



ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY

UK Child Safeguarding Procedures and Processes

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually, or in the following circumstances:

- After a change in legislation and/or government guidance
- As a result of any significant change or event

Version Control			
Version	Author	Date	Changes
1.0	Magda van Leeuwen/Rio Hutchings	March 2022	Final version
1.1	Magda van Leeuwen	March 2024	Review, edits reflect update to safeguarding roles and statutory guidance

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1. Introduction

1.1. Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Royal Society of Chemistry is an international charity and professional body that connects chemical scientists with each other and society as a whole. We develop and celebrate professional capabilities. We publish new research, bring people together to spark new ideas and partnerships, and support teachers to inspire future generations. We speak up to influence the people making decisions that affect us all.

Through our work we engage with children and vulnerable adults who are potentially at risk for a variety of reasons. We aim to create a safe environment in which no child or adult will experience harm or exploitation during their contact with us. Underpinning this is a structure to:

- Run safe programmes, providing a safe environment for everyone to participate in our organisation and its activities
- Alert the relevant authorities of any concern we become aware of through our work and
- Ensure all staff, volunteers and trustees understand their responsibilities in this respect

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and trustees, who should speak up if they have any concerns. The RSC is not a provider of direct care, advocacy or emergency support services but will work with Local Authorities and agencies, where relevant, to respond to concerns.

We will, where reasonably practicable, both follow relevant UK and International laws and standards, as well as ensuring local compliance.

1.2. Safeguarding Procedures

The procedures outlined in this document are to assist Royal Society of Chemistry Trustees, staff, contractors, and volunteers to protect all persons by identifying clear instructions in accordance with the legislative framework.

They include:

- Harm – what it is and how to recognise the signs
- Procedure for preventing harm
- Procedure for responding to the discovery and disclosure of harm and how to respond sensitively to persons who have been harmed
- Procedure for reporting and making a referral
- Procedure for responding to allegations made against staff, contractors and volunteers

Legislation and government guidance makes increasingly clear the need for all adults to play a role in safeguarding. We are fully committed to complying with all UK Safeguarding legislation and guidance including:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004,
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR)
- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998

1.3. Related Policies and Procedures

These procedures and processes should be read in conjunction with the following existing policies and procedures:

- RSC UK Child Safeguarding Policy
- RSC Professional Practice and Code of Conduct
- RSC Volunteer Problem Solving Policy
- RSC Volunteer Principles
- RSC Volunteer Safer Recruitment Policy
- Health and safety policies and procedures
- RSC Photography and filming policy
- Staff handbook including:
 - Code of Conduct
 - Dignity at Work Policy
 - Disciplinary Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Data Retention Policy
 - Whistleblowing

2. Definitions

2.1. Safeguarding children

Safeguarding relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. [Working together to safeguard children \(2018\)](#) states that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Definitions of child abuse are further detailed in Appendix 1.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Designated Safeguarding Officers/Lead

Magda van Leeuwen
safeguarding@rsc.org

Responsibilities:

- Provide operational leadership and organisation-wide co-ordination of safeguarding
- Advise and support the senior team in developing and establishing the RSCs approach to safeguarding.
- Lead the implementation of the RSCs plan for safeguarding.
- Manage safeguarding risk register and annual reporting to ARC
- Coordinate distribution of policies, procedures and safeguarding resources throughout the organisation.
- Advise on resource, structure and support to deliver effective safeguarding
- Advise on training needs and development, providing training where appropriate.
- Provide organisation-wide safeguarding advice and support to staff and volunteers
- Oversee all safeguarding concerns, responses and referrals reported to the RSC.

- Manage referrals to key safeguarding agencies (eg social services or police) of any incidents or allegations of abuse and harm
- Development and lead implementation of organisation approach to support safeguarding at international level
- Report to LT safeguarding leads

