



Safeguarding and Prevent Policy & Procedures

2024-25

An introduction to our policy, procedures and their purpose

At Career Tree we feel that it is our duty to help keep all of our learners safe in the time that they are training with us, regardless of their age or how vulnerable or not they may be (many safeguarding policies restrict themselves to cover only vulnerable adults [18-25 years of age] and those below 18 years of age, as dictated by legislation – those learners falling within these categories can be referred to social services for support, while those outside these categories may need support from other agencies or the police). We believe in a 'duty of care' for every learner involved in our training programmes, no matter how short or long their time with us is. This will include the awareness and prevention of the dangers of radicalisation to support extremist causes and where referrals would be made if learners were in danger. **This is the second version of our policy and it is now very much 'adult-based' and relevant, including updates to reflect incidents that occurred in Britain in recent years and the actions taken to keep our staff and learners safer. These include two **STAYING SAFE** one pager guidance notes on what to do if caught up in 'terrorist attacks' or on 'finding suspicious items' which are essential in the city centres where we offer courses.**

Although we know that we need to comply to all relevant legislation and keep ourselves updated on any changes, the main aim of this policy is to make it as clear as possible to our staff and learners what we will do, and what we expect of them, to ensure that we are all as safe as possible, rather than over-focus on quoting legislation. References to current legislation and how it came about in response to particular incidents will be made in staff and learner training and as appendices to this policy. Our main focus here is ensuring that all the key aspects of safeguarding are promoted by us to everyone who comes into contact with Career Tree, at an appropriate level, and in language that is understandable. If there are any changes in legislation within the one-year life of this policy, it will be updated in year as necessary, and staff and learners will be informed of the changes and their importance. Otherwise **the next version of this policy will be published and come into force in September 2025.**

This policy has been developed in accordance with and under the legislation and guidance of the: • Children's Act (1989 and 2004) • Education Act (2002 and 2011) • Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) • Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (2021) • Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018, updated July 2022 and any changes arising in September 2024) • Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) • Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007) • Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 [updated guidance came into force on 31 December 2023] • Prevent Duty and Channel Duty guidance 2019 • Equality Act (2010) • GDPR (2018) • Sexual Offences Act 2003 • Information Sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (last updated 2018) • The Care Standards Act (2014) • Domestic Abuse Act (2021) • Health and Social Care Act (2008) • Human Rights Act (1998) • Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2012)

We believe that all our learners should be happy and secure in their working and learning environments. Our safeguards not only protect and promote the welfare of our learners, but helps to improve their confidence both at work and in their everyday life. The safeguards also help to protect all Career Tree employees.

We recognise that there could be individuals who may wish to harm our learners, and that it is our duty to put in place safeguards to protect any people that we work with. Career Tree also wishes to avoid placing our employees in positions where accusations of abuse might be alleged. We seek to ensure that everyone knows what the reporting structure for safeguarding within Career Tree is, should any abuse, harm or attempt at radicalisation ever be suspected. We will seek to protect and to actively promote the welfare of the learners that we come in contact with. As a result, we have drawn up this safeguarding policy that embeds a set of learner-focused procedures to put what is intended by Career Tree, into practice.

Our approach to safeguarding is the same as our approach to training, based upon respect for all and a commitment to equality of opportunity. We will work with our staff and any external employers to provide a safe and secure environment within which all learners can work and learn. We will make every effort to identify any learner at risk of suffering harm during their involvement with our programmes, and once identified we will take appropriate action to keep them safe. As you read through this policy it will raise your awareness of the different ways people may be abused, harmed or placed in danger, including while with Career Tree and through radicalisation.

This policy applies to all Career Tree employees. There are four main elements to the policy:

1. **raising awareness of safeguarding, radicalisation and safety issues and equipping learners with the skills needed to keep them safe** – this will include in their working and their everyday lives (including an understanding of British values and e-safety – we use carefully worded one-pagers to try and get key facts across to our learners)
2. **developing and then implementing safeguarding procedures that support learners who have been, or are in danger of being abused or radicalised** - for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse or radicalisation so that we can help minimise the negative impact on their lives
3. **ensuring that we practice safer recruitment** - in checking the suitability of staff to work with our learners (this will include any temporary or agency staff)
4. **establishing a safe learning environment that meets our legal responsibilities** - in which learners can learn and develop and feel confident in being able to raise any concerns about themselves or others

Career Tree recognises that because of the day-to-day contact with learners and those that they work with, our training staff are best placed to observe the outward signs of possible abuse or changes in behaviour that might be signs of radicalisation.

Career Tree will have regard to the procedures and guidance issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Boards, the Local Safeguarding Adults Board and the Department for Education to:

- ensure that we have a designated senior staff member to oversee the safeguarding of our learners, leading a safeguarding team and acting as the 'nominated person' to act as Lead Safeguarding Officer (with appropriate initial training at level 3, annual updating and support for the role)
- ensure that our safeguarding team will represent both genders so that our learners have a choice of who to talk to, eliminating the potential barrier that any first steps to reporting a concern are not hindered by any embarrassment of talking to someone of a different gender
- ensure that all members of our staff have appropriate knowledge to carry out their roles, developed through different forms of training for safeguarding (not just completing Career Tree online training, which is not as effective at checking an understanding of the most important concepts as there is no chance to ask questions to confirm understanding). Training will cover traditional 'safeguarding', online safety, Prevent, signs of radicalization, Modern Slavery and the importance of British values, with training updates every year. Our staff will subsequently be able to raise the awareness of our learners
- ensure that Career Tree undertakes an annual review of the policy and procedures, so that it reflects any changes that might impact from changes in legislation, guidance or incidents of abuse or terrorism in England and other countries (but reacting to any urgent need for change within the lifespan of the policy and procedures)
- ensure that Career Tree produces an annual safeguarding report by September of every year so that we analyse the previous year to ensure that we better protect all involved in our training programmes

- ensure that Career Tree safeguarding arrangements are widely known amongst staff, learners and employer partners
- keep written records of concerns about learners, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately and ensure that all records are kept securely, separate from the main learner file and in secure locations
- include procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff
- ensure that safer recruitment practices are always followed, including carrying out appropriate checks on new staff
- having a governor with safeguarding expertise to provide advice and guidance where required, including overseeing investigation of any accusations against staff, and leading on the approval of policies and procedures of Career Tree through the Governance Board.

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1. Raising awareness of safeguarding, radicalisation and safety issues and equipping learners with the skills needed to keep them safe

Learners, and in some cases staff, could be the subject of abuse, exploitation or attempted radicalisation. As a training provider Career Tree wants our learners and staff to understand the different ways abuse and exploitation are categorised, and how people might become radicalised. Sadly, these topics are constantly in the news because they are not spotted at an early enough stage, and are highlighted when harm has been done. By raising awareness through reading this policy and procedures, together with further training and reinforcement for learners at induction and during reviews, we hope to be able to identify any problems at an early stage in order to minimise the potential negative impact and to protect our learners and staff. **If you are personally subject to anything in this section, or know of anyone else who is, please tell a member of staff such as your tutor/trainer, or go straight to a member of the safeguarding team.**

The main categories of abuse and exploitation

Abuse is defined as any action that intentionally harms or injures another person – here we outline how different abuse is broken down into different ‘types’ along with indicators it is happening.

Physical abuse – there are many different ways that people may be abused physically, examples include: hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, shaking, throwing, rough handling, twisting of limbs, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, misuse of medication, inappropriate sanctions or restraint, unnecessary physical force either deliberate or unintentional. Domestic violence by men or women on their partners is a form of physical abuse. **Indicators of this abuse include** bruising or other injuries for which explanations do not seem to fit, or recurring injuries. For example, if a female learner living with a partner has bruises on their face and says they walked into a door, especially if it happens more than once, you may start to suspect they are being subjected to physical abuse. Our learners who work in care settings need to be aware of the signs of physical abuse on their clients.

Sexual abuse – is forcing or enticing a person to take part in sexual activities, examples include: rape and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the person has not consented, could not consent or was pressured into consenting (including penetrative or non-penetrative acts). Again, our learners who work in care settings need to be aware of the signs of sexual abuse on their clients. It would be seen as a betrayal of that trust, and therefore abusive, a member of staff to have a sexual relationship with a person they are caring for. Indicators of this abuse include bruising (particularly to the thighs, buttocks and upper arms and marks on the neck), unusual difficulty in walking or sitting, changes in sexual behaviour or attitude, self-harming, poor concentration and becoming withdrawn. This can also be non-contact abuse such as voyeurism, involvement in pornography or sexting (pressuring someone to send indecent images using phones, but also computers). Upskirting [taking photos up womens skirts on say a staircase] is now a criminal offence. Sexual abuse can occur between people of the same sex and it can also occur within marriage or any long-term relationship. Although such acts are mainly carried out by men, there have been many examples where women have been involved. We have included a brief description of **child sexual exploitation** at the end of this section of the policy and procedures.

