

Safeguarding & Welfare Policy

Policy Group:	Group 3: Health and Safety
Policy Version:	8
Policy Number:	3.2
Policy Title:	TLG Safeguarding and Welfare Policy
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Last Review Date:	September 2026
Reviewed By:	Rebecca Graham
Next Review Date:	September 2027

Section 1 – Policy Outline & Statement

Purpose

This policy sets out the commitment of The Launch Group (TLG) to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all participants, including children, young people and adults, within our training environment. We recognise our duty of care and are committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for all individuals, particularly those who may be at increased risk of harm. TLG has a duty of care for learners, candidates and employees and takes a proactive approach to ensuring staff, learners and stakeholders understand their safeguarding and welfare responsibilities.

Policy Statement

The Launch Group is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults, engaged in the breadth of its activities.

The Launch Group will be proactive in its promotion of a safe learning environment and will regularly monitor arrangements to ensure this.

The Launch Group recognises that it has a duty to support staff and learners to recognise their responsibilities (through guidance, support and training), minimise risk and avoid situations (where possible) where abuse or neglect might be alleged.

This policy has been developed with regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- ✈ The Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004, where children and young people under 18 are involved
- ✈ Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- ✈ Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026), where applicable to children and young people under 18
- ✈ The Care Act (2014)
- ✈ Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (2023)
- ✈ The Equality Act 2010

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, learners and candidates involved in activities or training provided by TLG. It covers safeguarding and welfare concerns, including protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation, and the promotion of learner safety and wellbeing.

This policy works alongside TLG's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Prevent Policy and Procedure, Staff Recruitment, Induction and Vetting Policy, Internet Use Policy, Data Protection Policy and other relevant procedures.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- 🔥 Protect individuals from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- 🔥 Ensure learners' well-being, safety, and security.
- 🔥 Ensure a safe and secure environment for all learners and TLG employees.
- 🔥 Equip TLG employees with the knowledge to recognise, record, report and respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns and welfare issues.
- 🔥 Meet relevant legal and statutory safeguarding requirements and apply appropriate good practice.
- 🔥 Foster an inclusive culture, free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.
- 🔥 Provide appropriate support, signposting and escalation for individuals who may be vulnerable or at risk

Definitions

Safeguarding focuses on proactive action to prevent harm and protect individuals' rights and wellbeing. It includes responding to abuse, neglect, exploitation, harassment, violence, radicalisation and other risks of harm.

Welfare refers to ensuring the overall well-being of individuals, including their physical, emotional, and mental health. In the context of safeguarding, promoting welfare involves taking steps to create environments where individuals feel supported and can thrive. Many safeguarding concerns begin as welfare concerns. Recognising welfare concerns early enables TLG to provide support before concerns escalate.

Promoting welfare is a core part of safeguarding, and it involves ensuring that individuals are protected from harm, but it goes beyond that to actively support their health, happiness, and general quality of life.

TLG recognises that not every welfare concern will meet the statutory threshold for adult safeguarding. However, welfare concerns may indicate vulnerability or develop into safeguarding concerns and should therefore be identified, recorded and responded to appropriately.

TLG Safeguarding Approach

At TLG, safeguarding is about more than responding to emergencies. It is about recognising concerns early, promoting welfare and ensuring learners receive the right support before issues escalate.

We encourage all staff to use the following approach whenever they have a concern about a learner.

1. Notice - Be aware of changes in a learner's behaviour, attendance, engagement, wellbeing or circumstances. A concern may arise from something you see, hear or simply feel isn't quite right.
2. Explore - Remain professionally curious. Where appropriate, ask open, respectful questions, listen carefully and avoid making assumptions. Explore concerns in a way that is proportionate to your role and the situation.
3. Support - Respond appropriately within your role. This may include reassurance, reasonable adjustments, signposting or discussing concerns with the DSL.
4. Report - Record and report any safeguarding or welfare concerns promptly using the Safeguarding & Welfare Reporting Process. You do not need proof to report a concern. The DSL will assess the information and determine the most appropriate course of action

Section 2 - Roles & Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

The Launch Group's designated persons responsible for Safeguarding are listed below. In the absence of the primary contact, the DSL, the secondary contact will assume the DSL's relevant responsibilities (DSO).

