

Safeguarding Newsletter



The Safeguarding Team



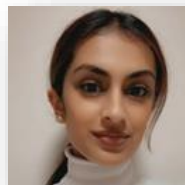
Mark Soady

Apprenticeships Head of Learner Services



Clare Stuart

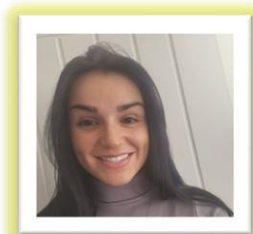
Designated Safeguarding Lead & Safeguarding Team Leader



Jaspreet Hothi

Deputy Designated Safeguarding & Prevent Lead

Safeguarding Specialists



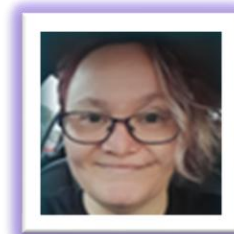
Alana



Jamie



Tina



Vix



Joanna

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

- Call us on **07552597253** or email safeguarding@qa.com
- Complete a Safeguarding Self-Referral Form if the concern relates to you.
[Safeguarding Self-Referral Form \(Learners\) QA Ltd](#)



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Safeguarding?

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the process of protecting people’s health, well-being, and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect. It’s especially important when working with children, young people, and vulnerable adults.



Safeguarding means protecting your right to live safely, free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm. It’s about making sure you feel safe and supported whether you're learning at work, online, or in training environments.

It covers: Physical safety, Mental health and Emotional wellbeing Protection from bullying, Discrimination, or Abuse, Online safety, Support with personal challenges.

Safeguarding applies to everyone!

Why You Shouldn’t Be Put Off by Safeguarding.

We get it! words like “*safeguarding*” can sound serious or even intimidating. But here’s the truth:

- **It’s not about judging you.** It’s about supporting you.
- **It’s not just for emergencies.** It’s there for everyday wellbeing too.
- **It’s not a sign of weakness.** Asking for help shows strength and self-awareness. Safeguarding is here to help you thrive not just survive. Whether you're struggling with stress, worried about someone’s behaviour, or unsure about something online, you deserve to feel safe and heard.



What to Do If You’re Worried

If something doesn’t feel right, trust your instincts. You can:

- Speak to your **Safeguarding Team at QA** or your **Tutor, DLC or Skills Coach.**
 - Use your organisation’s **reporting channels**
 - Reach out to support services- links are at the end of this newsletter.
- Just talking to someone is a powerful first step.***

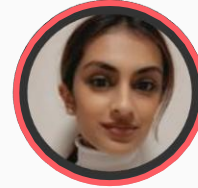
Remember:

- ✓ Safeguarding is for *you*
- ✓ You’re never wasting anyone’s time
- ✓ You deserve to feel safe, respected, and supported





Prevent



Jaspreet Hothi
Prevent Lead &
Safeguarding
Specialist

Man jailed after grooming girl he met on Roblox

Carlo Tritta, now 19, repeatedly messaged the teenager and encouraged her to send him sexually explicit images of herself. Det Supt Rod Kenny, from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary, said the victim, from Greater Manchester, "thought she was in a loving relationship, but it was founded in coercion, control and abuse".



Talking points:

- Are we teaching young people to recognise emotional pressure, not just explicit harm?
- Do we unconsciously lower our guard when something feels "safe" or familiar?

- Tritta, from Eastleigh, Hampshire, admitted making indecent images of a child, sexual communications with a child and causing a child aged 13-15 to watch a sexual act.
- He also admitted two counts of intimidating a witness and criminal damage after he twice travelled hundreds of miles to the girl's home as he tried to get her to drop the case.
- Tritta's abuse came to light after the girl's mother noticed a message on her daughter's phone in August 2025.

Click [here](#) for more information



British Values

**Democracy + The rule of law
+ Individual liberty + Tolerance of
those with different faiths and
beliefs.**

Nine universities start legal action over student loan error row – **Rule of Law**

Nine universities have begun legal action against the government in a row over students being asked to repay loans as soon as possible.

About 22,000 students in England are caught up in the dispute; after being sent letters saying they were given maintenance loans and childcare grants in error and must immediately pay the money back.

Just three universities are putting their name publicly to the legal action - Bath Spa, Southampton Solent and London Metropolitan.

