

## What is F-TEC Open Minds?

Welcome to Open Minds, a bimonthly newsletter from F-TEC promoting awareness, wellbeing, and shared values in our community. Each edition covers real-life topics that matter from mental health and social issues to safety tips and personal development. We also explore Fundamental British Values to help build a respectful, inclusive environment for everyone.

**Our aim is simple: to keep you informed, help you feel connected, celebrate diversity, and support a safe and inclusive learning and working environment.**

## Fundamental British Values in Action

Fundamental British Values are more than tradition or symbols. They shape how we treat one another and create safe, respectful communities at F-TEC, in the workplace, and beyond. These values appear in everyday behaviour, decisions, and interactions.

### Democracy in Action

- Speak up respectfully and listen to others
- Take part in feedback, meetings, or reviews
- Support fair decision-making

### Rule of Law in Action

- Follow workplace and training rules
- Take responsibility for your actions
- Report concerns through the correct channels

### Individual Liberty in Action

- Express yourself safely and respectfully
- Make informed choices about your behaviour
- Respect others' rights and identities

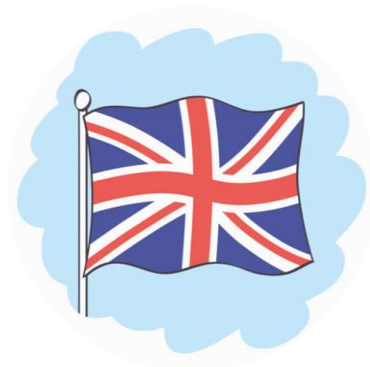
### Mutual Respect in Action

- Speak politely and professionally avoiding offensive language or jokes
- Respect boundaries and consent
- Treat everyone fairly

### Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs in Action

- Be open-minded toward different cultures and beliefs
- Avoid assumptions or stereotypes
- Support inclusive environments and work respectfully alongside others

**Living by these values helps create a safe, positive environment where everyone can learn, work, and succeed.**



## Respect in a Changing World

March and April bring important conversations around equality, respect, and how we treat one another at work, in training, online, and in everyday life. As social media and online influence continue to shape opinions and behaviour, it's more important than ever to pause, reflect, and consider how our actions and words affect others.

This edition of Open Minds focuses on building awareness and encouraging positive, respectful behaviour for everyone. These topics are not about blame or judgement. They are about understanding, growth, and creating safer, more respectful learning and working environments for all regardless of gender, background, or role.



## Equality & Fair Treatment: What It Really Means

Equality means everyone deserves to be treated fairly, safely, and with dignity. It doesn't mean everyone is the same it means everyone has the same right to respect and opportunity.



### Unfair treatment can include:

- Dismissing someone's views because of gender
- Making assumptions about roles or abilities
- Excluding people from conversations or opportunities
- Normalising jokes or comments that single people out

Creating equality benefits workplaces, teams, and learning environments by building trust and cooperation.

## Misogyny, Misandry & Harmful Stereotypes

While misogyny refers to prejudice or hostility toward women, harmful stereotypes can affect any gender. Reducing people to assumptions about strength, emotions, behaviour, or roles and this limits everyone.

### Examples of harmful thinking include:

- Expecting men to suppress emotions
- Expecting women to behave or dress a certain way
- Treating relationships as power struggles
- Believing one group is "owed" attention or respect



Challenging these ideas supports mutual respect, individual liberty, and tolerance all core British Values.

## Online Culture & Influence: Think Critically

Social media can shape opinions quickly. Algorithms often push extreme content because it gets reactions not because it's accurate or healthy.



### Before accepting a message, ask:

- Is this encouraging respect or division?
- Does it rely on anger, blame, or fear?
- Would this attitude work in a real workplace?

Being digitally aware helps protect your wellbeing and your reputation.

## Consent & Boundaries: Everyone's Responsibility

Consent isn't just about relationships it applies to everyday interactions, including conversations, jokes, personal space, and online behaviour. Everyone has the right to feel comfortable, respected, and safe in learning, work, and social environments.

### Consent means:

- Respecting "no" without pressure or challenge
- Not sharing private information, messages or images
- Listening when someone says they're uncomfortable
- Understanding that silence, or lack of response is not agreement



Clear boundaries help prevent misunderstandings and harm. Respecting boundaries shows maturity, professionalism, and consideration for others.

## Communication: How We Speak Matters

The way we communicate our tone, language, and timing can greatly affect how messages are understood and received. Even well-intended comments can cause harm if they are delivered without care or respect.

