes-Jones, founder of Conversations that matter!® and Director of The Laid Bare Company, has over 20 years' experience as a leadership development specialist, coach and coach mentor. She was Head of L&D for a FTSE 100 company and holds a Masters in Coaching and Development and is an ICF Master Certified Coach.

The programme is delivered by our associate team and Accredited Training Providers: qualified, experienced coaches who've led teams themselves.

FUNDING

Funding your school may be able to use.

- **Inclusive Mainstream Fund**
  New DfE funding paid straight into school budgets for whole-school approaches to inclusion. Inclusion strategies are due by 31 December 2026, so now is a good time to plan.

- **Pupil premium**
  Can fund evidence-informed staff training and coaching, and support for social, emotional and behavioural needs and attendance. The programme builds on social and emotional learning, which the EEF links to around three months' extra progress a year.

- **CPD and leadership budgets**
  The programme counts as CPD for staff and leaders.

- **Local schemes**
  Many areas run Healthy Schools or wellbeing schemes. It's worth checking yours.

We'll help you check what's open to you before you commit, and support you in making the case to your head, governors or trust.

Ready to start?

Let's talk through what Conversations that matter!® could look like in your school.

Scan to book a call at a time that works for you.

hello@thelaidbarecompany.com

Find out about our leadership programme at thelaidbarecompany.com

The Laid Bare Company