3.2. Designated Safeguarding Officers/Lead

Laura Alexandra Smith (DSO EPP) and Dawn McGahan (DSO CCF)
safeguarding@rsc.org

Responsibilities

- Support communication and distribution of policies, procedures and safeguarding resources
- Support with annual review and update of policies and procedures
- Responsible for safeguarding risk assessment of activity within the team/directorate
- Responsible for safer recruitment process for regulated activities in the team/directorate (inc. activity in Ireland)
- Support and deliver training, where appropriate
- Support with advice and guidance on appropriate action in relation to concerns raised from staff, members and service users.
- Make recommendations to safeguarding lead for the referral or ongoing management of safeguarding concerns
- Make safeguarding referrals to relevant Local Authority
- Maintain up-to-date records of team/directorate-wide activity on activity log
- Undertake appropriate training and maintain up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding requirements for the Royal Society of Chemistry
- Report to designated member of staff (DSL) on safeguarding issues
- Deputise for DSL as required

3.3. Senior Leadership Team

The Designated Safeguarding officers report to Directors from the Senior Leadership team.

- Sarah Robertson - Director, Education & Professional Practice (robertsons@rsc.org)
- Jo Reynolds - Director, Science & Communities (reynoldsj@rsc.org)

The RSC Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the policy and associated procedures and ensuring that everyone linked with the RSC is equipped and supported to meet their responsibilities.

3.4. Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees hold ultimate accountability for this policy. Our Trustee lead for safeguarding is the Chair of Audit and Risk Committee, Mandy Cooke.

Contact details of other agencies can be found in Appendix 2.

4. Raising and Responding to Safeguarding concerns

4.1. Responding to a concern from or about a child

If a child confides in you or you learn from anyone else about a safeguarding concern, then all staff, contractors and volunteers have a duty to respond and report this. The following steps are advised:

Remember the safety of the child is paramount

- Listen carefully and avoid expressing your own views
- Reassure and let them know they have done the right thing telling you

- Explain what you will do next but do not promise to keep the information a secret
- Record the conversation immediately so it is as accurate as possible
- Report the incident to the Designated Safeguarding Officers, safeguarding@rsc.org
- Concerns relating to a DSO should be raised with the Senior Leadership Team

In this situation do not:

- React strongly eg that's terrible!
- Jump to conclusions (especially about the abuser)
- Accuse anyone
- Tell them you will keep this a secret
- Ask leading questions
- Stop them from speaking freely
- Tell them to stop talking so you can contact the DSO

4.2. Reporting an incident or concern from or about a child

Anyone can voice an incident or concerns about unacceptable behaviour towards children through our process for recording incidents and concerns shown in Appendix 3.

If there is risk of immediate harm to the child you must contact the police or emergency services and keep the child safe.

All incidents must be reported to the DSO's (safeguarding@rsc.org) and an [incident/concern report](#) form completed (this may be done by the DSOs or the person reporting the incident/concern). The DSOs will then inform the Directors responsible for safeguarding, log the incident/concern and collect any further information. Where necessary the safeguarding unit will consult with the local authority and then report to the relevant service (police or social services). In all cases RSC action will be assessed and the incident or concern will be reported to the RSC's lead Trustee for safeguarding. If appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken. The record will be updated and stored, and the incident or concern reported to RSC Audit and Risk Committee.

4.2.1. Procedure for record keeping

All incidents and concerns must be recorded and stored securely and safely on the RSC network for 7 years. The DSOs are responsible for these records which only they and the relevant Directors have access. It is important to keep records that are not referred to the Police or Social Services as they may upon later review show patterns or clusters which may heighten the level of concern.

4.2.2. Confidentiality

The best interests of the child is always the most important consideration. Staff, contractors and volunteers must ensure the confidentiality of matters relating to child protection and information must be shared on a need to know basis. All staff, contractors and volunteers must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets that might compromise their safety or well-being or that of another.

4.2.3. Allegations against staff, contractors and volunteers

An allegation may relate to staff, contractor or volunteer who has:

- Behaved in a way that has (or may have) harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates that may pose a risk of harm

There are three strands for consideration

1. A police investigation of a possible criminal offence
2. Enquires and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or services
3. Disciplinary action by the RSC in respect of the individual

The RSC has a duty of care to staff, contractors and volunteers and will ensure effective support is provided for anyone facing an allegation. It is essential that any allegation is dealt with quickly and fairly that provides effective protection for the child and supports the person who is subject of the allegation.

