

Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

2024-2025

Prepared by	Authorised by	
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Background

Apprentify understands the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all learners and staff by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, and bullying as well as being vigilant, raising awareness, embedding and monitoring safeguarding.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our learners, so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every learner should be able to participate in all learning and social activities in an enjoyable environment and be protected from harm.

Apprentify promotes this policy through initial induction modules for learners, which provide an overview and understanding of Safeguarding and Prevent. In addition to this, there are regular development days and training sessions for staff, to share resources, discuss safeguarding scenarios, raise awareness and highlight best practice for embedding safeguarding into sessions.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect learners from harm. This policy adheres to the requirements of the Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance 2024, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and the CONTEST Strategy 2023 to reduce the risk we face from terrorism. At Apprentify, work with adult learners as well as under 18s, learners are defined as children and young people, as well as adults.

Scope

This policy applies to all colleagues employed by Apprentify including temporary, freelance and sub-contractors. All parties have a legal responsibility to take seriously any concerns about abuse, neglect and exploitation that come to their attention and to follow the procedures set out in this policy. All employers are aware that we take cases of bullying, emotional, verbal, and physical abuse very seriously and if they have concerns about their apprentices can use this policy to ensure concerns are taken seriously.

Our Commitment

Apprentify places the highest importance on Safeguarding and Prevent, and the safety and wellbeing of our learners is paramount. This policy sets out our commitment to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of our learners by

listening, supporting and respecting learners, and preventing young people and vulnerable adults becoming victims of abuse, neglect and exploitation, or radicalisation. It does this by:

- Recognising the Chair of the Board and the Head of Quality as having the overall responsibility for safeguarding our learners.
- Maintaining a Safeguarding and Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan that identifies risks and sets out actions taken to protect learners.
- Providing education and training to develop all learners' resilience to abuse and radicalisation, to know how to stay safe on and offline and to develop skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- By ensuring all staff complete the induction on start which includes mandatory training and reporting safeguarding concerns, as well as making sure all staff are up to date with the relevant training on an ongoing basis.

Definition of Safeguarding

'Safeguarding is not just about protecting learners from deliberate harm. It includes a wide range of issues relating to learners' welfare, health and safety'.

Safeguarding means:

- Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment.
- Preventing harm to children's health and safety.
- Ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.
- Providing help and support to meet the need of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that it within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.

Apprentify recognises that staff and employers have a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of our learners and preventing abuse. This policy focuses on protecting our learners from abuse, neglect and exploitation and identifying any actions that must be taken in the event of a safeguarding concern.

Definition of Prevent

- Prevent – to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- Pursue – to stop terrorist attacks happening in this country or against UK interests or overseas.
- Protect – to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack.
- Prepare – to minimise the impact of an attack and reduce the likelihood of further attacks.
- Keeping our learners safe is the first and most important duty of Apprentify and employers and safeguarding our learners from radicalisation. This policy focuses on protecting our learners from extremism.

Key Contacts and Responsibilities

Everyone who comes into contact with learners and their families has a role to play in safeguarding. Apprentify has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and three Designated Safeguarding Officers (named below).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take the lead role in ensuring that Apprentify has an effective policy and that agreed procedures are in place and being followed.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Chevonne James – 07795 555281

Designated Safeguarding Officers

Chris Elphick

Lauren Stones

Shannon Walsh

Apprentify's Safeguarding team have a Designated Safeguarding email address safeguarding101@apprentify.com that is monitored by both the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Safeguarding Officers.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (Chevonne James) is responsible for ensuring that:

- There are a sufficient number of trained and competent staff with designated responsibility for safeguarding.
- All staff have read and understand both Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and this policy.

- All staff receive adequate training to identify potential safeguarding issues and to respond appropriately to disclosures.
- Policies are maintained, and all other relevant information and material is effectively communicated to staff.
- Record keeping is accurate and secure.
- Apprentify operate safer recruitment procedures and ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff.

It is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to:

- Act as a central point for all staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Maintain a confidential recording system for safeguarding and learner protection concerns.
- Liaise with other agencies and professionals in line with Working Together to Safeguard learners.
- Be available during working hours for staff in the company to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within KCSIE.
- Ensure all staff, learners, parents/guardians/carers and employers are aware of the safeguarding team and their contact details.

Designated Safeguarding Officers (Chris Elphick, Lauren Stones & Shannon Walsh)

The Designated Safeguarding Officers are responsible for ensuring that in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, they act as Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Members of Staff

All members of staff are provided with a copy of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024 which covers safeguarding information and have received appropriate training relevant to their role within the organisation as part of their induction and ongoing updates.

Staff training is designed to ensure all staff can:

- Recognise potential safeguarding and learner protection concerns involving learners.
- Respond appropriately to safeguarding issues and take action in line with this policy.
- Record concerns in line with Apprentify's policies.
- Refer concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and be able to seek support external to Apprentify if required.

All members of staff have a responsibility to:

- Provide a safe environment in which learners can learn.

