

# RockAcad Limited

## Safeguarding Children Policy

Director: David Green

Date of Last Review: August 2022.

Next Review Date: August 2023.

**Written in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021'**

### Overview

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children has an important role to play.

RockAcad Limited is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse, harm and radicalisation.

RockAcad Limited will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns regarding the safety of a child that may occur. RockAcad Limited's child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB).

RockAcad Limited's Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) is David Green. Contact details can be found at the end of this policy.

All teaching staff and managers will also work alongside each schools' own safeguarding policy, reporting any concerns to the designated safeguarding team at that school as well as RockAcad Limited's own internal designated safeguarding lead.

### What is safeguarding?

For the purposes of safeguarding, a child is anyone under the age of 18.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined by 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021' as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

## **Child abuse and neglect**

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or by failing to protect them from harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children

### **Some forms of child abuse and neglect are listed below.**

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

- Physical abuse can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment.

All RockAcad Limited staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

## **Signs of child abuse and neglect**

Signs of possible abuse and neglect may include:

- significant changes in a child's behaviour
- deterioration in a child's general well-being
- unexplained bruising or marks

- comments made by a child which give cause for concern
- reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, eg in the child's home, or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation, or that a child may have witnessed domestic abuse
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by a member of staff, or any other person. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role, or inappropriate sharing of images.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or home life and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

\*It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

### **Mental Health**

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some

cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. RockAcad Limited staff however, can occasionally be well placed to observe any changes to a child's behaviour and question the reasons behind the changes.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that if staff are made aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken.

### **Peer-on-peer abuse**

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Peer-on peer abuse is taken seriously by the staff and will be subject to the same child protection procedures as other forms of abuse. Staff are aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Staff will not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people. The presence of one or more of the following in relationships between children should always trigger concern about the possibility of peer-on-peer abuse:

- sexual activity (in primary-aged children) of any kind, including sexting, sharing nudes or semi nudes in a sexualised manner
- one of the children is significantly more dominant than the other (eg much older)
- one of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other (eg in terms of disability, confidence, physical strength)
- There has been some use of threats, bribes or coercion to ensure compliancy or secrecy

If peer-on-peer abuse is suspected or disclosed, we will follow the same procedures as set out above for responding to child abuse.

### **Extremism and Radicalisation**

All companies working with children have a legal duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into extremism. There are many reasons why a child might be vulnerable to radicalisation, including:

- feeling alienated or alone

- seeking a sense of identity or individuality
- suffering from mental health issues such as depression
- desire for adventure or wanting to be part of a larger cause
- associating with others who hold extremist beliefs

### **Signs of Radicalisation**

Signs that a child might be at risk of radicalisation include:

- changes in behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- claiming that terrorist attacks and violence are justified
- viewing violent extremist material online
- possessing or sharing violent extremist material

If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of becoming radicalised, they will record any relevant information or observations on a Logging a concern form and refer the matter to the DSP by email and with a follow up phone call.

### **RockAcad Limited's Reporting Procedures**

If abuse is suspected or disclosed:

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

respond in a calm manner

reassure the child that they were not to blame and were right to speak out

listen to the child but not question them or investigate (eg ask to see other bruises) give reassurance that the staff member will take action

record the incident as soon as possible (see Logging an incident below)

Refer the disclosure to the school DSP and RockAcad Limited's DSP as soon as possible

If a member of staff witnesses or suspects abuse, they will record the incident straightaway on the 'Logging a Concern' form.

If a third party expresses concern that a child is being abused, we will encourage them to contact Social Care directly. If they will not do so, we will explain that RockAcad Limited is obliged to, and the incident will be logged accordingly.

Any child who discloses information should be taken seriously, and never made to feel like they are causing a problem by reporting a concern.

## **Logging a Concern**

Any concern about a child from a member of RockAcad Limited staff will be reported directly to a school in line with their own safeguarding procedure. It will also be reported to our own internal DSP.

