

JTL, a training provider to the building services engineering sectors



Who are JTL?

JTL is a national work based learning provider to the building services engineering sector. JTL offers Advanced Apprenticeships in electrical installation, plumbing, heating, motor rewind, heat and ventilation and engineering maintenance across the whole of England and Wales, working with employers. JTL manages over 6000 apprentices who are supported by dedicated national and regional staff throughout the 4 year apprenticeship.

The safeguarding and well-being of apprentices is essential to JTL and there are many procedures and systems in place to ensure this. The focus on safeguarding has allowed JTL to build a model of effective practice that compliments work based learning and allows JTL to work within regulatory and legislative frameworks.

What LSIS training did you access?

The Equality and Diversity Officer for JTL attended the LSIS Designated Person training and the Safeguarding Facilitators training to lead on implementing safeguarding practices on behalf of JTL.

What did you do as a result of the training?

As a result of the Safeguarding Facilitators training the Equality and Diversity Officer launched JTL's Safeguarding Awareness training for all staff. This was delivered nationally throughout England and Wales. The training took place over 8 months and was delivered to all JTL staff, at all levels. The training was modified to meet JTL's needs, for instance the training was designed around apprentices from the age of 16 years old. Before the training was launched a comprehensive and robust Safeguarding Policy was developed for staff and apprentices and procedures were put in place for equality and safeguarding incidents reporting. Feedback from the staff indicated they considered the training to be thought provoking. Staff felt it reinforced the practices the operational field staff had in place to meet the apprentice's needs. The main messages gained as a result of the training were;

- staff became aware of who the designated safeguarding officer was
- how to recognise the signs of potential abuse
- who and where to report suspicions or incidents and
- confidence in the systems JTL have in place to safeguard apprentices

JTL also developed a structured process for reporting incidents; this was done with the IT team who developed a reporting and recording incident page available on every apprentice's file held electronically through JTL's Management Information System. It was agreed that incidents should be reported using this system as this was the most effective way of ensuring confidentiality.

What has been the impact of the changes you made?

JTL have now embedded safeguarding into all documents and procedures. Previously when a decision was made for a procedure or process safeguarding would have been an afterthought. Now safeguarding is at the forefront of the thinking by the decision makers within JTL. The question always asked is “*how does this meet safeguarding and equality?*”

Some of the other changes have been the communication lines for apprentices. All apprentices can now report any issues they have to their regional team, but they can also go direct to the Equality and Diversity Officer, the methods of communication are now varied, for instance, telephone, email, text. Apprentices can also report incidents or issues via the JTL website, this facility is open to apprentices, parents, employers and colleges.

JTL have set up a robust safeguarding risk assessment process that includes a support mechanism for the apprentice. This involves working together with the employer and the college to ensure the apprentice is safe. JTL have also set up apprentice forums, there are specific forums, for instance a female only forum, where JTL female apprentices can ask questions and speak openly to other apprentices or female members of staff. Apprentices can also use the forums to talk openly about their time during their apprenticeships. Any issues reported on the forums are directed to the Equality and Diversity Officer for follow-up or to take action.

JTL have also developed key partnerships with organisations such as the NSPCC and Get Connected who provide confidential advice. All apprentices are given information on safeguarding and support organisations and JTL have developed a list of support organisations for apprentices to access via the JTL website.

Have you any future plans to develop safeguarding?

JTL will continue to progress its procedures and practices within equality and safeguarding and will look to provide every apprentice with information, advice and guidance as well as signpost apprentices to appropriate organisations for support.

JTL have also included safeguarding into its Single Equality Scheme and also its Equality Impact Assessments.

JTL staff are more confident when apprentices disclose information and are confident they are supported by the Equality and Diversity Officer. All safeguarding information such as safeguarding risk assessments are held at Head Office and staff have limited access to incidents reported.