- Ensure all learners are able to develop appropriate strategies to recognise and respond to risk and build resilience.
- Identify and recognise learners who may be in need of extra help, who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm.
- Provide help for learners, where appropriate and reasonable.
- Take appropriate action to prevent safeguarding concerns escalating arising.
- Safeguard learners' wellbeing and maintain public trust in teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and to always act in the best interests of the learner.
- Respond to and refer any concerns about learners, in accordance with this policy.
- Contribute to, where appropriate, read and adhere to the company's policies and procedures.

Learners have a responsibility to:

- Complete all safeguarding modules via Apprentify's BUD platform including British Values, radicalisation and extremism awareness, sexual harassment and staying safe online.
- Read and adhere to Apprentify's Safeguarding and Prevent policy and procedures.
- Develop and take responsibility (at a level that is appropriate for their individual age, ability and vulnerabilities) for keeping themselves and others safe, including online.

Safe Working Practice

All members of staff are required to work within clear guidelines on Safe Working Practice.

Learners may make allegations against staff in situations where they feel vulnerable or where they perceive there to be a possible risk to their welfare. As such, staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position regarding learner protection or potential allegations and work within professional boundaries. All staff having direct contact with learners must ensure there is an appropriate environment with learners e.g., in their workplace in view of other people.

Staff should be particularly aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (email, mobile phones, texting, social platforms, etc).

Allegations against Members of Staff

Apprentify recognises that it is possible for staff and sub-contractors to behave in a way that might cause harm to other staff members or learners and takes seriously any allegation received. Such allegations should be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will then escalate this. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Designated Safeguarding Lead then staff and learners are advised that allegations should be reported to the Head of Quality and Chair of the Board.

All staff and sub-contractors should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns will always be taken seriously by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All members of staff are made aware of Apprentify's whistleblowing procedure and that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a learner at risk.

Allegations against Learners

Apprentify recognises that young people can abuse their peers. Child on child abuse can take many forms, including (but not limited to) bullying, cyberbullying, hazing (initiation type violence), sexualised bullying and violence and sexting. Apprentify is mindful that some potential issues may be affected by the gender, age, ability and culture of those involved.

Apprentify believe that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated, dismissed or minimised.

Learners who have experienced child on child abuse will be supported by:

- Offering them an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of concerns as evidence and discussions regarding how to respond to concerns and build resilience, if appropriate.
- Providing reassurance and continuous support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Learners who are alleged to have abused other learners will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the specific concern and the need for behaviour to change.
- Informing parents/guardians and employers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the learner, if appropriate.
- Provide appropriate education and support.

- Speaking with/referring to police or other local services (such as early help or children’s specialist services) as appropriate.

Safeguarding Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Apprentify acknowledges that learners with an education health care plan (EHCP), special educational needs, and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges as they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.

Apprentify will ensure that learners with EHCP and SEND, specifically those with communication difficulties will be supported to ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.

Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that learners with EHCP and SEND can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns such as bullying. All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour/mood change or injuries and not assume that they are related to the learner’s disability and be aware that learners with EHCP and SEND may not always outwardly display indicators of abuse.

Apprentify understands the importance of good mental health and wellbeing for all learners, we aim to:

- Treat mental health and wellbeing very seriously and compassionately.
- Promote mental health and wellbeing through awareness, training and resources for learners, staff and employers.
- Work together as an organisation to safeguard those at risk of poor mental health.
- Identify issues proactively and work towards resolving them.

Online Safety

It is recognised by Apprentify that the use of technology presents challenges and risks to learners and adults both inside and outside of the training provision. All learners and staff are informed of safe practices when using the internet and are encouraged to be vigilant and report any harmful content.

Apprentify identifies that the issues classified within online safety are considerable but can be broadly categorised into three areas of risk.

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material

- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes harm

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Apprentify recognises that all matters relating to learner protection are confidential. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will only disclose information about a learner to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis.

All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have a duty to keep information about learners, families and colleagues confidential, which they have access to because of their role, they also have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard learners.

Members of staff know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality whilst at the same time know they must never promise a learner that they will not tell anyone about a concern or allegation as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the learner.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purpose of keeping learners safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare to protect the safety of our learners.

Procedure

What to do if you have a safeguarding concern?

Immediately record your initial concern(s) using the declaration form situated on the Apprentify website or follow the following link: <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=V-CJIACDmkOKIWyxWgGrBNjUQNxg52ROuidR0hfUEdURENJWUtTRFZOSUFBNEhWUTFaODNPWFQ2RC4u>

If you require any assistance completing the declaration form, please contact.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Chevonne James – 07795 555281 safeguarding101@apprentify.com

Designated Safeguarding Officers: Chris Elphick, Lauren Stones, Shannon Walsh – safeguarding101@apprentify.com

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will;

- Review the declaration within 24 hours.

- Add declaration to Safeguarding planner and review level of urgency.
- Contact those involved to schedule initial meeting to discuss concerns.
- Ascertain if any further action is to be taken, by whom and by when.
- Refer to other agencies if required.
- Ensure all areas are addressed and actions complete prior to the concern being closed.

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the declaration form will be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Officers.

Staff Support

Where a member of staff finds a Safeguarding incident distressing, they may wish to access external services such as counselling, contact the HR Director or one of Apprentify's MHFAiders.

Reporting

A monthly report is shared with the Head of Quality who shares the report with the Senior Leadership Team.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if deemed necessary.