

Norwich Astronomical Society

Safeguarding Policy

- **Introduction**

Charity Trustees are responsible for ensuring that those benefiting from the charity are not harmed in any way through contact with their charity. They must accordingly take all reasonable steps within their power to ensure that this does not happen. This is particularly important where beneficiaries do represent vulnerable persons in the community. Children are an especially vulnerable group and are considered in this policy.

The Norwich Astronomical Society has a number of children attending club nights, public open evenings and specially arranged visits for children's groups such as schools, scout and guide groups. A considerable number of Society members help out at these events, so it has been deemed impracticable to acquire appropriate security checks on this number of personnel. However, the Management Trustees recognises its responsibilities and has adopted this policy to minimise the risk to children attending the Society's Observatory

- **Exclusions**

The nature of the Astronomical activities, which are typically performed at night in the dark, preclude us from being able to monitor any particular individual. We will not therefore knowingly allow anyone to use or visit our Observatory who is a convicted child sex offender or subject to the notification requirements of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, or subject to a Sexual Risk Order or Child Abduction Notice.

- **Audience**

This policy is to be made available to all existing and new members of the Society to make them all aware of the Society Policy for the protection of Children whilst on Society property.

- **Best Practice**

- Events and work should be planned as to minimise the situations where it may be possible for children to be hurt or abused.
- When working with a child or children, the activity should be arranged so that it can be observed or supervised by other adults.
- Whenever groups of children are visiting the Society Observatory, adults from within that group are required to stay with them.

- **Management**

- Those working with children on behalf of the Society shall be accountable for their conduct to the Management Committee.
- It is the duty of all members of the Society to prevent the abuse of all children in contact with the Society.

- **Practice Never to be Sanctioned**

Members of the Society (or those) acting on the Society's behalf must not:

- Be the sole adult in charge of a child or group of children.
- Where those members are acting on behalf of the Society, they must not meet with children away from the Observatory without a parent or other adult being present.

- **How to Respond to Allegations and Suspicions**

If there is concern of an allegation of child abuse:

- One of the Society Officer's (Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer) must be notified immediately in the event of any allegation.
- The Society Officer dealing must make initial enquiries of the member concerned to ascertain any foundation to the allegation. Any conversations must be documented and signed by both parties.
- If the Society Officer feels there may be truth to the allegation, he/she must immediately contact Social Services or the Police.

- **Confidentiality**

- At no time must the name of the individual be disclosed to anyone outside of the Society Officers. It is appropriate however for the Management Committee to be made aware of the allegation.

Date of Next Review: March 2027