



**HCAT**  
**Apprentice**  
**Learners**  
**Safeguarding**  
**Policy**

**EDUCATE. EMPOWER. INSPIRE.**

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# HCAT Apprentice Learners Safeguarding Policy

## 1. Aims of this Policy

The Trust recognises that harm or abuse could affect anyone and believes that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, regardless of individual roles and duties. We are committed to working together to provide an excellent learning experience for our apprentices and ensure the highest levels of safety and wellbeing.

This policy outlines the safeguarding practices and procedures for those learners who are studying at the Trust as part of an Apprentice Programme.

## 2. Introduction

The Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead oversees the Safeguarding Policy and the apprenticeship programmes have dedicated DSL's who support and work with apprentices, programme leads and employers as required to follow this policy as well as the Trust's overarching Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding is intended to keep children and adults at risk safe from a range of potential harm and looks at preventative action, not just reaction. It is protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's health and development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. [Keeping Children Safe in Education, updated 2025]. HCAT extends its statutory responsibilities to adults at risk.

## 3. Safeguarding and Responsibilities

All Trust staff working with apprentices are required to attend mandatory annual safeguarding training. Staff can access additional advice, information and training when required. This can be accessed and supported by contacting the Apprenticeship Safeguarding Lead.

When a safeguarding concern is raised, the Programme Lead will refer and seek advice to support the learner from the Safeguarding Lead. The Programme Lead meets with apprentices regularly and discusses progress and will always consider any safeguarding concerns a will refer to Safeguarding Lead.

The Trust will:

- Provide safeguarding training for all Trust employees working with apprentices.
- Ensure that apprentices have an awareness of safeguarding and understand how to access support services.
- Communicate regularly and openly with employers and support them with understanding that apprentices may act differently in different environments, help employers to recognise any signs that the apprentice may display, and support them with the understanding of the need to be open to discussing sensitive issues and what to do with any new information that raises safeguarding concerns.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Dee Marsh.

The contact details for the Local Authority Designated Officer are 01226 772400

## 4. Employers

Current UK legislation and statutory responsibilities in relation to safeguarding has an expectation that employers should take responsibility for an apprentice's welfare in the workplace. This would include seeking appropriate advice when it is considered that an apprentice may be at risk in their personal lives.

- Employers should understand relevant government legislation and take steps to make sure that safeguarding is embedded into the organisations practice.
- Ensure that any people working with young or vulnerable people have had an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- Identify a person within the employers' organisation, such as the mentor, or the Apprenticeship Coach, to coordinate and share any safeguarding concerns with the Schools Safeguarding Lead and the Trust's Apprenticeship Safeguarding Manager.

## 5. Apprentices

Safeguarding focuses on the responsibilities of institutions to protect young people under the age of 18, and vulnerable adults who lack capacity, or are unable to keep themselves safe, however the Trust will also support apprentices who are affected by behaviour that is intentionally harmful to them. Other Trust processes, policies and regulations support apprentices' safety and areas of concern such as:

- Radicalisation and spiritual abuse
- Bullying, harassment and hate crime
- Sexual violence
- Domestic violence and coercive control

The Student Team also have emergency procedures for individuals at imminent and/or immediate risk. Through ongoing processes and collaborative working between the Trust staff, apprentices, and employers we can respond to concerns in a timely manner and support the safety and wellbeing of apprentices.

These processes, policies and guidance also provides staff with the opportunity to reflect on concerns which, on closer consideration, may require further action and involvement from external services. The biggest key to effective practice is the understanding that safeguarding is best managed collectively and through a continual process of risk assessment, risk management and agreed interventions.

For apprentices enrolled on courses leading to professional registration our fitness to practice protocols also applies.

Apprentices are provided access to induction sessions contain training to ensure they understand behaviour that may constitute harassment and/or sexual misconduct.

## 6. Safeguarding in Practice

The Trust is here to support Apprentices, staff on Apprenticeship programmes and Employers. If support is required to help with managing a particular set of circumstances with an apprentice, the appropriate Safeguarding Lead or Apprenticeship Safeguarding Manager should be contacted.

It should be recognised that an apprentice may feel more comfortable talking to some people about an issue than others, and it may take time to build a trusting relationship where they feel comfortable sharing information. By having regular meetings and supervisory sessions with the apprentice, their Apprenticeship Coach, and employer, safeguarding can regularly be mentioned, and any concerns raised can be followed up and action taken as required.

