

## **Safeguarding Policy**

**Last updated: 25th June 2026**

**Next review: 25th June 2027**

### **1. Our commitment**

Participation People is committed to creating safe, inclusive and empowering environments where everyone can participate confidently, knowing their wellbeing is our highest priority.

Meaningful participation can only happen when children and young people feel safe, respected and supported. Safeguarding is therefore not separate from participation; it underpins every activity, conversation and relationship across Participation People.

Our approach is informed by the Lundy Model of Participation, which supports Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We believe meaningful participation is about more than creating opportunities for children and young people to share their views. It also means creating safe, inclusive environments where they feel confident to participate, know they will be listened to, and understand how their voices influence decisions. Safeguarding is fundamental to creating these conditions and enabling meaningful participation.

We are committed to safeguarding everyone we work with by promoting their welfare, preventing harm wherever possible and responding promptly, appropriately and proportionately to any concerns.

### **2. Purpose**

This policy sets out Participation People's commitment to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk. It explains the principles that guide our safeguarding practice, the responsibilities of those working on behalf of Participation People and the procedures that support the safe delivery of our work.

This policy should be read alongside our Safeguarding Procedures, Data Protection and Information Governance Policy, Equality, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (EDEI) Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and other related organisational policies.

Participation People maintains detailed safeguarding procedures and operational guidance to support employees, volunteers, associates and partners in implementing this policy. These internal documents support the implementation of this policy and are reviewed regularly to ensure our safeguarding practice remains robust, consistent and aligned with current legislation and best practice.

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to everyone working on behalf of Participation People, including employees, Young Consultants, volunteers, associates, trustees, contractors and anyone delivering work in partnership with us.

This policy underpins how Participation People creates and maintains safe environments for the children, young people, adults at risk, families and communities we work alongside. It informs the way we plan, deliver and review our work to ensure safeguarding remains central to everything we do.

### **4. Safeguarding commitments**

Participation People will:

- place safeguarding and wellbeing at the centre of our work,
- maintain clear safeguarding procedures and reporting routes,
- provide regular safeguarding training appropriate to role and context,
- ensure safeguarding is embedded within supervision, team meetings and organisational learning,
- create psychologically safe and inclusive participation environments,
- challenge bullying, harassment, discrimination and harmful behaviour,
- ensure children, young people and families know how to raise concerns,
- ensure safeguarding arrangements reflect both face-to-face and digital engagement,
- maintain safer recruitment and DBS processes where appropriate,
- work collaboratively with partner organisations and safeguarding agencies,
- and continually review and strengthen our safeguarding practice.

### **5. Roles and safeguarding responsibilities**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

All staff, volunteers, contractors and associates are expected to:

- understand this policy and related procedures,
- recognise safeguarding concerns,

- maintain safe and appropriate boundaries,
- contribute to safe and respectful environments,
- and report concerns appropriately.

## Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)

Participation People has designated safeguarding officers responsible for:

- providing safeguarding advice and support,
- overseeing safeguarding concerns and referrals,
- ensuring safeguarding records are securely managed,
- supporting staff, volunteers and associates,
- ensuring safeguarding procedures are communicated clearly,
- supporting safe partnership working,
- ensuring appropriate safeguarding supervision and reflective practice,
- maintaining awareness of legislation, guidance and emerging safeguarding themes,
- and promoting best practice across the organisation.

Designated Safeguarding Officers can be contacted via:

[safeguarding@participationpeople.com](mailto:safeguarding@participationpeople.com)

Current Designated Safeguarding Officers are listed below and may change as organisational roles evolve. The safeguarding email address should always be used as the primary point of contact.

- Antonia Dixey – Chief Executive Officer
- Temi Oluwadare – Director of Operations
- Priya Shah – Programme Manager

## Managers and Project Leads

Managers and project leads are responsible for:

- supporting safe practice across projects and activities,
- ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed,
- supporting staff and volunteers to raise concerns,
- escalating concerns appropriately,
- ensuring appropriate safeguarding planning and risk assessment,
- and ensuring new staff, volunteers and associates receive appropriate safeguarding induction and support.

## Staff, Volunteers, Contractors and Associates

All staff, volunteers, contractors and associates are responsible for:

- following safeguarding policies and procedures,
- completing safeguarding training appropriate to their role,
- maintaining professional boundaries,
- raising safeguarding concerns promptly,
- supporting psychologically safe and inclusive environments,
- and acting in line with Participation People's code of conduct and safe practice guidance.

## Code of Conduct

All adults working in a paid or voluntary capacity for Participation People are expected to follow the organisation's Code of Conduct and Safe Practice Guidance.