Emotional or psychological abuse - examples include: [emotional] persistent emotional ill-treatment, verbal assault or intimidation, [psychological] includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying (online or by text), controlling (overriding of consent) of choices or wishes, being made to feel worthless, frightened or unloved. Please note that psychological or emotional abuse will usually occur in conjunction with other forms of abuse. **Indicators of this abuse include** an air of silence when a particular person is present, becoming withdrawn, having low self-esteem, having a change of appetite with weight loss or gain, showing signs of distress such as tearfulness or anger.

Financial abuse (also referred to as or material abuse) - examples include: theft, fraud, exploitation, and pressure in connections with wills, property, enduring power of attorney, possessions or benefits. A person may be pressured by someone into handing over their wages and having none of their own money. **Possible indicators of financial or material abuse include** sudden loss of personal possessions, unexplained lack of money or the inability to maintain a normal lifestyle (in the case of a learner walking everywhere rather than taking a bus, having no money for drinks or food, 'giving away' possessions), unexplained withdrawal of funds from bank accounts or running up credit card bills that can't be paid, rent arrears and eviction notices. Again, our learners who work in care settings need to be aware of the signs of financial abuse on their clients.

Neglect (and acts of omission) - examples include: ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to educational services or the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate food, shelter and heating. This type of abuse is most prevalent in care situations or with young children by parents. Again, our learners who work in care settings need to be aware of the signs of this abuse on their clients. It is often part of stories that hit our news headlines combined with physical abuse of children and older people. **Signs of this abuse may include** weight loss, tiredness, acting as a carer for other family members, scavenging for food, being dressed in dirty clothes and general signs of ill health.

Discriminatory abuse - this abuse is usually motivated by discriminatory and oppressive attitudes towards people on the basis of their race, gender, culture background, religion, physical or sensory impairment, sexual orientation or age (the protected characteristics under the 2010 Equality Act). Verbal discriminatory abuse may include derogatory remarks or inappropriate use of language related to one of the protected characteristics listed above, for example subjecting someone to racist or sexist remarks, or harassment. It can be carried out in person or online. A 2016 report found that one in four teenagers is abused online over their sexual orientation, race, religion, gender or disability. The abuse may also include denying access to communication aids, not allowing access to an interpreter, signer or lip-reader or harassment or deliberate exclusion (for example, not being allowed into a club) on the grounds of someone having a protected characteristic. **Signs of this abuse may include** changes in behaviour and a loss of self-esteem. Learners may volunteer to being a victim of this, often when they

have been on the street or using public transport. Although there may not be much that can be done after it has happened to stop it, it should be reported to the police with a description of who did it. They may be aware of other incidents and can examine CCTV footage from street or traffic cameras, or on public transport, to obtain evidence.

Domestic violence and abuse – this includes any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of their gender or sexuality. It also includes so called 'honour'-based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage (incidents are often in the news and all three are discussed below). Although the official definition uses the age of 16 and that will be the minimum age of our learners, there are many cases of FGM and forced marriage of children younger than this. **Indicators of this abuse include** having low self-esteem or worthlessness, feeling that the abuse is their fault when it is not, showing signs of physical violence such as cuts or bruises (and blaming it on 'walking into a door'), or a learner suddenly leaving their training as their partner does not like them mixing with members of the opposite sex or people who might notice the abuse and advise them to report it or to leave the relationship.

Honour Based Violence

Honour Based Violence (HBV) is a term used to describe **violence committed by members of extended families, motivated by a perceived need to restore 'standing' within the community**, which is presumed to have been lost through the behaviour of the victim that the violence is carried out on. The behaviour that triggers the violence may seem fairly normal to those outside of a particular culture, and is therefore hard to understand. Most victims of HBV are usually women or girls, although men can also be at risk, for example, if they are gay. Loss of 'honour' is often for showing independence or wanting freedom, over the wishes of the family. Common triggers for HBV include:

- not wishing to practice a particular religion anymore
- refusing to take part in an arranged marriage (family expectations may be to marry a much older man who they may never have met, who may live in another country)
- having a relationship outside the approved group (having a boyfriend of a different religion or ethnicity, or for family to find out someone is gay, for either males or females)
- loss of virginity or being pregnant outside of marriage (family would expect a girl to be a virgin on being married)
- a married woman having a relationship outside of their marriage
- spending time without the supervision of a family member
- reporting domestic violence to the police, rather than putting up with it
- attempting to divorce a partner or pushing for custody of children after divorce
- refusing to divorce when ordered to do so by family members
- men may be targeted by the family of a woman who they are believed to have 'dishonoured'

It is important to take learner fears of HBV seriously, even when the cause of it seems trivial, and therefore unlikely. Victims of HBV are more likely to underestimate the risks to their safety than overstate them. HBV is often a collective crime with several family members involved and someone outside a family may be paid to kill or harm a victim (for example, acid attacks to disfigure faces).

Forced or arranged marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage against their will is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion are used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. It is not unusual for families to deny that forced marriage is intended, and once aware of outside concern, they may move the learner and bring forward both travel

arrangements and the marriage. **For this reason, staff should not approach the family or family friends, or attempt to mediate between the learner and family, as this will alert them to official involvement.** Since **February 2023 it has been illegal to carry out conduct that would cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday** [England & Wales].

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision, cutting or sunna. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given as reasons for FGM, however, FGM is child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It doesn't enhance fertility and it doesn't make childbirth safer. It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

FGM has been a criminal offence in the UK since 1985. In 2003 it also became a **criminal offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to take their child abroad to have FGM.** Anyone found guilty of the offence faces a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison. Although you might think FGM is not common **it is estimated that there are 137,000 women and girls with FGM in England and Wales.** From July 2015, anyone can apply to the court for an FGM Protection Order if they are concerned that someone is at risk of FGM. Breaching an FGM Protection Order is a criminal offence with a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment. From October 2015, the FGM Act 2003 was amended to introduce a **mandatory reporting duty** for all regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales. We must make a report to the police, if, in the course of our duties:

- we are informed by a girl under the age of 18 that she has undergone an act of FGM **OR**
- we observe physical signs that an act of FGM may have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

The term FGM covers all harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes. There are four types - all are illegal and have serious health risks. FGM ranges from pricking or cauterizing the genital area, through to partial or total removal of the clitoris, cutting the lips (the labia) and narrowing the vaginal opening. Even partial removal or 'nipping' can risk serious health problems for girls and women. It is usually performed by someone with no medical training. Girls are given no anaesthetic, no antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained. The cutting is made using instruments such as a knife, pair of scissors, scalpel, glass or razor blade. FGM is practised in 28 African countries as well as in parts of the Middle East and Asia.

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen to them. She might talk about being taken 'home' to visit family, or that a special occasion is being planned to 'become a woman' or that an older female relative is visiting the UK. Although FGM is often carried out abroad it is also performed in the UK. A female learner may ask a trainer or assessor for help if she suspects FGM is going to happen to her, or a younger sister. She may run away from home and miss work or training days, often without a reason being given. If FGM happens it can be extremely painful and dangerous, causing long term effects on health, complications during pregnancy and childbirth as well as emotional and mental health problems. If you are worried or suspicious about FGM having happened or that someone is in danger of it happening, please tell us. The NSPCC have a free, 24/7 FGM helpline that can be phoned anonymously or an email address where concerns can be raised: Freephone 0800 028 3550 or email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Modern slavery

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support

victims - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). Career Tree do not have any aspect of modern slavery within our own organisation and have taken actions to prevent and ensure this.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse partly categorised by age, but the same kind of abuse could occur with learners of any age. Young people who find themselves in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities, or for allowing others to perform sexual activities on them. Young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol so they are not fully aware of what is happening to them and what they are asked to be involved in. They may also be groomed online to do or say sexual things in front of a webcam or on a phone (Zoom, Teams, Skype, Facetime, WhatsApp, etc.). Young people often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. Abusers may threaten to send images, video or copies of conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. A significant number of young people who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Victims can be male or female. Young people who have been in care are often specifically targeted to be victims of exploitation as their backgrounds can make them more susceptible. Some young people are '**trafficked**' into or within the UK (illegally helped into the country and then forced to work for the traffickers) for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Young people who have been trafficked may have no access to their parents, have false identity documents and may not be registered with a GP. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people who are in gangs. The majority of sexual exploitation within gangs is committed by teenage boys and men in their twenties. Girls and young women are frequently forced into sexual activity by gang members, to initiate young people into the gang or to exert power and control over members. **Indicators of sexual exploitation** include young people having unexplained gifts or new possessions, having older boyfriends or girlfriends, suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant, having changes in emotional well-being, misusing drugs and alcohol or going missing without explanation (to escape the situation that they are in). We will share a presentation to cover awareness of 'modern day slavery' as part of your programme.

