

# Safeguarding Newsletter



## The Safeguarding Team



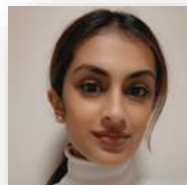
**Mark Soady**

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)  
& Apprenticeships Head of Learner Services



**Clare Stuart**

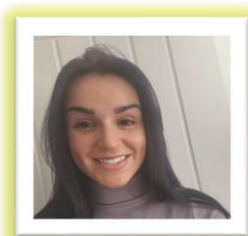
Deputy DSL & Safeguarding Team Leader



**Jaspreet Hothi**

Prevent Lead & Safeguarding Specialist

## Safeguarding Specialists



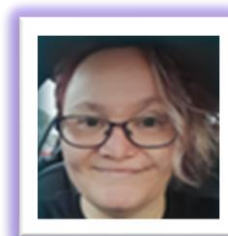
Alana



Jamie



Tina



Vix

**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\*\*](mailto: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:

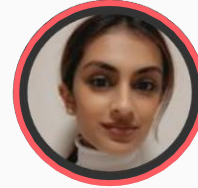
- ✓ **Safeguarding is for you**
- ✓ **You're never wasting anyone's time**
- ✓ **You deserve to feel safe, respected, and supported**







## Prevent



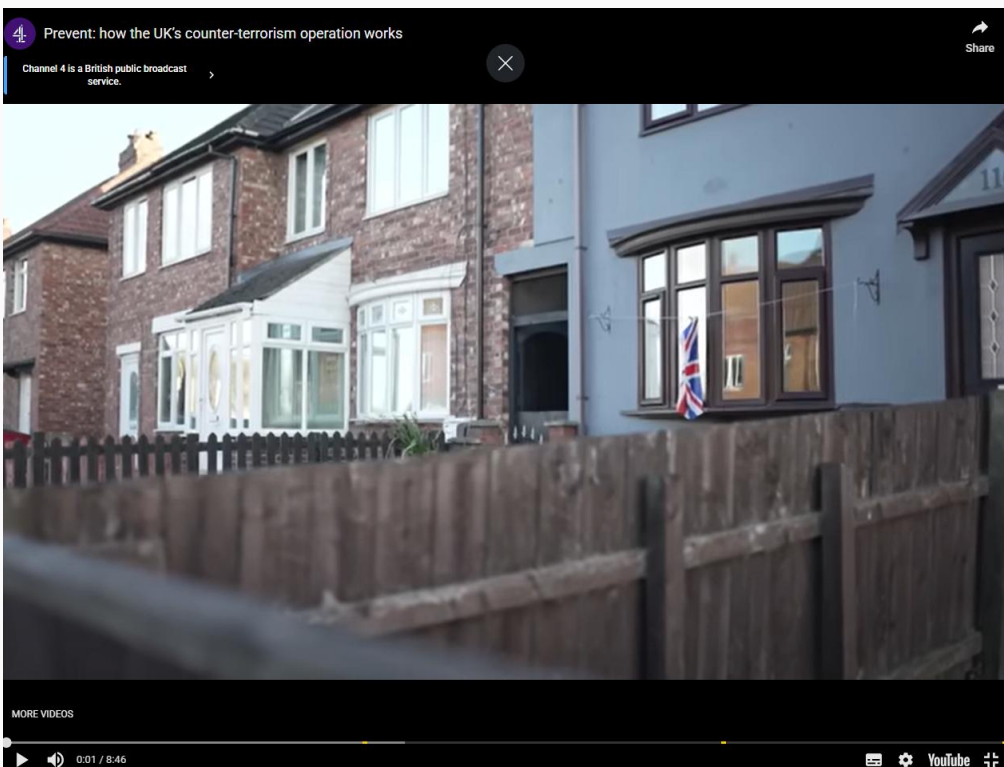
**Jaspreet Hothi**  
Prevent Lead &  
Safeguarding  
Specialist

### Unprecedented access to UK's counter-terrorism Prevent programme – and decision-making process.

For the first time in its history, journalists have been granted unprecedented access to see the inner workings of Prevent, a government programme that ultimately aims to stop people from perpetrating terrorist acts.

