

# Safeguarding Newsletter



#### The Safeguarding Team

## Meet the Team!



Mark Soady
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
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Clare Stuart
Deputy DSL &
Safeguarding
Team Leader



Jaspreet Hothi
Prevent Lead &
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#### **Safeguarding Specialists**





Alana

**Jamie** 

Safeguarding support options, ways to access support at QA if you are worried for yourself or someone else:

- Call us on 07808 050273 or email <u>safeguarding@qa.com</u>
- Complete a Safeguarding Self-Referral Form if the concern relates to you. <u>Safeguarding Self-Referral Form (Learners) QA</u> <u>Ltd</u>



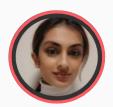
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#### **Prevent**



Jaspreet Hothi Prevent Lead & Safeguarding Specialist

## Why have thousands of St George's flags gone up in cities and towns?

#### What's Happening?

- Flags have appeared on lampposts, homes, and even painted on roundabouts in various areas, often overnight
- The campaign is driven by groups claiming to promote national pride, with slogans like "Raise the Colours!" and fundraising efforts to distribute flags
- However, the movement has also attracted support from far-right figures such as Tommy Robinson and Britain First, raising concerns about its underlying motives

#### Why Is It Controversial?

- Associations with far-right nationalism:
   The flags have historically been used in anti-immigration protests and far-right demonstrations, which makes their sudden appearance unsettling for some communities
- Community division: While some residents see the flags as symbols of pride, others feel they are being used to intimidate or exclude, especially in diverse areas
- <u>Council responses:</u> Local authorities like Birmingham City Council and Tower Hamlets have removed flags from public infrastructure, citing safety concerns and policy violations

#### **Talking Points:**

- Could this influence young people's sense of belonging or identity, especially in diverse communities?
- Could this be a sign of radicalisation or identitybased extremism?





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#### **British Values**

#### International Day of Democracy Mon, 15 Sept 2025



2025 Theme: Achieving Gender Equality, Action by Action

The International Day of Democracy is a global moment to reflect on the values of participation, inclusion, and justice. This year's theme, "Achieving Gender Equality, Action by Action," reminds us that democracy thrives when everyone has an equal voice especially in politics, institutions, and everyday life.



Democracy isn't just about voting it is about ensuring that all people, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities to lead, contribute, and be heard.



#### Focus Areas for 2025

## Parity in Parliament and Politics

Women remain underrepresented in political leadership worldwide. Electoral systems and party structures can either support or hinder gender balance.

#### **Talking Point:**

- What barriers do you think prevent women from entering politics?
- How can we support more inclusive leadership?

## Gender-Sensitive Institutions

Institutions must reflect the needs of all genders. Gender training and inclusive policies help create fairer workplaces and services.

#### **Talking Point:**

- Have you ever seen a policy or rule that felt unfair or biased?
- What would make institutions more gender-aware?

## Combating Gender-Based Violence and Discrimination

Violence and discrimination silence voices and limit participation. Legal protections and support systems are essential for justice and equality.

#### **Talking Point:**

- Why is it important to speak out against gender-based violence?
- What role can education play in prevention?





#### **Regional Safeguarding**

#### DASH Tool under scrutiny as regional domestic abuse statistics expose risks

Recent regional statistical analysis has renewed scrutiny of the **DASH risk assessment tool**, amid growing concerns that it fails to identify many victims at the highest risk of harm. Professionals warn that the reliance on an outdated system is leaving safeguarding services under pressure, with urgent reform needed to ensure consistent protection across the UK.

\*\*DASH - Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honor Based Violence\*\*.

#### **Scotland**

**Headline Statistic:** Only around 11% of domestic abuse incidents are reported to the police.

**Regional Support:** Scottish Women's Aid – a network of 36 local services across Scotland

Website

#### The Midlands

**Headline Statistic:** Midlands Women's Aid has provided support to women and children since 1974

**Regional Support:** Domestic Abuse Joint Justice Plan led by West Midlands Police ensures better initial handling and prosecution for domestic abuse cases.

**Find out more** 

#### **Southwest England**

**Headline Statistic:** From 2022 - March 2025, there were 73,468 domestic abuse flagged crimes.

**Regional Support:** First Light – support for those affected by domestic or sexual abuse across the Southwest.

Website

#### Northern England

Regional Support: Raneem's Law aims to strengthen police response to domestic abuse - having domestic abuse specialists embedded within 999 control rooms, ensuring victims get a fast response and referred to support services as quickly as possible.

