



# ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY

## Global Safeguarding Policy

Version Control			
Version	Author	Date	Changes
0.1	Magda van Leeuwen	January 2023	Draft circulated.
1.0	Magda van Leeuwen	March 2023	Final version published

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<b>Document Title</b>	Global Safeguarding Policy	
<b>Version number:</b>	1.0	<b>Original Authors:</b> Magda van Leeuwen, Designated Safeguarding Lead
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<b>Effective Date:</b>	21 March 2023	<b>Date of next review:</b> March 2024

## **1. Safeguarding Policy Statement**

- 1.1. The RSC 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.
- 1.2. 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.
- 1.3. We will, where reasonably practicable, both follow relevant UK and International laws and standards, as well as ensuring local compliance.

## **2. Purpose & Scope**

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy and associated procedures is to protect people, particularly children and vulnerable adults, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with the RSC. This includes harm arising from:
  - a) The conduct of staff or personnel associated with the RSC
  - b) The design and implementation of RSC programmes and activities
- 2.2. This policy serves to provide clarity to Royal Society of Chemistry Trustees, staff and volunteers, partners, contractors, and suppliers of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and how they should engage with children and vulnerable adults when working for, on behalf of, or in partnership with the RSC.
- 2.3. This policy and associated procedures are intended to provide a common understanding of safeguarding issues, develop good practice across the diverse areas in which we operate and thereby increase accountability in this aspect of our work.
- 2.4. This policy constitutes RSC's global policy. It is recognised that at country level, teams will have to identify how to fulfil the requirements of the Policy, given the local operating conditions and legalities.
- 2.5. Any breach of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter, which may result in immediate termination of employment or contract, withdrawal of volunteer status, and reporting to the police, relevant regulatory authority or other body.

## **3. Legal Framework**

- 3.1. This policy has been drawn up on the basis of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 and UK legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children and adults, including The Children Act 1989, The Care Act 2014 and Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

## **4. Related Policies and Procedures**

- 4.1. This policy also needs to be read in conjunction with our policies and procedures on:
  - 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

## **5. Guiding Principles**

- 5.1. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and the welfare of children is paramount.
- 5.2. Everyone who participates in activities at the RSC, or run by RSC staff and volunteers, partners, and contractors, is entitled to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- 5.3. All children and vulnerable adults, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- 5.4. No child or vulnerable adult must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access our services which meet their particular needs.

## **6. We will seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by:**

- 6.1. Taking all reasonable steps to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- 6.2. Adopting child protection and appropriate safeguarding best practice<sup>1</sup> through our policies and procedures.
- 6.3. Ensuring all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- 6.4. Designing and undertaking all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with the RSC. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated.
- 6.5. Implementing stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing, and deploying staff and volunteers.
- 6.6. Ensuring staff and volunteers receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the RSC.
- 6.7. Taking seriously all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse and responding swiftly and appropriately to them in accordance with current procedures.
- 6.8. Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff, volunteers, and contractors appropriately.
- 6.9. Ensuring all activities have an up-to-date risk assessment and that we provide a safe environment for children, staff, volunteers and contractors.

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<sup>1</sup> Charities Commission – Safeguarding for charities and trustees (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-for-charities-and-trustees>)

## **7. To guarantee the effectiveness of this Policy, we will ensure that:**

- 7.1. There is a Lead Trustee for Safeguarding on the Audit and Risk Committee
- 7.2. There is at least one designated director for safeguarding on the Senior Leadership Team
- 7.3. There is a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and at least one designated safeguarding officer (DSO)
- 7.4. There is a Safeguarding Unit that meets at least three times per year, ahead of Audit and Risk committee, to monitor organisational safeguarding practices and promote learning
- 7.5. Safeguarding compliance is reported to Senior Leadership Team and Trustees through the organisational risk register
- 7.6. Implementation and effectiveness of this Policy is reviewed annually, and the Policy is updated annually based on findings and/or whenever there is a relevant change in the law.
- 7.7. A safeguarding report is presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on an annual basis.

## **8. Questions about this Policy**

- 8.1. If you have any queries regarding how this Policy works in practice or do not understand anything in this Policy or related guidance and procedures, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead at [safeguarding@rsc.org](mailto:safeguarding@rsc.org).

## **9. Contact details**

- 9.1. **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**  
Name: Magda van Leeuwen  
Email: [safeguarding@rsc.org](mailto:safeguarding@rsc.org)
- 9.2. **Leadership Team leads for safeguarding**  
Name: Sarah Robertson and Jo Reynolds
- 9.3. **Lead Trustee for Safeguarding**  
Chair of Audit and Risk Committee, Liz Rowsell

## **Annex 1. Definitions**

For ease of reading the Policy, and to prevent repetition of definitions throughout, the following terms are used:

### **Child:**

In line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)<sup>2</sup>, 1989, under the Policy a child is defined as anyone who has not reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Although the national laws in countries that we work in may have different ages at which a child is considered an adult, or at which a child can give consent or is responsible, we use the definition of a child according to international law as set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### **Vulnerable Adult:**

An adult at risk is defined as:

- Any person aged 18 years or over
- Who identifies themselves as unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm, exploitation or neglect;
- Or are understood to be at risk, which may be due to frailty, homelessness, mental or physical health problems, learning or physical impairments, and/or impacted by disasters or conflict.

### **Staff and volunteers:**

The terms 'staff and volunteers' relate to all those working in an individual capacity with the RSC, irrespective of the contract used. This includes paid and unpaid staff, volunteers and associates engaged on a one-off, short- or long-term basis. It also covers consultants and contracted temporary personnel. Staff applies equally to national, international and UK personnel.

### **Partners, Suppliers & Contractors:**

The terms 'partners, suppliers and contractors' relate to all those who we have a contract or agreement with to provide goods, services or collaboration. There may be a financial or alternative benefit, but this is not essential. It includes implementing partners who carry out work on our behalf and other stakeholders with whom the RSC may establish a working relationship such as Funders.

### **Safeguarding:**

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect<sup>3</sup>

In our sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and vulnerable adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes.

### **Child Abuse:**

The RSC uses the definition of abuse endorsed by the World Health Organization<sup>4</sup>:

'Child abuse' or 'maltreatment' constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

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<sup>2</sup> The United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child is the international framework which sets out the specific rights of children, including the right to protection. Over 190 countries are signatories to the Convention

<sup>3</sup> NHS 'What is Safeguarding? Easy Read' 2011

<sup>4</sup> For further information see [www.worldhealthorganization.org](http://www.worldhealthorganization.org)

**Adult Safeguarding:**

Safeguarding adults means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to both prevent and responding to risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure the adult's wellbeing is promoted, including where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding any action.<sup>5</sup>

Safeguarding adults at risk involves reducing or preventing the risk of significant harm in relation to neglect or abuse, while also supporting people to maintain control of their lives.

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<sup>5</sup> Care Act (DH, 2014a) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>