

SAFEGUARDING IN DIGITAL MEDIA POLICY 2026

POLICY STATUS: **Operational**

POLICY CYCLE: **Annually or if Legal Change Required**

OWNER: **Urban Judge FRSA**

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: **Desingated Safeguarding Leads**

REVIEWED BY: **Governance Committee**

VERSION CONTROL

Adoption: **January 2025**

Latest Review: **February 2026**

Next Review: **September 2026**

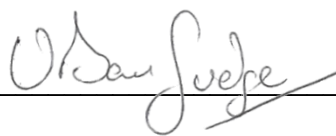
Signed: _____



Hayley Brown,
Vice-Chair of Directors;
Director responsible for Safeguarding

Date: 15 / 02 / 2026

Signed: _____



Urban Judge FRSA,
Group CEO
& Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Date: 15 / 02 / 2026

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1. Introduction

Digital media sits at the centre of YouthTV's mission, giving children, young people and vulnerable adults the opportunity to share stories, develop creativity and take part in positive media experiences. These opportunities also introduce specific safeguarding considerations linked to online behaviour, digital production, social platforms and the handling of personal data. This policy ensures that safeguarding is firmly embedded in every aspect of YouthTV's digital media activity.

2. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear standards that protect children, young people and vulnerable adults when they participate in YouthTV's digital media work. This includes filming, photography, audio recording, livestreaming, online events and all digital content creation.

The policy applies to all YouthTV staff, directors, volunteers, contractors and contributors. It complements the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Safeguarding Adults Policy by providing guidance specific to digital environments and online practice.

3. Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read together with the following YouthTV documents:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Social Media and Online Content Policy
- Media and Communications Policy
- Data Protection and GDPR Policy and Compliance Statement
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Declaration Form
- Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy

Together these documents create a complete safeguarding framework across both physical and digital settings.

4. Safeguarding Principles in Digital Media

All YouthTV digital media activity must prioritise the welfare, protection and dignity of participants. Safeguarding responsibilities apply equally online and offline.

YouthTV will recognise and act on risks including unsuitable contact, cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, exploitation, misuse of images or information and digital behaviour that could place a participant at risk. Staff and volunteers are expected to take a proactive approach to identifying, reporting and reducing any such risk.

5. Consent and Privacy

YouthTV requires informed and meaningful consent before any filming, photography or recording involving children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Consent must be clearly understood by the participant or their parent or guardian. The individual must understand the nature of the project, how the content will be used, where it may appear and how long it may be available. They must also understand that they can raise concerns or change their mind at any stage before publication.

Age requirements for consent

Under 16

Written consent from a parent or guardian is required. The child must also receive an age appropriate explanation of the project and be asked whether they agree to take part. Their wishes must always be respected. If a child does not want to participate, they must not be included even if parental consent has been provided. The Senior or Executive Producer, a member of the YouthTV Executive Team, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed before any child under 16 is recorded or photographed.

Ages 16 to 17

Young people aged 16 or 17 may provide informed consent themselves. YouthTV will normally also seek parental or guardian consent unless a safeguarding reason makes this inappropriate. The young person must understand the nature of the project and feel comfortable with the use of their contribution. Any concerns about a young person's welfare or ability to give informed consent must be discussed with the DSL.

Ages 18 and above

Adults with capacity may give their own consent. When the material involves sensitive or personal subject matter, YouthTV will ensure the participant receives additional explanation and support so they understand how their contribution may be shown or interpreted.

Adults who may lack capacity

Consent should be obtained from the individual wherever possible, with the support of a relevant carer, advocate or legal representative. Additional welfare measures will be put in place before any involvement. The Senior or Executive Producer and the DSL must be informed before any recording involving an adult who may lack capacity. No participation can proceed until these discussions have taken place.

Right of YouthTV to decline participation

YouthTV reserves the right to refuse consent or participation in any case where the DSL or CEO believes that involvement may pose a risk to welfare, safeguarding, editorial integrity or organisational responsibility. Any decision to refuse participation must be discussed and agreed by the DSL and CEO, who will record the reason clearly and ensure the participant or their parent or guardian is informed in an appropriate and respectful manner.

Ongoing consent

Consent is considered a continuing process. Participants should be reminded that:

- They may ask questions at any time
- They may pause or stop their involvement
- They may withdraw consent before publication

- YouthTV will take reasonable steps to remove or edit content if withdrawal of consent is linked to safety or wellbeing

Privacy

YouthTV will not publish or distribute content that includes personal contact details, home addresses, school locations, identifying landmarks or any information that may compromise safety. All content must comply with the Data Protection and GDPR Policy.

6. Online Conduct and Participation

Anyone taking part in YouthTV digital platforms must act respectfully, responsibly and in line with YouthTV values. Online sessions including workshops, recordings and livestreams must be moderated by trained YouthTV staff.

Private messaging between staff or volunteers and under 18s is not permitted unless formally approved for project purposes, recorded transparently and monitored through official channels.

7. Use of Digital Platforms and Tools

YouthTV will use secure platforms appropriate for the age and needs of participants. Digital spaces such as video meeting tools or collaboration platforms will be set up using appropriate safeguards including waiting rooms, controlled access, session passwords and restricted recording permissions. Staff must ensure that every online environment is safe, inclusive and properly monitored throughout.

8. Participant Welfare On Screen and Off Screen

YouthTV is committed to maintaining the highest standards of welfare for all participants. This includes their emotional, physical and psychological wellbeing during production and afterwards.

Participants must feel safe, respected and supported. They must not be pressured to share information or to take part in any activity that makes them uncomfortable. YouthTV will assess welfare risks linked to storylines, topics or digital content and will make adjustments where necessary.

A debrief session led by a Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL will take place after each recording session. The purpose of the debrief is to check on the wellbeing of participants, identify any concerns, confirm whether any follow up support is needed and ensure the experience has been positive.

The People and Culture team provides wellbeing support to staff, volunteers and contributors. Support can be accessed through a line manager or directly through information available on the YouthTV intranet. This includes signposting to further support where required.

9. Reporting Concerns and Incidents

Any safeguarding concern that arises during digital activity must be reported immediately using the procedures set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy or the Safeguarding Adults Policy. Concerns can also be raised under the Whistleblowing Policy.

YouthTV will take prompt action to address online risks including removing harmful content, stopping unsafe behaviour and making referrals to statutory services where required.

10. Monitoring and Compliance

The Chief Executive Officer and Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that safeguarding standards are applied consistently across all YouthTV digital media activities. The Board of Directors will receive updates as part of its safeguarding oversight responsibilities.

All staff and contributors will receive training on digital safeguarding during induction and as part of ongoing professional development.

11. Governance and Review

This policy will be reviewed each year by the Chief Executive Officer and approved by the Board of Directors. Amendments will be made where needed to reflect changes in legislation, technology or best practice.