

ACARISE

Safeguarding Policy

Protecting Children and Young People
Across All Acarise Services

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KCSIE 2024

Children Act 2004

Online Safety Act 2023

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1. Introduction and Commitment

Acarise Ltd is an online e-learning platform providing academic support for GCSE and A Level students and learners across other academic programmes globally. We are headquartered in England and Wales and operate in full accordance with applicable UK legislation and statutory safeguarding guidance.

We are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people who use our platform. This commitment extends across every service we deliver, every tutor we engage, and every member of staff we employ.

Our Core Commitment: The welfare of the child is paramount. Safeguarding is not the responsibility of one person — it is the shared responsibility of every individual associated with Acarise Ltd.

This policy applies to:

- All permanent, temporary, and contracted staff
- All tutors whether employed or self-employed
- All volunteers and third-party contractors
- Any partner organisations operating on behalf of Acarise Ltd

It applies across all platform features including live tutoring sessions, recorded lessons, messaging tools, resource libraries, and any future features introduced by Acarise.

2. Scope

This policy covers:

- All users under the age of 18 who interact with any Acarise service
- All staff, tutors, and contractors regardless of role or engagement type
- All digital interactions on the platform including video, messaging, content, and forums
- International users where equivalent or greater protections are imposed by local law
- Any organisation accessing Acarise services through a school, college, or MAT agreement

3. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Acarise has appointed a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** who holds overall responsibility for safeguarding across the organisation.

DSL Contact: safeguarding@acarise.com

The DSL is trained to Level 3 Safeguarding standard and refreshes training at a minimum every two years in line with KCSIE guidance.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Receiving and reviewing all safeguarding referrals and concerns
- Maintaining a confidential record of all safeguarding matters
- Liaising with statutory agencies including local authority children's services, the police, and the LADO
- Ensuring all staff and tutors receive appropriate safeguarding training
- Reviewing and updating this policy annually
- Acting as the first point of contact for all safeguarding queries

In the absence of the DSL a nominated deputy will assume full responsibilities. Contact details for the deputy are maintained internally and available to all staff upon request.

4. Legislative Framework

This policy is informed by and aligned to:

- **Children Act 1989** — Establishes the paramountcy of the child's welfare
- **Children Act 2004** — Introduces the duty to cooperate to improve children's wellbeing
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024** — Statutory guidance for educational settings
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023** — Multi-agency safeguarding guidance
- **Online Safety Act 2023** — Duties on online platforms to protect children from harm
- **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015** — Prevent duty obligations
- **Equality Act 2010** — Protects individuals from discrimination
- **UK GDPR** — Governs the handling of personal data including children's data

- **Sexual Offences Act 2003** — Defines and criminalises sexual offences against children
- **Modern Slavery Act 2015** — Addresses trafficking and exploitation

5. Types of Abuse and Indicators

All staff and tutors are trained to recognise indicators of abuse. The four main categories are:

5.1 Physical Abuse

Actions that cause physical harm including hitting, shaking, burning, or poisoning. In an online context this may be disclosed verbally or visible through a video session.

5.2 Emotional Abuse

Persistent emotional ill-treatment such as threatening, humiliating, or regularly criticising a child. Signs may include low self-esteem, fearfulness, or withdrawal during sessions.

5.3 Sexual Abuse

Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. Online indicators include grooming behaviour, inappropriate messages, or a child sharing concerning images.

5.4 Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs. Indicators include a child appearing consistently unwashed, unfed, or in an unsafe environment during video sessions.

Important: Staff and tutors are not expected to investigate or diagnose abuse. Their responsibility is to **observe, record, and report** any concern to the DSL without delay.

Additional areas of concern include:

- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Domestic abuse and its impact on children
- Female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage
- Honour-based abuse
- Online grooming and exploitation
- Radicalisation and extremism (Prevent duty)

- Human trafficking and modern slavery
- Child-on-child abuse including cyberbullying

6. Reporting a Concern

6.1 Who Should Report

Any person associated with Acarise who has a concern about the welfare of a child must report it without delay.

6.2 How to Report

Concerns must be reported to the DSL via **safeguarding@acarise.com** as soon as practicable and always within 24 hours of the concern arising.

6.3 What to Include

- The name and age of the child if known
- The nature of the concern and what was observed, heard, or disclosed
- The date, time, and platform feature through which the concern arose
- The name of the person making the report
- Any immediate risk indicators

6.4 Immediate Danger

If a child appears to be in immediate danger contact **999** immediately before notifying the DSL.