#### Key observations:

- Sharp post-Southport murder increase: July–March 2025 saw 6,350 referrals—a 34% rise year-on-year; August alone spiked 66%.
- Data capture level-up: New Prevent Case Management Tracker (PCMT) introduced in 2024, boosting data quality and Panel recording accuracy.



#### Talking points:

- Do you have any biases that might influence any decision-making when thinking about raising concerns?
- When does someone's strong opinion cross into a safeguarding concern?

Click on the video to learn more about Prevent



## British Values

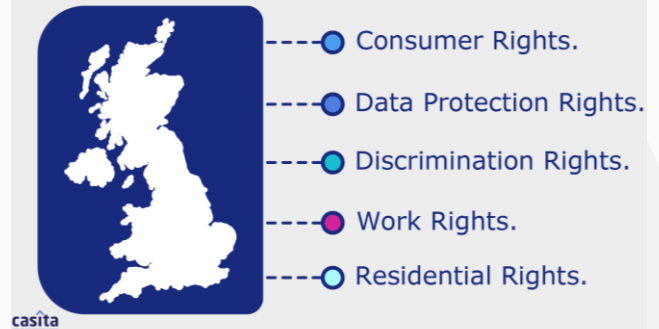
+ Democracy + The rule of law  
+ Individual liberty + Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

## Why the Rule of Law Matters

### What is the Rule of Law?

The Rule of law means that **everyone is subject to the law**, regardless of position or status. It ensures that laws are applied consistently and fairly, protecting individuals from discrimination and safeguarding rights.

### General Rules of the UK:



### Why is it important in Education and workplaces?

- **Equality & Fairness:** Apprentices and employees are treated equally under the law.
- **Safety & Protection:** Laws around safeguarding, health & safety, and employment protect individuals from harm.
- **Accountability:** Organisations & individuals are held responsible for their actions, promoting trust and integrity.

### Practical Examples:

- Following safeguarding legislation to protect vulnerable learners
- Adhering to workplace health & safety regulations.
- Respecting data protection laws when handling personal information.



## National Spotlight

# The Hidden Weight of Caring

When responsibility becomes a safeguarding concern

**Across the UK, a staggering number of people are quietly managing adult caring responsibilities behind closed doors, often under significant emotional strain.** This article shines a light on how that hidden role can impact wellbeing, safety and education, including apprenticeships, and where support can be found.

**59%**

Info from ...  
**CARERS TRUST**

of young carers spend at least 3 hours daily caring.

**38%**

Info from ...  
**UK Parliament**

of young carers record persistent absence in education.

**49%**

Info from ...  
**CARERS TRUST**

of young carers have less than 1 hour per day to see friends.

Balancing caring with education, friendships and future plans can be exhausting, and it can take a real toll on mental health. With the right support in place, caring doesn't have to limit your learning, your relationships, or the opportunities ahead of you.

## Caring in Numbers

**≈8%**

Info from ...  
**GOV.UK**

Informal (unpaid) carers in the UK  
That's about 5.4 million people.

**14%**

Info from ...  
**GOV.UK**

of carers provide 50+ hours of care per week.

**20%**

Info from ...  
**carersuk**

of carers have experienced an injury related to care giving.

## Speak to us!

If caring for someone at home is making it harder to attend training, keep up with coursework, or look after your mental health, you are not expected to manage this alone.

QA – along with your employer, have a responsibility to listen, support you and help you access the right help, so that caring responsibilities do not stop you from learning, progressing or staying safe.

### Safeguarding Support

Comprehensive mental health and well-being support.

[Self Referral Form](#)

### Learning Support

For case-by-case adjustments to your programme and learning.

