

Safeguarding Newsletter



The Safeguarding and Welfare Team



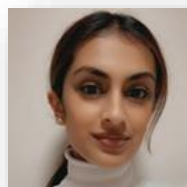
Mark Soady

Apprenticeships Head of Learner Services



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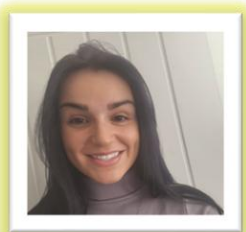
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
& Safeguarding Team Leader



Jaspreet Hothi

Prevent Lead & Deputy (DSL) & Safeguarding Specialist

Safeguarding Specialists



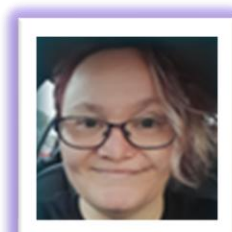
Alana Davies



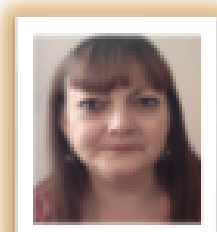
Jamie Hodges



Tina Forster



Vix Wrigley



Joanna Smith

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 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.***

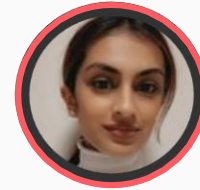
Remember:

- ✓ 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

England's children's commissioner says Prevent failing to help young people 'fixated with violence'

A new report from England's Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, has raised concerns that some young people who are referred to the Prevent programme may not be receiving the support they need. The report highlights a growing number of children who are described as being "fixated with violence" but who do not appear to follow a specific extremist ideology.

Why This Matters:

This story highlights the evolving nature of safeguarding and Prevent. Risks are not always linked to a specific ideology. Young people may be influenced by violent online communities, harmful content, or extremist material that promotes violence without fitting into traditional categories of radicalisation.

For education providers, it reinforces the importance of remaining alert to signs such as:

- A fixation on weapons or violent attacks.
- Sharing graphic or violent online content.
- Obsession with individuals who have committed mass violence.
- Engagement with harmful online communities.
- Significant changes in behaviour that raise concerns about vulnerability or exploitation.



Talking Point:

How can we help young people develop critical thinking skills and stay safe online in an environment where harmful and violent content is increasingly accessible?



British Values

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

National Television Awards pick first all-female shortlist for drama acting award

The National Television Awards have announced the first ever all-female shortlist for the Drama Performance category. Nominees include established and well-respected actors such as Sheridan Smith, Ruth Jones, Vicky McClure, Judy Parfitt and Ella Bruccoleri. This marks a notable moment in the awards' history and reflects the strength and impact of female performances on British television over the past year. Click [here](#) to read more.

This story links strongly to the British Value of Mutual Respect. It encourages us to recognise and appreciate people's achievements based on their talent, hard work and contribution, regardless of gender. Celebrating success in this way helps create a culture where everyone feels valued and respected for their abilities.

The article also relates to Individual Liberty. The women shortlisted have pursued successful careers in a highly competitive industry and have been recognised for their performances. Their achievements demonstrate the importance of providing equal opportunities for individuals to develop their skills, pursue their ambitions and fulfil their potential.



Talking Points:

- Why is it important to recognise people based on their achievements and contributions?
- How does celebrating diverse talent support mutual respect and inclusion?



