
Safeguarding (including the risk of radicalisation)

****For issues relating to safeguarding or PREVENT, or you/a learner are simply a little worried about a friend, colleague or your own situation and would like assistance, please send an e-mail to our confidential, secure inbox: safeguarding@thevocationalacademy.co.uk**

When using this e-mail, please don't include any names or personal details at this initial stage. Simply send an e-mail to this address requesting assistance and one of our safeguarding leads will be in contact promptly.

The Vocational Academy believes that it is **always** unacceptable for a learner/Apprentice/EPA apprentice to experience abuse of any kind and the safeguarding of our learners is paramount. All learners have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

The Vocational Academy work in partnership with learners, employers, awarding organisations and other agencies in promoting a safe learning and working environment, and has a Designated Safeguarding Officer and procedures in place for dealing with safeguarding issues.

Radicalisation: is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

As part of The Vocational Academy safeguarding arrangements, our aim is to provide our learners with a safe environment to discuss issues relating to radicalisation and extremism and to equip learners with the skills to recognise radicalisation and protect themselves and peers. If you have any safeguarding concerns, please ask to speak with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (Michael Rickards). More information can be found in The Vocational Academy Safeguarding Policy and PREVENT Strategy below:

Safeguarding Policy:

To support our commitment to the safeguarding and well-being of all of our learners/apprentices/EPA apprentices and with regard to the above legislation we will;

- Ensure that we have a Designated Person for Safeguarding who has received appropriate training and support for this role. The Designated Person for Safeguarding is Michael Rickards
- Ensure that all staff and learners are aware of our Designated Persons for Safeguarding. This will be communicated via our staff and learner induction process, internal training and awareness sessions, via the learner handbook and via posters located throughout the centre
- Ensure that all staff are aware and understand their responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding and in being alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and for referring any concerns directly to the Designated Person for Safeguarding
- Ensure that effective Safeguarding procedures are developed, implemented

and monitored to ensure their effectiveness. These procedures are based on the 5R's approach of Recognition, Response, Record, Report, Refer

- Ensure that we develop effective links with relevant external agencies, local safeguarding boards and co-operate with any requirements with any safeguarding referral matters
- Ensure that we keep written records of safeguarding concerns, even when there is no need to refer the matter to the relevant agencies
- Ensure all records are stored securely and in accordance with the GDPR

The Vocational Academy Essex LTD recognises its responsibility with regard to the safeguarding of young and vulnerable learners/apprentices/EPA apprentices from abuse and from inappropriate and inadequate care and is committed to responding in all cases where there is concern.

Due to the nature of our work The Vocational Academy Essex Ltd may be in the frontline of work with some vulnerable learners and vulnerable adults. This may mean that we are the first to know that a vulnerable learner or adult is being or has been abused or that we are concerned about a persons well-being.

Everyone has an equal responsibility to ensure that the individual needs and welfare of the person are put first and to safeguard any person with whom we may come into contact.

This responsibility not only rests with the Directors, Senior Management and Designated Persons for Safeguarding but also with every individual member of staff employed or volunteering within our organisation whilst at work, at an employers premises or at home.

We will ensure that our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are reviewed at least annually to ensure that they are still relevant and effective.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is a proactive process of protecting and ensuring the safety and well-being of young and vulnerable learners.

Safeguarding may involve instances in which a young or vulnerable learner is suffering or likely to suffer from harm.

Safeguarding involves adopting safer recruitment practices to assist in identifying persons who are unsuitable to work with young or vulnerable learners.

What are the benefits of effective Safeguarding?

When learners feel safe and secure they can concentrate on learning.

Learners can rely on those people in positions of trust.

Staff are protected from malicious and misplaced allegations.

Staff are clear about individual responsibilities, roles and boundaries.

Learners are appropriately protected and all issues are dealt with effectively.

How do we define Young / Vulnerable learners?

Young learners are defined as any learner who has not yet reached their 18th birthday (Childrens Act 1989, 2004).

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act SVGA (2006) no longer labels adults as 'vulnerable' because of the setting in which an activity is received, nor because of the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult receiving the activities.

