

Code of Conduct & Behaviour

Purpose

Steadfast is committed to providing a safe, respectful, inclusive and supportive environment for all learners. We are equally committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance.

We expect all employees, contractors, associates, volunteers, governors, directors, visitors and anyone working on behalf of Steadfast to uphold the highest standards of professional conduct, integrity and accountability. Everyone representing Steadfast has a responsibility to contribute to a positive learning environment where learners feel safe, valued, respected and supported to achieve their potential.

This Code of Conduct & Behaviour sets out the standards of behaviour expected of everyone working for or representing Steadfast. It is designed to:

- Promote a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment for all learners.
- Protect learners from harm, discrimination, harassment, bullying and abuse.
- Safeguard staff from misunderstandings or unfounded allegations.
- Promote professionalism, accountability and integrity.
- Support compliance with safeguarding, equality, health and safety and data protection legislation.

Steadfast recognises its statutory safeguarding responsibilities under current legislation and guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, the Care Act 2014, and the Prevent Duty.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff must remain vigilant to indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation, online harm, harassment, discrimination and any circumstance that may place a learner at risk or negatively affect their wellbeing.

Any safeguarding concern, regardless of how small it may appear, must be reported immediately to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Scope

This Code applies to:

- Permanent and temporary employees.

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- Apprentices employed by Steadfast.
- Associate trainers and assessors.
- Agency staff.
- Contractors.
- Volunteers.
- Governors and Directors.
- Visitors, guest speakers and external agencies delivering services on behalf of Steadfast.
- Anyone representing Steadfast whilst undertaking work-related activities, whether on Steadfast premises, employer premises, learner workplaces, online or at any other location.

Throughout this document, the term staff refers to everyone listed above.

Professional Standards

All staff are expected to:

- Place the safety, wellbeing and best interests of all learners at the centre of every decision.
- Treat every learner with dignity, courtesy, fairness and respect.
- Promote equality, diversity, inclusion and British Values.
- Foster a learning environment where learners feel safe, supported and able to participate.
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- Act honestly, ethically and with integrity.
- Demonstrate behaviour that reflects Steadfast's values and promotes public confidence.
- Challenge inappropriate, discriminatory, abusive or unsafe behaviour.
- Maintain confidentiality whilst recognising that safeguarding concerns must always be shared with the appropriate people.
- Take responsibility for maintaining professional competence through mandatory training and continuous professional development.
- Act promptly where there are concerns regarding the safety, wellbeing or welfare of any learner.

Professional Behaviour

Staff must always:

- Behave professionally and respectfully towards learners, employers, colleagues and visitors.
- Recognise that they hold a position of trust and must never abuse that position.

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- Maintain appropriate professional relationships with all learners.
- Consider how their behaviour, language, appearance and conduct may be perceived by others.
- Avoid behaviour inside or outside work that could damage confidence in Steadfast or bring the organisation into disrepute.
- Comply with all organisational policies, procedures and statutory requirements.
- Report safeguarding concerns, learner welfare concerns, allegations, low-level concerns or whistleblowing matters through the appropriate procedures.
- Use professional judgement in all interactions with learners, employers and colleagues.

Staff remain responsible for maintaining professional standards when working remotely, delivering online learning or communicating through digital platforms.

Learner Welfare and Safeguarding Responsibilities

Every member of staff is responsible under this Code for contributing to a safe learning environment and reporting concerns about children, young people and adults at risk. Specific statutory duties apply to the organisations and roles identified in the relevant legislation.

Staff must:

- Promote the safety, wellbeing and welfare of all learners.
- Recognise signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation, bullying, harassment and other forms of harm.
- Listen to learners respectfully and without judgement.
- Take concerns seriously and respond appropriately.
- Record concerns factually, accurately and promptly.
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).
- Never promise confidentiality where safeguarding concerns are disclosed.
- Cooperate fully with safeguarding investigations and external agencies.
- Maintain appropriate professional curiosity where concerns arise regarding a learner's welfare or wellbeing.

Staff must never assume another person has reported a concern. If in doubt, report it.

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Staff must promptly pass information that may be relevant to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of a child to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), including emerging need, concerns about a person connected to the child, and requests from

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another safeguarding agency. Do not wait for evidence of significant harm or assume another person has shared the information. If there is immediate danger, contact emergency services or children's social care without delay and inform the DSL. Steadfast delivers to learners aged 16–18, who are children for safeguarding purposes. From 30 September 2026, the information sharing duty in section 16LA of the Children Act 2004 applies where Steadfast meets the statutory organisational criteria. The DSL must record whether its inspected provision is funded by or under arrangements made by the Secretary of State, or another statutory route applies, and determine the recipient, purpose and lawful sharing route. Where Steadfast is in scope and the duty's criteria are met, relevant information must be shared securely and promptly without needing the child's or parent's consent, unless sharing would be more detrimental to the child than not sharing. The DSL must record a rare decision to withhold and consider safer, narrower disclosure. Staff must never promise secrecy or let an absent data sharing agreement delay necessary safeguarding action. Share only information relevant and proportionate to the safeguarding purpose through approved channels. Record facts accurately, distinguish opinion, and keep a record of disclosures and decisions. Be transparent with the child and family where safe and practicable; do not alert them if that would increase risk or undermine safeguarding. The statutory duty concerns children under 18; follow the separate adult safeguarding and Prevent procedures for other matters.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly used within education and training to support learning, administration and business operations. AI should enhance professional practice and never replace professional judgement.

Staff must:

- Use AI in accordance with Steadfast's Safeguarding Policy, Data Protection Policy, Acceptable Use Policy and Information Security procedures.
- Apply professional judgement when using AI-generated information and verify all content before sharing it with learners.
- Ensure AI-generated resources are accurate, inclusive, appropriate for the intended learner group and free from harmful, discriminatory or misleading content.
- Protect confidential, personal and safeguarding information by ensuring it is never entered into publicly accessible AI platforms unless expressly authorised and compliant with UK GDPR.
- Be aware of safeguarding risks associated with AI, including deepfakes, impersonation, misinformation, cyberbullying, online exploitation and technology-enabled abuse.

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- Report any concerns regarding misuse of AI to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).

Staff must not:

- Enter confidential learner, employer or staff information into publicly accessible AI systems.
- Use AI to replace professional judgement when making safeguarding, welfare or assessment decisions.
- Use AI to create, access or distribute inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory or extremist material.
- Use AI in any way that compromises learner safety, assessment integrity, confidentiality or Steadfast's reputation.

Transporting Learners

Transporting learners should only take place where authorised by Steadfast and where no suitable alternative arrangements are available. Where transport is necessary:

- Appropriate risk assessments should be completed.
- Managers should be informed in advance wherever possible.
- Parents or carers should be informed where appropriate.
- Only insured, roadworthy and legally compliant vehicles should be used.
- Staff should avoid transporting a learner alone unless exceptional circumstances exist and prior authorisation has been obtained.

Staff must never place themselves or learners in situations that could compromise safeguarding or give rise to avoidable allegations.

Dress and Professional Appearance

Staff are expected to present themselves in a professional manner appropriate to their role, working environment and the learners they support.

Clothing should:

- Promote confidence and professionalism.
- Be clean, appropriate and suitable for the workplace.
- Be appropriate for teaching, assessment, employer visits and learner engagement.
- Meet any health and safety requirements relevant to the role.

Staff should wear Steadfast identification whenever required and ensure they can be readily identified by learners, employers and visitors.

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