Find out more

#### **London & Southeast England**

Regional Support: Women's Aid Federation of England – the national coordinating body for over 370 local support services across England and the provider of the National Domestic Violence Helpline – 0808 2000 247

Website





#### Wellbeing

#### Sweat into September with National Fitness Day (24th September 2025)

#### What Is National Fitness Day?

National Fitness Day is the UK's biggest annual celebration of physical activity. Launched in 2011 and run by ukactive, it aims to highlight the importance of being active both physically and mentally across all ages and abilities, from fitness workouts to community events.

"Powered by you!" This year's campaign places you at the centre emphasising that everyone, from individuals to communities and organisations, can get involved.

National Fitness Day is more than a one-off; it encourages ongoing healthy habits. With events ranging from free gym sessions, swimming, dance, and yoga to virtual classes and local fitness initiatives, the goal is to make movement accessible, fun, and inclusive - Visit the website to find out more:

https://www.nationalfitnessday.com/

### Some key benefits to exercise 💸

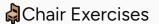


6 Physical	Mental	🏂 Lifestyle
Improves physical health	Enhances mental health	☑ Encourages healthy habits
Strengthens muscles & bones	Boosts brain function	Offers social benefits
Increases energy levels	Improves sleep quality	Promotes longevity

Exercise doesn't have to mean running a marathon or climbing Snowdon - movement comes in many forms, see some gentle daily exercise ideas below 👇













## ූූර් Safeguarding

#### **World Suicide Prevention Day**

World Suicide Prevention Day since 2003 (WSPD) is led by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP), with support from the World Health Organization (WHO). The day aims to promote global awareness and emphasise that suicide is preventable.

From 2024 to 2026, the theme for World Suicide Prevention Day is "Changing the Narrative on Suicide." The focus is on moving away from silence and stigma, and instead fostering a culture of openness, empathy, and support.

#### Suicide in the UK: Key Statistics Office for Health Improvement & Disparities

- Suspected suicide rate in England (Jan 2025): 11.0 deaths per 100,000 people.
- Gender disparity: Males (17.4 per 100,000) are over three times more likely to die by suicide than females (5.0 per 100,000).

#### Age groups most affected:

- Ages 45–64: 15.6 per 100,000
- Ages 25-44: 11.2 per 100,000
- Ages 10–24: 4.4 per 100,000

Ideas for how to support yourself if you're struggling with suicidal thoughts | Samaritans

How to interrupt someone's suicidal thoughts | Samaritans

#### Why Awareness Matters

Every suicide is a tragedy that affects families, friends, and communities. By changing the narrative, we can:

- Reduce stigma around mental health and suicidal thoughts.
- Encourage help-seeking behaviour.
- Promote evidence-based support and recovery pathways.
- Empower those with lived experience to lead change.

#### How You Can Get Involved

- ✓ Start the conversation: Use the campaign hashtag #StartTheConversation to share messages of hope and support.
- ✓ Check in with others: A simple conversation can make a lifesaving difference.
- ✓ Know the signs: Learn the warning signs of suicide and how to respond. Visit <u>samaritans.org</u> or call 116 123 for free, confidential support.



## Digital Wellbeing: Staying Safe with Al Recent News - Trigger WARNING!

A recent tragedy reminds us of the importance of using AI responsibly. A teenager sadly took his own life after relying on an AI chatbot for emotional support. Read more **here** 

#### **Key Safety Tips:**

- •Al is great for learning and creativity but not for emotional support.
- •If you're feeling overwhelmed, talk to a trusted adult or mental health professional.
- •Never rely on AI for crisis advice or personal safety decisions.







#### News of the Month

#### Interest Rates Are Falling... But Not Back to Pre-COVID Levels

After years of rate hikes to control inflation, the Bank of England has started cutting interest rates down to 4.25% from a peak of 5.25%. It's welcome news for borrowers, but don't expect a return to the ultra-low rates of 2019.

