

Online Safety Policy

Updated May 2026

This document outlines the procedures for best practices and online safety. It is aligned with our Safeguarding Policy & Procedures for [Children](#) & [Adults at Risk](#) at Risk & our [Safeguarding Code of Conduct](#).

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people when using the internet, social media, or mobile devices.
- Operate in line with our values and comply with the law in the use of online platforms and devices.
- Safeguard against online abuse and bullying.

This policy has been informed by guidance from the NSPCC [Online Safety](#) advice and relevant legislation.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all team members, children, young people, and anyone involved in Lighthouse's activities.

1.3 Lighthouse Commitments to Online Safety

Lighthouse is committed to safeguarding through the following actions:

1. **Online Safety Officer:** Niamh Hicks (Communications Manager) is designated Online Safety Officer.
 2. **Online Code of Conduct:** Having and sharing clear guidelines for all team and participants (below 1.4)
 3. **Handling Inappropriate Behaviour:** Establishing robust procedures to address online abuse or inappropriate behavior.
 4. **IT Security: Protect Personal Information & Data Security:** Ensuring personal data is shared and handled appropriately. Regularly review IT security systems. Tom Arr Jones (Head of Operations) is designated Data Protection Officer
 5. **Image Consent:** Requiring consent for the use of children's images.
 6. **Team Training:** Providing online safety training to team.
 7. **Risk Assessments:** Assessing all online events and social media platforms/new technologies before use.
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1.4 Online Code of Conduct

Lighthouse is committed to creating safe, inclusive, and supportive online spaces for all participants, with additional safeguards in place for events involving children, young people, and adults at risk.

1. **General Expectations**

Participants, including attendees, speakers, hosts, and team members, are expected to:

- Treat everyone with respect, regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnicity, or religion.
- Avoid harassment, bullying, or hate speech.
- Follow event-specific guidelines, such as raising hands or using chat features to participate.
- Avoid taking screenshots or recordings without explicit consent.
- For events involving children or vulnerable adults:
 - Do not share personal contact details or connect with under-18s on personal social media.

- Do not engage in one-to-one video calls with under-18s; ensure at least two DBS-checked team members are present.
- Ensure compliance with data protection laws by securely handling and disposing of personal information.

2. **Prohibited Behaviours**

The following behaviours are strictly prohibited during online events:

- Violence, threats, or offensive comments related to identity or personal characteristics.
- Sharing explicit or illegal material, trolling, doxing, or spamming.
- Cyberstalking, impersonation, or spreading malware.
- Encouraging harassment or engaging in disruptive behavior.
- For events involving children or adults at risk:
 - Using camera phones or taking screenshots during events.

3. **Expectations for Organisers, Facilitators, and Contributors**

Organisers, facilitators, and contributors must:

- Maintain a professional and respectful environment, including appropriate dress and background settings.
- Avoid sexualised imagery, activities, or content.
- Refrain from smoking, vaping, or using alcohol or illegal substances during events.
- For events involving children or adults at risk:
 - Ensure all interactions are supervised by at least two DBS-checked team members.
 - Take immediate action to report any suspicions or disclosures of abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Leads:
 - Alli Beddoes
 - Sian Habell-Aili

1.5 Responding to Online Abuse

In cases of online abuse, Lighthouse will:

- Follow safeguarding procedures to protect those involved.
- Provide training to address specific issues like cyberbullying, sexting, and exploitation.
- Regularly review response plans to ensure their effectiveness.

1.6 Keeping Yourself Safe Online

Lighthouse encourages the following steps are taken for online safety:

- Adjust privacy settings on social media to control visibility and notifications.
- Block or mute abusive accounts and report incidents.
- Avoid tagging or being tagged in inappropriate content.

For further advice [Online Abuse Toolkit](#) The Space

By adhering to these guidelines, Lighthouse ensures a safe, professional, and respectful online environment for all participants, including additional protections for children, young people, and vulnerable adults.