



Safeguarding Your Apprentice – Guidance for Employers



This booklet is intended to inform Employers and Work Placements about Safeguarding their apprentices or young people in their care/employment.

Every educational organisation or workplace is required through Government legislation to ensure that everyone working with young people understands their responsibility to keep them safe.

This booklet will provide you with the information you need to recognise an abusive situation and report it correctly within the correct procedures.

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What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the overarching term used to describe the protection of the health, wellbeing, and human rights of individuals. Under Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and other legislative and contractual requirements, all parties involved in an apprenticeship must take reasonable action to minimise risks to apprentices. This includes aspects of the apprentice's experience, both in the workplace, as well as during any attendance at Training.

To meet the statutory duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of apprentices, it is expected that the business commits to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance, best practice and meets the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024.

What does an Employer need to do?

Supervision

Good supervision is an effective way of enabling the employment/work placement to be successful and reduce the risk of any problems arising. Ensure that any staff working with apprentices in a position of trust are appropriate for the role, be over the age of 18 and do not present any danger or threat. All employees placed in charge of the young person should be confident in dealing with young people, be mature, yet capable of putting the young person at ease. An apprentice must never be left unsupervised in the workplace. Apprentices should not be responsible for the opening or closing of the business.

Behaviour and relationships

It is important that young people are reassured and helped to feel comfortable and confident in their surroundings. However, relationships (inclusive of all staff, the self-employed, contractors and members of the public who may have access to the apprentice) should remain professional and should avoid becoming too familiar. Never permit 'horseplay' or 'banter' which may be misconstrued and may cause embarrassment, offense, or fear. Language should be professional and not be of a discriminatory, degrading, or sexual nature inclusive of so called 'horseplay' or 'banter.'

Work Environment

Where possible avoid being alone with young people in an isolated or closed environment. If a one-to-one meeting is essential, try to do these in semi-public areas or in a room with the door ajar. If travel is necessary in a one-to-one situation, ensure that there is a known destination and an estimated arrival time. Wherever possible ensure the young person and employee has a mobile phone in case of an emergency. Consideration should be given to an apprentice's safety during travel to and from the workplace if they are aged under 18 with consideration given to early or late shift patterns.

No activities as defined as illegal under UK (United Kingdom) law should be permitted within the workplace. Learners should not be encouraged or enabled to engage in activities that are defined as illegal in UK law inclusive of activities that may be legal for adults but illegal for under18s. The workplace should meet all requirements of relevant health and safety legislation.

Physical Contact

There may be occasions when physical contact with a learner is unavoidable, (e.g., guiding a hand or arm) during a task whilst training to carry out a manual or technical operation. If this is necessary, it should be kept to a minimum and used in a manner that is appropriate to the situation and the learner's permission verbally sought so as not to give rise to any inappropriateness. Apprentices should not have been subjected to physical contact that may be misconstrued as affectionate, sexual in nature or has the potential to cause them physical harm.

Employment Rights

Apprentices have the same employment rights as other employees. They are entitled to a contract of employment, and paid leave each year, plus bank holidays. They must work at least 30 hours per week. Their scheduled academy training days form part of the working week and be paid as a normal working day.

Apprentices under 18 must not work more than 8 hours a day, or 40 hours a week. Apprentices aged 16 to 18 must be paid at least the apprenticeship minimum wage for the duration of their apprenticeship or until they reach the age of 19. Apprentices over the age of 19 and who have completed one year of their Apprenticeship are entitled to receive the National Minimum Wage applicable to their age. These rates apply to time working, plus time spent training that is part of the apprenticeship.

Failure to meet the minimum required of employment rights of an apprentice can be viewed as exploitation and may be investigated by HMRC under Modern Slavery Legislation.

What does this mean for the Academy?

Employers are particularly important, as they can identify concerns early, provide help and advice, promote welfare, and prevent concerns from escalating; provide a safe environment where effective learning can take place.

We have a robust system in place which gives all learners a voice to share their experiences and current situations, and time to work with the team if additional support is needed. This is referred to as 'pen portrait' and 'needs assessment' meetings. Copies of these can be found in the appendices.

We have several policies which are 'how to' guides in themselves and a copy will have been provided to you during the on boarding process.

Who should I contact?

Contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead at your relevant Reflections Academy or via safeguarding@reflectionstraining.co.uk

Name	Position	Contact number	Email
Suzanne Sewell Bristol	Senior Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead/SEND	0117 9221440 07425 607820	suzanne.sewell@reflectionstraining.co.uk
Louise Forde Birmingham	Designated Safeguarding Officer	0121 6432147 07500668567	louise.forde@reflectionstraining.co.uk

Working in Partnership

Learners are not working in isolation and for some their experience thus far with school, exams and life have thrown challenges their way. This means for some they are going to need a higher level of understanding and support and intuitive approaches from those working with them – it can be a given that they won't like to be put on the spot and questioned directly.

What can we do together to raise awareness and in turn secure a better outcome for each learner?

- Complete all paperwork swiftly and setup your account
- Arrange visits from academy staff to discuss on boarding of your salon/shop, session with Health and Safety and attend New Employers Safeguarding Briefing or Mandatory Employers Safeguarding Briefings timetabled throughout the year with Safeguarding Lead
- Provide your new apprentice with your policies, handbooks and expectations
- Follow this up with a casual meeting to look at the expectations and demonstrate these in practice (they will need to see and hear this many times until it fixes for them – we run on autopilot with many things)
- Reinforce the importance of attending Induction sessions at the academy
- Work with your learner, their tutor and site assessor to maximise the learner journey
- Participate with site tutors during review meetings to ensure your voice is captured

Which indicators of need fall under safeguarding?

(please note not an exhaustive list and can vary on complexity and context)

- Abuse/Physical Abuse/Emotional Abuse/Sexual Abuse/Online grooming and abuse
- Bullying (emotional, physical, racial, sexual, verbal, cyber, prejudice-based and discriminatory)
- Coercive abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Child on child abuse
- Domestic Violence
- Drugs, including County Lines
- Extremist Platforms
- Faith abuse
- Fabricated or Induced Illness
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Financial Exploitation
- Forced Marriage
- Financial and material abuse
- Gambling Gangs and Youth Violence
- Gender-based Violence/Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Honour-based abuse
- Mental Health
- Modern Slavery
- Neglect
- Online gaming and extremist content
- Private Fostering
- Radicalisation
- Scams and Frauds including Sextortion
- Sexting
- Sexual Harassment: such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Trafficking

What is abuse and how can you recognise it?

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Signs of Physical Abuse

- Bruises to the eyes, mouth or ears.
- Fingertip bruising (grasp mark)
- Unlikely reasons given for the injury or a refusal to give any reason
- Bruises of different ages in the same place
- Outline bruises (handprints, belts or shoes)
- Burns bites and scars or unusual shaped scars and fractures
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted
- This is caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a learner.

Signs of Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be very difficult to define or prove, but there are signs and symptoms to identify it. Possible indicators include:

- Behavioural problems such as petty crime, telling lies, being disruptive
- Low self-esteem, lack of confidence
- Aggression
- Become withdrawn, depressed or anxiety
- Self-harming or covering signs of self-harm
- Developmental delay including difficulty learning

Signs of Neglect

Learners that need extra care from an adult could be vulnerable to neglect. This may involve:

- Undernourished
- Dirty Skin/hair, poor hygiene
- Dirty Soiled clothing
- Inappropriate clothing for weather
- Hungry or stealing food
- Tiredness
- Becoming withdrawn

Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Direct disclosure
- Behavioural concerns e.g. depression, self-harm, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, over or under eating
- Sudden changes in mood and altered attitudes to particular adults
- Sexually transmitted diseases/infections

Reporting Suspected Abuse?

- If you feel the learner is in immediate danger, call **999**. If the learner is not in immediate danger, you should approach the learner and ask generic questions such as: How are you getting on? Is there anything I can help you with? Good practice is to keep this low-key and not ask a learner directly in front of other members of staff. Good practice may be for you to take the learner away from premises and chat over a coffee as part of an informal review.
- Learners are much more likely to open conversation if they feel safe and secure and not in earshot of those they are working with.

How to approach these types of conversations

When handling safeguarding concerns and/or wellbeing check in, it is a good idea to:

1. Ask **open questions**
2. **Not direct questions** (*Did he/she hit you? Are you upset because...*)
3. **Instead use** - What? When? How? Who?

Follow the below steps...

