



**SAFEGUARDING
- THE LATEST
UPDATES FOR
LEARNERS,
EMPLOYERS AND
COLLEAGUES
DEC 23 - JAN 24**

[TOTALPEOPLE.CO.UK](https://totalpeople.co.uk)





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WELCOME

Hello and welcome to the fourth issue of our safeguarding newsletter.

Published every two months, this newsletter is written for all of our learners, employers, partners and Total People colleagues.

We aim to provide updates, information and resources to enable you all to ensure the safety of our learners, provoke thought and promote discussion.

In this edition we look closer at critical thinking – the best way to safeguard yourself by asking the right questions when faced with difficult topics, protecting yourself against being tricked, conned, or groomed.



SAFEGUARDING YOURSELF

Critical thinking: A higher order of thinking. Critical thinking is the practice of using a number of different advanced thinking skills in a variety of complex ways.

In this newsletter we share a brief insight into the skill of thinking critically. If you receive some information or see something in the news, or even get some messages from family or friends, how do you respond? Is it best to:

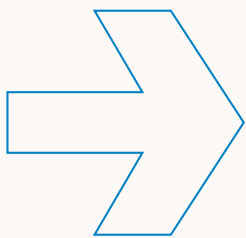
- Rely on just ONE source of information?
- Focus on the most interesting piece of information?
- Go along with what everyone else agrees with?
- Just agree with someone because you like them?
- Or just think that, because some in a particular community do something, that everyone within that community does it?

You could just rely on one piece of information or go with a consensus, but someone who thinks critically should also do some of the following: find out how the information is gathered / proven, how the arguments are formed, and how the conclusions are reached, rather than just accepting the information, arguments or conclusion that is presented.

Top value tips to think critically

Good critical thinking meets these intellectual values:

- Clarity
- Accuracy
- Precision
- Consistency
- Relevance
- Sound Evidence
- Good Reasons
- Depth
- Breadth
- Fairness



Reflection

Are these your values at home or in work?

Do you practice or use these values?

The right approach to critical thinking is needed; practice these five strategies:

Reasoning: We base our thinking in logic, not just feelings.

Self-Awareness: We pay attention to our own and others' assumptions, biases, and perspectives. This can be part of being 'emotionally intelligent'.

Integrity: We care about doing our work honestly and accurately, rather than about always being right.

Discipline: We put effort into doing our work comprehensively and precisely.

Open-mindedness: We consider alternatives and other points of view.

Learning coaches, employers and learners should all practice conversations where fairness is promoted, thinking with logic and also consider other points of view when presented with information. This way we challenge some of our biases and assumptions and could end up standing up for someone else that may need our help and advice.

Skill development:

Practice this at progress reviews, using topical issues in the UK such as Brexit, knife crime, poverty, extremism, mental health, sexual harassment, and housing as some examples. Oh, and don't forget to link these to the British Values of tolerance, respect, democracy, the rule of law, and freedom. Critical thinking takes time and needs each of us to practice and challenge ourselves.

Don't forget to evidence this in your progress reviews – it's a good way to keep on practicing these skills and how they fit into British Values.

SAFEGUARDING – IS THE UK GETTING SICKER?

Matt, our HR manager, has looked at whether Covid has made the UK sicker, as sickness absences have jumped post-Covid.

What do learners think is the cause of the UK becoming sicker? And what are some of the solutions? Do the statistics say something to you?

- The sickness absence rate - the percentage of working hours lost because of sickness or injury rose to 2.6% in 2022, an increase of 0.4 percentage points from 2021 and the highest it has been since 2004, when it was 2.7%
- An estimated 185.6 million working days were lost because of sickness or injury in 2022; this level was a record high, but the number of days lost per worker, at 5.7, was not
- The most common reason for sickness absence was minor illnesses, accounting for 29.3% of occurrences
- All age groups experienced increases in their sickness absence rate in 2022.

(Source: ONS, Sickness absence in the UK labour market, 2022)

Plan for the day:

There are many ways to manage your welfare, resilience and remain healthy. Do you need assistance with this? If so, speak to your employer or the Learning Coach at Total People. We have many ideas and resources, and can signpost you to support with any concerns with sickness at work.

Remember someone who is resilient and healthy is more likely to keep themselves safeguarded.





WELLBEING - MANAGING PRESSURES OVER THE FESTIVE PERIOD

As we enter into the festive period many of us will be planning holidays, breaks, parties, and other festive things to celebrate the month. You may be reflecting as a person of faith or just using the break to wind down as we enter 2024.

However, this can also be a stressful time; please remember that MIND, the mental health organisation in the UK, promotes many coping tips. Visit their website and take some ideas as needed. There is a range of guidance covering relationships, money, keeping safe, dangers of spiking, etc., as well as key phone numbers for support.

Remember no one should feel alone during this time or anytime. Even if you have plans in place, share this site as part of your role as an 'active British citizen'. You never know, it may help someone in need.

Christmas and mental health - support

[Christmas and mental health - MIND](#)

Signposting and advice online counselling for under and over 18 year olds

[Qwell](#)

Free online wellbeing support

[Kooth](#)

A free, anonymous place for young people to find counselling and support.