The DSL/ DSO will:

- ✈ Maintain strategic and operational oversight of safeguarding and welfare arrangements.
- ✈ Ensure safeguarding practices, policies and procedures are reviewed and updated as required.
- ✈ Liaise with relevant external agencies, including local authorities, police, health services and Prevent partners where appropriate.
- ✈ Ensure concerns are recorded securely, assessed, monitored, followed up and dealt with promptly.
- ✈ Determine whether support, signposting, external advice or referral is required and record the rationale and outcome.
- ✈ Support safeguarding induction, training and ongoing staff awareness.
- ✈ Monitor themes and trends and use these to inform improvement activity

Primary Contact – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Rebecca Graham, (Rebecca.graham@thelaunchgroup.co.uk)
Senior Programme Manager

Secondary Contact - Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

David Cooke, (David.cooke@thelaunchgroup.co.uk)
Head of Training and Quality

The Launch Group fosters a culture of safety and support, where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

TLG employees will:

- ✈ Complete safeguarding training as part of their induction.
- ✈ Complete annual safeguarding refresher training and remain familiar with the signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and radicalisation.
- ✈ Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all learners.
- ✈ Maintain professional boundaries and confidentiality, sharing information only on an appropriate need-to-know basis.
- ✈ Understand and follow the TLG Safeguarding Approach by:
 1. Notice concerns affecting a learner's safety, welfare or wellbeing.
 2. Explore concerns appropriately through professional curiosity, without investigating.
 3. Support learners within the boundaries of their role through reassurance, signposting or reasonable adjustments where appropriate.
 4. Report safeguarding and welfare concerns promptly using the TLG Staff Safeguarding & Welfare Reporting Process.

Learners/ Candidates will:

- ✈ Adhere to the Learner Code of Conduct, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.
- ✈ Report concerns about their own or another person's safety or welfare to a member of staff, the DSL/DSO or through the learner reporting route.
- ✈ Seek support if they are worried about themselves or someone else.

Promoting safeguarding and welfare helps instil a culture of responsibility among both staff and learners. Staff are trained to recognise safeguarding issues and take appropriate action, whilst learners are encouraged to look after their own well-being and the welfare of their peers.

Why is promoting Safeguarding and Welfare necessary?

TLG has a duty to promote the safety and welfare of learners and to respond appropriately where safeguarding concerns arise. Relevant legislation and statutory guidance include:

- ✈ The Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, where children and young people under 18 are involved.
- ✈ The Care Act 2014 places similar responsibilities on organisations with respect to vulnerable adults.
- ✈ Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 – where applicable to provision or activities involving children and young people under the age of 18.
- ✈ Prevent Duty Guidance, which set out responsibilities for preventing people from being drawn into terrorism.

Failure to meet these legal obligations can result in serious consequences for learners and the organisation.

Promoting safeguarding and welfare also helps create an environment where learners feel safe, supported and valued. This is important for:

- ✈ Emotional and mental health: Learners who feel safe and supported are more likely to engage positively in their programme and access support when needed.
- ✈ Personal development: A supportive learning environment helps learners to build confidence, resilience and awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe.
- ✈ Physical safety and well-being: Safeguarding helps ensure that learners can participate in training within safe learning environments and that risks to their safety or welfare are identified and responded to appropriately.

Section 3 – Virtual Classroom

Learners will be given clear guidance on acceptable online behaviour, digital privacy and how to report any safeguarding concerns. TLG delivers online learning using approved virtual learning platforms, primarily Zoom, although Microsoft Teams may also be used where appropriate. All platforms are configured with appropriate privacy and security settings to help ensure a safe online learning environment.

Identity Verification

Learners will enter online sessions via the virtual waiting room. Before admission, participant names will be checked against the expected learner list. Where a participant's display name cannot be matched to an expected learner, their identity will be confirmed before access to the session is granted.

For Zoom sessions, a Recruiter (or another designated member of staff) will normally be assigned as Co-host to support learner identity verification, manage admissions from the waiting room and help maintain a safe online learning environment.