### Healthy communication includes:

- Speaking respectfully, even when disagreeing
- Avoiding personal insults or sarcasm
- Listening without interrupting
- Taking responsibility if something causes harm



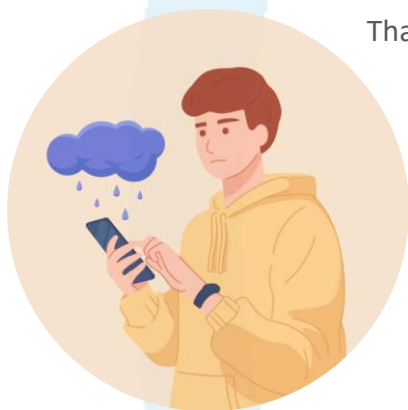
Apologising, reflecting, or adjusting behaviour is not a weakness. It shows accountability, emotional awareness, and personal growth.

## Charlie's Story: Seeing the Bigger Picture

Charlie enjoyed scrolling through social media after work. Some content focused on confidence, success, and self-improvement but over time, it became more negative. Certain posts blamed entire groups for personal frustrations and encouraged “us vs them” thinking.

Charlie noticed changes in himself. He became quicker to judge others and slower to listen. During a group discussion, someone challenged a comment he made, explaining how it came across.

That conversation made Charlie reflect.



He started following a wider range of voices and questioning where his opinions came from. He realised that confidence doesn't come from comparison or blame — it comes from respect, balance, and understanding.

Charlie didn't feel “silenced.” He felt more informed.

## Positive Role Modelling in Work & Training

Whether you realise it or not, your behaviour influences others. In workplaces and training environments, people often learn just as much from what they observe as from what they're taught. The way you respond to challenges can set the tone for those around you especially for new starters or quieter colleagues.

### Positive role models:

- Treat colleagues fairly
- Respect differences
- Take accountability
- Support others
- Set professional standards



Employers value people who contribute to a respectful culture just as much as technical skills. Being reliable, inclusive, and professional helps build trust, improves teamwork, and creates environments where everyone can do their best work.



## Speaking Up Safely

If something doesn't feel right, it's important to trust that instinct. Speaking up doesn't have to mean confrontation or conflict, there are different ways to address concerns while keeping yourself and others safe.

### If something doesn't feel right:

- You can challenge behaviour calmly
- You can support someone privately
- You can report concerns through appropriate channels



Speaking up helps maintain safe environments for everyone. It can prevent small issues from becoming bigger problems and shows a commitment to fairness, dignity, and shared responsibility.

## Wellbeing & Personal Growth

Conversations about behaviour and equality can feel uncomfortable but growth often starts there. Learning how to navigate boundaries, values, and expectations is part of developing confidence and resilience, both personally and professionally.

### If you're feeling:

- Confused by online messages
- Pressured to behave a certain way
- Unsure how to handle boundaries
- Concerned about someone else

You don't have to figure it out alone. Reaching out for advice, asking questions, or seeking support can protect your wellbeing and help you make informed, respectful choices as you continue to grow.



## Support & Useful Resources

If you're affected by any of the topics covered in Open Minds or are concerned about someone else support and advice are available.

### Mental Health & Emotional Support

- **Samaritans** – Free, confidential support, 24/7  
116 123 | [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)
- **Shout** – 24/7 text support if you're feeling overwhelmed  
Text **SHOUT** to **85258**

### Respect, Behaviour & Relationships



- **Respect** – Advice on healthy relationships, boundaries, and behaviour  
respect.uk.net
- **Relate** – Support with communication and relationships  
relate.org.uk

## Equality, Discrimination & Harassment

- **Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS)** – Advice on discrimination and equality issues  
0808 800 0082 | equalityadvisoryservice.com

## Online Influence & Safety

- **Internet Matters** – Guidance on online behaviour, social media, and digital wellbeing  
internetmatters.org
- **UK Safer Internet Centre** – Support with online concerns and reporting  
saferinternet.org.uk

## Abuse, Bullying or Feeling Unsafe

- **Victim Support** – Free, confidential support  
08 08 16 89 111 | victimsupport.org.uk
- **National Domestic Abuse Helpline** (England, 24/7)  
0808 2000 247 | nationaldahelpline.org.uk
- **Men's Advice Line** – Support for male victims  
0808 801 0327 | mensadviceline.org.uk

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