All options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to this step. If the RSC removes an individual because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the RSC must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service

5. Recruitment, selection and vetting

5.1. UK legislation

The Royal Society of Chemistry are committed to the safe recruitment, selection and vetting of those performing their duties for or on behalf of the Royal Society of Chemistry, or represent the Royal Society of Chemistry in its work with children. Appendix 4 provides details of our safeguarding levels and measures which we have used to assess all our activities.

For activities seeking to engage children through schools and youth organisations, it must be ensured that these organisations are aware that our members are not responsible for the supervision of the students involved and that the host organisation must provide sufficient supervising adults who will take responsibility for the children. Those engaging the services of external organisations to provide activities for children must review the risk assessments of these external providers, ensure they are in date, and record that this has been done in keeping with the health and safety policies and procedures of the RSC.

It is important that our staff, contractors and volunteers do not engage in unsupervised activity on a regular basis with unaccompanied children. Such activity might be classified by law as 'regulated activity'. We require all staff, contractors and volunteers within the jurisdiction of UK legislation and regulation, who are involved in regulated activity with children (face-to-face, online, by phone, by email or via social networks) to undergo a safer recruitment process to ensure they are appropriate for that role.

This includes a criminal record check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in England and Wales, Disclosure Scotland or Access Northern Ireland (AccessNI). Organisations which knowingly allow barred people to work on regulated activities are breaking the law. Occasional interaction with children where none of that time is unsupervised should not necessitate the need of a criminal record check, however such a check may be appropriate under special circumstances. The appropriateness of such a check will be discussed and agreed by the individual affected and the Designated Safeguarding Officers. The level of criminal record check and renewal dates will be confirmed by the RSC. The RSC will renew criminal record checks every 3 years.

As part of the safer recruitment process, all staff, contractors and volunteers are provided with relevant safeguarding training, or they must evidence relevant training completed at an equivalent level in the last 2 years.

Under all circumstances, staff, contractors and volunteers must still abide by the Code of Conduct, Dignity at Work Policy and Data Protection policy.

5.2. Outside UK legislation

Whilst UK disclosure checks will not apply to staff, contractors and volunteers outside UK legislation and regulation, they must abide by the Code of Behaviour and other terms of this policy, to the extent that this does not conflict with local law and that it meets the legislative requirements of the countries in which they are working. The Royal Society of Chemistry is required to adopt local procedures (where relevant), disseminate to the staff, contractors and volunteers within that jurisdiction and report any incidents immediately to the relevant local authorities.

Republic of Ireland

Our Child Safeguarding Statement and procedure of reporting incidents in the Republic of Ireland is available on our [website](#).

6. Code of conduct and appropriate behaviour

All staff, contractors, volunteers are bound by the Royal Society of Chemistry's Code of Conduct. Additionally the following is recommended with regards to behaviour around children for face-to-face and online activity.

DO

- Ensure that there is always more than one adult present and whenever practicable this is the persons who are normally responsible for the children (teachers, parents, carers etc)
- Ensure all contact regarding the activity is with an adult responsible for the children
- Act as a role model of good and appropriate behaviour
- Treat all children with respect and respect a child's right to personal privacy
- Bear in mind that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned
- Be aware that any physical contact with a child may be misinterpreted and so must be avoided whenever possible
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations and/or suspicions of abuse.
- Ask for the organisations' safeguarding policy and check the procedures and guidance for visitors if you are attending as a visitor for an activity (either face-to-face or online)
- Ensure you feel comfortable with the online activity and with the technology being used (eg for privacy reasons do you want to do a live video call from your home?)
- Ensure the background setting which involves you being seen is appropriate for an online event

DON'T

- Put yourself in a vulnerable situation that may lead to allegations, for example do not spend time alone during an online or face-to face event with children without another adult present;
- Have inappropriate contact with children – physical, verbal or electronic;
- Use inappropriate language
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves;
- Allow children to behave inappropriately without being challenged;
- Make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in the presence of children;
- Show favouritism to any one child;
- Provide your personal contact details to any children or contact them via social media;
- Record any online sessions and store this on your personal device;
- Be under the influence of alcohol or other substances when working with children;
- Take photographs of children without the express permission of their school, parents/carers
- Transfer the personal data of children to third parties without express permission from the child, parents or carers as appropriate;
- Let any allegations a child makes go unrecorded;
- Rely on your good name or our good name to protect from allegations of abuse
- Become complacent on the (spurious) grounds that "it could never happen to me"

7. Risk assessment

Hazards and risk must be considered, assessed and managed for all events run on behalf of the Royal Society of Chemistry. Not only is it a strict legal requirement to effectively manage the risks created by such events, but it is necessary that we demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism at all our events, and in so doing, meet a duty of care towards everyone involved.