Platform Functionality

TLG facilitator will always fully brief the participant group on the functionality of the virtual classroom platform, demonstrating the unique features each platform has such as the 'Raise Hand' or 'chat box' function. Virtual classrooms are set up without a cross-participant chat function, meaning that all online conversations are open and visible to the TLG Facilitator. Learners will be admitted from the waiting room only after their identity has been verified against the expected learner list. Lessons are recorded and communicated to learners during the induction session and stored securely in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

TLG Programme Managers/Tutors will actively monitor learner interactions throughout online sessions, including chat functions and breakout rooms where used, to identify any behaviour or safeguarding concerns requiring intervention. Any inappropriate behaviour (e.g., offensive language, bullying) should be addressed immediately. The incident must be reported to the DSL, and appropriate action, such as a follow-up meeting or further investigation, should be taken.

Breakout Rooms

Tutors should plan breakout room activities carefully, taking into account of learner needs, group dynamics and intended learning outcomes. Where additional learning needs, behavioural concerns or identified safeguarding risks require additional supervision, appropriate staff oversight will be put in place.

Section 4 - Control Measures

To effectively safeguard learners and promote their welfare, this policy outlines specific control measures to ensure that all staff, learners, and candidates understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding, risks are managed, and any issues are dealt with promptly.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy (DSO)

Control Measure: Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy (DSO) who are responsible for managing all safeguarding matters.

The DSL oversees safeguarding matters and the DSO deputises when required. Both will maintain safeguarding knowledge and training appropriate to their responsibilities. The DSL is the principal point of contact for safeguarding concerns, with the DSO available for escalation and cover.

Safe Recruitment Practices

Control Measure: Adopt safe recruitment process to ensure all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with learners, particularly vulnerable individuals.

Safer recruitment is managed in accordance with TLG's Staff Recruitment, Induction and Vetting Policy. Required pre-employment and vetting checks will be determined according to the role and applicable legal requirements and recorded on the Single Central Record where appropriate. TLG will act on adverse or concerning information in accordance with its recruitment and safeguarding procedures.

The Launch Group reserves the right to deny employment to individuals where safe recruitment practice suggests they might pose a danger to the learning community.

TLG's Single Central Record (SCR) includes all DBS checks and relevant vetting information. TLG will evaluate information to determine individual's appropriateness to work in such an activity.

Staff Training and Awareness

Control Measure: Provide regular safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers to ensure they understand their responsibilities.

All new staff must receive safeguarding and Prevent information/training as part of induction. Refresher training and updates will be provided and monitored through TLG training and CPD arrangements, taking into account changes to statutory duties, emerging risks and learning from safeguarding practice.

Reporting Safeguarding & Welfare Concerns

Control Measure: Ensure that staff, learners, and volunteers can report safeguarding concerns confidentially and promptly.

For TLG employees:

Where a member of staff has a safeguarding or welfare concern, they should follow the TLG Safeguarding Approach and report the concern promptly using the TLG Staff Safeguarding & Welfare Reporting Process.

Reports should contain clear, factual information and be recorded using the TLG Staff Safeguarding & Welfare Concern Report Form. You do not need proof to report a concern. The DSL or DSO will assess the information and determine the most appropriate course of action.

For learners:

Learners are encouraged to report any safeguarding or welfare concerns about themselves or another learner as soon as possible.

Concerns can be raised:

- ✈ with any member of TLG staff
- ✈ directly with the DSL or DSO
- ✈ by completing the Learner Safeguarding & Welfare Concern Form

Information about how to report concerns, including DSL/DSO contact details and access to the online Learner Safeguarding & Welfare Concern Form via a QR code, is provided during learner induction and is available in the learner programme handbook and completion pack.

The DSL will assess concerns and, where appropriate, make referrals to Children's Services, Adult Social Services, the Police or other relevant agencies.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm, emergency services should be contacted without delay.

The Launch Group reserves the right to suspend or exclude learners whose behaviour presents a safeguarding risk to others.