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure, or concern about radicalisation, will be recorded on the 'Logging a concern' form as soon as possible after the event. The record should include:

- date of the disclosure, or the incident, or the observation causing concern
- date and time at which the record was made
- name and date of birth of the child involved
- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern/ a factual report of what happened.

If recording a disclosure, you must use the child's own words, name, signature and job title of the person making the record.

The record will be given to RockAcad Limited's DSP who will liaise with the school and decide on the most appropriate course of action.

A copy of the 'Logging a concern' form should also be given to the relevant school's DSP.

For immediate concerns about child abuse, the DSP will contact Social Care. The DSP will follow up all referrals to Social Care in writing within 48 hours. If a member of staff thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they may contact Social Care directly. The DSP will also contact the relevant school's DSP to inform them of the referral.

For minor concerns regarding radicalisation, the DSP will contact the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) or Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator. For more serious concerns, the DSP will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. For urgent concerns the DSP will contact the Police using 999.

## **Record Keeping**

**All** concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing. Information will be kept confidential and stored securely. Records will include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern via the 'Logging a Concern' form
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

## **Allegations Against Staff**

If anyone makes an allegation of child abuse against a member of staff:

- The allegation will be recorded on a Logging a Concern form. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.

- The allegation will trigger an immediate internal investigation.

- The allegation will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and to Ofsted.

The LADO will advise if other agencies (eg police) should be informed, and RockAcad Limited will act upon their advice. Any telephone reports to the LADO will be followed up in writing within 48 hours.

- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation.

- If appropriate RockAcad Limited will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. **Promoting Awareness Among Staff**  
RockAcad Limited promotes awareness of child abuse and the risk of radicalisation through its staff training. RockAcad Limited ensures that:

- The designated safeguarding person has relevant experience and receives appropriate training in safeguarding and the Prevent Duty, and is aware of the Channel Programme and how to access it

- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new staff – see safe recruitment policy

- All staff have access to a copy of this Safeguarding Children policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect or radicalisation. RockAcad Limited staff are required to acknowledge that they have read the policy.

- All staff are aware of their statutory duties with regard to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse, and concerns about radicalisation

- All staff receive basic safeguarding training (Universal safeguarding)

- RockAcad Limited procedures are in line with the guidance in ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)’ and staff are required to read “Keeping children safe in Education Part One” and to sign to acknowledge having read and understood this document

- Staff are also required to read our “Energy Management” Policy and sign to acknowledge having read these policies.

### **Use of iPads, mobile phones and cameras**

Photographs will only be taken of children with their parents’ permission.

### **Recording Media**

Recording videos of children performing in lessons or in a concert to be published on our website is a positive part of RockAcad Limited culture, and a great way of showing the children (and parents) how much they have progressed. However, it can be a very sensitive issue, both legally and emotionally, and the following must be adhered to by all employees:

- Consent must be obtained by the child’s parents before any filming can take place
- This consent must be recorded digitally in our system.
- Media may only be published through approved RockAcad Limited channels
- Never upload any RockAcad Limited media to your own personal social media channels.
- Do not share any RockAcad Limited media on your own personal social media channels unless it is taken from a public source eg. the RockAcad Limited website.
- When you have finished uploading, processing or otherwise using the media, delete it from the device within 24 hours.
- Never share internal RockAcad Limited media with anybody outside the company

### **Contacts**

**DSP:** David Green David@rockacad.com

### **Local Authorities**

These contact numbers will vary depending on region but here are some of the local bodies/authorities working together to safeguard children.

### **Social Care or Social Care out of hours contact**

**LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)**

**LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator**

**National**

**Police:** 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency) **Anti-terrorist hotline:** 0800 789 321

**NSPCC:** 0808 800 500

**Ofsted:** 0300 123 1231

Written in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021': the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014): Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: Child Protection [3.4-3.8] and Suitable People [3.9-3.13].