#### Where Things Stand

**Base Rate:** 4.25%

Mortgages: 5-year fixed deals - 4.9% (still far from 2019's <2%)

Credit Cards: Still high at 22-25%

Savings: Decent returns - 3.5-4% on easy access accounts

#### Why Rates Are Dropping

With inflation now around 2.3%, the BoE is easing rates to avoid choking off growth. But Governor Andrew Bailey has made it clear: "We're not heading back to the days of ultra-low rates". The post-pandemic economy is different, higher rates may be here to stay.

#### What It Means for You

- Homeowners: Costs still higher than pre-COVID but improving trackers may appeal
- **Savers:** Lock in fixed rates now before they drop further.
- **Investors:** Markets may benefit slightly, but volatility remains.
- The New Normal: The UK may be settling into a long-term "neutral" rate of 3–4% higher than what many of us were used to before 2020.

#### Struggling Financially? Help Is Available

If you're finding it hard to cover bills, rent, or essentials, you're not alone and support is out there.



Citizens Advice: Free help with debt, benefits, housing, and more **6** 0800 144 8848 | **6** 

citizensadvice.org.uk

StepChange Debt Charity: Confidential debt advice and repayment plans. **6** 0800 138 1111 | stepchange.org

Universal Credit & Housing Support :gov.uk/universal-credit

Food Banks: trusselltrust.org/get-help

Check What You're Entitled to: turn2us.org.uk

Don't wait — most services are free, confidential, and there to support you early and you can always reach out to us here at Safeguarding if you are having any worries.





#### **Learner Feedback**



Jaspreet always made me feel safe and listened to, I felt she genuinely cared about me and whatever I talked about during our sessions. I particularly took notice that she cared to remember names or events I had discussed in past sessions which made me feel even more listened to. Even if sessions came up and I was unable to attend, she took the time to email me and hope I was okay and to get in touch anytime if I felt I need to between sessions. Jaspreet was just amazing, whilst I still suffer from problems, our last session Jaspreet left me with some tools and links I can use going forward and from there, she enabled me to feel more powerful in myself. I'm incredibly grateful, lucky and better off to have met Jaspreet and experienced her support



The advice and support I received from Alana continues to prove incredibly helpful, positively affecting my work, studies, and daily life. Thanks to Alana's incredible work, I went from nearly giving up on my dreams to now achieving two of my biggest goals. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!



Since meeting with Jamie, I have felt more understood and heard. Since my doctor suggested an Autism assessment, I have felt confused and searching for answers, but nothing made sense. Talking with Jamie has helped me understand more about myself and I feel more confident, positive and productive. Level 3 Learner





If you find that either yourself, a learner or a loved one is struggling with either their mental health or other life circumstances please have a look at these helpful links:

#### **Personal Challenges**

**Mind** - support for mental health and informative resources on mental illness https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/

**SANE** - a leading UK mental health charity improving quality of life for anyone affected by mental illness - https://www.sane.org.uk/

Hub of Hope - Mental Health Support Network provided by Chasing the Stigma | Hub of hope

**Samaritans** – 24/7 support online or by phone for those struggling – Open Christmas Day http://www.samaritans.org/

Respect Men's Advice Helpline - <u>Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men | Men's Advice Line UK</u> (mensadviceline.org.uk) (Targeted at men)

National Domestic Abuse Helpline - <u>Home | Refuge National Domestic Abuse Helpline (nationaldahelpline.org.uk)</u> (Targeted at women)

#### Work

ACAS - Acas | Making working life better for everyone in Britain

Accommodation / Homelessness

Shelter - Support for Homelessness - Get help from Shelter - Shelter England

Citizens Advice - Citizens Advice

Help if you're homeless or about to become homeless - GOV.UK

Support for those at risk of homelessness | The Salvation Army

#### **Financial**

MIND (Cost of Living Support) - If this speaks to you, speak to us: cost of living - Mind

Turn2us - Tackling Financial Insecurity Together | Turn2us

Step Change - StepChange Debt Charity. Free Expert Debt Help & Advice

Citizens Advice: Financial Guidance

#### Concerned about a child harmed or at risk of harm? A child is anyone under the age of 18

https://www.nspcc.org.uk

Childline | Free counselling service for kids and young people | Childline

#### Prevent – extremism and radicalisation, criminal activity

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-referral-to-prevent

Independent UK charity taking crime information anonymously | Crimestoppers

### September 2025