Private Fostering

Although this maybe a perfectly safe arrangement we need to be made aware of any private fostering arrangements for any of our learners, to ensure that they are not in potential danger. **Privately fostered learners under the age of 18 are cared for by someone other than a parent or close relative** (e.g. step-parents, siblings, siblings of a parent and grandparents) for a period of 28 days or more. Staff should make a referral to the safeguarding team if they become aware of such an arrangement and if they feel that the fostering arrangement is not likely to have been notified to the local authority or if they have doubts about whether a young learner's carers are actually their parents, and there is evidence to support these doubts, including concerns about the young learner's welfare.

Eating disorders

These are characterised by an abnormal attitude towards food that causes someone to change their eating habits and behaviour (<http://www.nhs.co.uk/eating-disorders>). They occur in both men and women of all ages. The two most common disorders are **Anorexia nervosa** [when a person tries to keep their weight as low as possible e.g. by starving themselves or exercising excessively] and **Bulimia** [when a person goes through periods of binge eating and is then deliberately sick or uses laxatives to try to control their weight]. Both can cause long term damage to the body and need support from medical professionals.

County lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Young people can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Young people can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Sexting

Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) means sending sexually explicit messages and/or suggestive images, such as nude photographs. While the name suggests that this is only done via text message, these types of messages can be via any messaging service, including emails and social media such as WhatsApp. Sexts can be sent or received via several electronic devices, such as smart phones, computers, and tablets.

If a child is under the age of 18, it is illegal for them to take a nude photo of themselves or a friend, as well as distributing them. Even though the age of sexual content is 16, the Protection of Children Act means that it is against the law for a child to share a sexual image, even if it is with someone who is also under the age of 18. Images covered under the law include, but are not limited to, naked pictures, topless photos of girls, any sex acts, and sexual images in underwear. If it is found that a child under the age of 18 is in possession of any of these, has been sending them or taking these types of photos, the police can record it as a crime and it can have serious consequences for future employment as it may show up on pre-employment checks. It is illegal to take pictures in what is described as ‘**up skirting**’, of women’s legs by standing on staircases as women go up them. Prosecutions have taken place of offenders.

Sextortion

Over the past few years there has been an evolution in online scamming. This relatively novel phenomena involves attempting to extort internet users by claiming to possess compromising recordings of said user. The user will be threatened with the release of alleged indecent material, which will only be avoided through paying a ransom via bitcoin. The emails can be highly convincing, written in language designed to convince the recipient that the perpetrator that they have an advanced command of computers, persuading the recipient of the credibility of the threat. This form of scamming can be highly successful, relative to other more easily detected scams. Sadly, this crime has contributed to suicides. To find out more on what to do to prevent yourself becoming targeted, please follow the link below for advice from the National Cyber Security Centre on what to do.

- <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/sextortion-scams-how-to-protect-yourself>

Mate crime

Mate crime happens when people with learning difficulties are befriended by someone who uses the relationship to exploit or abuse them. This could include controlling their finances and taking over their homes (cuckooing). For more information – www.mencap.org.uk

Hate crime

Hate crime can be used to describe a range of criminal behaviour where the perpetrator is motivated by hostility or demonstrates hostility towards the victim's disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or

transgender identity, all of which are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Examples include attacking gay couples on the street or others such as Jews or Muslims because of their appearance.

Mental health matters including self-harm and suicide

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a person has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Although only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, staff are well placed to observe behaviours indicative of a mental health problem, or the risk of developing one. Mental health and mental ill health can be defined in very different ways. If staff have a mental health concern about a learner that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following Career Tree processes outlined in this document.

Mental health influences how we think and feel about ourselves and other and how we interpret life events. Whereas mental ill health is a term that is used for a person whose thinking, emotions and behaviours negatively affect their ability to go about day-to-day activities such as work, and home life and it disrupts their abilities. This can be particularly prevalent during times of isolation from others and the Covid pandemic has increased the number of people with mental health conditions. There are several different types of mental illnesses including:

- Depression
- Anxiety disorders
- Self-harm
- Suicide
- Substance misuse

The idea of self-harm is tied up in stereotypical actions. It is a behaviour not an illness, people self-harm to cope with emotional distress or to communicate that that are distressed. It can present itself in many ways, for example:

- Cutting, scratching the skin with sharp objects such as knives or razor blades
- Burning oneself with heated wax or cigarettes
- Hitting or banging arms, legs or head on walls or other objects
- Compulsory action of pulling hair out of the head
- Abusing drugs and alcohol for risk rather than enjoyment

It is generally seen as a physical reaction to emotional pain and can be extremely addictive. This means that it is often more productive to focus on why an individual feels compelled to harm themselves, rather than the means by which they are doing so. Self-harm should not be misunderstood for being suicidal. Many who self-harm have used the internet to research it and have copied the behaviours that they have seen described.

Suicide is a major public health issue in England. Suicide and suicidal thoughts need to be given the highest priority when dealing with an individual presenting these feelings. That said, not all people expressing suicidal thoughts want to die, they often don't want to feel the way they currently are which results in the thoughts turning to suicidal. Sadly, medical help is not readily available with waiting times of several months in many areas. The biggest killer of men under 50 is suicide, and nearly 3/4 of all suicides are men.

Gangs

Being in a gang can make a person feel part of something, or that they belong, but being part of a gang like this can be dangerous. Sometimes a person can be forced to commit a crime or do things that are unsafe. If a gang carries knives or other weapons, they might get them out to show off or intimidate people. This can be very scary for other people, especially if they think the gang will use them. It could also lead to the police using Tasers or guns if they believe there is a serious threat.

People join gangs for lots of different reasons. Some of these include:

- fitting in with friends and other gang members
- having the same interests as other people, like sports [football hooligans] or music
- feeling respected and important
- to be protected from bullying or from other gangs
- making money from crime or drugs
- gaining status and feeling powerful.

Being in a gang is not itself against the law, but being involved with illegal activities (that some gangs do) could be an offence. A person could go to prison or end up with a criminal record if involved with:

- gun and knife crime
- violence or harassment
- turf wars or postcode wars
- carrying, using or selling drugs
- theft or other illegal activities
- rape and sexual assault.

Gun and knife crime

Gun and knife crimes are often in the news, particularly in urban environments but can occur anywhere. Guns and knives can affect everyone, not just people in gangs. Gun and knife crime include stabbing or shooting someone. It is illegal to:

- carry a knife
- threaten someone with a knife or gun
- commit a crime with the use of a weapon - like a robbery
- commit a crime by pretending you have a real knife or gun

Some people carry weapons like knives and guns to feel protected, because of peer pressure or to feel powerful. If a person has a weapon, they might not always plan to use it – whether it is used as a weapon or not, it is still illegal. Police have the power to stop and search if they think someone has a weapon. This could result with an arrest or the person going to prison for carrying, buying or selling a weapon. Knife arches that detect metal are sometimes used to control entry to venues or simply to detect weapons. Situations involving weapons can get out of control very easily and there might not have time to think about actions. If carrying a weapon, a person is more likely to:

- be attacked or threatened by other gangs/individuals who use weapons
- be arrested by the police
- kill or injure yourself badly with your weapon
- hurt or kill others with your weapon
- hurt innocent people if a fight happens
- be charged with murder through joint enterprise if you're at a place where someone is killed, even if you weren't carrying the weapon.

Safeguarding learners from radicalisation and the influences of extremism

What are extremism and terrorism?

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental 'British' values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs of others. There are many types of extremists for many different causes, including animal rights, right and left-wing groups, religious groups and several others. Extremists may or may not be violent (for example hacking computers may not cause physical harm) but often violent action is taken alongside protests. For example, in the United States some 'pro-life' groups that are anti-abortion simply protest, while others have blown up clinics and attacked those who work there. At the moment there are several climate change groups who disrupt transport and public events against the wishes of the majority of the population, but most want to limit the negative impacts of climate change so the way these activists are categorised may yet change. The October 2023 attack by Hamas on Israel has increased recruitment to that terrorist group and Israeli retaliation has seen a large increase in antisemitic behaviour in the UK.

Terrorism is defined as action designed to influence the government, intimidate the public, and done for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause, that endangers or causes serious violence or harm to people, property, or seriously disrupts or interferes with an electronic system (computer hacking). Sadly there are examples around the world on a very regular basis of murders including the 9/11 attack on New York, the '7/7' attacks in London, the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby in Greenwich and the London Bridge attack along with the Manchester bombing. Nearby in France there have been several violent murderous incidents including the attacks on journalists of a magazine, a Jewish restaurant, slitting the throat of a Catholic priest in church, the attack on an audience of a rock concert, attempts to bomb a football match and the deliberate running over and killing scores of people watching fireworks on a seaside promenade in Nice.

The groups most commonly in the news when people think about extremism and terrorism have generally been Islamic ones, but there are groups with many different ideologies that are seen in the UK, including several from the far right, far left and animal rights. We should not stereotype those who support any one group, such as Islamic State as being bearded males (IS) or the National Front as tattooed skinheads (NF), because they may not be anything like that. Extremists come from every background imaginable, they may be male or female, wealthy or poor, and of any intelligence level. People who become extremists and terrorists in the UK are not born as such, but become **radicalised**.