When an apprentice learner makes a disclosure or raises any safeguarding concerns, this will be brought to the attention of the Programme Lead, who will act, and refer to the Safeguarding Lead and Apprenticeship Safeguarding Manager.

Common signs which can help you to recognise when things are wrong;

- Absence – missing work or study;

- Appearance – physical injuries or self-neglect;
- Behaviour – becoming uncharacteristically aggressive or withdrawn;
- Emotional health – crying, anxiety, or low mood;
- Risky behaviour – excessive alcohol consumption or use of drugs;

A safeguarding cause for concern is an action, observation, disclosure or discussion that makes staff feel anxious about the safety or wellbeing of a learner.

All causes for concern must be recorded on a Safeguarding Report form (Appendix 1) and must be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. Staff should provide as much detail as possible about the concern, clarifying the basic facts. If an alleged crime has been committed, it is necessary to gather the basic facts about the alleged perpetrator (including name, age, address, access to children and adults), but not take any action that might alert the alleged perpetrator.

The Safeguarding Team will decide on the appropriate actions, completing the section 'To be completed by the Safeguarding Team' on the form and notify the member of staff of the actions.

Whilst awaiting the advice and actions from the Safeguarding Team, staff must continue to monitor the situation that has led to report in a cause for concern. If the situation changes in the interim, staff must report in immediately any further details. In addition, if the concern becomes one of immediate suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, follow the guidance detailed below.

The Safeguarding Team will consider if the concern needs to be passed on to Children or Adult Social Care for further action, following the procedures of these agencies respectively for making a referral.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a learner or staff believe that a learner is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, contact must be made with a member of the Safeguarding Team immediately so that prompt, appropriate action and referrals can be made to safeguard the learner.

If staff are unable to make contact with a member of the Safeguarding Team, a referral must immediately be made by that member of staff directly to Children or Adult Social Care, depending on the age of the learner and it must be to the Social Care team in the Local Authority area where the learner resides. In addition, if appropriate, support from the relevant emergency services should be sought (Police/Ambulance/Fire Services).

If a learner has a Social Worker, staff must keep the Social Worker updated on any safeguarding concerns regarding the learner, as well as the Safeguarding Team.

An electronic safeguarding file will be raised by the Safeguarding Team immediately and will include:

- learner Information Sheet
- details of other agencies the learner may be working with
- whether a child protection, child in need, early help assessment or adult safeguarding arrangements are in place
- chronological information including cause for concerns, emails, telephone calls, meeting notes
- concerns about and/or contact with the learner and actions taken
- information on any siblings

## 7. Prevent

Under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 the Trust has a duty to safeguard against the threat of terrorism and prevent people from being drawn into terrorism or violence and ensure that vulnerable individuals receive appropriate support. This is known as 'Prevent Duty'.

The Trust recognises that young people can be at risk of being drawn into extremist ideologies which can lead to a risk of radicalisation. Where there is a suspicion that this may be the case, this will be a significant safeguarding concern which is of equal weight alongside other forms of abuse and mistreatment of children and adults at risk. A safeguarding concern of this nature would also fall within the scope of other Trust policies. A person may be vulnerable and drawn into extremist ideology for varied reasons and it is often the culmination of several influences. These influences can include family, friends, or relationships they have made online. Extremism can also include non-violent action.

The Trust:

- Provides relevant training for staff so that they understand the obligations the Trust has under the Prevent Duty and how to manage risks and concerns;
- All staff complete the Home Office certified Prevent Duty training,
- All staff working on apprenticeship provision attend mandatory safeguarding and prevent training annually;
- Provide a curriculum for apprentices that explores these matters;
- Provide a safe and welcoming environment where apprentices have the freedom to express and discuss varying views respectfully;
- Provide a named Prevent Lead who can be contacted for any further information regarding the Prevent Duty;
- Procedures are in place so that concerns can be brought to specialist attention.

Apprentices:

- Should demonstrate their commitments to the principles that underpin the Prevent Duty;
- Bring any concerns to the attention of the Prevent Lead and Safeguarding Manager. This may be through their Safeguarding Lead and/or Programme Lead, Personal Tutor, or Apprenticeship Coach.

## Appendix 1

### **How to report a concern;**

If you are concerned about that someone is at risk you should register your concern either by contacting Dee Marsh via telephone on 01226 782233 or by completing the Safeguarding Reporting a Concern form below. You can do this anonymously.

[Safeguarding: Reporting a Concern – Fill in form](#)