[Level 3 - 6](#)

[Degree & L7](#)



## Regional Safeguarding

# Support for Carers



### Carers Scotland

Carers Scotland is the Scottish national charity dedicated to improving the lives of unpaid carers. They offer expert information, advice, support, and campaigning efforts so carers get the recognition, rights, and help they need.

**Phone:** 0808 808 7777 (Advice Line)

[Website](#)



### Forward Carers

A regional charity offering support, advice and wellbeing services to unpaid carers across the Midlands, including hubs in Birmingham and Walsall. Support includes information, events, and recognition of caring roles.

**Phone:** 0121 274 0439

[Website](#)



### Shared Lives Southwest

Shared Lives Southwest is a charity-registered service that supports carers and people needing care across the Southwest. It helps people with lifelong disabilities, autism, dementia or other support needs by placing them with trained Shared Lives Carers in a family-like home environment.

**Phone:** 01626 360170

[Website](#)

### Carers UK (National)



The UK's leading charity for unpaid carers offering national advice, information, a helpline and local signposting, including resources relevant to carers in the North of England.

**Phone:** 0808 808 7777 (Carers Helpline)

[Website](#)

### Carers Trust



Carers Trust works to improve support and services for carers through a nationwide network of local partner organisations offering information, replacement care, emotional support, and practical help.

**Phone:** 0300 772 9600 (general enquiries)

[Website](#)





## Wellbeing

**Let's kick off the year with a reflection around alcohol**

### Dry January

Dry January began with a simple idea, take a break from alcohol for the month of January.

It started in 2011, when Emily Robinson, training for a half marathon, gave up alcohol for a month and shared her experience while working at Alcohol Concern (now Alcohol Change UK). By 2013, it became an official campaign, and today millions around the world join in each year to reset their relationship with alcohol.

### But what about the rest of the year?

#### Sober Curious: Rethinking Your Relationship with Alcohol

Being sober curious isn't about quitting alcohol forever, it's about pausing to ask why, when, and how much you drink. It's a mindful approach that encourages you to explore how life feels with less (or no) alcohol, without labels or judgment.

#### Why Go Sober Curious?

Even small breaks from alcohol can have big benefits:

Better sleep – Deeper, more restorative rest.

More energy & focus – Feel sharper and more motivated.

Improved health – Lower blood pressure and a happier liver.

Clearer skin & weight balance – Less inflammation, more glow.

Better mood & balance – More emotional regulation and calm.

#### Tips to Explore a Sober Curious Lifestyle

Start with awareness. Before reaching for a drink, ask yourself: Do I really want this, or is it just habit or pressure?

Try a short break. Join Dry January or choose your own alcohol-free month to see how your body and mind respond.

Find alternatives. Swap wine for mocktails, sparkling water, zero alcohol drinks, your glass can still feel celebratory.

Change your social scene. Suggest coffee dates, brunches, or alcohol-free events instead of bar meetups.

Track how you feel. Notice your sleep, mood, focus, and energy levels, the benefits often appear quickly.

Drop the labels. It's not about being "sober" or "not." It's about choice, curiosity, and self-care.

If you're worried about your own or someone else's drinking, there is support available.

[Get help now](#)

Take this quick quiz to see if your drinking is likely to be affecting your health.

[Check your drinking](#)



## Safeguarding

Human trafficking is a form of modern slavery and happens when someone is moved by force, fraud, coercion, or deception to be exploited.

This exploitation can take many forms and includes forced labour, being made to commit a crime such as shoplifting, and being forced into prostitution, which you might hear referred to as sexual exploitation.

### Survivors in their own words



#### Wayne

"I got a job at Ikea, and that's where I was befriended by a guy. At the time, I thought he was just a friend."

[Read Wayne's story](#)



**Katherine** suffered years of constant abuse at the hands of her exploiter before finally finding freedom

[Read katherine's story](#)

In this powerful, true story, one bystander made a call that changed the lives of two children caught in human trafficking.



Men, women, and children can all be victims of modern-day slavery:  
54% women and girls  
46% men and boys  
1 in 4 victims are children

Human trafficking generates an estimated \$236 billion USD per year.