How do people become radicalised?

As young people grow and become more independent, it is not unusual for them to take risks, explore new things and push boundaries. Teenage years are often a time when young people will be searching for answers to questions about their sense of identity, faith and belonging, as well as looking for adventure and excitement. This can mean that they are particularly vulnerable to extremist groups, who may claim to offer answers, as well as giving identity and being part of a strong social network. Extremist groups often target young people for this very reason, using the internet and social media to spread their ideology. Although the radicalisation process is unique for each individual, in general terms, four key elements are usually present:

1. **a vulnerable person** will be introduced to an
2. **extremist ideology** by a
3. **radicalising influencer**, who, in the
4. **absence of protective factors** (such as a supportive network of family and friends, or a fulfilling job) draws the individual towards extremism

There is no single path to radicalisation, otherwise it would be easier to block and stop. It can occur quickly in a matter of weeks, or over a much longer period of time. Sometimes there are clear warning signs, and in other cases the changes in personality or behaviour are less obvious or are attributed to 'normal' teenage behaviour.

Here is a guide to some possible warning signs of radicalisation that may be noticed by parents/guardians, friends, employers or our trainers and assessors, as changes to a learner's attitudes, opinions, character or behaviour:

- being argumentative or aggressive, with an unwillingness to listen to or consider other points of view which contradict their own
- refusal to engage with, or being abusive to, peers who are different to themselves. These differences could include race, religion, gender or sexuality
- susceptibility to believe conspiracy theories and having a feeling of persecution
- changes in behaviour and the peer group and friends associated with
- from being a hard-working individual who is punctual and has work done on time, to being late, missing appointments and not handing work in on time (grades suffer)
- distancing themselves from friends, both online and offline
- having a recent and possibly sudden conversion to a new religion
- having a significant change of appearance, clothing and/or behaviour
- rejection of activities they previously enjoyed (socialising in pubs, clubs, etc.)
- excessive time spent online or on mobile phones, and secretiveness or reluctance to discuss what they are doing (more so than previously seen, but typical of many young people)
- changes in online identity, including social media profile image or name. Some will even have two parallel online profiles, one their 'normal' or old self, the other for an extremist identity, often in another name
- showing support for extremist ideologies and groups (for example, giving expressions of sympathy with the ideology of extremist groups or justification of their extreme actions, perhaps after a major incident)
- expressions of sympathy or understanding for young people who have joined or attempted to join these groups (for example, travelling to Syria via Turkey)
- accessing extremist material online, including violent extremist websites (for example, beheadings), especially those with a social networking element (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)
- possessing or accessing other forms of extremist literature
- being in contact with extremist recruiters
- joining or seeking to join extremist organisations

Whether you are a friend or an employer, you will be well placed to recognise when changes to behaviour feel out of character for someone that you know. You should have confidence in your judgment and seek advice if something feels wrong. **Use our safeguarding contact details to raise or discuss any concerns. Staff and learners should understand that they can report illegal or harmful information, pictures or videos that they have found on the internet here [you can request that your report remains anonymous]: <https://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism>**

Prevent Duty

Since July 2015 [update 31 December 2023], all further education institutions, including learners hip providers, have had a legal responsibility to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism by being radicalised. This government initiative is known as the 'Prevent Duty' and is designed to not only stop people becoming radicalised, but also to avoid them from getting a criminal record. 'Channel' is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for us to make referrals if we become concerned that a learner might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Following a referral, a Channel panel will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, and,

where considered appropriate and necessary, consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. Update on Prevent 2023 [government training courses in spring 2024]. Prevent duty guidance to reflect several recommendations of the Independent Review of Prevent published in February 2023. There have been several cases of people being identified as potentially having been radicalised but going on despite the programme being completed to take part in terrorist activities. Key changes to the statutory guidance include:

- Amending the first Prevent objective to “**tackle the ideological causes of terrorism**”;
- Updating terminology to reflect current best practice and official terminology;
- Outlining the new **Security Threat Check (STC), which consists of three questions**, will ensure that high level decision-making within Prevent is always informed by proper consideration of the terrorism threat picture and responds proportionately;
- Communicating the need for **genuine concern about an individual’s path to radicalisation** and that ideology should be a critical consideration (to **improve the quality of referrals**);
- Clearer advice on how to understand and manage risk, including by having training and risk assessments; and
- Including ‘Reducing Permissive Environments’ as a key theme to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism and broader radicalising influences.

Our named Prevent Lead is Ali Jafar Zaidi who is also our Designated Safeguarding Lead. We have established links with our local Prevent Lead and with local safeguarding groups where Prevent is also discussed.

The main risk to our learners in London, Luton and Birmingham is from Right-wing extremist groups. This was very clear after the July 2024 riots across the country as a result of false claims and misinformation from right wing groups across Europe around the identity of the Stockport murderer of three young girls attending a dance group. Please see the PowerPoint presentation that explores the local risks to our learners as part of induction.

All learners will be asked to complete online training modules, which have been produced by the Education & Training Foundation – this is called ‘Side by Side’, to raise awareness of extremism and radicalisation

Promoting British values

Most people would be able to express their idea of what they felt British values were if asked, generally talking about a sense of fairness and democracy. Britain has a long history and some of the things that we now take for granted, such as ‘one person, one vote’ were hard won equal rights (only women who were householders over the age of 30 [six million women] got the vote in 1918). Women over 21 did not get the vote until 1928, despite all men over the age of 21 getting the right to vote in 1918.

The four British values and what they represent are discussed below:

Democracy – this is the belief in freedom and equality between people in which power is held by elected representatives or directly by people themselves. Everyone has a role in influencing decision making, at national, local and community level. As a learner it means exercising your democratic influence through the feedback mechanisms we provide such as surveys. These could have influence, for example on developing procedures to improve your experience whilst learning through Career Tree.

Rule of Law – this is ensuring an understanding of the importance of having laws and the consequence of breaking laws, accepting that no one is above the law. It is about individuals having an

understanding of their rights and responsibilities, as learners, employees, consumers, service users and citizens in society. This is about encouraging everyone to accept responsibility for their behaviour; distinguishing right from wrong, and to respect the civil and criminal law of Great Britain.

Individual Liberty – this relates to our rights and responsibilities as citizens; the right to act believe and express oneself in a manner of one's own choosing. This requires an understanding of the balance between freedom of speech and expression and the potential negative impact on others. This is about enabling learners to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence, and to encourage you to become a responsible individual who actively participates in your own learning and development.

Mutual respect and tolerance for others (such as people who hold different faiths) – this is about accepting that other people have different faiths or beliefs which should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour. This aspect applies to people of all backgrounds, cultures, ages, sexual orientations, genders, and abilities. Each person has the right to be treated with dignity and respect with regard to any aspect of their identity. This is a fundamental element of The Equalities Act 2010 and one of the reasons why your development of a good understanding of equality and diversity while with Career Tree as a learner is so important.

A key part of any learning today is preparing people to live and work in modern Britain, and the world, as responsible citizens.

Your personal physical safety – tips on staying safe

This section applies equally to all of our learners and staff, especially as many of us live and work in towns, where just by the number of people and crowding of public transport, there are more issues around safety than elsewhere. Although everyone should have the right to go about their lives free from the fear or threat of violence, aggression and intimidation, we often read of violent incidents in areas that we know and would generally consider safe. Cities are more likely to be subject to terrorist incidents, although these are few and far between and often prevented by the police and intelligence sources. By taking some simple precautions, you can improve your chances of staying safe and not being a victim of violence or crime:

- **Plan the routes you are going to walk somewhere in advance.** Think about where the danger spots may be along your regular routes, and how you could avoid them (e.g. avoid walking through wasteland, down dark alley ways, underpasses, under bridges, or through deserted or poorly lit areas)
- **Similarly, plan bus, tram, tube or train journeys so you know where you need to make changes, and know the times of the last services** – carry a little extra money, a credit card or have your travel card topped up in case you get stranded and need to take another bus, tram, tube or train, or even a cab
- **Use all your senses**, don't limit your ability to see or hear trouble by wearing hoods, listening to music through headphones, by talking on your mobile phone or by wearing sunglasses that block out too much light
- **Cross roads at crossings**, walking rather than running (less likely to trip and fall) if the sign to cross is about to change
- **Don't invite crime** by displaying the fact you have an expensive phone, iPod or headphones that make you a target for opportunist theft
- **If you have to stay late at work** and are concerned about how you are going to get home safely, talk to your employer about how they can help you to keep safe – it is better to try and travel with someone and to plan your route home, and depending on circumstances, to even provide a taxi
- If there is someone at home, **let them know that you are on your way** and what time to expect you (it will mean someone can alert help if you are late without an explanation such as a text)

