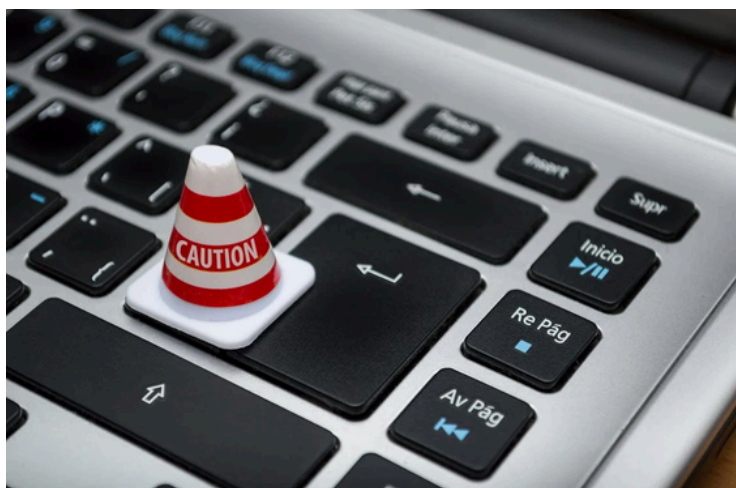




SAFEGUARDING

OUR BI-MONTHLY SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2026 • SAFEGUARDING IN THE DIGITAL AGE



WELCOME TO 2026!

As we enter a new year, it's important to refocus our approach to safeguarding.

The landscape continues to change rapidly – especially around online safety, exploitation, and the growing need for early help and mental-health support.

This short edition highlights the key priorities for early 2026, along with practical guidance for staff, learners, partners and employers.

SAFEGUARDING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Digital risks remain one of the fastest-growing safeguarding concerns.

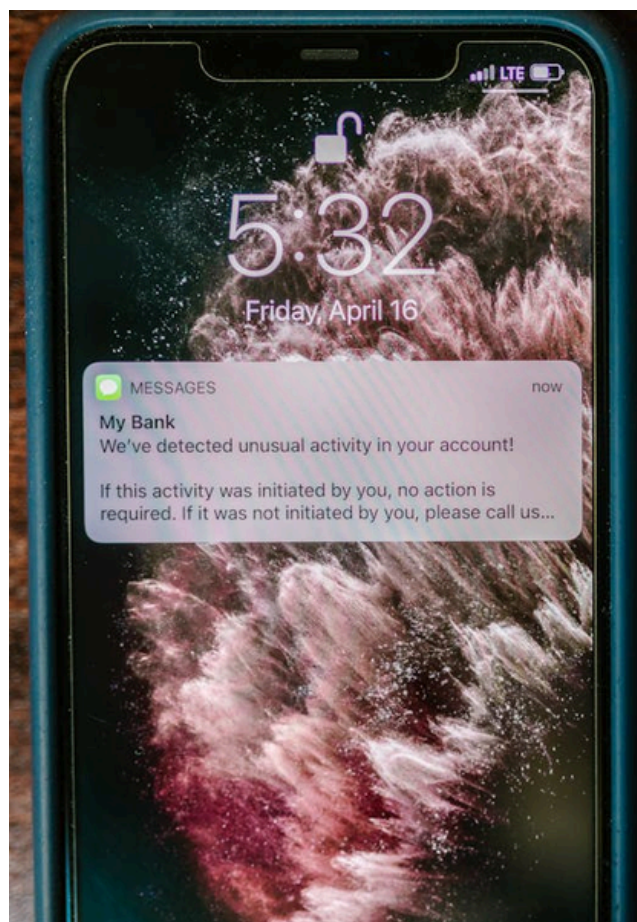
Advances in technology, particularly artificial intelligence, have created new forms of harm that organisations must be prepared for.

Emerging Risks

- AI-generated images & deepfakes targeting young people.
- Online grooming using impersonation and AI chatbot tactics.
- Increased pressure from social media, anonymous platforms and viral challenges.
- Digital scams & fraud, particularly affecting vulnerable adults.

How to Respond

- Review your online-safety and filtering/monitoring procedures.
- Encourage safe online habits: privacy settings, cautious sharing, reporting concerns.
- Reinforce to learners and staff how to identify fake profiles and suspicious behaviour.
- Report incidents promptly to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).



IMPORTANT INFO

If you're concerned about a loved one or yourself please contact one of the helplines and support groups on page 3.





EARLY HELP, MENTAL HEALTH & PREVENTION

With pressure on local early-help services, many organisations are seeing increased safeguarding needs at an earlier stage.

Key Challenges

- Rising levels of anxiety, stress and emotional difficulties.
- Persistent absence, disengagement or isolation.
- Families facing financial hardship, increasing vulnerability to neglect.
- Growth in self-neglect and mental-health crises among adults.

Early Support Matters

Early intervention can prevent a concern becoming a crisis.

Staff should remain alert to subtle changes in behaviour or presentation, such as:

- Withdrawal or mood changes
- Sudden drop in engagement
- Poor self-care
- Unexplained injuries
- Consistent lateness or non-attendance

If unsure — always share the concern. Safeguarding is about being curious, not certain.

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS & VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Safeguarding responsibility extends beyond children and young people.

Adults May Be at Risk Due To:

- Cognitive decline, disability or illness
- Coercive control or domestic abuse
- Financial abuse or online fraud
- Social isolation or mental-health difficulties
- Exploitation, including criminal or labour exploitation

What Staff Should Do

- Notice changes in behaviour, finances or personal presentation.
- Check in regularly with adults who may be isolated.
- Share concerns early with the Safeguarding Team.
- Know how to signpost to local agencies (mental-health support, housing, community groups).

Safeguarding adults requires the same vigilance and compassion as safeguarding children.



FURTHER SUPPORT & INFORMATION

UK Safer Internet Centre

Guidance on online safety, cyberbullying, and reporting harmful content.

NSPCC Helpline

Support for concerns about children or families:

0808 800 5000

Childline

Support for children and young people:

0800 1111

CEOP (Child Exploitation & Online Protection)

Report online sexual abuse or grooming.

Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline

For concerns around forced labour, trafficking or exploitation:

08000 121 700

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

24/7 confidential support:

0808 2000 247

Samaritans

Mental health & crisis support:

116 123

ICO – Information Sharing Guidance

Support for safe, lawful sharing of safeguarding information.

9 PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

PREVENT DUTY

The Prevent Duty is part of the government strategy to reduce the risk of Extremism, Terrorism and Radicalisation.

View our Prevent Leaflet

Report possible terrorist activity online If you are concerned about someone or see anything suspicious call the local police or the police anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

BRITISH VALUES

British Values are defined as:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

OUR SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Contact Steadfast Training's Safeguarding team on 0845 223 2401 or email safe-guarding@steadfasttraining.co.uk

If you wish to raise an issue of safeguarding for a learner or individual related to Steadfast Training Ltd in any way, please contact the centre immediately on: 0845 223 2401.

Report a Safeguarding Issue



For more information on anything covered in the newsletter, feedback or ideas for the next issue, please contact us on marketing@steadfasttraining.co.uk.