NATIONAL  
**HUMAN**  
TRAFFICKING  
AWARENESS DAY  
JANUARY-11

**Fact – anyone can be a victim of human trafficking**

**Fact – exploiters use many ways to control their victims**

**Fact – trafficking victims are not necessarily criminals if a crime is committed**

**Learn more [here](#)**

### Where to seek help

Call the UK modern slavery & exploitation helpline on  
08000 121 700  
[report concerns online](#)

[Report Now | A21](#)

[Directory - Global Modern Slavery Directory](#)

### Spot the signs of trafficking

**TALKING POINT** Could you spot a victim of trafficking? Here are six general indicators to look out for.

Do they seem isolated?

Is their freedom of movement restricted?

Are they reluctant to seek help?

Does their physical appearance show signs of negligence?

Do they have poor living conditions?

Have you noticed unusual travel arrangements?

[Find out more](#)

# Your Space

U18 Safeguarding Update

## Understanding Family Wellbeing and Support Networks Why Strong Support Matters — and Where to Find Help.

Family wellbeing plays a big role in how young people feel, cope, and grow. While every family looks different, what matters most is feeling safe, supported, and listened to. For many 16–18-year-olds, this stage of life brings new responsibilities, independence, and sometimes pressure which is why having strong support networks is more important than ever.

Family wellbeing is about more than just living under the same roof. It includes:

- Feeling emotionally safe and respected
- Being able to talk openly without fear
- Knowing who to turn to when things feel overwhelming

### When Family Life Feels Difficult

Sometimes young people experience challenges at home such as:

- Arguments that don't get resolved
- Feeling ignored or misunderstood
- Financial stress or changes at home
- Caring responsibilities for others

If home doesn't feel safe or supportive, it's important to know that help is available and you are not alone.

### Speaking Up is a Strength

Asking for help is not a weakness it's a positive step in looking after yourself. If you're worried about your wellbeing or someone else's safety, talking to a trusted adult or professional can help prevent problems from getting worse.

### How Safeguarding Helps

Safeguarding is about protecting young people from harm and making sure they have the right support to stay safe and healthy. Here at QA you have access to a safeguarding team trained to listen, support, and take action when needed. If something doesn't feel right at home or in your relationships, it's okay to raise concerns even if you're unsure or worried about the outcome.

### What are Support Networks & Where to Get Help

Support networks are people or services outside your family who can help during tough times, such as trusted friends, teachers, counsellors, mentors, or health professionals. Talking to more than one trusted person can really help. If you need support, speak to a trusted adult, contact a youth support service, or use confidential helplines or online chats. In an emergency, always contact emergency services. Visit our [helpful links](#) page for more support options.



[YoungMinds | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People | YoungMinds](#)



[Childline | Free counselling service for kids and young people | Childline](#)



## News of the Month

January

### Get ready for an exciting start to 2026!

From January through March, we've lined up a series of impactful events and resources designed to inspire, connect, and empower.

Please note, not all live events will be recorded, so make sure you get booked on!

Date & Time	Event/Resource	Information
January 26	Financial Wellbeing PDF Guide.	The festive season often brings joy, but it can also leave behind financial stress. January is a time when many feel the pinch from holiday spending, and the pressure can impact mental health, especially around Blue Monday.
05/01/26	Dry January PDF Guide and Podcast	Dry January is a chance to hit the reset button and focus on your wellbeing. Taking a break from alcohol even for just one month can help you feel more energised, improve your concentration, and save money.
05/01/26	Safeguarding Newsletter PDF	This month we share wellbeing tips, highlight regional safeguarding updates, and provide guidance on the Prevent Duty. Plus, updates around all things safeguarding and how British Values shape our communities—don't miss our Under 18's page for key information.
30/01/26	Parent/Guardian Mental Health PDF Guide.	Parenting can be rewarding, but it's also challenging and your wellbeing matters. This resource explores why balance is essential and practical tips to help you find it.
30/01/26 12:30-13:30	Safeguarding Introduction  Live event – NOT recorded.	Join us in a short live session to learn more about how we support you and how to make a referral.





