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November 2026

Safeguarding Newsletter



The Safeguarding Team



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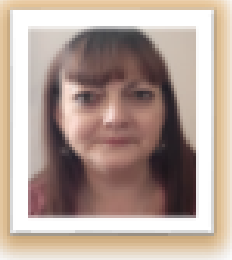
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Safeguarding support options, ways to access support at QA if you are worried for yourself or someone else:

- 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.

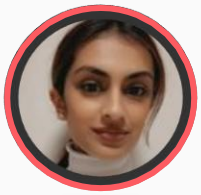
Just talking to someone is a powerful first step.

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

Stay Smart Online: Think Before You Trust

Why it matters
Every day we are exposed to thousands of pieces of online content. Not everything we see is accurate, genuine or trustworthy. Artificial Intelligence (AI), conspiracy theories, extremist narratives, misinformation and clickbait can all influence how people think, feel and act. Being able to critically assess content is an important digital safeguarding skill.

STOP. CHECK. THINK.
Before believing, sharing or acting on online content, ask yourself:
✅ Who created it?
✅ Why was it posted?
✅ What evidence supports it?
✅ Can I verify it elsewhere?
✅ How does it make me feel?
Content designed to provoke strong emotions such as anger, fear or outrage is often intended to drive engagement rather than inform.

Build Your Critical Thinking Skills
Do:
✓ Verify information using multiple trusted sources.
✓ Check the date of publication.
✓ Consider different perspectives.
✓ Pause before sharing content.
Don't:
✗ Share information simply because it is shocking.
✗ Assume lots of likes or shares mean something is true.
✗ Rely on a single source for important information.
Remember:
Not everything online is fake, but not everything online is real.
The strongest protection against misinformation, AI deception, conspiracy theories and harmful online influence is curiosity, critical thinking and healthy scepticism.

Spotting AI-Generated Content
AI can create realistic images, videos, audio and text within seconds.
Warning signs:
- Images that appear almost real but contain unusual details.
- Videos where voices or facial movements seem unnatural.
- Quotes or news stories with no credible source.
- Audio recordings that cannot be independently verified.

Ask yourself:
- Can I find the same information from reputable sources?
- Has the content been reported by trusted news organisations?
- Is the original source clearly identified?

Beware of Clickbait
Clickbait is designed to attract attention and generate clicks.
Examples:
❌ "You won't believe what happened next!"
❌ "The government is hiding this from you!"
❌ "This one trick changes everything!"
Check:
- Does the headline match the article?
- Is the claim exaggerated?
- Is there evidence to support it?

Talking Point: If an AI-generated image, video or news story confirmed something you already believed, would you be more likely to trust it?

British Values

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

Heating Oil Customers Face a Tough Winter

What does this mean and why should we care?

Many households across the UK rely on heating oil to keep their homes warm. Unlike homes connected to the gas grid, heating oil customers often have fewer options when prices rise. Recent concerns suggest that despite promises to improve the market, many customers could still face high costs this winter, putting pressure on household finances.

Why is this important?

💷 **Cost of Living:** For many families, heating is a necessity, not a luxury. Rising fuel costs can force people to make difficult choices between heating their homes and covering other essential expenses.

🏡 **Rural Communities:** Heating oil is most commonly used in rural areas where mains gas is unavailable. This means some communities can be disproportionately affected by price increases.

⚖️ **Fairness and Accountability:** When changes or "shake-ups" are promised, people expect improvements. This raises important questions about whether organisations and decision-makers are doing enough to protect consumers.

Links to British Values:

🗳️ **Democracy:** Citizens have the right to question decisions that affect their lives and hold organisations and governments accountable.

⚖️ **Rule of Law:** Regulations exist to help protect consumers and ensure businesses operate fairly.

🗣️ **Individual Liberty:** People should be able to make informed choices about how they heat their homes and manage their finances.

Read more here.



Talking Point:

If promised changes do not improve people's lives, what responsibility do governments, regulators and businesses have to act?

Key Takeaway:

This article is about more than heating oil. It highlights the importance of fairness, accountability and ensuring that people are protected when decisions affect their daily lives.

MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Regional Safeguarding

Across the UK, men are creating spaces where it's okay to talk, walk, connect and ask for support. Wherever you are, you don't have to carry everything on your own.

Men Matter Scotland

Men's mental health and suicide-prevention charity offering peer support, one-to-one support, activities and counselling, with hubs around Glasgow and North Lanarkshire.

Website

Men's Action Network

Based in Derry/Londonderry and established specifically around men's health and wellbeing, including counselling, depression, anxiety, isolation and suicidal ideation.

Website

Man Down

A Cornwall-based men's mental health charity providing informal peer support groups, safe spaces to talk, and a strong local community for men experiencing poor mental health, isolation or difficult periods in their lives.

Website

Space North East

Sunderland-based men's peer support, walking and personal-development groups. Their whole approach is creating spaces to "talk, walk, think & move".

Website

Men's Mental Health Group

Yorkshire peer-support community using conversation, shared experience and activities to reduce isolation and improve wellbeing.

Website

The Proper Blokes Club

Walk-and-talk groups across London. Very accessible concept: no counselling-room feel, just men walking, talking and connecting.

Website

Wellbeing

Connection in the Darker Months: A Therapeutic Perspective

As the darker months arrive, many people notice changes in their mood, energy and motivation. For remote workers, reduced daylight and less face-to-face interaction can increase feelings of isolation and disconnection. Connection is more than a social activity; it is a fundamental human need that supports wellbeing, resilience and a sense of belonging. Positive social interactions can reduce stress, boost mood and remind us that we are part of a wider community. In contrast, prolonged isolation can contribute to loneliness, anxiety and emotional fatigue.

WHY REMOTE WORKERS MAY FEEL THE IMPACT MORE IN WINTER

Remote working offers many benefits, but during the darker months it can sometimes lead to:

- *Fewer opportunities for spontaneous social interaction.*
- *Blurred boundaries between work and home life.*
- *Increased feelings of loneliness or disconnection.*
- *Reduced exposure to daylight and outdoor activities.*
- *A tendency to withdraw when energy levels are lower.*

Therapeutically, these experiences are understandable responses to both seasonal and environmental changes. Recognising them without judgement is often the first step towards improving wellbeing.

SMALL CONNECTIONS MATTER

Connection does not always require lengthy conversations or organised social events. Research and therapeutic practice suggest that meaningful moments of connection can be built through small, consistent interactions. Consider:

- *Sending a message to check in with a colleague.*
- *Taking a few minutes for informal conversation before a meeting.*
- *Sharing successes, challenges, or reflections with your team.*
- *Participating in virtual wellbeing or social activities.*
- *Reaching out when you're struggling rather than waiting until things* feel overwhelming.

These small acts help strengthen a sense of belonging and remind us that we are not navigating challenges alone.

A THERAPUTIC REFLECTION

As winter approaches, it can be helpful to ask yourself:

"What helps me feel connected, supported, and part of something bigger than myself?"

The answer may be regular conversations with colleagues, attending team events, connecting with friends and family, or simply knowing there are people you can turn to when needed.

ONLINE ARTICLE

CLICK HERE FOR AN ARTICLE ON HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR WELLBEING WHEN WORKING REMOTELY THROUGH THE WINTER

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MOVEMBER

MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Men's mental health matters - **Every Day**, not just in November. Let's break the stigma, check in on each other and create a culture where it's ok to talk.



Don't wait until things feel unmanageable.

If something doesn't feel right, talk to someone. Check in with a mate. Take a break. Ask for help.

