



Built on botheredness . . .

the **enquire**
learning trust



Safeguarding Policy

**Apprenticeship
Provision**



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Version History

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1. Aims

The Enquire Learning Trust (ELT), as a main apprenticeship provider, aims to ensure that:

- **Appropriate and timely action** is taken to safeguard and promote the welfare of apprentices, including those aged 16–18 and adults at risk.]
- **All staff, tutors, assessors, workplace mentors, and employer partners** understand their statutory safeguarding responsibilities.
- **All staff and employer partners** receive appropriate training to recognise, respond to, and report safeguarding concerns in any learning or workplace setting.
- **Safeguarding arrangements** are embedded across all apprenticeship delivery models, including off-the-job training, workplace learning, remote learning, and employer premises.

2. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*
- *The Governance Handbook*
- *ESFA Funding Rules and Apprenticeship Accountability Agreements*
- *Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and Safeguarding Handbook*
- Local safeguarding partnership arrangements in the areas where apprentices live or work

This policy also reflects the following legislation:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Statutory guidance on school attendance (where relevant to 16–18 apprentices)
- The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (mandatory reporting duty)
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Prevent Duty (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015)
- The Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018 (where applicable)
- The EYFS statutory framework (for apprentices working in early years settings)
- Digital and technology standards for filtering and monitoring in education settings

This policy also complies with ELT's funding agreement, articles of association, and ESFA requirements for apprenticeship providers.

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of apprentices includes:

- Providing early help and support when concerns emerge
- Protecting apprentices from maltreatment, exploitation, or harm in any setting, including online or in the workplace
- Preventing impairment of apprentices' mental or physical health or development
- Ensuring apprentices learn and work in safe, healthy and supportive environments
- Taking action to secure positive outcomes for apprentices, including those who are vulnerable or at risk

Child protection refers to safeguarding actions for apprentices under 18 who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Adults at risk refers to apprentices aged 18+ who may require safeguarding support due to vulnerability, disability, mental health, exploitation, or abuse.

Abuse, neglect, and sexting retain their statutory definitions.

Children refers to anyone under 18, including 16–18 apprentices.

Safeguarding partners include:

- Local authorities
- Integrated Care Boards (ICBs)
- Police forces

ELT works with safeguarding partners in all regions where apprentices are placed or employed.

4. Equality Statement

ELT is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognises that some apprentices may face additional barriers to recognising or reporting abuse. We ensure that all apprentices receive equal protection regardless of background or circumstance.

We give particular consideration to apprentices who:

- Have SEND or disabilities
- Are care-experienced or previously looked-after
- Are young carers
- Are LGBTQ+
- Have English as an additional language
- Experience discrimination due to race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, or sexuality

- Are asylum seekers or refugees
- Are at risk of exploitation, FGM, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Experience mental health challenges
- Live in unstable or unsafe accommodation
- Work in environments where safeguarding risks may be higher

ELT follows the Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, and Public Sector Equality Duty.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility across ELT's apprenticeship provision, including:

- ELT staff, tutors, assessors, and support teams
- Workplace mentors and employer partners
- Subcontractors (where used)
- Trustees and governance bodies

This policy applies to all apprenticeship delivery settings, including employer premises, online learning, and off-the-job training environments.

5.1 All Staff (Tutors, Assessors, Coaches, Support Staff)

All staff must:

- Read and understand Part 1 and Annex A of KCSIE 2025 (or updates) annually
- Understand ELT's safeguarding systems, including reporting procedures and the role of the DSL
- Recognise signs of abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, and workplace-related harm (*see Preventing Radicalisation Policy*)
- Understand early help processes and their role in identifying emerging concerns
- Know how to respond if an apprentice discloses abuse
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality while sharing information with relevant professionals
- Record concerns promptly using ELT's safeguarding system

5.2 ELT Inclusion Officer

The Inclusion Officer is a senior leader within ELT's apprenticeship provision and is responsible for:

- Leading safeguarding and child protection across all apprenticeship delivery
- Ensuring safeguarding arrangements extend to employer premises and subcontractors
- Providing advice and support to staff and employers
- Maintaining accurate safeguarding records

- Liaising with local authorities, police, and safeguarding partners
- Ensuring all staff and employer partners understand safeguarding expectations
- Ensuring apprentices know how to report concerns
- Overseeing safeguarding training for staff and employer partners
- Ensuring ELT meets ESFA, Ofsted, and statutory safeguarding requirements

The Inclusion Officer must be available during working hours for safeguarding concerns.