Do not attempt to investigate the concern yourself. Do not share it with colleagues beyond what is necessary. Do not contact the family unless directed by the DSL or a statutory agency.

6.5 External Referrals

The DSL will refer concerns to the relevant local authority children's services, the NSPCC, or the police where appropriate. In cases involving a staff member or tutor a referral to the DBS and the LADO will be made.

7. Safer Recruitment

All individuals engaged by Acarise who have direct or indirect contact with learners must complete the following checks before engagement:

- Enhanced DBS check with barred list check renewed every three years

- Identity verification and right to work check
- At least two professional references
- Verification of qualifications and teaching credentials where applicable
- Self-declaration of any known cautions, convictions, or regulatory concerns
- Online presence check as part of due diligence

No individual will be permitted to interact with learners under 18 until all pre-engagement checks have been satisfactorily completed and reviewed by the DSL.

8. Training and Awareness

- All staff and tutors must complete Acarise safeguarding induction training before working with learners
- Refresher training is required at least annually for all staff and every two years for the DSL
- Training covers recognising abuse, reporting obligations, online safety, safer recruitment, Prevent duty, and child-on-child abuse
- Training completion records are held by the DSL
- The DSL attends external safeguarding training provided by local safeguarding partnerships

9. Online Safety

As an exclusively online platform Acarise recognises the specific safeguarding risks that arise in digital environments.

9.1 Platform Design and Controls

- All sessions between tutors and learners under 18 take place on the Acarise platform only
- Tutors are prohibited from sharing personal contact details with learners
- Private messaging outside of monitored platform channels is not permitted
- Session recordings are retained for a defined period and accessible only by authorised Acarise personnel
- Age verification is required at the point of registration

9.2 Content Safety

- All uploaded resources are subject to content moderation
- Automated filtering is in place to detect harmful or inappropriate content
- Users may report inappropriate content using the in-platform reporting tool

9.3 Online Grooming and Exploitation

- Staff and tutors are trained to identify grooming behaviours
- Any communication attempting to move interaction off-platform must be reported immediately
- Concerns regarding online exploitation are referred to the NCA's CEOP Command

10. Prevent Duty

Acarise recognises its obligations under the Prevent strand of the government's counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST. We are alert to signs that a learner or staff member may be at risk of radicalisation or extremist influence.

- All staff and tutors receive Prevent awareness training as part of their induction
- Concerns about radicalisation are reported to the DSL who will refer to the relevant Channel panel if appropriate
- Acarise does not permit the promotion or glorification of terrorism, extremism, or violent ideologies on the platform

11. Child-on-Child Abuse

Acarise recognises that abuse can be perpetrated by children against other children. This includes:

- Cyberbullying and online harassment between learners
- Sharing of intimate images without consent
- Sexual harassment or coercion through platform messaging tools

All such incidents are treated with the same seriousness as adult-perpetrated abuse. Reports are made to the DSL who will follow the same referral process.

12. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- All safeguarding information is held in strict confidence

- Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with UK GDPR
- Confidentiality is never a barrier to sharing information where a child is at risk of significant harm
- All staff are made aware that they cannot promise confidentiality to a child who discloses abuse
- Records of all safeguarding concerns and referrals are maintained securely by the DSL

13. Allegations Against Staff or Tutors

Where an allegation is made against a member of staff or a tutor:

- The DSL will be notified immediately
- The individual concerned will be suspended from platform access pending investigation
- The matter will be referred to the LADO within one working day
- A referral to the DBS will be made where the individual is removed from regulated activity
- No internal investigation will proceed in a manner that could compromise the statutory process
- The individual will be informed of the allegation and their rights in accordance with applicable employment law

14. Record Keeping

- All safeguarding concerns, referrals, and outcomes are recorded in writing by the DSL
- Records are stored securely and separately from general personnel files
- Safeguarding records relating to a child are retained until the child reaches the age of 25 or for a minimum of seven years whichever is longer
- Records involving allegations against staff are retained indefinitely in line with statutory guidance
- All records are subject to UK GDPR and accessible only to authorised personnel

15. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL and updated to reflect any changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or organisational practice. All staff and tutors will be notified of material updates.

Next Review Date: January 2026

Policy Owner: Acarise Ltd — Designated Safeguarding Lead

16. Contact

Contact Type	Details
General Support	support@acarise.com
Safeguarding	safeguarding@acarise.com
Legal and Compliance	legal@acarise.com
Website	www.acarise.com
Address	283 Uxbridge Road, W12 9DT, London
Company Number	16831261

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