It's Okay to Talk

Check in

Stay Active

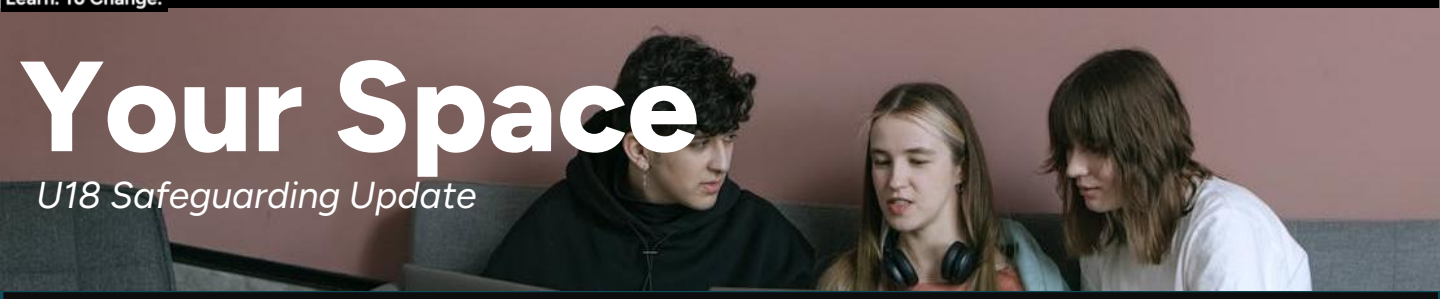
Get Support

Whether you are feeling stressed, overwhelmed, low, anxious or simply not yourself, you do not have to deal with it alone. Reaching out is a sign of strength, and sometimes one conversation can be the first step towards feeling better.

If you need support, the Safeguarding Team is here for you. We can listen, offer confidential support and help you find the right next step.

Your Space

U18 Safeguarding Update



ANTI-BULLYING WEEK (16th - 20th November)

CHOOSING RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

Anti-Bullying Week is a chance to think about how we treat others and how we want to be treated ourselves. If something doesn't feel right, trust your instincts. Whether bullying happens in person, online or in the workplace, support is available and speaking up early can make a real difference.

WHAT BULLYING CAN LOOK LIKE

Bullying is repeated behaviour that makes someone feel upset, excluded, unsafe or humiliated.

It can happen face-to-face, online, through social media, messaging apps or in the workplace.

Remember: bullying is never your fault, and you don't have to deal with it on your own.



SIGNS TO WATCH FOR

You or someone else might be experiencing bullying if you notice:

- Changes in confidence or mood.
- Withdrawing from friends or activities.
- Increased absence from learning or work.
- Reduced motivation or engagement.

Bullying can affect wellbeing, confidence and mental health. Recognising concerns early and treating others with respect helps create a safer and more inclusive environment for everyone. If you are worried about your own experience or someone else's, speak to a trusted adult, Skills Coach or Safeguarding contact.

QUICK ACTIONS

- ✓ Save screenshots or evidence
- ✓ Report concerns early
- ✓ Block and report abusive accounts
- ✓ Talk to someone you trust
- ✓ Support others respectfully
- ✓ Ask for help when you need it



News of the Month

Each year on **25 November**, **White Ribbon Day** coincides with the **International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women**, creating an important opportunity to raise awareness, encourage conversation, and inspire action.

These **two** campaigns share a common goal: **a world where women and girls can live free from violence, abuse, harassment, and fear**. While the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women shines a global spotlight on the issue and calls for collective action, White Ribbon Day focuses on the role each of us can play in preventing violence and promoting respect, equality, and healthy relationships.

As we mark White Ribbon Day and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, take a moment to reflect on **what we can do individually and collectively** to support positive change. Every conversation, every act of allyship, and every challenge to harmful behaviours helps build a culture where everyone feels safe, valued, and respected.

White Ribbon Day & The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

3.2 million women aged 16 and over in England and Wales experienced domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking in the year ending March 2025.

White Ribbon encourages people, particularly **men and boys**, to make a simple but powerful promise: to **never commit, excuse, or remain silent about violence against women and girls.** It reminds us that creating safer communities is everyone's responsibility. Whether it is challenging inappropriate comments, supporting someone who is struggling, or helping to foster a culture of inclusion and respect, our everyday actions can make a real difference.

Violence against women and girls continues to affect individuals, families, workplaces, and communities across the world. Behind the statistics are real people whose lives have been impacted, often in ways that remain unseen. This is why awareness matters. **Open conversations** help **break down stigma**, encourage people to seek support, and demonstrate that nobody should face abuse alone.

Violence against women is never acceptable, never excusable, and never inevitable.
Together, we can make a difference.

Where to get help! ➡

Where to get help!