- Ask open-ended questions to clarify but do not investigate: ***Why are you upset? Would you like to tell me what happened. How did this happen? How can we help?***
- Record what was said using the young person's words; ***good practice to explain why you are recording information shared and explain where and when this will be shared.***
- Do not promise confidentiality as a criminal offence may have been committed, explain that you may need to speak to someone else about it
- Reassure them but avoid unnecessary contact.
- Avoid making judgments or giving your opinion.
- Do not discuss the matter openly with other staff.
- Conversations must be shared with the DSLs so a case can be opened, and further support can be investigated

Mental Health and Wellbeing

How can you support your apprentice if they need support with their mental health and wellbeing?

In this section you will find links to useful videos explaining mental health, help guides and advice on how to speak to someone who may be struggling with their mental health and useful website links and advice lines which you can signpost your staff/apprentices too.

Mental wellbeing doesn't have one set meaning. We might use it to talk about how we feel, how well we're coping with daily life or what feels possible now.

Good mental wellbeing doesn't mean you're always happy or unaffected by your experiences. But poor mental wellbeing can make it more difficult to cope with daily life.

Click on the QR code below and gain access to a directory of services which can be used in signposting learners to support

[Visit Here](#)



Visit our Safeguarding resources padlet by following this link or using the QR code above:

<https://padlet.com/suzannesewell/reflections-training-academy-safeguarding-padlet-zpybhfwhk8iw5pww>



The Prevent Duty

What is the Prevent Duty and why are Reflections speaking to me about it?

Prevent is one part of CONTEST the UK governments strategy for Counter-Terrorism. Section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on certain bodies, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. These statutory bodies include:

Education

Health

Social Care

Police

Reflections as an education provider have a statutory duty to “**prevent people from being drawn into terrorism**” and to promote British Values as defined by the act.

At the heart of Prevent is Safeguarding young people and adults and **we need** employers to help and support to help us comply with the duty.

Key Terms

Extremism – “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs”. This also includes calls for the death of members of the British armed forces. Extremism and radicalisation might include violent Islamist groups, the extreme right wing and other causes.

Ideology – a set of beliefs

Terrorism – a violent action against people or property, designed to create fear and advance political, religious or ideological cause.

Radicalisation – the process by which a person comes to support or become involved with extremism or terrorism.

Channel – the programme that provides support to people identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism or extremism.

The video below will explain the process of Prevent and give you an understanding of the importance of it. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAFJhn9b0mQ>

How do we meet the Prevent Duty expectations?

Reflections already support learners to be positive, happy members of society which will contribute to Prevent. These include:

- Exploring different cultures and religions and promoting diversity
Challenging prejudices and racist behaviors
- Prevent awareness training sessions
- Active promotion and embedding of British Values within the training programmes
- Use a range of methods to protect learners from the risk of radicalisation
- The promotion of the governments “**Run, Hide, Tell**” guidance;
- Providing learners with information so that they understand how to protect themselves from extremist views that go against British values that they may encounter, now or later in their lives;
- Filters on equipment that access the internet, to ensure extremist and terrorist materials cannot be accessed;
- Vetting all visitors who come to any of our training centers to deliver sessions.
- Vetting any visitors who attend with learners prior to starting such as Social Services

All Reflections staff have undergone a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check.

How can you meet the Prevent Duty expectations as a valued apprenticeship employer?

- Providing opportunities for your apprentices to discuss their own concerns about extremism, events in the news and British values;
- Be alert to any changes in your apprentice’s behavior; that in your opinion give cause for concern;
- Report any concerns you may have to Reflections Safeguarding personal

Signs and Indicators to look out for

- vulnerable to or under the influence of others (directly or via internet / social media)
- Crime against them or their involvement in a crime e.g. race/hate crime, anti-social behavior
- Personal or political grievances
- changes in behavior and dress; allowing for trends in fashion
- physical signs that could indicate concerns such as tattoos linked with extreme organizations or movements (e.g. far right or Islamic extremism)
- accessing or sharing extremism websites
- homophobic; religion based or racist comments

How can you help to signpost your apprentice to support?

1. Allocating a space in your salon to promote safeguarding, mental health and wellbeing
2. If you hold staff meetings, have this as a running agenda item
3. Consider how staff can report things to you in an anonymous way
4. Consider having an 'update' section/discussion where staff can contribute anything new they have come across
5. Ask advice from your site assessor who can either signpost you to resources or raise requests with the safeguarding team
6. Ensure at least one manager has attended the Employer Safeguarding Briefings presented by the academies safeguarding lead.