- **If you live alone** you could arrange a buddy system with a friend, where you text them to let them know you are home safely and they do the same with you if they are out late
- Try to ensure you **always have enough money or a travel card (contactless payment cards can be used as a 'ticket' by a number of travel companies)** to get home (getting money from cash tills can be especially dangerous in the evenings or early mornings as streets are darker and less busy)
- **Have your keys ready when you approach your home** so that you can enter through your entrance door quickly and not spend time fumbling in bags or pockets to find a key
- **Remain alert**, until you are safely inside your home
- **If you are out in the evening or early in the morning** try and stay safe by being with friends or stay near a group of people
- **Although smart phones are great to find where you are going** if you don't know the way holding them out in front of you while you follow the map **impacts on your concentration** (more likely to be unaware of traffic) and **makes you vulnerable to crime** (theft of your phone). Better to look at the map app in a safe place, note the route and road names in your head, walk for a few minutes and then check you are following the route.
- **Never accept a lift with a stranger or someone you don't know** [if a police car stops to offer aid, check their identity and phone someone to give the registration number of the car should you accept help]
- Be mindful that **alcohol and drugs use will reduce your ability to keep yourself safe** and that some people may deliberately try to 'spike' your drink in pubs, bars or clubs (if in a group someone can keep an eye on your drinks while others dance or go to the toilet). If you suddenly feel unwell or dizzy, stay with friends and get them to look after you to get safely home
- **If you cycle**, wear a protective helmet and use cycle paths whenever possible. Take care when passing lorries as they are less likely than other vehicles to see you. Be extra cautious at road junctions as this is where the majority of accidents involving cyclists occur. Wear reflective clothing and have lights on to make yourself as 'visible' as possible. Obey the rules of the road, especially at traffic lights.
- If you are out in a pub or club remember that **thieves will be looking to see if bags are not being watched by their owners** (the busier a venue, the more likely thieves will be operating there)
- **Don't pick up a cab on the street or from outside bars and clubs** unless you can be sure that they are licensed (black cab) and properly called by yourself or the bar/club (ask the driver who the cab has been booked for and the destination – if it was for you they should know this); check that the photo ID displayed is the person driving the cab and not someone else. It is useful to know the details of a minicab company (put as a contact on your mobile)
- If possible, **wait for a bus or train in a well-lit place**, near other people if possible (use waiting areas with glass so you can be seen if they are available)
- Once on board, **take note of where the emergency alarms are** and try to sit near to them. There are alarms on buses, train carriages, tubes, trams and rail platforms. If a bus is empty or it is after dark, **it is safer to stay on the lower deck near the driver**. On trains **sit with others** to avoid empty carriages or seats where there are few people
- **Consider carrying a personal shriek/ attack alarm** to give you extra confidence and to shock and disorientate potential attackers, giving you time to get away
- **Be cautious/on your guard** if someone approaches you on the street to ask directions
- **Online, don't give away personal information** (pictures, address, telephone number, financial details, passwords, date of birth) **or arrange to meet anyone you have not physically met before by yourself**
- **If you see a suspicious unattended package or bag** on public transport, in tube or railway stations or at an entertainment venue (pub, club, cinema, theatre, concert venue, etc.) **report it to someone**
- **If there is any form of incident that may be linked to terrorism, such as a bomb, suspect bomb or an act of violence, do as you are instructed to by those in authority**

(the police, transport officials or security personnel). It is important that you get away from danger but without panic, which itself can cause potential problems such as people falling or being crushed if too many people try and get through exits at the same time without being orderly. Use your common sense and go away rather than towards what you think maybe an incident – put your own safety above curiosity of what may have happened

Learners and staff should be made aware of our two **STAYING SAFE** one pager guidance notes on what to do if caught up in 'terrorist attacks' or on 'finding suspicious items'

Understanding the reasons for E-safety and how to stay safe online

E or online safety refers to the safe use of the internet and other electronic forms of communication such as e-mail, text messages or different forms of social media (for example Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or WhatsApp), that can be used to put learners at risk. The following are three key ways in which these various forms of technology can be used in a harmful way, followed by some awareness raising safety pointers to keep you safe from possible online crime:

Internet grooming - flattering someone into talking in a private chat room where they will be isolated or befriending someone on a social networking web page. Asking someone what problems they have to create the illusion of being a best friend and building up a sense of mutual love and trust, suggesting that they can discuss "anything". Convincing someone that you have similar interests with the intention of meeting and then subjecting them to abuse or even murder. Such grooming can also be used to radicalise people into involvement with extremist groups by changing their beliefs, leading to criminal activities

Sexting or sex talk - engaging someone in explicit conversations or requesting sexually explicit pictures from them. Even if pictures were requested from someone you love and trusted there is no guarantee that in the future you may fallout and they may post pictures of you to hurt you (often called 'revenge porn')

Cyber-bullying - using electronic forms of communication such as e-mail, texts and social media to send malicious or unkind messages to try and intimidate or threaten someone. You cannot just express your opinion of someone without possible repercussions (comeback) from the law. In October 2016 the Crown Prosecution Service made their intent to prosecute online offenders clearer in order to discourage online bullying. Examples include hateful posts about well-known black footballers.

The following safety information is particularly important for learners to understand, as there are dangers in terms of crime and theft, as well as grooming, with the aim of either abuse or radicalisation:

- **Social networking sites** - many learners belong to sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google Plus+, Tumblr, Flickr, Meetup, Grinder, Tinder or Tagged. No matter how well established a site is, your information can be accessed by others, so we all need to think about what we post and what could be done with it. Read the information below to keep safer online. A key tip for posting is would you want someone you care about to see what you have posted or if you are 'reacting' to something, do you think you could regret what you are about to post in a few days' time?
- **Does everyone you meet online represent themselves honestly?** Knowing that many young people meet and make friends through social media, this is often where they are targeted by fraudsters (to steal money), potential abusers or potential radicalisers (who groom you to gain your trust but ultimately want to cause you harm or draw you into terrorist causes). If you have an 'online friend' that you have never met, be careful if they request photos of you, personal information or phone numbers. There are numerous cases of people being 'groomed' or conned out of money by people they considered 'friends' and even murdered by someone of a similar age group when someone met their friend to play console games.

- **'My information is only visible to friends and I can delete anything embarrassing'** is a belief held by many young people – some companies pay for reports on applicants as part of recruitment that show deleted and private information. Everything that gets posted on the internet leaves a 'footprint' that can be seen by others who have the right skills to do so. Some employers will check your social media presence prior to interviews to see if you are a suitable candidate.
- **Identity theft** – This is where personal information that is readily available online about you can be used for building up a profile of you. Be wary of putting too much personal information in profiles online particularly on social networking sites, such as email addresses, dates of birth (DOB), employer details, and details of where you are training. For example, although some people say they would never make their date of birth public, they put messages or pictures on Facebook or Instagram about their '18th birthday party' – not difficult to know a date of birth from that!!
- **Why should passwords be kept safe?** Letting passwords become known can let hackers (someone who accesses other people's emails or websites) see your emails or even online banking. Don't write all your passwords down where you might lose them, or use the same password for everything or a password such as your date of birth. Losing passwords leaves you open to online crime. Change them if you think something is odd about anywhere you have used them (the same applies to PIN numbers on credit or debit cards). Some social networking sites will let you know if someone has tried to hack into your account but only ever change your password by going through the main website of a service, not using a link that may have been provided by a hacker, even though it looks real.
- **Should you give information about yourself if requested in an email (or phone call)?** The simple answer is 'no'. There are many tricksters trying to make themselves look like real sites that many of us use; for example, PayPal, iTunes or major banks/building societies. If in doubt always go to your account through the main website and never by any link provided in an email, otherwise you will sign into the false website and they then have your details to use fraudulently. Fraudsters set up websites that look just like the real thing. Although this is about online safety, the same applies with phone calls that are supposedly from banks or credit card companies. Phone the numbers on your actual card or statements to check if there is a real problem following a call to alert you, but not one given by someone on the phone which will not be the real company (especially if they offer to connect you).
- **Using wireless networks safely** – is your home network secured with a password? The same goes for using a hotspot on mobile phones – otherwise information can be taken from you. The same can be true for 'free' wireless zones where thieves and fraudsters might get into your email if it is not secure. The same can apply to having your Bluetooth on, on a mobile phone. People have had all their information copied by people hacking into their phones through Bluetooth.
- **Opening your email on public computers in hotels/internet cafes and other public places** – always make sure that you log out, never say 'yes' to saving your password, and ensure that you untick the box that says 'save my details.' Many of us will have seen a stranger's emails opened up on a public computer where the previous user had not logged out properly and had just walked off and left it. If you use any computer keep this in mind.
- **Your workplace will have 'Filtering and Monitoring' in place** to assure itself that work computers are not misused [to look at unsuitable websites or to carry out searches that could be linked to potential terrorist-related subjects. Here at Career Tree we provide links to resources that are hosted with 'Filtering and Monitoring' suitably in place. Increased emphasis was placed on this in **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 [Sept 23]** with **filtering and monitoring of IT systems** to protect users from accessing unsuitable material (such as self-harm information, or information that might lead to radicalisation/development of extremist views).