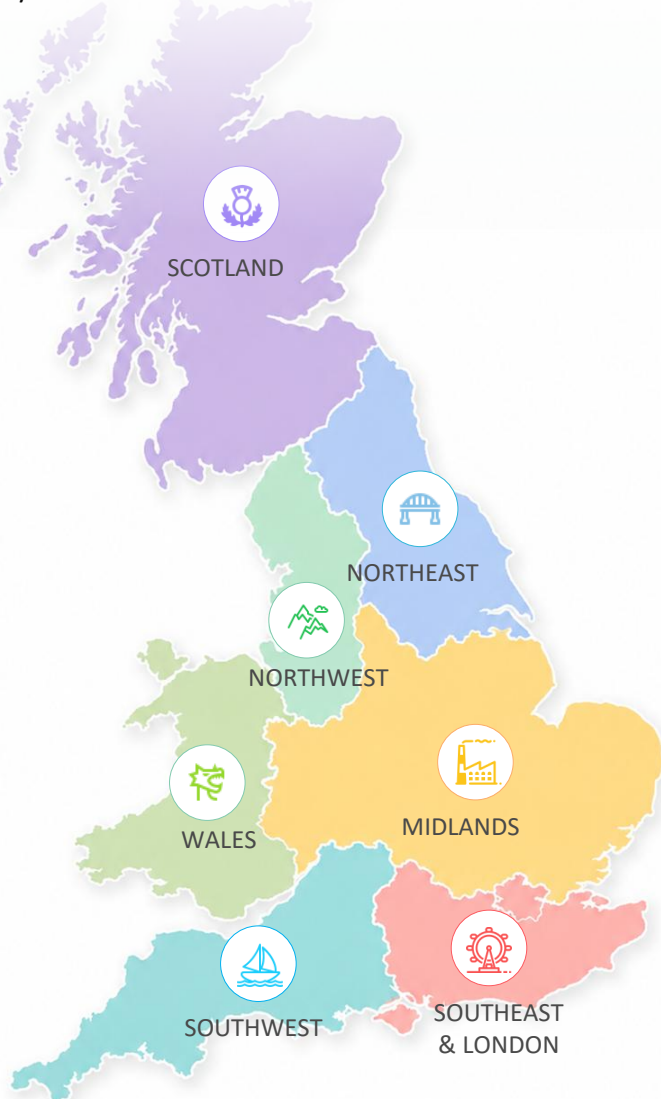
Regional Safeguarding

Suicide Prevention Support

Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone and knowing where to turn can make a vital difference. Across the UK, local organisations provide specialist suicide prevention, crisis support and a safe place to talk.

You don't have to face it alone — support is available in your area..

Need help now? If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call **999**. For urgent mental-health support in England, call **NHS 111** and **select the mental-health option**. Samaritans are available 24/7 on **116 123**.



Chris's House

Suicide crisis support for people experiencing suicidal thoughts, with additional support for families affected by suicide.

☎ 01236 766 755

[Website](#)

If U Care Share Foundation

Suicide prevention and intervention support for individuals, families and communities across the North East.

☎ 0191 387 5661

[Website](#)

The Martin Gallier Project

Specialist suicide prevention and crisis support for people experiencing suicidal thoughts across the North West.

☎ 0151 644 0294

[Website](#)

Jac Lewis Foundation

Mental health and suicide prevention support for individuals and communities across Wales.

☎ 0330 133 6510

[Website](#)

The Tomorrow Project / Harmless

Specialist support for people experiencing suicidal crisis, alongside help for those affected by suicide.

☎ 0115 880 0280

[Website](#)

Grassroots Suicide Prevention

Brighton-based suicide prevention charity working to give individuals and communities the skills and confidence to prevent suicide.

☎ 01273 234 834

[Website](#)

Suicide Prevention UK

Bristol-based, charity providing suicide prevention and crisis support providing outreach and patrol work around known suicide-risk locations.

☎ 0800 587 0800

[Website](#)



Wellbeing

ANNUAL LEAVE - LEARN TO SWITCH OFF

Time away from work allows us to pause, reset, and focus on the things that matter most outside of our working lives. Whether enjoying a holiday, a staycation, or simply slowing down, annual leave provides an opportunity to recharge both physically and mentally.

DISCONNECT FROM WORK

Annual leave is an opportunity to step away from work responsibilities and give your mind a break. Where possible, avoid checking emails, Teams messages, or work notifications. Creating space from work helps your brain shift into recovery mode and supports genuine rest.

BE PRESENT ON YOUR HOLIDAY

Whether you are travelling, enjoying a staycation, or spending time at home, try to focus on the moment rather than your to-do list. Taking in new experiences, enjoying the outdoors, and spending time with loved ones can help reduce stress and boost wellbeing.

DO WHAT HELPS YOU RECHARGE

Everyone relaxes differently. Reading, walking, swimming, exploring new places, hobbies, or simply slowing down can all help restore energy levels. Use your annual leave to do more of the activities that leave you feeling refreshed and energised.

EMBRACE NEW EXPERIENCES

Annual leave can be an opportunity to step outside your usual routine and experience something different. Whether it is visiting a new place, learning a skill, exploring nature, or trying a new activity, new experiences can boost confidence, creativity, and personal wellbeing while creating positive memories that last beyond your time away.

TAKE A MOMENT TO RESET

Planning annual leave is important, but so is allowing yourself time to truly switch off.

Here is a short, NHS wellbeing exercise designed to help you relax, recharge and make the most of your time away from work.



EASE BACK IN

Returning from annual leave can feel challenging. Setting realistic expectations, prioritising tasks, and taking regular breaks can help make the transition smoother. A well-rested mind is often better able to cope with demands and adapt to change.

Safeguarding

KCSIE 2026: WHAT IT APPRENTICES NEED TO KNOW



KCSIE 2026 strengthens support around **online safety**, **wellbeing**, **safeguarding** and **digital responsibility** for IT apprentices, especially those **under 18**.

