Neil
Hello, I'm Neil…

Feifei
…and I'm Feifei and this is The English We Speak.

Neil
So do you want a cup of coffee then, Feifei?

Feifei
Yes, but you know the rules – no drinking coffee in the studio!

Neil
Well that is the rule but nobody's looking so maybe we could sneak two cups in?

Feifei
Sneak? Yes ok, you keep an eye out for the boss and I'll grab the coffee from the kitchen.

Neil
…ok, the coast is clear!

Feifei
Eh? The coast is clear – how do you know that? We're nowhere near the seaside.

Neil
We don't need to be – it's just a saying. The coast is clear means it's safe to do something because nobody is watching – so we won't get caught.

Feifei
Ah, got you! So we're being a bit naughty, Neil?

Neil
Yes, that's right – hopefully nobody will ever find out what we're doing! Let's hear some more examples of this phrase…
Examples
I really wanted to know what my birthday present was, so when the coast was clear, I unwrapped it – I guess I’ve spoilt my surprise now!

The coast is clear so make a run for it before you get caught!

Feifei
Ok – so that’s the coast is clear which means it’s safe to do something which isn’t allowed while nobody is watching. Right Neil, is the coast still clear?

Neil
Yes, but quick before someone comes. Quick… someone's coming!

Debbie
Oh hello Feifei… are you making coffee for the team? Thanks - I'll take those from you shall I? You wouldn’t want to be caught drinking those in the studio now, would you? You know the rules! See ya.

Feifei
Err, see you later, Debbie. Oh dear Neil, it looks like the coast wasn’t clear.

Neil
I think we got away with it. Anyway, that’s the end of the programme. What shall we do now?

Feifei
Coffee?

Neil
Yeah. Good idea, let's go.

Both
Bye.