See our online safety poster for a quick reference to the most common problems that you are likely to encounter.

The deep web or dark net

Our learners (and even possibly some staff) may be attracted to a hidden part of the internet called the dark web or dark net, which is part of the deep web. According to researchers, only 4% of the internet is visible to the general public, the other 96% being the deep web. That deep web is used for secure communications networks and also to share or sell things, often illegally. There are sites that sell drugs, hacking software, counterfeit money, weapons and more. What might attract some people to browse what is there, is the prospect of free but illegal music or film sharing, or just general curiosity. However, it can also be used to share child pornography or to spread propaganda for the purposes of radicalisation. It is important to remember that you may take part in criminal activity without even realising it, so beware of Tors and .onion domains that are part of the dark web. It is extremely easy to access the dark web, but even easier to be detected on it. Clearly the security services from different countries monitor it to identify criminal activity and those encouraging radicalisation of others in order to promote their causes, sometimes leading to terrorist acts.

2. Developing and then implementing safeguarding procedures that support learners who have been, or are in danger of being abused or radicalised

As has already been said in section one of this policy and procedures, Career Tree wants to actively protect all our learners and staff. The key message that we put across to our learners is to tell someone about any concerns that they may have, either for themselves or others. This second section looks at what is in place to help provide that protection, while meeting our statutory (legal) duties.

Responsibility of all staff members when a safeguarding issue is disclosed by a learner, guardian or friend, or is suspected by the member of staff because of changes in behaviour or appearance

Any suspicion, allegation or disclosure of harm made by a learner concerning themselves or another learner (or a suspicion of someone else being radicalised), should be reported immediately to one of the safeguarding team, with a view to the concerns being passed onto the relevant statutory agency if necessary, or to seek advice and help, to allow us to protect the learner or other person if they are in danger. Clearly if a learner is in imminent danger from being abused or taking part in illegal activity, the matter should be urgently addressed and not left to a later time. Staff should alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible (in person or by phone), submitting a written record of their concern using the Safeguarding Concern Referral Form (see Appendix 1). This can be handwritten in order to save time. If a member of staff is at an employer and becomes aware of a safeguarding issue, they should contact a member of the safeguarding team by phone to confirm the most appropriate next steps.

When a learner discloses a safeguarding cause for concern, the member of staff should listen attentively to the learner and treat them with respect. The learner has a right to expect that their situation will be dealt with sensitively. Any allegations, disclosures or suspicions must be taken seriously. Staff who receive a disclosure must make an immediate verbal report in person or by phone, followed as soon as possible by a written report. Staff should be aware that:

- it is **not their responsibility to investigate safeguarding cases** but to pass on what they are made aware of to our safeguarding team, regardless of how well they know a learner (some online training wrongly makes it sound as if staff should be investigating and taking protective action, when their role is to pass it to the safeguarding team or a manager if a member of the team were not available). If a learner is in imminent personal danger, or they

are a danger to others, the police or health professionals will be informed depending on what the individual circumstances are

- any attempt to investigate by the member of staff could be construed as unjustified interference, which could jeopardise any police investigation and subsequent court case
- any questioning should be limited to the minimum necessary to seek clarification, avoiding any leading questions e.g. *'Did he do xxx to you?'* Instead, use non-leading or open questions like *'tell me what happened?'* Do not prompt what you think they might say if there is a silence, let them talk in their own time, and use their own language. It is important to **not show** by your body language or words that you are shocked by a disclosure; try to remain 'neutral' so the person is not put off talking. Do not ask why someone disclosing abuse did not try to avoid it, or infer that they were somehow to blame, or try and explain to them why it might have happened
- the staff member should inform the learner of the role of a Designated Safeguarding Lead, as although this will have been covered in induction and this policy, they may have forgotten what they were told
- despite what they may request, the learner must be advised that this **information cannot be kept totally confidential** and will be passed on securely to a Safeguarding Officer in the first instance. Information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis and will not be widely known or gossiped about
- if the learner is distressed, they should not be left alone, and if necessary, staff should call for further assistance to help support the learner or to look after other learners that the member of staff may have been working with

Responsibility of the Safeguarding Officers

At Career Tree we have a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Deputy Safeguarding Lead, who are there to ensure that we make the right decisions should there be any safeguarding concerns over a learner or member of staff. We will make decisions on whether a disclosure is a '**concern**' that might develop into something more serious, or if someone is in '**immediate danger**' or '**at risk of harm**'. Where someone is in immediate danger, the police would be the first point of contact to best ensure immediate protection. On receiving a disclosure, allegation or suspicion of self-harm, harm to others or from others, the Safeguarding Officer will respond and pass information to the appropriate agency as required by the Local Safeguarding Boards' Procedures. The Safeguarding Officer must be familiar with these reporting requirements and contact details of the Safeguarding Boards, including the procedures to be followed outside of normal office hours. We hold contact details for these Boards. Where concerns are for a learner who is 18 years of age or older, we have contacts for various support agencies who can offer expert advice and help, as well as police contacts if there is imminent danger to anyone or a crime has, or might be committed. Where concerns are about possible radicalisation, we hold details of who to discuss the next steps with, and then deciding whether entering further stages will be required.

Safeguarding Officers must keep a written record of the date and time of their report and include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. This should be recorded on the Safeguarding Concern Referral Form started by the member of staff to whom an initial concern or disclosure was made (Appendix 1), along with notes attached and referenced of follow up and the progress/ outcomes made.

Initial reporting to external agencies may be over the telephone but must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. Some Safeguarding Boards still use faxes in order to have written records of reports. The Safeguarding Officer will discuss with the relevant agency what action, if any, should be taken, making notes of the conversation on or attached to the Safeguarding Concern Referral Form, acting on their recommendations.

The Safeguarding Officer will complete the fully completed Safeguarding Concern Referral Form

within 24 hours of the initial concern arising. The Safeguarding Officer will ensure all further documents and monitoring updates are added to a log of concerns raised on a Central Safeguarding Register for each academic year.

The Lead will always be able to make themselves available to staff during centre opening hours. They will be trained to Level 2 and will know what actions will best support learners or staff for whom a safeguarding concern has been made:

- referring cases of suspected abuse to the relevant local Children's Services team
- referring allegations against professional staff and volunteers to the local authority LADO
- referring cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern

The Career Tree safeguarding team and how to contact them

We are all here to help you if you, or someone that you know, are at risk of harm or radicalisation. If you would prefer to speak to, or be telephoned back by a female or a male, please let us know. Please contact us directly by phone or email, or if you are in the workplace by talking to your trainer assessor who will advise you and let us know so that we can help and support you

Email - safeguarding@careertree.com

Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Lead: Ali Jafar Zaidi (CEO)

Email: ali@careertree.com

Tel: 02087957636

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Laila Moussaid (Executive Assistant & Project Manager)

Email: laila.moussaid@careertree.com

Tel: 0208 7953 863 Ext: 434

3. Ensuring that we practice safer recruitment

Safer recruitment of staff

Career Tree undertakes to ensure that its staff are fit to work in a training setting with learners of all ages. We also reserve the right to refuse to employ staff whom we have a reasonable belief may pose a risk to our learners. Our senior staff have completed appropriate safer recruitment training and are able to teach it to other professionals.

Our safer recruitment procedures aim to help deter, reject or identify people who are unsuited to working with young people and other learners. Key to this is having appropriate procedures for appointing staff that are strictly adhered to. We will ensure that when a post is advertised the advertisement makes clear our commitment to safeguarding and carrying out pre-employment checks:

- **we will ask all applicants to complete an application form** rather than simply submit a CV so that the appropriate required information can be easily seen and gaps are easy to see. This also helps in scoring an application for suitability
- **as part of shortlisting from September 2023 our safer recruitment will include candidates being informed that online searches may be carried out as part of our due diligence checks** [a simple search by search engine that will include previous names].

- we will **obtain two independent professional and character references**, one of whom will be the last employer, that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with young people and follow up any concerns
- we will **conduct a face-to-face panel interview** (at least one panel member will have extensive knowledge of safer recruitment training) to explore the candidate's suitability to work with young people as well as their suitability for the post
- **we will verify** that successful applicants have all **the academic or vocational qualifications claimed** on their application
- **check the previous employment history and experience** including the reasons for any employment gaps
- we will **carry out an identity check** including one source of photographic evidence such as a **passport or driving licence**
- we will verify the **person's right to work in the UK**
- if the person **has lived or worked outside the UK**, we will carry out any other checks deemed necessary

We will maintain a **single central record** on all individuals we employ, or who have access to our learners, which will include and record:

- a **mandatory enhanced disclosure criminal record check via the DBS** (this includes the two barred list checks of individuals unsuitable for working with children or vulnerable adults) with recording of the certificate numbers and issue dates (note: a check is required prior to the commencement of employment if no valid DBS within 12 months from a previous employment is available and assuming there has not been a break in service greater than three months). This checks for spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings and asks local police for any additional information that is reasonably considered relevant to the work being applied for
- completion of an **annual check for any staff whose DBS record has any offences on it** (this is subject to consideration of the type of offence, i.e. driving, etc.)
- ensuring that **new staff are familiarised with our safeguarding policy and procedures**
- ensuring that **new staff undertake safeguarding and Prevent training as part of induction**, along with awareness raising of the **importance of British values**
- that **annual updating around safeguarding and the prevention of radicalisation** takes place

Employees will only be **confirmed as being permanently employed following the satisfactory completion of an agreed probationary period**.