It has collected a petition of 13,000 signatures and said hundreds of students will gather in Westminster on Thursday, before a small group delivers their requests to the Department for Education.

Meghan says she was 'most trolled person in the world' – **Democracy + Mutual Respect**

The Duchess of Sussex has said that for 10 years she was the "most trolled person in the entire world" online.

Speaking in Melbourne about the harms of social media, alongside the Duke of Sussex, Meghan said she was "bullied" every day for a decade and that tech companies were "not incentivised to stop" their platforms being misused.

During the sit-down chat, Meghan told the group: "When I think of all of you and what you're experiencing, I think so much of that is having to realise that you know that industry, that billion-dollar industry, that is completely anchored and predicated on cruelty to get clicks - that's not going to change.

Talking Point: Is banning under-16s from platforms protection, prevention, or displacement of harm?



Regional Safeguarding

SCOTTISH
AUTISM

Scottish Autism

A national charity providing a wide range of support including education, supported living, outreach and an advice line. They focus on helping autistic people live independently and access meaningful opportunities.

Phone: 01259 222022

[Website](#)



Autism
Together

Autism Together

Based in the North West, Autism Together provides specialist support, residential services, and community programmes to help autistic individuals live more independently.

Phone: 0151 334 9666

[Website](#)

autism
west midlands

Autism West Midlands

Provides a wide range of services including community support, training, and employment programmes for autistic people across the Midlands.

Phone: 0121 450 7582

[Website](#)



National Autistic Society

The UK's leading autism charity, offering a free helpline, online guidance, and links to local support services across the country. They're a strong first point of contact if you're not sure what support is available in your area.

Phone: 0808 800 4104

[Website](#)

Following recent discussions in our ND Network around neurodiversity in the media, you may be thinking more about what this means for you or others. This map highlights organisations across the UK where you can access advice, support, or simply learn more.

Daisy Chain Project



A well-known North East charity offering support groups, activity sessions, and services for autistic children, adults, and their families.

Phone: 01642 531248

[Website](#)

Resources for Autism



A London-based charity supporting autistic children and adults through outreach, clubs, and family support services across the capital and surrounding areas.

Phone: 020 8458 3259

[Website](#)



Wellbeing

WHEN ANXIETY FEELS CLOSE – GENTLE WAYS TO FIND CALM

WHAT DOES ANXIETY FEEL LIKE?

Anxiety can show up quietly or all at once. It might feel like a racing mind, a tight chest, restlessness, or a sense that you can't quite switch off. If this sounds familiar, you're not alone and there are small, kind ways to support yourself through those moments.

START WITH YOUR BREATH

When anxiety rises, the body often thinks it's in danger. Slow, steady breathing can gently reassure your nervous system that you're safe. Try breathing in through your nose for a count of four, and out through your mouth for a count of six. There's no rush even a few slow breaths can begin to soften the intensity.

GROUND YOURSELF WHERE YOU ARE

Anxiety can pull us into "what ifs" and worries about the future. Bringing your attention back to the present can help. Notice your feet on the floor, the support of the chair beneath you, or the temperature of the air around you. You might quietly name things you can see or hear (small anchors to the here and now).

RELEASE TENSION WITH KINDNESS

Anxious feelings often live in the body. If it feels right, gently roll your shoulders, unclench your jaw, or stretch your hands. You could try slowly tensing and releasing different parts of your body, reminding yourself that it's okay to let go, even just a little.

CREATE POCKETS OF CALM

You don't need hours of quiet to reduce anxiety. A short walk, a warm drink, listening to calming music, or stepping away from screens for a few minutes can all help create moments of calm in a busy day.

BE GENTLE WITH YOUR THOUGHTS

Anxiety doesn't mean you're weak or doing something wrong, it's often your mind trying to protect you. If worries arise, try acknowledging them without judgement: "I notice I'm feeling anxious right now." You don't have to fix the feeling allowing it to pass can be enough.

WHEN TO SEEK SUPPORT

It's important to remember that you don't have to manage anxiety on your own. Support may be especially helpful if:

Anxiety is affecting your sleep, work, relationships, or daily activities

You feel stuck in a constant state of worry or overwhelm

You're using substances or avoidance to cope with your feelings

Anxiety feels intense, distressing, or hard to control

You simply feel you need someone to talk to

FINAL THOUGHT

Reaching out, whether to a trusted person, a mental health professional, or workplace support is a sign of strength, not failure. Asking for help can be the first step towards feeling more balanced and supported.