**SPEAK UP.
GET HELP.
WE'RE HERE.**



ONLINE SAFETY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

KCSIE 2026 places increased emphasis on understanding digital risks, including:

FAKE NEWS

- Misinformation and disinformation
- Conspiracy theories
- Online scams and fraud
- Cyberbullying
- Grooming and exploitation
- AI-generated content and deepfakes
- Safe and responsible use of generative AI tools

Think critically about online information, use technology responsibly, and understand the risks associated with sharing information online.



GREATER FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The updated guidance highlights the importance of identifying and supporting mental health and wellbeing concerns at an early stage.

Apprentices balancing work, study and personal responsibilities may experience stress, anxiety or other wellbeing challenges.

KCSIE reinforces the importance of seeking support and ensuring learners know where to access help.

At QA, this is supported through:



WELLBEING
CHECK-INS



SAFEGUARDING
SUPPORT



LEARNER
REVIEWS



ACCESS TO
SPECIALIST
SERVICES

Your wellbeing matters.
You are **not alone**.



SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Safeguarding is not just the responsibility of safeguarding teams or managers.

Everyone has a role to play in creating safe, respectful and inclusive environments.

For apprentices, this means:



Be aware of safeguarding risks



Look out for colleagues and peers



Report concerns when something doesn't feel right



Understand how to access support



UNDERSTANDING PREVENT AND EXTREMISM

KCSIE continues to support the Prevent Duty, helping learners recognise how individuals can be influenced by extremist content online.

As digital professionals, IT apprentices may encounter online forums, social media platforms and content where misinformation, radicalisation or harmful narratives can spread quickly.



Understand these risks.
Think critically.
Stay safe.
Make informed decisions.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU



- ✓ Being aware of online risks and how to stay safe.
- ✓ Understanding misinformation, deepfakes and AI-related risks.
- ✓ Knowing how to access wellbeing and safeguarding support.
- ✓ Promoting British Values, respect and inclusion.
- ✓ Recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns.
- ✓ Developing the digital responsibility expected of technology professionals.



PROMOTING RESPECT AND INCLUSION



The 2026 guidance includes a stronger focus on respectful behaviours, challenging discrimination and addressing harmful attitudes such as misogyny and harassment.

Apprentices are encouraged to contribute to positive workplace cultures by demonstrating:



RESPECT
OTHERS



CHALLENGE
DISCRIMINATION



VALUE
DIFFERENT
PERSPECTIVES



PROMOTE
BRITISH
VALUES



CREATE A
POSITIVE
CULTURE

REMEMBER

Safeguarding is about protecting your wellbeing, safety and ability to thrive both at work and in learning.

If you are worried about yourself or someone else, speak to someone.



TUTOR OR
SKILLS COACH
DLC

SOMEONE
YOU TRUST



SAFEGUARDING
TEAM



SUPPORT IS
ALWAYS
AVAILABLE



Your Space

U18 Safeguarding Update

AI, DEEP FAKES AND KNOWING WHAT'S REAL

WHAT IS AI?

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) is technology that can create text, images, videos, voices and even conversations that look and sound real.
- Many young people use AI every day through search engines, social media, chatbots, photo editing apps and study tools.
- AI can be useful, but it can also be used in ways that are misleading, harmful or unsafe.

WHAT IS A DEEPPAKE?

A deepfake is an image, video or audio recording that has been created or altered using AI to make it appear real.

Deepfakes can be used to:

- Create fake celebrity videos
- Impersonate family members or friends
- Spread misinformation
- Bully, embarrass or exploit someone
- Support scams and fraud

Sometimes it can be difficult to tell the difference between what is real and what has been created by AI

SPOT THE WARNING SIGNS

Before believing something online, ask yourself:

- Does it come from a trusted source?
- Can I verify it elsewhere?
- Does the video or audio seem unusual?
- Is someone trying to make me react quickly?
- Could this have been created using AI?

If something feels wrong, pause and check before sharing.

PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

Never share:

- Passwords
- Verification codes
- Bank details
- Personal documents

Scammers increasingly use AI-generated voices, images and messages to trick people into sharing information.

VIDEO ON AI AND DEEPPAKES



Need Support? *If something online makes you feel uncomfortable, pressured or unsafe:*

Speak to: Your Tutor or Skills Coach, Safeguarding Team, Line Manager, Parent, Carer or Trusted Adult, CEOP (if online safety concerns involve someone under 18)

Remember: *It's okay to ask for help. Staying safe online starts with questioning what you see*



News of the Month

September is Suicide Awareness Month.

If you think someone might be suicidal, take action, interrupt their thoughts and show them you care.

How to reach out to someone

Small interruptions you make and actions you take could help someone who is suicidal. There's no quick fix but in that moment, you could save their life.

Start a conversation

It can be as simple as saying 'hello' or asking a question. Try not to worry about saying the wrong thing.