Where we might use **agency staff**, it is now a requirement that we check that the person presenting at the centre, is the same person that the agency has provided us with vetting checks for. This is best done with an official form of photo ID such as a passport or driving licence. If ID documents are from another country we will **use PRADO online** to reference the authenticity of the documents.

4. Establishing a safe environment that meets our legal responsibilities

See section 3 on safer recruitment – this ensures that we take appropriate precautions in checking the suitability of all new staff who can come into contact with our learners (established staff will already have undergone the same checks).

Secure premises - Career Tree takes all practical steps to ensure that our training premises are as secure as circumstances permit. We check the safety of employer premises as part of our sign-up procedures.

Staff training - all staff members must undergo safeguarding training at induction and aspects of this training will be updated annually. Staff will also receive regular updates on safeguarding as required, via for example email and briefing notes during staff meetings.

The Safeguarding Officer will undertake training on their role that is updated at least annually, and will also undertake training on their duties under the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent. In addition to this formal training, the Safeguarding Officer will refresh their knowledge and skills regularly, via for example e-bulletins, meeting other Safeguarding Officers or spending time reading and digesting safeguarding developments.

Online safety - Career Tree have appropriate internet filters and monitoring systems in place, to protect learners from harmful and inappropriate content online. We will promote online safety to our learners so that they know how to protect themselves and are aware of both how criminals and extremist organisations try to use it for their purposes.

Teaching learners about safeguarding - learners will be taught about safeguarding and the Prevent agenda, including staying safe online, as part of their training programme, including at induction and during reviews.

Code of conduct and acceptable staff behaviour - staff should seek to keep their personal contact with learners professional and seek to minimise the risk of any situation arising in which misunderstandings can occur. The following are sensible precautions to avoid potential problems:

- if working with one learner try to work in a room where there is a glass panel in the door or leave the door open
- make sure that others visit the room occasionally
- never give out personal mobile phone numbers or private e-mail addresses to your learners, use your work phone for making or receiving texts or calls, and your Career Tree email address for online contact to do with their training and assessment
- do not give learners lifts home or to events that need to be attended in your car (unless this has been specifically agreed by senior management)
- do not arrange to meet learners outside of training activities
- never 'befriend' or chat to your learners on social networking sites

Allegations of abuse against staff - the correct handling of allegations against staff can be a difficult area to get right as allegations must be treated seriously and learners protected until investigations are completed. We may need to consider suspension of an accused member of staff from duties that involve contact with learners where there are allegations of inappropriate behaviour involving learners. The allegations will be investigated by senior staff [because of marital circumstances the Strategic Governance Board chair will be directly involved in any necessary investigations] so they can then decide on an appropriate course of action.

One of the following terms will always be used when determining the outcome of an investigation of an allegation:

- substantiated
- malicious
- false
- unsubstantiated (or 'unfounded')

We will inform the person accused about the allegation as soon as possible after it has been made, unless a strategy discussion is needed or other agencies need to be involved, in which the manager should wait until these parties have been consulted before informing the accused. This also applies to informing guardians if a learner is aged below 18. We will maintain confidentiality throughout the investigation and have a duty of care to our employees, and will support the accused to manage and minimise the stress resulting from the allegation, for example, by being given access to welfare counselling or medical advice where available.

If an accused member of staff resigns, this will not prevent an allegation being followed up. We must refer the accused to the DBS if the member of staff needs to be identified as a risk to learners and it is an offence not to do so. Depending on the particular circumstances, there may be a criminal investigation or prosecution. Also, on the conclusion of a case, and where a malicious or unsubstantiated allegation has been made, an accuser may face prosecution. The local LADO will be informed as and when necessary.

Reminder that females and younger people can also groom and abuse - until recently, the perpetrators of sexual offences have typically been 'stereotyped' by being thought of as men. It is now appreciated that women can also groom and abuse young people because of such cases being reported (for example, female teachers in schools and childcare workers taking indecent images of children). It is therefore important to recognise that suspicions about the behaviour of any member of staff, raised by staff or learners, could have foundations regardless of their gender, or how unlikely you may feel an accusation is. No member of staff should get too close to their learners, but should maintain a professional relationship at all times, while supporting their learners.

Similarly to this, there is a perception that abusers are generally older men. We should also heighten the awareness of learners that even if someone they meet online is of a similar age to themselves, it does not mean they are 'safe' to meet. Lewis Daynes, a 19-year-old, was jailed for life for murdering 14-year-old Breck Bednar, who he groomed and met to play computer games in 2014.

Our online learning delivery

Career Tree offer remote, online learning delivery models to all learners across our programmes. As with other online harms, every employee needs to be aware of the risks posed by the online activity, including that of extremist and terrorist groups. If you have a concern for the safety of a learner, including the risk of radicalisation, you should follow Career Tree's safeguarding procedures outlined in this policy.

The term 'online learning' is used in this policy to mean courses that are delivered online, in real-time, with Learning Coaches and learners connected to each other by an online meeting platform, for example 'Zoom' or 'Teams'. Learning in a digital environment enables people from all backgrounds to access learning and valuable knowledge.

Considerations when delivering online learning

- Where you are communicating with a member of staff or learner on an individual basis, please remember you are 'at work' and therefore will behave in the same way as you would if meeting in person in one of our offices.
- Be mindful of wearing appropriate clothing as should anyone else who is likely to be within your camera's range. It is recommended that you blur your background.
- Consider the background that will be in view. You may want to consider not using your bedroom for example and possibly being against a neutral background. Consideration needs to be given about what can be seen, such as family photographs. The online meeting platforms offer a virtual background so this function should be considered.
- Think about the language you are using. Do not forget about any family members or other persons who may be in the background.

- Although learning is being delivered via an online platform, it is still a learning environment and professional behaviour is expected. Ensure that expectations of behaviour and etiquette are covered at the start of each online learning session.
- Online learning sessions may be recorded as part of ongoing quality assurance processes and as part of safeguarding all parties. You must ensure that you follow GDPR and Data Protection guidelines when doing so and that all attendees are aware the session is being recorded.
- If staff member feels uncomfortable with something said or done during session end call as soon as possible and report to the Safeguarding Lead
- In an emergency if session is ended consider phoning the learner or contacting directly on another platform
- Learners must join through the secure link which is sent to them via their online portfolio and links should only be sent via email in exceptional circumstances.
- Only the Tutor taking a group session to be able to share screen as default, to reduce risk of inappropriate information or content being shared.
- Sessions sizes are limited to allow for all learners to be seen on screen at the same time e.g. no scrolling in case miss something.

Safeguarding awareness during an online learning session

All delivery staff should be fully aware of the learners in their group and remain vigilant for any signs of abuse of safeguarding issue which may need to be reported. During any online delivery session, be conscious of the following:

- Being/becoming withdrawn
- Having bruises/cuts
- Clothes that seem inappropriate – e.g., covering up in hot weather
- Never being alone at the home end of the virtual classroom
- Appearance of unease in the presence of another family member
- Family member constantly checking on the learner in the virtual classroom
- Visible distress on the part of the learner – e.g., crying
- Visible but non-verbal learner responses to delivery staff input on safeguarding
- Use of Signal for Help (information on this has been passed out to learners)
- Keeping microphone unmuted
- Keeping video/camera off
- Intoxication
- Posters in background/tattoo symbols/ profile images which are inappropriate

Content Considerations – What do we need to think about?

When communicating with young people/vulnerable adults online observe the same rules of behaviour as if speaking with them in person that is by being professional -polite, respectful, not swearing or saying anything (using the written word, images or icons) that could be regarded as sexual innuendo, bullying or discrimination.

- Ask yourself whether the content of the message could be misunderstood or misinterpreted by someone else.
- Always ensure the content of any online communication has a clear work purpose.
- Do not use any text speak abbreviations or symbols/emoticons even if you ordinarily use these in your personal life.
- Never disclose non-public and confidential information about Career Tree, its staff or the learners with whom we are working.
- Do not say anything or re-tweet any posts that could be deemed offensive, controversial, or socially inappropriate in any way.
- Contact with young people or vulnerable adults online should only be a recognised element of your work and done strictly for the business of Career Tree only.

- Do not send any illegal or inappropriate content (written, images or icons) including sexting via mobile phones.

Openness and scrutiny – remember:

- Always communicate with learners in a way that is open to others to see if necessary.
- Do not use private messaging facilities on social networks or apps rather if it needs to be private then do this by email exchange or phone and note the conversation afterwards.
- Ensure there is always a record of such conversations that would be open to others to check if necessary.
- It should always be clear who the communication is from when Career Tree is communicating with a learner.
- There should be no use of anonymous apps – that is where the sender can remain anonymous.

