



YOUNG SOMERSET | BOARD POLICY

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy template | 2026 edition

POLICY OWNER	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
APPROVED BY	Board of Trustees
Approved by	David Elstone – Chair of Trustees
Signature	
APPROVAL DATE	14 OCTOBER 2026
EFFECTIVE DATE	1 September 2026
REVIEW DATE	November 2027, or earlier if required
VERSION / STATUS	1.0

Linked procedure: Safeguarding Procedure 2026. Operational detail is deliberately maintained outside this Board-approved policy.

Template note: delete all bracketed guidance before approval

1. Purpose

This policy sets Young Somerset's Board-approved commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk who engage with our services. It establishes the legal and governance framework for safeguarding, the standards Young Somerset will uphold, and the accountability for ensuring concerns are prevented, recognised and acted on. Operational steps are set out in the linked Safeguarding Procedure.

2. Scope

This policy applies to trustees, employees, volunteers, students, sessional and freelance workers, agency workers, contractors and anyone acting on behalf of Young Somerset. It applies across face-to-face, telephone, digital, outreach, community and education-based work. Young Somerset may work with people up to age 25; for child-protection law and statutory procedures, a child is anyone under 18. Adult safeguarding frameworks apply where relevant to people aged 18 and over.

3. Policy statement

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Young Somerset will maintain a child-centred, person-centred, trauma-informed and anti-discriminatory safeguarding culture. The welfare and best interests of the child will be a primary consideration in safeguarding decisions, and all concerns about abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm will be taken seriously.

Young Somerset will listen to children, young people and adults at risk, take account of their wishes and feelings, and act where necessary to protect them even when consent to share information has not been given, where there is a lawful safeguarding basis.

Young Somerset will work with safeguarding partners and other agencies, share information lawfully and proportionately, and use professional curiosity and respectful challenge where risk remains or the response of another agency is insufficient.

4. Legal and statutory framework

Young Somerset will comply with applicable safeguarding law and will have regard to relevant statutory guidance and local multi-agency arrangements. We will use the current version of each applicable source and update our procedures when the legal or statutory framework changes.

Framework	Young Somerset commitment
Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004	Safeguard and promote children's welfare; act and cooperate appropriately where children may need help or protection.
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026	Follow the current multi-agency safeguarding expectations relevant to organisations working with children and families, including timely help, information sharing and partnership working.
Information Sharing Statutory Guidance 2026	This incorporates the new guidance from the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 s4 framework. Introduces provisions concerning safeguarding information sharing, consistent identifiers, and associated statutory guidance/codes of practice.

The United Nations conventions= on the Rights of the Child 1992	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (commonly abbreviated as the CRC or UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty which sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health, and cultural rights of children. The convention defines a child as any human being under the age of eighteen, unless the age of majority is attained earlier under national legislation.
The Human Rights Act 1989	The Human Rights Act 1989 is a crucial piece of legislation that aims to protect and safeguard the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals. It serves as a beacon of hope, ensuring that every person is treated with dignity, equality, and respect.
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026	Where Young Somerset works in or with schools and colleges, meet contractual/host-setting safeguarding requirements and follow KCSIE-consistent practice relevant to the role. KCSIE is statutory guidance for schools and colleges; Young Somerset is not treated as one unless a service legally falls within that definition.
Care Act 2014 and Mental Capacity Act 2005	Apply adult safeguarding and mental-capacity duties and principles where relevant to adults who use our services.
Domestic Abuse Act 2021; Modern Slavery Act 2015; Sexual Offences Act 2003; Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 / Prevent; Serious Violence Duty guidance	Recognise and respond appropriately to these forms and contexts of harm, using statutory and local referral routes where applicable.
Equality Act 2010	Safeguarding practice will be inclusive and anti-discriminatory, with reasonable adjustments and due regard to equality duties where applicable.
Data Protection Act 2018; UK GDPR; Data (Use and Access) Act 2025	Safeguarding information will be recorded, stored and shared lawfully, securely, proportionately and for a clear safeguarding purpose.
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended; Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order; current DBS eligibility requirements	Young Somerset will operate safer recruitment and make legally required checks/referrals for eligible roles and regulated activity.
SEND Code of Practice; Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework where relevant	Apply additional statutory requirements where a service or setting falls within scope.
Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership and Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board procedures	Follow current local thresholds, referral, escalation and multi-agency procedures.

5. Policy commitments

Young Somerset will:

1. prevent harm through safer recruitment, clear professional boundaries, appropriate training, supervision and safe systems of work;
2. ensure safeguarding concerns are recognised early, taken seriously, recorded accurately, shared appropriately and acted on without avoidable delay;
3. maintain effective Designated Safeguarding Lead arrangements and clear routes for urgent advice, referral, allegations, low-level concerns and whistleblowing;
4. work in partnership with children, young people, families, education settings, statutory safeguarding agencies and other professionals while keeping the person's welfare central;
5. ensure non-attendance or non-engagement is considered in context and is not used to close support for a vulnerable child without documented safeguarding consideration;
6. protect safeguarding information and ensure data protection is not treated as a barrier to necessary and lawful information sharing;
7. learn from incidents, complaints, safeguarding reviews, audit, feedback and changes in law or guidance, and use that learning to improve practice.

6. Roles and accountability

The Board of Trustees approves this policy and holds Young Somerset to account for its intent. The Chief Executive Officer and Senior Leadership Team ensure it is implemented, resourced and monitored. The Designated Safeguarding Lead owns the safeguarding framework, linked procedure, training and assurance evidence. Managers apply the policy consistently. All staff and volunteers must understand and follow this policy and the linked procedure.

7. Assurance, exceptions and review

The DSL and senior leadership will monitor safeguarding through case audit, incident and complaint learning, training compliance, recording quality, safeguarding themes and feedback. The Safeguarding Trustee will provide support and constructive challenge, and the Board will receive sufficient safeguarding assurance while preserving confidentiality.

Material exceptions to this policy must be authorised by the Chief Executive Officer or Board as appropriate, documented, risk assessed and reviewed. This policy will be reviewed at least annually and earlier following material legal or statutory guidance changes, significant safeguarding learning, or a material change to Young Somerset services.

8. Related documents

Linked procedure	Safeguarding Procedure 2026
Supporting guidance / forms	Team Handbooks; Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy; Staff Code of Conduct; Lone Working Policy; Social Media / Online Safety arrangements; Whistleblowing arrangements; MyConcern guidance
Relevant law / standards	See section 4. Current versions of legislation, statutory guidance and Somerset safeguarding procedures apply.

Version	Approved	Review due	Summary
1.0	[DD Month 2026]	November 2027	Separated Board policy from operational procedure; 2026 safeguarding framework