Ask how they're feeling

Don't be afraid to ask if they're having suicidal thoughts. It gives them permission to tell you how they really feel.

Be there for them in the moment

If you're worried about someone, stay with them and let them know you're there for them.

If you think it's an emergency or they've tried to harm themselves, call 999 in the UK or 112 in Ireland.

Listen without judgement

Give them a safe space to express how they feel. Try not to jump in with advice.

SAMARITANS

**Suicidal thoughts
can be interrupted**

➤ Here's how you can help

Anyone can interrupt suicidal thoughts

Samaritans surveyed people with lived experience, and the majority told them that their suicidal thoughts have been interrupted. Many respondents said their suicidal thoughts had been interrupted by someone close to them, while some said their suicidal thoughts had been interrupted by someone they didn't know.

Watch video here - [Suicidal thoughts can be interrupted - Samaritans](#)



**Samaritans are
here to listen**

**Call free day or
night on 116 123**

For more tips visit [World Suicide Prevention Day](#) | [Campaigns](#) | [Samaritans](#)



News of the Month

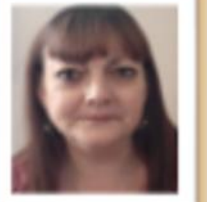
Date	Event	Information
 All Month & 10 Sept	Suicide Prevention Awareness Month anchored by Suicide Prevention day.	Encourages mental health awareness, support, and prevention initiatives.
 All Month & 21 Sept.	World Alzheimer's Month, anchored by World Alzheimer's Day.	Raises awareness of dementia and supports those affected by Alzheimer's disease.
 All Month	Childhood Cancer Awareness Month	Helps raise awareness and support for children and families affected by cancer.
 All Month	Blood Cancer Awareness Month	Raises awareness of blood cancers, symptoms and available support.
 1 Sept	First Day of Meteorological Autumn	Marks the beginning of autumn in the UK, bringing cooler weather and changing colours in nature.
 5 Sept	International Day of Charity	Recognises charitable work and encourages support for humanitarian causes worldwide.
 8 Sept	International Literacy Day	Celebrates the importance of literacy and lifelong learning for people of all ages.
 9 Sept	Emergency Services Day (999 Day)	Honours the work of emergency service personnel across the UK.
 15 Sept	World Afro Day	Celebrates Afro hair culture, identity, diversity and inclusion.
 21 Sept	International Day of Peace	Promotes peace, understanding and cooperation among people and nations.
 23 Sept	Autumn Equinox	The day when daylight and darkness are nearly equal, marking the start of astronomical autumn.
 25 Sept	World Pharmacists Day	Recognises the important contribution pharmacists make to healthcare.



Learner Feedback



Jaspreet has been amazing throughout my apprenticeship journey and makes me feel safe and respected. She has provided me with a safe space to vent and express my concerns and feelings and has always provided me with multiple solutions as well as simply providing understanding and empathy. I always look forward to our meetings as she is a very lovely individual who puts a lot of effort into our sessions. I have truly improved since our first meeting and would say that Jaspreet has been a very great help to this. Thank you, Jaspreet!!



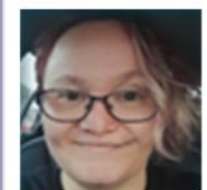
Joanna has been so super supportive and really genuine she's really helped me unpack a lot with what has been going on in my home life and helped me process things which has helped me move forward emotionally



Jamie has always been a great listener. He has never judged me or made me feel that my feelings were invalid, and I have always felt able to speak openly and honestly during our conversations. His kindness, patience and support have meant more to me than I can really put into words.



Spotlight on Tina! As our Counsellor, Tina has recently delivered a number of valuable training sessions for the Safeguarding team, covering a range of key topics. Her knowledge, professionalism, and ability to create open and supportive learning environments have been instrumental in helping the team build confidence and enhance their practice. Thank you for all your hard work, Tina!



I have been very happy and comfortable when meeting with Vix. It has been reassuring that we both share a common ground with some health subjects and this has helped my when talking through it and needing support. Vix has been very supportive and has been a great listener, and I can only thank you for this.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We'd love your feedback and suggestions for future newsletters!

Your voice matters, and we want to make sure our safeguarding newsletters covers the topics that are most relevant and helpful to you.

What safeguarding topics would you like to see more of?
Whether it's mental wellbeing, healthy relationships, preventing bullying, online safety or something else entirely, your ideas can help shape future content.

- ☒ Share your suggestions
- ☒ Tell us what you want to learn more about
- ☒ Help make our newsletter more useful for everyone

Press on **SUBMIT FEEDBACK** to open the link and start sharing your thoughts and ideas!



**SUBMIT
FEEDBACK**

OR scan
this QR
code





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](#)



Sept 2026

Learn. To Change.