Responding to Safeguarding concerns during an online session

Guidance on how to respond to situations that may be identified during an online session, along with the use of technology, is detailed in the Responding to online safeguarding process document.

Recording

Only use social media and apps where there is a permanent record of what has been said and sent thereby being open to scrutiny e.g., the use of Snapchat is not appropriate.

Use of equipment

Career Tree IT equipment (including computers, laptops, mobile phones, notebooks, etc.) must not be used to view, download, create or share (with colleagues or learners) illegal content including abusive images of children or young people or adults. IT policies are held on the company intranet.

Online Safety - Information and support

Within the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 guidance, Annex D has further information and support to support online safety.

If you become aware of any cases in the news or anything that is raised through an employer, please let our safeguarding team know about it so it can be shared.

If you are unsure of anything in this policy and procedures please talk to a member of the safeguarding team.

The key safeguarding legislation Career Tree will follow is the guidance that is outlined in **'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018 but updated in July 2022, with consultation on updates in September 2023)** and **'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (last updated in September 2024 and read by CAREER TREE staff and the safeguarding governor)**. Within both guidance documents, there are external support services and further sources of information within the appendix sections.

Code number of concern [/]

About you

Your name and email address/phone number:

Your job role at CAREER TREE?

Your relationship to the person who is the subject of the concern – if relevant (assessor, etc.):

The name of the Safeguarding Officer the referral was made to (in person or by a telephone call, state which) was made to:

SG Officer _____ Date and time referral was made: _____

Form completed and passed to Safeguarding Team on (date) _____

Your signature and date of completion: _____

Keep a confidential copy of this form for your own records

Details of actions by CAREER TREE Safeguarding Officers

Depending on age of the person the subject of this concern is about and the nature and immediate danger of the concern, which external agency or support organisation has been contacted (if required). Write name, details of agency and date here:

If the concern is to be dealt with internally write details of action(s) taken (dates and persons involved to be noted)

Any subsequent details of follow up to original concerns

Please ensure that the safeguarding governor is made aware of this case so that it can be discussed at the next strategic governance meeting [anonymising the apprentice name]

Please use continuation sheets if required and keep all details related to the concern together with code number of concern written in the top right-hand corner in date order

STAYING SAFE: Finding suspicious items

Learners, if you notice a suspicious item:

- Do not touch it but try and identify an owner in the immediate area
- If you still think it's suspicious, don't feel embarrassed or assume that someone else will report it
- Depending on where you are, report it to a member of staff, security, or if they are not available dial 999 (**do not use your mobile phone in the immediate vicinity**)
- Move away to a safe distance - even for a small item such as a briefcase move at least 100 metres or yards away from the item, starting from the centre and moving out

Remember - If you think it's suspicious, **SAY SOMETHING**

Guidance for staff and workplace managers

When dealing with suspicious items apply the 4 C's (confirm, clear, communicate & control) protocol:-

CONFIRM whether or not the item exhibits recognisably suspicious characteristics

The **HOT** protocol may be used to help inform your judgement:-

Is it **HIDDEN**?

- Has the item been deliberately concealed or is it obviously hidden from view?

OBVIOUSLY suspicious?

- Does it have wires, circuit boards, batteries, tape, liquids or putty-like substances visible?
- Do you think the item poses an immediate threat to life?

TYPICAL? Is the item typical of what you would expect to find in this location?

- Most lost property is found in locations where people congregate. Ask if anyone has left the item

If the item is assessed to be **unattended** rather than **suspicious**, examine further before applying lost property procedures. However, if H-O-T leads you to believe the item is suspicious, **apply the remaining three parts of the 4Cs**

CLEAR the immediate area

- **Do not touch it**
- Take charge and move people away to a safe distance. Even for a small item such as a briefcase move at least 100m away from the item starting from the centre and moving out
- Keep yourself and other people out of line of sight of the item. It is a broad rule, but generally if you cannot see the item then you are better protected from it
- Think about what you can hide behind. Pick something substantial and keep away from glass such as windows and skylights
- Cordon off the area

COMMUNICATE - Call 999 and give the operator the facts about the object

- Inform your control room and/or manager/ supervisor if in a building
- Do not use radios within 15 metres **CONTROL access to the cordoned area**
- Members of the public should not be able to approach the area until it is deemed safe
- Try and keep potential eyewitnesses on hand so they can tell police what they saw

STAYING SAFE: Terrorist attacks



Firearms and weapons attacks are rare in the UK but we have seen a number of attacks in recent years, for example, using vehicles as a weapon. We emphasise that this is still extremely rare but it is worth thinking about how you should protect yourself if you are involved in an incident or one takes place nearby to where you are. The 'STAY SAFE' principles tell you some simple actions to consider at an incident and the information that armed officers may need in the event of an attack:

RUN

- Escape if you can and consider the safest options to do so
- NEVER go towards an incident or stop to take video on your phone
- Is there a safe route? RUN away from the incident, if not HIDE
- Can you get away without exposing yourself to greater danger?
- Insist others leave with you but leave belongings behind that may slow your escape

HIDE

- If you cannot RUN, HIDE
- Find cover from gunfire or a terrorist with knives and remember if you can see the attacker, they may be able to see you
- Cover from view does not mean you are safe, bullets go through glass, brick, wood and metal (the best cover from gunfire would be substantial brickwork or heavy reinforced walls)
- Be aware of your exits and try not to get trapped without a way of exiting
- Be quiet, *silence your phone and turn off vibrate*
- Lock or barricade yourself in and move away from the door

TELL

Call 999 - What do the police need to know? If you cannot speak or make a noise listen to the instructions given to you by the call taker

- Location - where are the suspects?
- Direction - where did you last see the suspects (note the time)?
- Descriptions – describe the attacker, numbers, features, clothing, weapons etc.
- Further information – casualties, type of injury, building information, entrances, exits, hostages etc.
- Stop other people entering the building if it is safe to do so

ARMED POLICE RESPONSE

- Follow officers instructions and remain calm
- Can you move to a safer area?
- Avoid sudden movements that may be considered a threat
- Keep your hands in view (best to have your arms raised)

OFFICERS MAY

- Point guns at you and treat you firmly as they try to identify potential terrorists
- Question you
- Remember that they may be unable to distinguish you from the attacker(s)
- Officers will evacuate you when it is safe to do so

You must STAY SAFE

- What would your plans be if there were an incident?
- What are the local plans for a building in which you work or study in? e.g. a personal emergency evacuation plan
- Always get away from anything that is potentially the danger area

FE/HE Regional Prevent Coordinators

East Midlands: Sam Slack	sam.slack@education.gov.uk 01332 643054/07812 301215
North West: Nigel Lund	n.lund@manchester.gov.uk 0161 8569304/07507 269830
South West: Salam Arabi-Katbi	Salam.katbi@avonandsomeret.pnn.police.uk 0117 9455533/07824 083307
East of England: Dave Layton-Scott	David.LAYTON-SCOTT@education.gov.uk 07384 452155
South East: Alamgir Sheriyar	alamgir.sheriyar@education.gov.uk
Wales: Barrie Phillips	barrie.phillips@cardiff.gov.uk 02920 873281/07800 711318
West Midlands: Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal	h.h.iqbal@staffs.ac.uk 0121 3033642/07825 40099
North East: Christopher Sybenga	chris.sybenga@education.gov.uk 07384 456640
London: Jennie Fisher	Jennie.FISHER@education.gov.uk 07880 469 588

Help to PREVENT Possible Radicalisation and Extremism by Acting Early

It can be hard to know what to do if you're worried that someone you are close to is expressing extreme views or hatred, which could lead to them harming themselves or others, and possibly ruining their lives in the future. Even if your previous experience of the police has not been a good one, be assured that they are working with other organisations to protect vulnerable people from being exploited by extremists through a Home Office programme called PREVENT. If you act early and tell them your concerns in confidence, they will help those identified as being at risk not to put themselves in danger, with no criminal record resulting so that their future is protected. Many concerns referred to the police do not lead to anything, but some protect the individual concerned and others who might otherwise have been harmed. You won't be wasting their time and you won't ruin lives, but you might save them.

Spotting the signs of radicalisation

More important than any one sign is the feeling that something is not right. Friends and family are often the first to spot worrying changes taking place. These can be big or small changes that take place very quickly or over a longer period. Trust your instincts and if you're concerned, seek advice.

Share your concern

If you're worried about someone, **call the ACT Early Support Line on 0800 011 3764**, in confidence, to share your concerns with our specially trained officers.

This support line is available every day 9:00am – 5:00pm. Calls outside of these hours will be transferred to specialist officers.

The advice line is designed for members of the public to use, especially friends and family, or those who work with vulnerable or young people in volunteering roles. Your call won't do any harm but it may help someone from harming others.