INCLUSION ALL ROUND -

FOCUS ON KEY EVENTS

The winter solstice on 22 December is a special time to people who celebrate this occasion, and also for others who start to see the days getting longer from there on. Do any other key events appear interesting to you as a learner?

Religious/cultural

3	Advent Sunday <i>Christian</i>
8	Feast of the immaculate conception <i>Catholic Christian</i>
8	Rohatsu (Bodhi day) <i>Buddhist</i>
8-15	Hanukkah* <i>Judaism</i>
16	Dhanu Sankranti** <i>Hindu</i>
21	Yule <i>Wicca and Pagan</i>
22	Gita Jayanti <i>Hindu</i>
24	Christmas eve <i>Christian</i>
25	Christmas day <i>Christian</i>
25	Feast of the nativity of our lord <i>Orthodox Christian</i>
26	Feast of Saint Stephen <i>Christian</i>
26	Zarathosht diso <i>Zoroastrian</i>
28	Holy innocents' day <i>Christian</i>
31	Feast of the holy family <i>Catholic Christian</i>
31	Watch night <i>Christian</i>

Awareness and events

1	World AIDS day
2	International day for the abolition of slavery
3	International day of persons with disabilities
10	Human rights day
18	International migrants' day
20	International human solidarity day
22	Winter solstice
26	Boxing day
31	New year's eve/hogmanay

MODERN BRITISH SOCIETY - RESPECT AND TOLERANCE

It is important that, as active British citizens, we make efforts to learn about events and religious times – so do some research on Hanukkah or read up on Guru Singh as suggestions. This will assist your knowledge of other faiths and promote the British Values of tolerance and respect.

Religious/cultural

1	Solemnity of Mary, mother of God <i>Catholic Christian</i>
1	Gantan-sai (new year) <i>Shinto</i>
5	Twelfth night <i>Christian</i>
6	Epiphany <i>Christian</i>
7	Feast of the nativity <i>Orthodox Christian</i>
7	Baptism of the lord Jesus <i>Catholic Christian</i>
8	Seijin no Hi <i>Shinto</i>
13	Lohri/Maghi <i>Hindu and Sikh</i>
14	Old new year <i>Orthodox Christian</i>
15	Makar Sankranti ** <i>Hindu</i>
15-18	Pongal ** <i>Hindu</i>
17	Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh <i>Hindu</i>
18-25	Week of prayer for Christian unity <i>Christian</i>
20	Timkat <i>Ethiopian Orthodox Christian</i>
25	Conversion of Saint Paul <i>Christian</i>
25	Thaipusam ** <i>Hindu</i>
25	Tu BiShvat * <i>Judaism</i>
25-27	Mahayana new year ** <i>Buddhist</i>

Awareness and events

4	World braille day
15	Martin Luther King Jr day
21	World religion day
24	International day of education
25	Robert Burns night (Burns night)
27	Holocaust memorial day



IN THE NEWS – DEMOCRACY, TOLERANCE, FREEDOM, RULE OF LAW – **PROGRESS** **REVIEW TOPIC**

In Oct 2023, the Independent and Guardian newspapers reported on Health Secretary Steve Barclay's speech on the NHS at the party conference. In the speech he addressed the very topical issue of gender and sex and the rights of all:

Trans-hospital patients in England to be banned from female-only and male-only wards.

What are your views on the topic, remembering that the rights of all should be at the centre of, and protected within, the Equality Act. Keep in mind the British Values of respect, tolerance, and the rule of law within your critical thinking.

KEEPING LEARNERS SAFE AT WORK (H&S) – THE RULE OF LAW

At Total People we aim to provide for the Health & Safety of learners through the initial learning assessment and screening work. This system allows learning coaches to identify your learning needs and any additional support.

Though technically it may not appear this is part of 'Health & Safety', providing 'safe and effective care' and looking after your 'health and development' is all part of good safeguarding and Health and Safety.

Learners whose needs are met are more likely to complete the apprenticeship journey in a positive manner and sometimes, if learning needs are not met, it could lead to a Health and Safety incident. Learners and employers should enquire with their learning coaches on this process.

Please contact Steve Stringer, our Learning Support Lead, or Ben Holden, our Access Arrangements Assessor, for more information.

Useful resource and good practice to use: H&S is everyone's responsibility

Visit the link below for more learning: [Health & Safety at Work | Factsheets | CIPD](#)

Use these resources with colleagues, discuss in team meetings, use in your tasks or assignments. There are some great links here.



NEXT STEPS



Who to contact if you need help and support

There are a number of ways you can ask for some help and support. You could contact your Learning Coach or speak to your workplace manager or mentor.

We understand that asking for help can be difficult, you can ask anyone at Total People at any time. We will always take concerns seriously and treat your information with care and respect.



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Designated Lead for Safeguarding



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You can also ask for help or support by contacting our safeguarding team directly via email or via our online reporting tool.

To report online visit www.totalpeople.co.uk/about/safeguarding/report-a-concern

Email: Safeguarding@totalpeople.co.uk

There is also an independent site called [Together All](#) that you can join if you wish. It is anonymous and offers community-based support. Please note it is important to follow their 'house rules' to keep safe online. Click on the link to see whether this may be of use to you.

Total People is part of LTE group. LTE group is committed to equality of opportunity, non-discriminatory practices and supporting individual students. This information is also available in a range of formats, such as large print, on request.