A red risk assessment outlining safeguarding considerations must be completed for all activities targeted at engaging children in accordance with the health and safety policies and procedures of the RSC. The risk assessment should explicitly declare any safeguarding risks alongside the usual health and safety considerations and be relevant to the activity and location in which it is held.

Further guidance on risk assessments including information on completing a risk assessment are available from our [website](#). Further safeguarding information for members can be found in the [Rules for Member Networks of the Royal Society of Chemistry](#).

Appendix 1. Definitions of Abuse

What is child abuse?

Child abuse is any action by another person (adult or child) that causes significant harm to a child. There are many types of abuse as defined by the [NSPCC](#):

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. But it isn't just physical violence, domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse.

Sexual abuse

A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This doesn't have to be physical contact and it can happen online. Sometimes the child won't understand that what's happening to them is abuse

Neglect

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and is the most common form of child abuse. A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care. A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm. They may not get the love, care and attention they need from their parents.

Online abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child's emotional health and development.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them

Female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting

Bullying and cyberbullying

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone

Child trafficking

Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse. Children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold

Grooming

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking.

Harmful sexual behaviour

Harmful sexual behaviour includes using sexually explicit words and phrases, inappropriate touching, using sexual violence or threats, full penetrative sex with other children or adults.

Appendix 2. Contact details

The services provided by the RSC are Monday-Friday during office hours. For any urgent concerns about the wellbeing and safety of children support should be sought through emergency services and local providers.

If a child is in immediate danger **call 999**

For urgent safeguarding matters regarding a child please refer to the **guidance of the local authority where the child lives**.

For general advice and guidance relating to safeguarding children please refer to the [NSPCC website](#).

The following services can be contacted by:

NSPCC

help@nspcc.org.uk

0808 800 5000

Cambridgeshire Police

01480 456111

Cambridgeshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

01223 727967

[Cambridgeshire and Peterborough MASH](#) (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)

