



## **Safeguarding Policy**

EmpathyLab is committed to keeping children safe and will ensure that its activities, strategies, processes and marketing have safeguarding at their heart

EmpathyLab abides by the key principles and guidance of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/592101/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children_20170213.pdf) and recognizes the key principle identified therein:

“Whilst local authorities play a lead role, safeguarding children and protecting them from harm is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play<sup>1</sup>”.

### **1: Identifying children**

#### **A: Images**

We will not include photographs of children on our website, Twitter/social media feed or in research and evaluation reports unless:

- photographs are specifically commissioned for Empathy Lab activities and products with all permissions from parents and schools obtained.
- Schools or relevant partners give consent for EmpathyLab to use their photographs of children taking part in EmpathyLab programmes. (We will request assurance that schools or partners’ blanket photo permissions cover such third party use and if not, request that they seek direct permission from parents and children on EmpathyLab’s behalf).

Empathy Lab recognizes that once a photo is posted onto a social media platform, it may be freely shared and takes its responsibilities in terms of using images of children seriously.

#### **B: Children's work and quotes**

When we include images of children's work or their comments in our research, evaluation reports, displays or on our website or social media accounts, we will only include first names. However, if a school is named (and children may therefore be identified by use of their first names), we will use pseudonyms.

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[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/592101/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children\\_20170213.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/592101/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children_20170213.pdf)

We reserve the right to retweet Tweets from schools or parents tweeting about their own Empathy Lab activities which may include images of children, quotes from children or children's work. (We will remind schools that if they choose to share images, we will assume that permissions have been sought and granted).

## **2: Public Events (including festivals and library activities) and events/visits to schools**

EmpathyLab will abide by the safeguarding policies of the organisations we are working with. We may request partners' safeguarding policies if required before finalising a partnership.

We will ensure that EmpathyLab staff and volunteers working on public events are aware of their responsibilities when working with children. This will include:

- always carrying identification,
- never being alone with a child and not taking children out of parents/carers/teachers' sight.
- avoiding touching children unless to move them out of danger.
- ensuring that parents/carers/teachers understand the activities children are participating in for EmpathyLab.

EmpathyLab will undertake risk assessments as required for public events which will include assessing safeguarding risks and obtain evidence of DBS checks where appropriate

## **3: Disclosures by children**

If a child discloses any safeguarding concern, EmpathyLab will not assure confidentiality. In school we will report the concerns immediately to the head teacher or designated safeguarding lead in school. In libraries we will inform the designated officer or library link. At public events and festivals, we will alert the organisers and contact the safeguarding lead if one exists. We will follow "[what to do if you are worried about a child](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)" national guidelines<sup>2</sup> and we will contact the police if a child is in immediate danger.

## **4: Empathy Lab content**

The work of EmpathyLab can sometimes highlight issues which might cause children anxiety and distress. Empathy Lab is mindful of these risks and will mitigate by checking activities and the books we propose using with our team of advisory teachers, psychologists and experts. We will alert teachers if activities potentially could cause

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<sup>2</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419604/What\\_to\\_do\\_if\\_you\\_re\\_worried\\_a\\_child\\_is\\_being\\_abused.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

issues.

### **5: Third parties**

We will require all third parties commissioned by EmpathyLab – authors etc to abide by EmpathyLab's safeguarding policies

### **6: Contacting children**

We will never contact children directly. Our contact with children and families will usually be made through the mediation of schools. In the rare occasion that we wish to contact parents outside of school, for example following a festival, we will only do if they have previously given signed permission.

### **7: Allegations against staff**

If there was ever an allegation against Empathy Lab staff members or volunteers, they would be required to immediately cease EmpathyLab activity. EmpathyLab would comply with the safeguarding guidelines of the partner organisation to ensure that the allegation is properly investigated.

### **8: Engaging with children online**

As EmpathyLab develops its online presence, it will develop a policy around direct engagement with children and young people including where appropriate that online submissions by children are moderated.

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