 **Safeguarding**

When global events and ongoing bad news become too much

Hearing about negative news from around the world can feel like a lot to take in. Feeling overwhelmed by current events, no matter how big or small, can take a toll on our mental health.

In the digital age, managing how much information we take on board might feel impossible. But you can take control and limit the impact of global overwhelm on your well-being.



Why the world may feel so overwhelming

It can sometimes feel like the world is full of bad news. With constant updates on global crises, and news always available on our phones, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. While staying informed is important, too much negative news can affect our mental health, leaving us anxious or drained. If you find it hard to switch off, you're not alone. Setting limits and focusing on your wellbeing can help.

Feeling overwhelmed by current events, no matter how big or small, can take a toll on our mental health. Here are some tips to help you cope with global news overwhelm and find your way back to balance.



Set boundaries with the news

Ask yourself how much news content you're happy to take in, and how often.



Use grounding exercises

Grounding yourself in the here and now can ease your stress response.

Have phone-free times

If you often find yourself doomscrolling, having set phone-free times or zones could help break this habit.



Talk with others

When you feel overwhelmed, it can help to connect with other people. You could spend some quality time with loved ones, family or friends.



Give yourself permission to rest

Taking time to look after yourself doesn't mean you've stopped caring about anything else; it means that you are looking after yourself so that you can keep on caring.



Focus on what you can control

Small actions still matter. Taking positive action can help shift feelings out of helplessness and into purposefulness.

When you understand how world events are affecting your mental health, you can take positive steps to improve your wellbeing.

If you are looking for more information on managing overwhelm, check out our [guides](#) and free resources:

• [Boost your mental health by moving more](#)

• [Tips to look after your mental health during traumatic world events](#)

• [How to sleep better](#)

• [Diet and mental health](#)

Constant exposure to distressing news can affect our mental health, even when events aren't happening to us directly.

Over time, it can increase anxiety, low mood, and feelings of helplessness. Staying informed matters, but taking breaks from the news is an important form of self-care.

Reflection: How do you protect your wellbeing while keeping informed?

Your Space

U18 Safeguarding Update

WORKPLACE BANTER: WHEN JOKES DON'T FEEL LIKE JOKES

Banter can be part of working life, but sometimes comments or jokes can feel uncomfortable, upsetting or go too far. If something said at work makes you feel uneasy, embarrassed or targeted, those feelings matter. Understanding the difference between friendly banter and behaviour that crosses the line can help you feel safer and more confident at work.

WHAT IS BANTER?

Banter is usually:

- ❖ Light-hearted
- ❖ Mutual (everyone is comfortable)
- ❖ Easy to stop
- ❖ Not personal or hurtful

Good banter makes people feel included,
not singled out or awkward

HOW IT CAN AFFECT YOU

Uncomfortable banter can lead to:

- ❖ Dreading work or certain shifts
- ❖ Feeling anxious or less confident
- ❖ Worrying about speaking up
- ❖ Feeling left out or isolated

You are not overreacting. No one should feel uncomfortable just to “fit in”.

WHEN BANTER CROSSES THE LINE

Banter is not OK if:

- ❖ It's about your age, appearance, background or personal life
- ❖ It keeps happening after you've asked for it to stop
- ❖ It happens in group chats or online and makes you feel targeted
- ❖ It feels intimidating, embarrassing or upsetting

If it doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Every situation is different, but you can:

- ❖ Tell the person clearly if you feel safe to do so
- ❖ Write down what happens and when
- ❖ Talk to someone you trust about how it's affecting you