## News of the Month

**February**

### Get ready for an exciting start to 2026!

From January through March, we've lined up a series of impactful events and resources designed to inspire, connect, and empower.

Please note, not all live events will be recorded, so make sure you get booked on!

Date & Time	Event/Resource	Information
02/02/26	Safeguarding Newsletter PDF	This month we share wellbeing tips, highlight regional safeguarding updates, and provide guidance on the Prevent Duty. Plus, updates around all things safeguarding and how British Values shape our communities—don't miss our Under 18's page for key information.
10/02/26	Safer Internet Use Podcast	Pre-recorded session exploring practical tips and strategies to stay safe online. From protecting your personal information to recognising digital risks.
03/02/26	Sexual Abuse & Violence Podcast	Pre-recorded session discussing sexual abuse and violence, which some viewers may find distressing. Please take care while watching and seek support if needed.
23/02/26 12:30-13:30	Safeguarding Introduction Live event – NOT recorded.	Join us in a short live session to learn more about how we support you and how to make a referral.
27/02/26 12:30-13:30	Eating Disorder Awareness Live event – NOT recorded.	Join us for an open and informative session exploring the vital link between nutrition and mental health and raising awareness about eating disorders.



## News of the Month

March

### Get ready for an exciting start to 2026!

From January through March, we've lined up a series of impactful events and resources designed to inspire, connect, and empower.

Please note, not all live events will be recorded, so make sure you get booked on!

Date & Time	Event/Resource	Information
02/03/26	Safeguarding Newsletter PDF	This month we share wellbeing tips, highlight regional safeguarding updates, and provide guidance on the Prevent Duty. Plus, updates around all things safeguarding and how British Values shape our communities—don't miss our Under 18's page for key information.
13/03/26 12:30-13:30	Sleep & Stress Management PDF and Live Event – NOT recorded	Struggling with stress or poor sleep? You're not alone! This interactive session will explore practical strategies to improve your sleep quality and manage stress effectively.
27/03/26 12:30-13:30	Safeguarding Introduction Live event – NOT recorded.	Join us in a short live session to learn more about how we support you and how to make a referral.

To access the resources and book onto the live events please visit the Learner's Portal, Wellbeing Calendar:

[Wellbeing calendar](#)



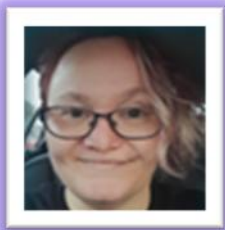
## Learner Feedback



I wanted to take a moment to personally thank you for the invaluable support you provided during my apprenticeship. Your guidance and care truly helped me through one of the most challenging periods of my journey. Knowing that I had someone to turn to who genuinely listened and understood made a world of difference. I'm very happy to share that I've officially passed my apprenticeship! This achievement feels even more meaningful because I know how much your encouragement and safeguarding support contributed to it. You helped me stay focused, feel safe, and believe in myself when things felt overwhelming. I'll always be grateful for your kindness and professionalism.



Tina was non judgemental, building trust and using an honest approach to the advice and guidance she delivered. She gave me time and space to gather my thoughts and explain what was going on for me. Tina listened thoroughly and was very empathetic which I needed



I just wanted to take a moment to thank you again for the insightful ADHD – A journey to late diagnosis session and especially for your input on it, as it raised few new questions in my head that you were kind enough to take the time afterward to speak to me. This helped me gain clarity on the link between hormones/menopause and neurodiversity, as well as being able to have a conversation with somebody that shared my situation somehow and therefore the way it feels was something that I am not lucky enough to have experienced before. For this reason, I wanted to let you know that I really appreciated your time, as well as your openness, engagement, and support, because it made a real difference. I found our chat genuinely uplifting.



## 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](#)

[\(mensadvice.org.uk\)](https://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](#)





January 2026

Learn. To Change.

