

## Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

### Purpose

We're dedicated to looking after the physical and mental well-being of all our team members and learners, including adults and vulnerable adults involved in our programmes.

This policy explains the steps we take to keep everyone safe and create a secure learning environment, whether on-site or online. It also includes guidelines from the Prevent Duty to protect people from being influenced by terrorism or extremism.

### Applies To

This policy covers all employees, contractors, and volunteers working with or representing Headforwards Digital Academy.

Additionally, any employee delivering training on behalf of the Academy must complete mandatory safeguarding and Prevent training, which includes recognising online risks and mental health-related issues.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, responding to safeguarding and Prevent concerns, and liaising with external agencies. Additionally, ensuring the protection of learners' mental health and well-being.

*This policy is effective from 1st October 2024.*

### Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for updating this policy. This policy will be reviewed annually, incorporating feedback from employees, volunteers, and learners.

Updates will reflect changes in safeguarding and Prevent legislation and will address mental health and online safety.

### Definitions

→ **Safeguarding:** Protecting people's health, mental well-being, and human rights, enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, neglect, or radicalisation.

→ **Prevent:** A part of the UK Government's counter-terrorism strategy that seeks to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism, including extremist ideologies that promote terrorism.

→ **Adult:** A person aged 18 or over.

→ **Vulnerable Adult:** An adult who may need community care services due to age, disability, illness, or other circumstances, and who may be unable to protect themselves from significant harm, exploitation, or radicalisation.

## Policy

### Key Principles

- **Zero Tolerance:** We take a firm stance against abuse, neglect, and radicalisation—we won't tolerate any of it.
- **Empowerment:** We help people make their own choices and give informed consent, while making sure they understand the risks of abuse and radicalisation.
- **Prevention:** We actively work to stop abuse, harm, or radicalisation before it happens, including addressing early signs of extremist influences.
- **Proportionality:** We handle safeguarding concerns appropriately based on the level of risk, including risks related to radicalisation.
- **Protection:** We make sure vulnerable individuals get the support and protection they need.
- **Partnership:** We team up with local authorities, healthcare providers, Prevent partners, and other organisations to safeguard vulnerable people.
- **Accountability:** We ensure employees and volunteers know their roles in safeguarding and Prevent, including spotting signs of extremism and terrorism.
- **Online Safety:** We maintain a safe learning environment both on-site and online, training team members to spot online risks like cyberbullying and online radicalisation.

## Safeguarding and Prevent Procedures

### Recruitment and Training

All employees and volunteers working directly for the Digital Academy must undergo appropriate background checks, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

Safeguarding and Prevent training, including mental health and online safety, is mandatory and renewed annually. This will be logged on their Bamboo HR profile.

### Recognising Abuse, Radicalisation, and Mental Health Risks

Abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- **Physical Abuse:** Inflicting physical harm or injury.
- **Emotional/Psychological Abuse:** Causing emotional distress or psychological harm.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Engaging in sexual activity without consent.
- **Financial Abuse:** Exploitation or misuse of an individual's financial resources.
- **Neglect:** Failing to meet the basic needs of an individual.
- **Radicalisation:** The process by which individuals come to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups
- **Risks to mental health,** including emotional distress and psychological harm, should also be recognised and addressed.

### Reporting Concerns

Any concern or suspicion of abuse, neglect, or radicalisation must be reported immediately to the DSL. You should email your safeguarding referrals to: [academy-safeguarding@headforwards.com](mailto:academy-safeguarding@headforwards.com).

If the concern involves the DSL, it should be reported to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead

[kelly.kingstone@headforwards.com](mailto:kelly.kingstone@headforwards.com)

Concerns can be reported anonymously, although providing contact details is encouraged to facilitate follow-up.

Prevent-related concerns may also involve informing the local Prevent team for early intervention and support.

## **Responding to Disclosures**

Listen carefully and provide a supportive response to anyone disclosing abuse or concerns of radicalisation. Training can be provided for anyone who would like further support on responding to disclosures, email [rhonwen.dawes@headfowards.com](mailto:rhonwen.dawes@headfowards.com) for more information.

Do not promise confidentiality; explain that the information will be shared with the appropriate people to ensure safety.

Document the disclosure using the academy's safeguarding reporting form, you can find this on the intranet for staff and for learners on our Learning Management System.

Then submit it to the DSL by emailing: [academy-safeguarding@headfowards.com](mailto:academy-safeguarding@headfowards.com). Where possible do not wait longer than 24 hours to report concerns.

If there is immediate danger, please call 999 and remember to document the concerns afterwards.

If you suspect a safeguarding issue, but have not received a direct disclosure, you can still use the [safeguarding referral form](#) to report your concerns.

## **External Reporting and Cooperation**

The DSL will work with local authorities, Prevent partners, and external agencies to provide support and ensure a thorough investigation of any safeguarding concern. Mental health professionals may also be involved in cases concerning emotional well-being.

## **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

All safeguarding and Prevent concerns will be kept confidential and stored securely. Information will only be shared with relevant parties following data protection legislation, including GDPR.

## **Managing Allegations Against Employees**

These will be investigated promptly and fairly, in collaboration with external agencies as needed.

## **Feedback**

If you wish to offer feedback on this policy you can do so by emailing [rhonwen.dawes@headfowards.com](mailto:rhonwen.dawes@headfowards.com)