If someone is in immediate danger, always call 999.

White Ribbon Day & The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Support Organisation	Helpline & Website	Information
Refuge	0808 2000 247 www.refuge.org.uk	The UK's largest specialist domestic abuse organisation, providing support for women and children experiencing domestic abuse.
Women's Aid	0808 2000 247 www.womensaid.org.uk	Provides information, practical guidance, local service directories, and support for women affected by domestic abuse.
Rape Crisis England & Wales	0808 500 2222 www.rapecrisis.org.uk	Offers specialist information and support for anyone affected by rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other forms of sexual violence and abuse.
Karma Nirvana	0800 5999 247 www.karmanirvana.org.uk	Specialist support for people experiencing honour-based abuse and forced marriage.
Galop	0800 999 5428 www.galop.org.uk	Support service for LGBT+ people who have experienced abuse, violence, or harassment.
Childline	0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk	Free, confidential support and counselling for children and young people up to their 19th birthday.

News of the Month

Date	Event	Information
🎗️ **All Month**	Movember	Raises awareness of men's health issues, including mental health, prostate cancer and testicular cancer.
🩺 **All Month**	Diabetes Awareness Month	Promotes awareness of diabetes, prevention, early diagnosis and effective management.
🕯️ **1 Nov**	All Saints' Day (Christian)	A Christian holy day honouring all known and unknown saints.
🌹 **2 Nov**	All Souls' Day (Christian)	A day of remembrance and prayer for those who have died.
🎆 **5 Nov**	Bonfire Night / Guy Fawkes Night	Commemorates the foiling of the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 and is marked by bonfires and fireworks.
🕉️ **8 Nov**	Diwali (Hindu, Sikh, Jain)	The Festival of Lights celebrates the victory of light over darkness and good over evil.
🌺 **8 Nov**	Remembrance Sunday (UK)	Honours members of the armed forces who lost their lives in service.
🤝 **13 Nov**	World Kindness Day	Encourages acts of kindness and promotes positive community connections.
💙 **14 Nov**	World Diabetes Day	Raises awareness of diabetes and advocates for improved care and support.
🚻 **19 Nov**	International Men's Day	Celebrates positive male role models and highlights men's health and wellbeing.
🚽 **19 Nov**	World Toilet Day	Highlights the importance of sanitation and access to safe toilet facilities worldwide.
🏳️‍⚧️ **20 Nov**	Transgender Day of Remembrance	Remembers transgender people whose lives have been lost to anti-transgender violence.
📺 **21 Nov**	World Television Day	Recognises television's role in communication, education and information sharing.
✋ **25 Nov**	White Ribbon Day	Focuses on ending violence against women and girls and promoting respectful relationships.
♀️ **25 Nov**	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women	Raises awareness and encourages action to prevent violence against women and girls.
🕯️ **29 Nov**	Advent Begins (Christian)	Marks the beginning of the Christian season of preparation for Christmas.

Learner Feedback



Jamie has been a really great support, helped me get through the tough times of my apprenticeship and listened to my concerns validating them. He was and is really patient and considerate.



I would highly commend you for the outstanding support you have provided during my EPA. Your knowledge, professionalism, and willingness to go the extra mile have been invaluable... You consistently provided timely and helpful guidance, ensuring I understood the process and knew what was required at each stage... Your support has had a significant positive impact on my overall experience, and I am extremely grateful for your help, encouragement, and dedication throughout the process. You are a real credit to QA.



"Tina delivered an outstanding session, 'Take Control: Practical Strategies for Stress & Wellbeing', which was both informative and engaging for staff and learners alike. The practical strategies she shared were easy to implement and greatly appreciated. Thank you for organising such a valuable and supportive event." (Staff)
"Tina is very attentive, makes you feel heard and seen.“ (Learner)



Thank you as well for all the support, guidance and encouragement you've given me throughout this process. I'm particularly grateful for the time you've taken to speak with me and help me navigate everything over the past year and beyond my QA Time. Your words of encouragement mean a lot to me, and I'll try to keep them in mind as I continue looking for the right opportunity. Thank you again for everything. I really appreciate your kindness and support.

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 (mensadviceline.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

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