

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

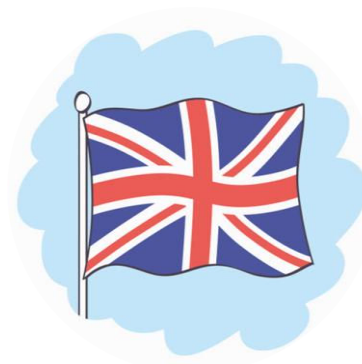
Mutual Respect in Action

- 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.



Summer Awareness: Staying Safe, Respectful & Aware

As we move into May and June, longer days and warmer weather naturally lead to more activity, both in and outside of work. Whether it's spending more time outdoors, attending social events, or simply adjusting to busier environments, this time of year can bring both opportunities and risks.

This edition focuses on staying aware, making responsible choices, and looking after both yourself and others during the summer months.



Seasonal Safety: Work & Everyday Life

Warmer conditions can affect concentration, energy levels, and overall safety, particularly with hands-on or outdoor roles. Even simple factors like dehydration or fatigue can increase the risk of mistakes or accidents.

It's important to stay mindful of how the environment affects you and to take simple but effective precautions:

- Drink water regularly, even if you don't feel thirsty
- Take breaks when needed, especially in direct sunlight or heat
- Use appropriate PPE, including sun protection where required
- Stay alert to signs of fatigue in yourself and others



Adapting to seasonal conditions is part of working safely and responsibly.

Out & About: Social Responsibility

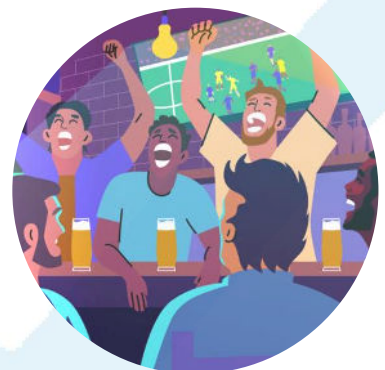
With lighter evenings and warmer weather, social activities tend to increase. While this can be a positive time to relax and connect with others, it's important to remain aware of how situations can change.

Social environments can sometimes lead to lowered awareness or different behaviour, particularly where alcohol or large groups are involved. Keeping a sense of responsibility helps ensure that everyone has a safe and enjoyable experience.

This includes:

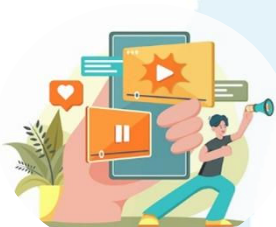
- Respecting personal space and boundaries at all times
- Being mindful of how alcohol can affect judgement and behaviour
- Looking out for friends, colleagues, or anyone who may be vulnerable
- Planning ahead to ensure safe travel home

Enjoying yourself and being responsible go hand in hand.



Online Trends & Real-World Impact

Online content continues to influence behaviour, especially during social periods where trends, challenges, or viral moments gain attention quickly. However, not everything shared online reflects safe or realistic behaviour.



It's important to pause and think critically before engaging with or sharing content:

- Does this encourage safe and respectful behaviour?
- Could this put me or others at risk?
- Would I be comfortable with this being seen by an employer or shared publicly?

Developing digital awareness helps protect both your wellbeing and your future opportunities.

Respecting Shared Spaces

During the summer, shared environments such as workplaces, public transport, and social spaces can become busier. This makes consideration and awareness even more important. Respecting shared spaces isn't just about rules, it's about recognising that everyone has the right to feel comfortable and safe.

This can be shown by:

- Being considerate of noise levels and behaviour
- Cleaning up after yourself and respecting the environment
- Giving people appropriate personal space
- Being patient and considerate in busy situations



Small, everyday actions contribute to a more positive environment for everyone.

Mental Wellbeing: It's Okay to Slow Down

While summer is often associated with positivity and activity, it can also create pressure to always be social, active, or "having a good time." This expectation can sometimes feel overwhelming. It's important to recognise that everyone experiences this time of year differently. Taking care of your mental wellbeing means understanding your own needs and limits.



Remember:

- It's okay to take time for yourself
- It's okay to say no to plans
- It's okay not to feel positive all the time
- Balance is more important than keeping up appearances

Looking after your wellbeing helps you stay grounded and resilient.

Jordan's Story: Thinking Ahead

Jordan had been looking forward to a weekend festival with friends. The weather was great, and the atmosphere felt relaxed and exciting. As the day went on, the crowd grew larger, and the environment became more unpredictable.

Nearby, a group of people were filming social media challenges, encouraging others to take part. At first, it seemed harmless and entertaining, and there was some pressure to join in. Jordan paused and thought about it more carefully. He considered the potential risks, how quickly situations could escalate, and how easily something could go wrong in a crowded space.

Instead of getting involved, Jordan chose to step back. He checked in with his friends, and together they made sure they stayed aware of their surroundings and stuck together throughout the evening.

Looking back, Jordan realised that making a different choice didn't take away from the experience, it made it safer and more enjoyable. Confidence came from thinking ahead, not following the crowd.



Being a Positive Influence

Whether you realise it or not, your actions influence the people around you. In both work and social settings, others often take cues from how people behave. Being a positive influence doesn't mean being perfect, it means being aware, respectful, and responsible.



This can include:

- Encouraging safe and sensible decisions
- Challenging inappropriate behaviour calmly where appropriate
- Supporting others who may feel uncomfortable or unsure
- Setting a professional and respectful example

These behaviours help create environments where everyone feels safe and supported.

Speaking Up & Looking Out for Others

If something doesn't feel right, it's important to trust that instinct. You don't need to handle situations alone or put yourself at risk, there are always ways to respond safely.

You might:

- Check in with someone who seems uncomfortable or at risk
- Remove yourself from a situation that doesn't feel safe
- Report concerns through appropriate channels



Speaking up, even in small ways, helps prevent problems from escalating and supports a safer environment for everyone.



Wellbeing & Support

If you're feeling unsure, pressured, or affected by anything in or outside of work, it's important to remember that support is available. Reaching out for advice, asking questions, or talking to someone you trust can help you make informed and safe decisions.

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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