If you run a children's activity business, you'll know this already.

The hard part isn't the sessions, it's everything that sits around them, the bookings, the payments, the messages, the registers, the forms, all the moving parts that come with trying to run something properly. That's where our partner Love Admin comes in.

It's not about being the simplest system on the market.

It's about having the right things in place, the kind of functionality that actually reflects how children's activity businesses are run, and gives you the visibility and control you need as you grow. So instead of patching things together or outgrowing your setup every year you've got one system that supports you to run more efficiently and build something sustainable. If admin is starting to feel like a blocker rather than a support, it's worth a look.

Welcome back to another episode of Approaching Schools. Now, if you have ever thought I'm great with parents, but schools and nurseries feel intimidating, then this episode is for you, because today I want to challenge one of the biggest beliefs, holding brilliant children's activity and well being providers back schools and nurseries are actually easier to sell to than parents, more logical, more predictable, and once you're in, far more loyal.

Yet for so many providers, schools and nurseries feel scarier. They feel more formal, more exposing. And if that's you, I want you to know something before we go any further. There is nothing wrong with you. You haven't failed, you're not bad at business, you're not missing confidence.

What's been missing is context, because most providers are unknowingly bringing parent marketing behaviour into a school procurement environment, and that mismatch is what creates silence, self doubt and the feeling that schools and nurseries are a closed door.

Today, I want to open that door for you. Let's start with parents, because this is where most of you feel comfortable. Parents buy emotionally first, then they justify that decision logically. Think about it, a parent buys because their child came home smiling, or another mum recommended you at pick up, or your Instagram inspired them. The price probably felt worth it in that moment, parents don't need to explain the decision to anyone else. They don't need internal approval. They don't need to map it to a wider strategy. They buy because it feels right. And if you've built your business on warmth and connection, personality, maybe your personal brand, the passion that you have for why you set up your business in the first place. That's not weakness, that's skill, but it only works in that one environment.

Schools and nurseries, however, do not buy like parents do. A school decision maker never wakes up thinking, Hmm, let's see who inspires us today. Schools buy because something internal is happening. There are real situations that I see every single week. SLT are reviewing the school development plan, a subject lead has been told we need a strength and wellbeing provision. Teachers are feeling overwhelmed, and something has to give Ofsted feedback has flagged engagement PE or enrichment, and funding has been allocated and needs to be spent responsibly. Now, someone in that building has been asked to solve a problem, and that

person is not thinking about passion or personal branding. They are thinking about fit, about risk, about justification of spend, about workload and accountability.

So when your email lands saying, Hi, I'm really passionate about supporting children's well being, and would love to come in. You're reading that thinking, This sounds aligned. This sounds caring. This sounds like me, but the school or nursery is thinking, Where does this fit? Who would own this internally? Is this curriculum, pe well being or enrichment, and which budget does this sit under? Would I feel confident justifying this decision? If those answers aren't immediately obvious, they're going to pause, aren't they? And when decision makers, who are very, very busy on school SLTs and nursery managers, they don't reply.

This is where the spiral for activity providers usually starts, because you check your inbox, don't you, you reread the email that you wrote, you wonder if you said the wrong thing, and slowly the story in your mind becomes maybe they didn't like my idea. Maybe I'm not professional enough. Maybe schools and nurseries just don't want what I do. But the truth is this, that silence isn't rejection, it's incomplete decision making, because schools are overloaded, and anything that requires interpretation or extra thinking on the teacher's part gets parked. Your email didn't give them enough decision clarity yet, and it's not a reflection on the value of what you're offering. It's a reflection on how schools and nurseries operate.

So this part can feel uncomfortable, okay, especially if you are a very heart led provider, because emotion heavy messaging works beautifully with parents, but inside schools and nurseries, emotion without structure is actually creating friction, because the decision makers and the teachers behind the school do care. They do, but because the schools and nurseries and the decision makers behind them want to be reassured. There are some things they're going to want to know from you. They're going to want to know exactly what it is, exactly why it matters, and exactly where it fits and when they have to work it out themselves, the decision stores, because they're too busy for that.

So here's a reframe. Then that changes everything instead, because schools and nurseries actually prefer simplicity over exciting ideas. They like clear outcomes, clean structure, logistics, simple pricing and clear justification. Exciting can sometimes feel a little bit risky, but clarity feels safe and safe decisions are what get approved in schools. So this is also why, once you're in schools and nurseries can be incredibly loyal and replacing you often actually means more admin, more risk and more explaining to do, and schools are going to value the stability of having you in consistently more so than the novelty of getting someone exciting in or somebody else doing something different to what you do. And this scares providers, actually, even the most brilliant ones, because school selling asks you to step out of your comfort zone a bit, doesn't it? It asks you to step away from needing to be liked, from relying on your personality or your personal brand, from relying on leading with enthusiasm, and it takes you into being really, really calm and clear, holding your nerve, positioning and the language you use, and really communicating with a real air of professional authority.

Because for former teachers and well being providers and activity professionals who already question whether they are real business owners that can feel exposing. But here's the truth, you don't need just to be like the louder, more confident one. You just need to align with how those busy decision makers in schools and nurseries actually think and you can learn this.

This is exactly why I run the approaching Schools Challenge, because in this free training, we don't just tweak your emails. We actually help you retrain your brain, from parents selling to education partner thinking so schools and nurseries can stop feeling intimidating to you and start feeling a bit more logical. So if you've ever thought, I know schools and nurseries need what I do, but I just don't know how to position it for SLT, or I freeze when it comes to outreach, or I'm great with parents, but totally stuck with schools, then the challenge, honestly, is the best place to start. I'm going to leave the link in the show notes for you Come and join us, because once you felt that shift, that's when working with me and my team this year in the Approaching Schools Academy becomes the next natural step for you, because it's where this thinking becomes repeatable, professional and measured so you can grow your business sustainably
this year.