The definition of regulated activity as explained within the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 identifies the activities provided to any adult which, if any adult requires them, will mean that the adult will be considered 'vulnerable' at that particular time.

New definition of regulated activity relating to adults

An adult is a person aged 18 years and over. There are six categories within the new definition of regulated activity.

1. Health care
2. Personal Care
3. Providing Social Work
4. Assistance with General Household Matters
5. Assistance in the Conduct of a Persons own Affairs
6. Conveying

Definition and types of Abuse or Neglect

'Child abuse and neglect' is a generic term encompassing all ill treatment of young and vulnerable learners, including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the persons health or development.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a young or vulnerable learner. Somebody may abuse a young or vulnerable learner by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm.

Young or vulnerable learners may be abused in the family or an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. An adult or adults or another child or children may abuse them.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010) sets out definitions and examples of the four broad categories of abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their development. It may involve conveying to the person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed in them. These may include interactions that are beyond the person's developmental capacity, as well as over-protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing them participating in normal social interactions. It may involve serious bullying causing the person frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of persons. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a person, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving them in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging sexually inappropriate behaviour.

Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a person's basic or physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the persons health and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a person from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsive to, a persons basic emotional needs.

Additional types of abuse and unsafe activities which we recognise and which have become more prevalent in recent times are:

- Bullying and Harassment
- Discriminatory Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Domestic Violence
- Alcohol and Drugs

- Crime
- Cyber-bullying

Signs and Indicators of possible abuse

When considering whether there is enough information and evidence to suggest a young or vulnerable learner has been abused, there are a number of possible indicators.

However, there may also be a perfectly reasonable explanation so it is important to remain vigilant but not be over zealous nor jump to conclusions. There may also be no signs or indicators of abuse, however this does not necessarily mean that a report of abuse is false.

Signs suggesting physical abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that have occurred on parts of the body which are unusual and not indicative of a fall or because of playing a contact / rough sport etc
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, unkempt appearance, dirty clothes etc
- Changes in routine

Signs suggesting sexual abuse

- Any allegation made by an individual
- Individuals with an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Individuals who are sexually provocative or seductive
- Severe sleeping disorders
- Eating disorders

Signs suggesting emotional abuse

- Changes or regressions in mood or behaviour
- Nervousness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away

Procedures to follow:

Procedure to undertake following a young or vulnerable learner confiding about or suspecting a case of abuse or neglect

Where a young or vulnerable learner seeks out a member of staff to confide in and share information about abuse or neglect or talks spontaneously individually or in groups, our staff will:

- Listen carefully to them, and not directly question him/her
- Give them time and attention
- Allow the person to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a person who is freely recalling significant events
- Make an accurate record of the information given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the person's presentation as well as what was said. Do not discard this as it may be later needed as evidence
- Use the persons own words where possible
- Explain that they cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared.

Reassure the person that:

- You are glad that they have told them
- That he / she has not done anything wrong
- What you are going to do next
- Explain that help will need to be sought to keep them safe

The person should be asked NOT to repeat his / her accounts to anyone.

The Designated Person for Safeguarding must be informed immediately, who will investigate the concern and take appropriate action, all records of the investigation, will be kept strictly confidential and stored in a secure place.

Outside agencies and Resources on Child Protection can and will be used to assist the company:

- Social Services
- NSPCC
- Police Services

Prevent:

Policy Summary Our commitment to meeting the Prevent Duty can be summarised as follows:

P – Promotion of Equality and Diversity and positive relationships between staff and students

R – Referral of any concerns via Safeguarding staff to relevant authorities

E – Embedding British Values and education for students on all courses

V – Vetting guest speakers and removal of any posters or other materials of an extremist nature

E – Environment – a safe and secure site with CCTV, sufficient security procedures and online filters

N – News monitoring for any concerns in the locality

T – Training of staff to raise awareness of the signs and risks

Who does this policy apply to?

The Prevent Policy applies to everyone working at or attending the College. It confers responsibilities on staff, students, agency staff and volunteers, contractors, visitors, consultants and those working under self-employed arrangements.

