

Several Seats CIC



# Digital Safeguarding Policy

Our Policy





# Several Seats Policy

## DIGITAL SAFEGUARDING

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### Our Digital Safeguarding Policy

#### Introduction

Several Seats is committed to the safety and well-being of all individuals who engage with our services, both online and offline. In line with UK government guidelines, this Digital Safeguarding Policy sets out the measures we take to protect children, young people, volunteers, staff, and all users from potential online risks, ensuring their safety and well-being in the digital space.

Our commitment extends to the implementation of best practices in digital safeguarding, and this policy outlines the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of all members, volunteers, staff, contractors, third-party providers, and users.

#### Policy Scope

This policy applies to:

- All children and young people who engage with our services.
- All members, volunteers, and staff.
- Associated contractors, third-party providers, and external collaborators.
- Anyone interacting with Several Seats' digital platforms, projects, and services.

#### Digital Safeguarding Principles

We adhere to the following core digital safeguarding principles to comply with UK regulations and ensure safety across all our digital interactions:

##### 1. Appropriate Setup of Social Media Accounts:

- All organisational social media accounts must be set up with appropriate privacy controls and clear guidelines for safe online interaction.
- Individuals using personal social media accounts should make it clear, through disclaimers, that their views, opinions, and thoughts are their own and not reflective of Several Seats' policies or guidelines.

##### 2. Clear Permissions and Consent:

- Before taking and using photographs or video recordings, explicit permission must be obtained, especially when dealing with children, young people, or vulnerable adults.
- Parental consent must be acquired before contacting any young person under the age of 14, even if they have initiated the contact.

##### 3. Technical Safeguards:

- All devices owned or used by Several Seats must have appropriate filtering or monitoring software (e.g., parental controls) installed to block inappropriate content.
- Risk assessments must be carried out regularly to ensure these solutions meet safeguarding standards.

##### 4. Safe and Responsible Social Media Use:

- Ensure that all users, particularly young people and vulnerable adults, understand how to use social media safely and responsibly.
- Encourage the use of appropriate privacy settings to protect personal information.

##### 5. Raising Concerns and Reporting Incidents:

- Any inappropriate online behaviour or safeguarding concerns must be raised and reported using the procedures outlined in this policy.
- All digital safeguarding incidents will be taken seriously, and appropriate action will be taken to resolve the matter.

### Our Commitments to Digital Safeguarding

To ensure digital safeguarding, Several Seats commits to the following actions:

- **Support Safe Online Engagement:**  
All our projects, activities, initiatives, and campaigns will be designed to support the safety and well-being of members, volunteers, and staff in the digital space.
- **Best Practice in Technical Solutions and Procedures:**  
We will implement industry-recognised best practices for safeguarding through technical measures, such as encryption, access control, and content filtering.
- **Training and Support:**  
Volunteers and staff will receive ongoing training and guidance to help them support members in staying safe online, recognising risks, and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- **Handling Digital Safeguarding Incidents:**  
In the event of a digital safeguarding incident, appropriate action will be taken following UK guidelines, which may include reporting to relevant authorities or agencies (e.g., CEOP or local safeguarding boards).
- **Partnerships with Key Organisations:**  
Several Seats will maintain links with external safeguarding organisations to ensure best practice and facilitate reporting and referral processes where necessary (e.g., NSPCC, UK Safer Internet Centre, Childline).
- **Risk Assessments:**  
Digital risk assessments will be conducted for all projects, campaigns, activities, and services to ensure that digital safeguards are in place and meet legal and ethical standards.

### Code of Conduct for Digital Interactions

All members, staff, volunteers, and users are expected to follow the online code of conduct when engaging with Several Seats digitally. This includes:

- Treating others with respect and kindness in all digital communications.
- Reporting any inappropriate behavior or content immediately.
- Using secure and appropriate channels when sharing personal or sensitive information.
- Not sharing or accessing illegal or inappropriate material online.

Failure to follow this code of conduct may result in disciplinary action or exclusion from our services.

### Reporting Procedures

If you witness or experience any safeguarding concerns or inappropriate behavior online, please report it as follows:

1. **Immediate Reporting to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):**  
Any incidents or concerns must be reported to the DSL Joan Idowu via email at [joan@severalseats.org](mailto:joan@severalseats.org) or via the Complaints Helpdesk at [team@severalseats.org](mailto:team@severalseats.org).
2. **Incident Investigation:**  
All reports will be investigated by the DSL and safeguarding team in line with internal procedures and UK safeguarding regulations. Action will be taken as necessary, including reporting to external authorities where applicable.
3. **Support for Affected Individuals:**  
Anyone affected by a digital safeguarding incident will be offered support, and appropriate steps will be taken to ensure their well-being and protection moving forward.

### Review and Continuous Improvement

Digital safeguarding is a constantly evolving area, and Several Seats is committed to regularly reviewing and updating this policy to remain compliant with UK government guidelines and best practices.

- **Review Schedule:**  
This Digital Safeguarding Policy was last reviewed on October 2024 and will be reviewed quarterly. The next review is scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> March 2025, at the Board of Directors meeting.
- **Continuous Monitoring:**  
We will continuously monitor changes in government guidelines, technology trends, and safeguarding risks to ensure our policies remain up to date and effective.

### Contact Information:

For more information or to report any digital safeguarding concerns, please contact:  
Email: [joan@severalseats.org](mailto:joan@severalseats.org)

This policy is approved by the Board of Directors of Several Seats C.I.C and is effective from 1st October 2024.

By following these guidelines, we ensure compliance with UK safeguarding laws, create a safe digital environment, and protect the well-being of all our stakeholders.