Speak to your tutor, employer or the safeguarding team at safeguarding@qa.com

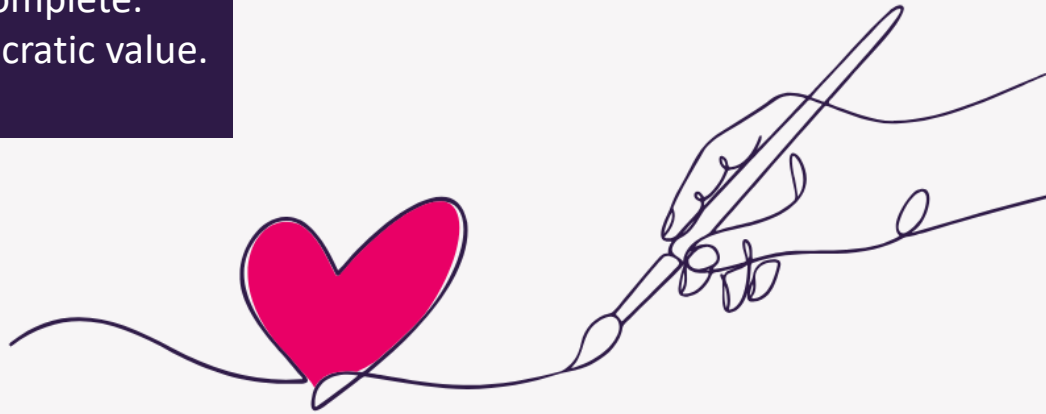


News of the Month

#IDAHOBIT2026

A democracy that excludes LGBTQIA+ people from equal participation is incomplete. Inclusion is a democratic value.

The International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia (IDAHOBIT) is a **global moment of solidarity and collective action** for LGBTQIA+ communities.



At the heart of democracy

65 UN member States criminalise consensual same-sex acts. We mark IDAHOBIT today in solidarity with the many who cannot do so safely. That is what it means to act at the heart of democracy.






On 17 May, communities around the world will mark IDAHOBIT, including in countries where consensual same-sex acts are still criminalised. That is both the weight of this day and its meaning.

MAY 17

IDAHOBIT • A Worldwide Celebration of Sexual and Gender Diversities • may17.org



Events of the Month

Date	Event	Info
 1 May	May Day	Traditional celebration of spring, marked with flowers, dancing and community events.
 4 May	Bank Holiday	UK public holiday marking the start of May.
 4 May	Star Wars Day	Popular culture day celebrated by fans of the phrase 'May the Fourth be with you'.
 8 May	World Red Cross Day	Honours humanitarian work and emergency aid around the world.
 12 May	International Nurses Day	Recognises the vital role nurses play in healthcare.
 17 May	IDAHOBIT	Promotes equality and challenges discrimination against LGBTQ+ people.
 18 May	International Museums Day	Encourages engagement with museums and cultural heritage.
 20 May	World Bee Day	Raises awareness of the importance of pollinators.
 21 May	World Tea Day	Celebrates the cultural and economic importance of tea.
 21 May	World Day for Cultural Diversity	Celebrates cultural diversity, dialogue and inclusion across communities.
 21-23 May	Shavuot	Celebrates the anniversary of the day God gave the Torah to the Jewish people.
 24 May	Pentecost	Celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Jesus.
 25 May	Bank Holiday	UK public holiday often linked to travel and outdoor leisure.
 26-28 May	Eid-ul-Adha	"Festival of Sacrifice" is a major Islamic holiday honoring Prophet Ibrahim.



Learner Feedback



I felt genuinely listened to and understood. That sense of safety made it much easier to open up and engage with the support being offered. The advice provided was clear and practical, which made a real difference. Rather than feeling overwhelmed, I came away with a clear sense of what steps to take and why.



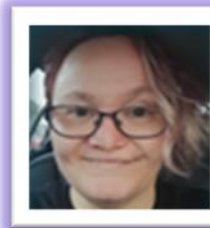
Joanna has been amazing she makes me feel like my feelings are valid, she really listens and she's given me grounding exercises to practice."



I received feedback from a learner that I support through learner support that they've found Jamie absolutely brilliant to talk to. The learner described having negative experiences with numerous mental health professionals before, and so they were hesitant to engage with Safeguarding, but have had such a positive and healing experience working with Jamie.



Tina has really helped me understand the grief and mental health issues I have been dealing with in the past 18 months. I feel like I have been heard and have more understanding on what's going on which has also helped me focus more on my course and work life.



I do want to say, though, that I genuinely appreciate all the time and support you've given me throughout my apprenticeship, it's been really valuable.



Helpful Links

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 - [Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men](#) | [Men's Advice Line UK \(mensadvice.org.uk\)](#) (Targeted at men)

National Domestic Abuse Helpline - [Home](#) | [Refuge National Domestic Abuse Helpline \(nationaldahelpline.org.uk\)](#) (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](#)

May 2026



Learn. To Change.

