

Child Protection Policy

STEMpower Through Art – KA154-YOU

1. Introduction

The organizations of the consortium are committed to ensuring the safety, protection, and well-being of all children participating in the Erasmus+ project “STEMpower Through Art – KA154-YOU.”

This policy outlines the principles, rules, and procedures that guide our work with children, educators, mentors, and partner organizations.

It is aligned with European Union safeguarding standards, Erasmus+ guidelines, GDPR, and national child protection laws in Greece, Türkiye, and Hungary.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All project staff
- Educators and trainers
- Mentors and volunteers
- External collaborators
- Any person involved in activities where children are present

It covers all project environments including digital workshops, online meetings, in-person sessions, field activities, and communication channels.

3. Principles of Child Protection

Our work follows these core principles:

- Children’s safety and dignity always come first.
- All children have equal rights to protection and participation.
- No child should experience neglect, abuse, discrimination, or exploitation.
- Adults working with children must follow strict safeguarding rules.
- All concerns or incidents must be reported immediately following the official protocol.
- Parents and guardians must be informed about activities and provide consent for participation.

4. Types of Abuse and How to Recognize Them

Staff and partners must be aware of the main categories of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse or inappropriate behavior
- Neglect
- Bullying or peer-to-peer abuse
- Cyberbullying

Warning signs may include withdrawal, fear, unusual behavior, unexplained injuries, or visible distress. Staff and mentors must report concerns immediately.

5. Code of Conduct for Adults Working with Children

All adults must follow these rules:

- Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- Never be alone with a child behind closed doors.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries.
- Do not exchange personal phone numbers or social media accounts with minors.
- Use inclusive, non-discriminatory language.
- Do not photograph or record children without written consent.
- Do not shout, insult, shame, or punish children.
- Report any suspicion of abuse immediately.

6. Safe Learning Environment – In-person & Digital

We ensure:

- Safe physical setups free of hazards.
- Autism-friendly learning aids (visual supports, clear instructions, quiet zones).
- Clear emergency procedures.
- GDPR-compliant handling of children's data.

For online sessions:

- Only approved platforms are used.
- Two adults must be present in every online activity.

- Cameras are optional for children.
- Chat moderation is mandatory.

7. Role of the Child Protection Officer

STEM Robotics Academy appoints a Child Protection Officer (CPO) responsible for:

- Receiving concerns or reports
- Ensuring proper documentation
- Supporting staff during incidents
- Coordinating action with partner organizations
- Overseeing compliance with this policy
- Reviewing the policy annually

8. Reporting Procedure

If a staff member or partner notices:

- suspicious behavior
- a disclosure from a child
- signs of abuse
- unsafe conditions

They must:

1. Stay calm and listen.
2. Reassure the child (if applicable).
3. Do NOT promise confidentiality.
4. Report immediately to the Child Protection Officer.
5. Document the incident in the Incident Report Form.
6. Avoid discussing the case with other children or adults outside the process.

9. Data Protection and GDPR Compliance

STEM Robotics Academy follows GDPR principles:

- Minimum data collection
- Data stored securely
- Parental/guardian consent required

- Photos/videos used only with written permission
- Personal data deleted after the project
- Children's identities protected in publications

10. Responsibilities of Partner Organizations

Each partner (Greece, Türkiye, Hungary) must:

- Adapt and follow this policy
- Train their local staff and mentors
- Sign the Child Protection Code of Conduct
- Ensure safe environments during local workshops
- Appoint a local safeguarding contact person
- Report incidents immediately to the Coordinator
- Cooperate during investigations or evaluations

11. Training Requirements

All staff and mentors must complete Child Protection & Ethics Training that includes:

- Safeguarding principles
- Recognizing abuse
- Responding to concerns
- Online safety
- GDPR for minors
- Autism-friendly and inclusive practices

12. Incident Management

In case of an incident:

- The CPO evaluates the severity
- Partners are notified
- Parents (if appropriate) are informed
- Authorities are contacted if required by law
- All steps are documented
- Measures are taken to prevent recurrence

13. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review

This policy is monitored through:

- Attendance sheets from training
- Annual safeguarding review
- Incident logs
- Feedback from children, parents, and staff
- Evaluation from partners

The policy is reviewed annually or sooner if legislation changes.

14. Contact Information

Child Protection Officer (CPO):

STEM Robotics Academy

Email: info@stemrobotics.gr

Phone: +30 6936849735