Together, these documents help to:

- safeguard children, young people and adults at risk,
- support safe, ethical and respectful participation practice,
- and protect staff, volunteers and associates from situations that may create safeguarding risks or misunderstandings.

## 6. Reporting concerns

If you are a child, young person, parent, carer, partner organisation or member of the public and have a safeguarding concern relating to Participation People, please contact **[safeguarding@participationpeople.com](mailto:safeguarding@participationpeople.com)**. Your concern will be treated sensitively, taken seriously and reviewed by the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Officer.

## Procedures and Practice

Participation People maintains clear safeguarding procedures to ensure concerns are recognised, recorded, responded to and escalated appropriately. These procedures are set out in our supporting safeguarding documentation.

Participation People maintains clear safeguarding procedures for:

- recognising safeguarding concerns,
- responding to disclosures,
- recording concerns,
- escalation and reporting,
- allegations management,
- whistleblowing,
- safe practice,
- digital safeguarding,
- and partnership working.

## Responding to Concerns and Breaches of Safe Practice

Participation People takes safeguarding concerns seriously.

Any concerns regarding:

- unsafe behaviour,
- breaches of safe practice,
- allegations,
- harmful conduct,
- or safeguarding risks

must be raised promptly through the appropriate safeguarding or management routes.

Concerns will be responded to proportionately, sensitively and in line with safeguarding, disciplinary and allegations management procedures where appropriate.

If your concern relates to organisational practice rather than an immediate safeguarding issue, you may also wish to refer to our Whistleblowing Policy.

## 7. Safer recruitment, training and support

Participation People is committed to safer recruitment practices and appropriate safeguarding training.

We will:

- carry out enhanced DBS checks where appropriate,
- ensure safeguarding considerations form part of recruitment and induction,
- provide safeguarding training appropriate to role and context,
- support reflective safeguarding practice and supervision,
- and review safeguarding learning regularly.

All staff, volunteers and associates should understand:

- how to recognise safeguarding concerns,
- how to respond appropriately

## 8. Information sharing and record keeping

Participation People maintains clear processes for:

- recording safeguarding concerns,
- managing confidential information,
- storing safeguarding records securely,
- and sharing information appropriately and lawfully.

Safeguarding records are:

- stored securely,
- accessible only to those who need them,
- and managed in line with data protection legislation and safeguarding guidance.

We will only share information that is necessary, proportionate and in the best interests of safeguarding, in accordance with legal and professional responsibilities.

## **9. Partnership working**

Participation People frequently works alongside partner organisations, commissioners and external agencies.

Where projects involve shared safeguarding responsibilities, we will:

- clarify safeguarding roles and escalation routes,
- identify lead safeguarding contacts where appropriate,
- work collaboratively with partner organisations,
- and ensure safeguarding concerns are escalated appropriately across organisational boundaries.

We believe safeguarding and meaningful participation go hand in hand. Working collaboratively with our partners helps ensure children and young people are both safe and genuinely able to influence the decisions that affect them.

## **10. Online and digital safeguarding**

Participation People recognises that safeguarding responsibilities extend across:

- online spaces,
- digital communication,
- social media,
- hybrid engagement,
- and asynchronous participation.

We are committed to:

- maintaining professional boundaries online,
- creating safe and moderated digital spaces where appropriate,
- ensuring safeguarding concerns arising online are responded to appropriately,
- clearly communicating digital boundaries and reporting routes,
- and supporting children and young people to participate safely in digital environments.

Further guidance on the ethical use of digital technologies and artificial intelligence can be found in Participation People's Artificial Intelligence Policy.

## **10. Governance**

Participation People continually reviews and strengthens its safeguarding practice to reflect learning, lived experience, emerging risks and best practice.

We work alongside children, young people, families, colleagues and partners to co-design, review and improve our safeguarding approaches, ensuring they remain responsive, inclusive and informed by lived experience as well as statutory guidance and sector best practice.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and we are committed to creating a culture where concerns are raised confidently, acted upon appropriately and used to continually strengthen our practice.

## **11. Relevant legislation and guidance**

This policy reflects relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance across the UK, including:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children,
- Keeping Children Safe in Education,
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004,
- The Care Act 2014,
- Data Protection legislation
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- and relevant online safety and safeguarding guidance.

Where Participation People works across national boundaries or within partner organisations, we will consider and apply the relevant safeguarding legislation, guidance and procedures appropriate to that context.

Participation People supports the principles outlined within safeguarding and equality legislation and applies them in the context of our delivery model and participation practice.

### **Related policies**

- Safeguarding Procedures
- Data Protection and Information Governance Policy
- Equality, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (EDEI) Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Artificial Intelligence Policy
- Valuing Young People's Participation: Policy and Principles

## **12. Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where legislation, safeguarding guidance, organisational learning or best practice changes.