Safeguarding and welfare concerns will be recorded centrally and stored securely with access restricted to authorised personnel. Records should include, where applicable, the nature and risk level of the concern, factual information received, actions/signposting, DSL/DSO assessment, referrals or external advice, review/follow-up, outcome and closure. Records will be retained and handled in accordance with TLG data protection and retention arrangements.

Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations Relating to Staff and Other Adults

Control Measure: Ensure that safeguarding concerns or allegations relating to TLG employees, contractors, volunteers or other adults associated with TLG are reported, recorded and managed appropriately.

Any safeguarding concern or allegation relating to the conduct of a TLG employee, contractor, volunteer or other adult associated with TLG must be reported promptly to the DSL and an appropriate senior leader.

Where the concern relates to the DSL or DSO, it must be reported directly to an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team/Managing Director and must not be managed by the person who is the subject of the concern.

TLG will record and assess the concern promptly, take appropriate action to safeguard learners and seek advice from or refer to relevant external agencies where required. Where applicable, TLG will consider whether the criteria for referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are met and make a referral where there is a legal duty to do so.

Staff may also raise concerns about wrongdoing or unsafe practice through TLG's Whistle Blowing Policy.

Referral to External Agencies

Control Measure: Ensure appropriate referrals are made to external safeguarding agencies when required.

Where a concern meets, or may meet, the threshold for statutory safeguarding intervention, the DSL/DSO will seek advice and/or make a referral to the appropriate local authority safeguarding service, police, health service or other relevant agency. Immediate risk of harm will be escalated without delay.

Concerns relating to radicalisation or extremism will be assessed and escalated through the appropriate Prevent referral route. Where appropriate, a Prevent referral will be made and the individual may subsequently be considered for Channel support.

TLG will record external advice, referrals, follow-up actions and outcomes where appropriate.

Online Safety (E-Safety)

Control Measure: Safeguard learners from online risks including cyberbullying, harassment, exploitation, scams, harmful content and inappropriate online contact.

Educate learners and staff about e-safety and the risks associated with using the internet.

Use firewalls, filtering, and monitoring systems on all organisational devices to prevent access to harmful content.

Address cyberbullying, harassment or inappropriate online behaviour through safeguarding and relevant conduct procedures.

Review relevant internet/IT use arrangements regularly and update them where required.

Risk Assessment and Health & Safety

Control Measure: Conduct and review risk assessments appropriate to the learning context, including face-to-face, off-site and online delivery, and take account of identified learner vulnerabilities or safeguarding needs.

TLG will implement proportionate control measures and individual safeguarding risk assessments where required. Staff will follow relevant health and safety procedures and escalate safeguarding risks through the DSL/DSO.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Control Measure: Keep safeguarding information secure and share information lawfully and proportionately where necessary to protect an individual or support safeguarding action.

Safeguarding information will be stored securely in accordance with TLG's Data Protection Policy, the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Information will normally be shared on a need-to-know basis. Data protection legislation does not prevent appropriate information sharing for safeguarding purposes where there is a lawful basis to do so.

TLG may share relevant information with local authorities, police, health services, Prevent partners or other agencies where necessary and lawful. Decisions and rationale for significant information sharing should be recorded.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review

Control Measure: Regularly review and evaluate safeguarding practices to ensure they are effective and up to date.

The Safeguarding & Welfare Policy and associated procedures will be reviewed at least annually and earlier where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local arrangements or TLG practice.

The DSL/DSO will monitor safeguarding and welfare concerns for themes, trends, recurring risks and learning.

Learner voice, safeguarding/welfare data, staff training information, external scrutiny and relevant quality activity will be used to inform improvement.

Material changes to safeguarding arrangements will be communicated to relevant staff and stakeholders.

Supporting Policies

1.1 TLG Staff Recruitment, Induction and Vetting Policy

1.8 TLG Whistle Blowing Policy

1.2 TLG Equality and Diversity Policy

1.2.2 TLG Anti-Bullying Policy

3.3 TLG Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

3.4 TLG Prevent Procedure Policy

5.3 Internet Use Policy

TLG Staff Safeguarding & Welfare Reporting Process

TLG Participant/Learner Safeguarding Reporting Process