

Safeguarding Children Statement

Principles

The William Herschel Society including Bath Astronomers ('the Society') takes seriously its responsibilities to provide a safe and secure environment for children when they attend lectures, workshops or take part in the Society's observing or outreach activities. The Society will adhere to the laws relating to child protection when children take part in any of the Society's activities.

For the purposes of this document, a child is anyone under 18 years of age. A child cannot be a member of the Society by the Society's Constitution, but a child is welcome to accompany their parent or guardian as long as the adult is a current member of the Society and retains responsibility for the child for the duration an event.

The Society's Child Protection Responsible Officer (CPRO) will, by default, be the Society's Chairman or a specifically delegated person agreed by the Committee. The current CPRO will be clearly indicated on the Society's web sites. Where a child's presence is anticipated, the CPRO or a deputised lead will be identified during the event briefings to volunteers and participants. For joint events with other bodies, the lead body will be agreed beforehand as part of preparations and their CPRO arrangements identified in the event briefing.

Any Society member noticing abuse of a child or children has a responsibility to immediately report such abuse to either the Police or to Children's Services of the Local Authority. Any reports of child abuse, during a Society event, must also be reported to the Society's CPRO.

Any Society member witnessing abuse of a child during Society activities, who is unsure about identifying abuse, or who to report such matters to, can discuss the issue with the Society's CPRO who will, if necessary, seek advice from Children's Services and advise accordingly.

A child's parent or guardian, or an adult acting 'in loco parentis' will be responsible for the child at all times whilst undertaking activities with the Society. At no time will the Society, or its members acting on behalf of the Society, act 'in loco parentis'.

Future decisions regarding policy or the activities of the Society will be mindful of, and not contradict, the principles for safeguarding children.

For a detailed working policy on child protection and astronomical bodies, the Society defers to the Federation of Astronomical Societies (FAS) Child Protection Guidelines (CPG).

THE WILLIAM HERSCHEL SOCIETY

Abuse

Abuse can present itself in many forms. There are obvious forms of abuse such as physical, sexual and neglect. Emotional or psychological abuse is more difficult to identify. A detailed description is provided in the FAS's CPG and should be referred to.

Society Events

A Society Event is one organised by one or more members of the Society's Committee in the name of the William Herschel Society or the Bath Astronomers.

For any Society event which involves a child, the child must be accompanied by a responsible adult. In normal circumstances, a responsible adult will be the child's parent, guardian or an adult acting in loco parentis. When Society events involve groups of children from an organisation (Scouts / Guides / Cubs / Brownies etc.), the organisation will ensure there are sufficient adults to accompany the children who have been vetted as suitable to work with children, and that the vetting adheres to the most recent legislation appropriate to the frequency of their involvement. It is the responsibility of the organisation, not the Society, to ensure the vetting is undertaken. For Society events occurring during twilight and darkness, the Society requires a minimum ratio of 1 responsible adult to 8 children. Organisations that do not adhere to the above will not be able to participate in such restricted light events.

Members should be reminded that assisting children at telescopes (hands on) should be undertaken primarily by the parent or guardian and any help offered by members must be with the agreement of the child and parent/guardian.

Reporting Concerns

Any Society member noticing abuse of a child or children has a responsibility to immediately report such abuse to either the Police or to Children's Services of Bath and North East Somerset.

When in doubt about any observed abuse, discussion should take place as soon as possible with the CPRO of the Society. It is good practice to make contemporaneous notes for future reference of exactly what was observed. These notes must be kept confidential. A detailed process is described in the FAS's CPG and should be referred to in the event of a concern being raised.

To discuss concerns or to make a referral, contact details are as follows:

[Local Authority Children's Services](#)

Children and Families Duty and Assessment Team on 01225 396312 or 01225 396313

Disabled Children's Team on 01225 396967

Both teams are open 8.30am – 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am – 4.30pm Friday

If outside of these office hours, call the Emergency Duty Team on 01454 615165

Further information available at <http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/banes/index.html>

THE WILLIAM HERSCHEL SOCIETY

Local Police

For reporting suspected abuse, dial 101 or use the online reporting form

<https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/reportcrime>

For in progress/imminent danger, dial 999.

Concerns can be raised with the local police who will provide further advice.

This document will be reviewed annually, or more frequently in the light of any experience, future legislation or guidance issued in relation to the safety and safeguarding of children.

Reference documents:

FAS Child Protection Guidelines v1.0 (FAS_CPG_v1.0Final_Oct_2013.pdf)

Approved by the Committee

September 2018

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