5.3 Governance (Trustees)

Trustees are responsible for ensuring:

- Safeguarding is embedded across apprenticeship provision
- ELT meets statutory and ESFA safeguarding requirements
- Regular safeguarding training is completed
- Safeguarding is monitored through reports, audits, and visits
- Subcontractors and employer partners meet safeguarding expectations

A named Trustee champions safeguarding across the Trust.

5.4 Apprenticeship Leader

The Apprenticeship Leader is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy across apprenticeship delivery
- Ensuring staff and employers understand safeguarding responsibilities
- Ensuring safe recruitment and handling of allegations
- Ensuring apprentices receive safeguarding education, including online safety
- Ensuring the Inclusion Officer has time, resources, and authority to fulfil their role
- Ensuring concerns are managed appropriately and escalated when necessary

6. Confidentiality

Staff must follow ELT's Information Governance Policy and understand that:

- Timely information sharing is essential to safeguarding apprentices
- Data protection legislation does not prevent sharing information to keep apprentices safe
- Staff must never promise confidentiality to an apprentice
- Concerns must be shared with the Inclusion Officer promptly
- Special category data may be shared without consent if a person is at risk

If unsure, staff must consult the Trust Inclusion Officer.

7. Recognising Abuse and Taking Action

All staff are supported to recognise behaviour that may indicate abuse or a lack of well-being. While their primary focus will be on the learning and workplace environment, they should remain alert to any signs of concern that arise outside of these settings.

Enquire Learning Trust is committed to taking appropriate, proportionate and timely action. No report of a concern about possible abuse or lack of well-being will ever be ignored. To determine the most appropriate response, Enquire Learning Trust colleagues will aim to establish clarity on any potential concern and refer internally to the Designated Leads. It is not the intention that colleagues 'lead' or 'probe' with questions, but rather that they 'listen well'.

All staff, employers, and workplace mentors must follow these procedures when a safeguarding concern arises.

Staff must recognise that apprentices may:

- Be reluctant to disclose abuse due to fear, embarrassment, or workplace pressures
- Not recognise exploitation or coercion, especially in workplace settings
- Face additional barriers if they are LGBTQ+, have SEND, or speak English as an additional language

Staff must maintain professional curiosity and report concerns immediately.

Apprentices have access to **safe, confidential reporting mechanisms**, including digital reporting options for remote learners.

7.1 If an Apprentice Is in Immediate Danger or at Risk of Harm

Staff must:

- Contact emergency services or local authority children's/adult social care immediately
- Inform the Inclusion Officer as soon as possible
- Record concerns promptly in ELT's safeguarding system

Anyone can make a referral.

8. Safer Recruitment

The Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021 extends safeguarding requirements to all post-16 education providers and sets out the mandatory pre-employment checks that must be completed to protect learners. Enquire Learning Trust fully upholds these requirements and is committed to preventing individuals who may pose a risk of harm from working within our organisation. This applies to all roles, including full-time, part-time, temporary, and subcontracted positions.

Our recruitment processes are designed to be rigorous, transparent, and robust. They aim to deter unsuitable applicants, identify potential risks at the earliest stage, and ensure that only individuals who meet our safeguarding expectations are appointed.

All offers of employment are strictly conditional until every required pre-employment check has been completed to a satisfactory standard.

Enquire Learning Trust:

- Ensures that every interview panel includes at least one member who has completed recognised Safer Recruitment training.
- Embeds safeguarding expectations into all recruitment materials. Application forms, job adverts, person specifications, and recruitment briefs clearly state our commitment to safeguarding and confirm that all roles require an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information where appropriate).
- Treats all applicants fairly, consistently, and in accordance with relevant legislation, including equality and data protection requirements.
- Makes proportionate, risk-based decisions about the level of vetting required for each role, based on a clear assessment of responsibilities and access to learners.
- Requires enhanced DBS checks for all roles identified through our safeguarding risk assessment.
- Encourages staff to subscribe to the DBS Update Service. Enquire Learning Trust funds the cost of renewals to support ongoing safeguarding assurance.
- Does not permit any individual to begin employment before their DBS certificate has been received and verified.
- Completes all additional pre-appointment checks, including identity verification, right-to-work checks, reference checks, and any other vetting required by statutory

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if significant regulatory or legislative changes occur.

10. Supporting Documents

The Trust maintains several related policies, including:

- ELT Complaints Policy
- ELT Whistleblowing Policy
- ELT Safer Recruitment Policy