Policy Statement

The aim of the Prevent Policy is to create and maintain a safe, healthy and supportive learning and working environment for our students, staff and visitors alike. We recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for students. We further recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views we are failing to protect our students from potential harm. As such the Prevent agenda, will be addressed as a safeguarding concern.

The Vocational Academy has adopted the Prevent Duty in accordance with legislative requirements. However, we will endeavour to incorporate the relevant duties so as not to: (a) Stifle legitimate discussions, debate or student engagement activities in the local community; or (b) Stereotype, label or single out individuals based on their origins, ethnicity, faith and beliefs or any other characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010.

Why do we need this policy? Background information Prevent is one of 4 strands of the Government's counter terrorism strategy – CONTEST. The UK currently faces a range of terrorist threats. Terrorist groups who pose a threat to the UK seek to radicalise and recruit people to their cause. Therefore, early intervention is at the

heart of Prevent which aims to divert people away from being drawn into terrorist activity.

Prevent happens before any criminal activity takes place by recognising, supporting and protecting people who might be susceptible to radicalisation.

The national Prevent Duty confers mandatory duties and responsibilities on a range of public organisations, including Further Education Colleges, and seeks to:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat we face from those who promote these views.
- Provide practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and violent extremism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.
- Work with a wide range of sectors where there are risks of radicalisation which needs to be addressed, including education, criminal justice, faith, the internet and health.

The Government has created a system of 'threat level' which represents the likelihood of a terrorist attack in the near future. The current threat level from international terrorism in the UK is severe, which means that a terrorist attack is highly likely.

Our Prevent Policy has five key objectives:

1. To promote and reinforce shared values, including British Values; to create space for free and open debate; and to listen and support the learner voice.
2. To breakdown segregation among different student communities including by supporting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding; and to engage all students in playing a full and active role in wider engagement in society.
3. To ensure student safety and that the College is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.
4. To provide support for students who may be at risk of radicalisation, and appropriate sources of advice and guidance.
5. To ensure that students and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing violent and non-violent extremism.

Definitions

The following are commonly agreed definitions within the Prevent agenda:

- An ideology is a set of beliefs.
- Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism that may lead to terrorism.

- Safeguarding is the process of protecting vulnerable people, whether from crime, other forms of abuse or from being drawn into terrorism-related activity.
- Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence, damage or disruption and is intended to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made with the intention of advancing a political, religious or ideological.
- Vulnerability describes factors and characteristics associated with being susceptible to radicalisation.
- Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British Values, including democracy, the rule of law, Individual and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Aims:

Teaching and Learning To provide a curriculum that promotes British Values, knowledge, skills and understanding, to build the resilience of students by undermining extremist ideology and supporting the learner voice.

This will be achieved through:

- Embedding British Values, equality, diversity and inclusion, wellbeing and community cohesion throughout the curriculum.
- Promoting wider skills development such as social and emotional aspects of learning.
- A curriculum adapted to recognise local needs, challenge extremist narratives and promote universal rights.
- Teaching, learning and assessment strategies that explore controversial issues in a way that promotes critical analysis and pro-social values.
- Use of external programmes or groups to support learning while ensuring that the input supports the academy goals and values.
- Encouraging active citizenship and learner voice.

Student Support To ensure that staff take preventative and responsive steps, working with partner professionals, families and communities.

This will be achieved through:

- Strong, effective and responsive student support services.
- Developing strong community links and being aware of what is happening in the locality.
- Implementing anti-bullying strategies and challenging discriminatory behaviour.
- Recognising factors that may increase risk to a student, i.e. vulnerability, disadvantage or hardship, and implementing early risk management strategies.
- Ensuring that students and staff know how to access support.

- Supporting students with problem solving and repair of harm.
- Supporting 'at risk' students through safeguarding and crime prevention processes.

In the event of any concerns or reporting of potential threats to undermine the values and support set out above, all staff/students must report immediately to the centre coordinator (Michael Rickards). All reporting will be kept anonymous, confidential and if in writing, stored in a secure location. Outside support will immediately be sought from external local authorities such as the Police.