safeguardingboards@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

0345 045 5203

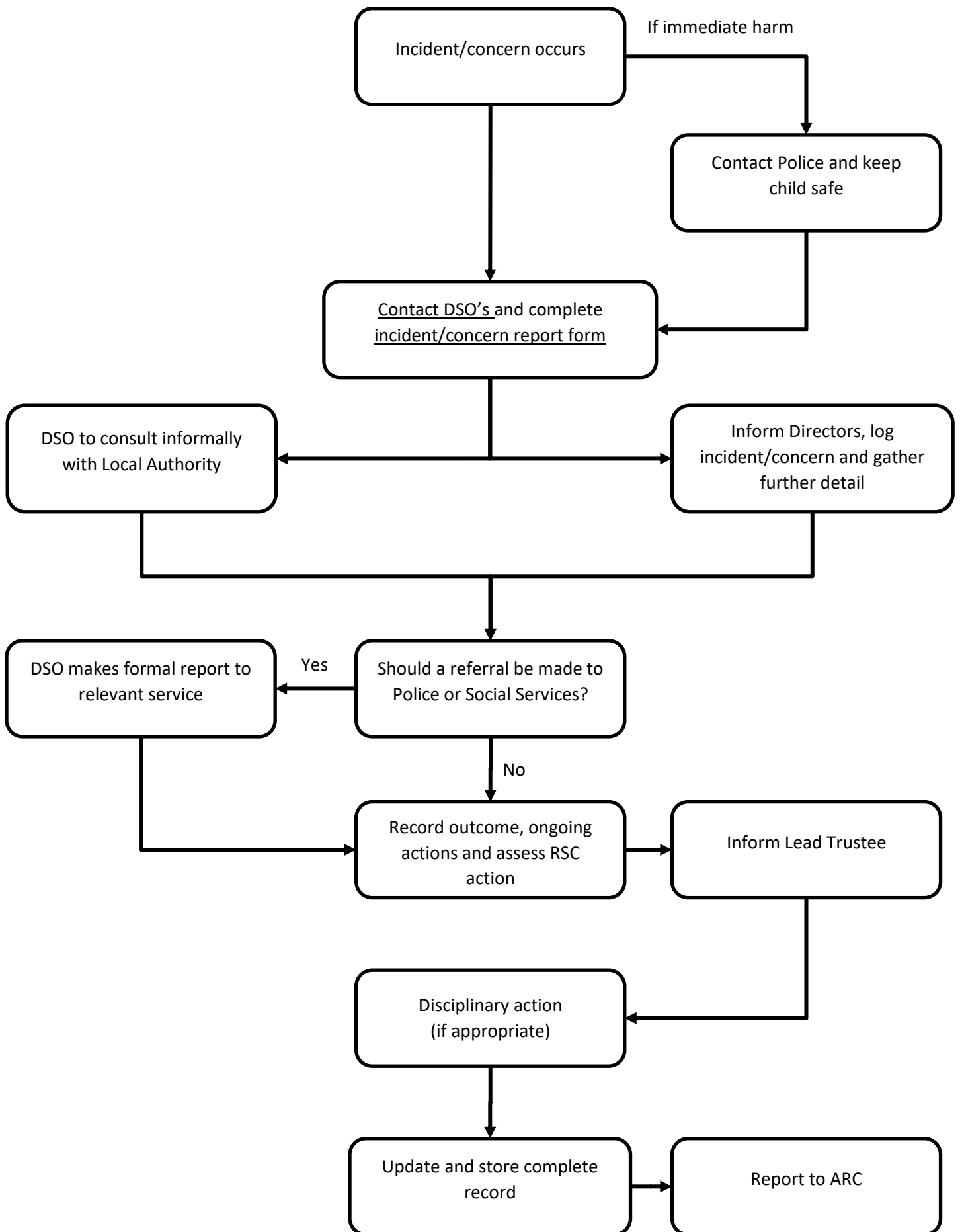
01733 8234724

[Safeguarding Children Partnerships/Boards/Committees England](#)

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP)

They can be contacted through their [website](#)

Appendix 3. Process for recording incidents and concerns



Appendix 4. Safeguarding levels and measures

Safeguarding level	Safeguarding level descriptor	Safeguarding measures
General awareness	Understanding of safeguarding responsibilities	<p>All will be made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities</p> <p>Communications to raise and maintain safeguarding awareness</p> <p>Safeguarding policy, procedures and processes available on RSC webpage</p> <p>Safeguarding awareness video available</p>
Level 1	<p>No direct contact with children, but has overall responsibility for safeguarding strategies</p> <p>Manages a department, team or section which require level 1,2,3 & 4 Safeguarding measures</p>	<p>All involved to understand and comply with safeguarding policy and procedures</p> <p>Training</p>
Level 2	The activity has some contact with children but on an infrequent basis and where other staff/volunteers/teachers/parents/STEM ambassadors will be present	<p>All involved to understand and comply with safeguarding policy and procedures.</p> <p>Safeguarding responsibilities explained and guidance provided to all those involved</p> <p>Safeguarding responsibilities will be reviewed annually</p> <p>Training</p>
Level 3	<p>Activities have some contact with children on a regular basis (but not frequent)</p> <p>Activities involve working or visiting a location where there is a potential for coming into contact with children on a frequent basis, but they won't be the same children</p> <p>Activities involve visiting a location or school where access to children is likely but not the same location</p>	<p>All involved to understand and comply with safeguarding policy and procedures.</p> <p>Safeguarding responsibilities explained and guidance provided to all those involved</p> <p>Safeguarding responsibilities will be reviewed annually</p> <p>Training</p>

<p>Level 4</p>	<p>Activity is seen as regulated and/or involves frequent contact with children. Frequent contact is considered to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working more than 3 times a month with children • ever working overnight (between 2am and 6am) where there may be face-to-face contact with children <p>Activity is unsupervised</p>	<p>All involved to understand and comply with safeguarding policy and procedures.</p> <p>Safeguarding responsibilities explained and guidance provided to all those involved</p> <p>Safeguarding responsibilities will be reviewed annually</p> <p>Individuals will undertake safer recruitment process which includes criminal record check</p> <p>Training</p>
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