



Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Statement

Updated: April 2025

Principles

The Bath Astronomers ('the Society') take seriously its responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for all when they attend lectures, workshops or take part in the Society's observing or outreach activities. The Society will act in accordance with the relevant safeguarding legislation and with local statutory safeguarding procedures.

Policy Statement

The Society believes everyone has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, biological sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status.

The Society is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution.

The Society acknowledges that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is committed to prevent abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of all involved.

The Society recognises that health, well-being, ability, disability and need for care and support can affect a person's resilience. We recognise that some people experience barriers, for example, to communication in raising concerns or seeking help. We recognise that these factors can vary at different points in people's lives.

Actions taken by The Society will be consistent with the principles of safeguarding ensuring that any action taken is prompt, proportionate and that it includes and respects the voice of those concerned.

What is 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.

Child Safeguarding

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.

Without separate child protection arrangements set in place by the Society's Child Protection Responsible Officer (CPRO), a Child must be accompanied by a Responsible Adult during Society events and meetings. The Responsible Adult must be the parent of the child, their guardian or an adult acting 'in loco parentis'. The Responsible Adult must be a member of the Society and will

always be responsible for the child whilst participating in Society activities. At no time will the Society, or its members acting on behalf of the Society, act 'in loco parentis'.

The CPRO will, by default, be the Society's Chair or a specifically delegated person agreed by the Coordination Team. The current CPRO will be clearly indicated on the Society's web site. 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, must discuss the issue with the Society's CPRO who will, if necessary, seek advice from Children's Services and advise accordingly.

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).

Society Events

A Society Event is one organised by one or more members of the Society's Coordination Team in the name of the Bath Astronomers.

For all Society events, a Child must be accompanied by a Responsible Adult. When Society events involve groups of children from another organisation (School / Scouts / Guides / Cubs / Brownies etc.), that organisation will ensure there are sufficient Responsible Adults to accompany the children. It is the responsibility of the organisation, not the Society, to ensure that those adults having been vetted as suitable to work with children, and that the vetting adheres to the most recent legislation appropriate to the frequency and extent of their involvement.

For Society events occurring during twilight and darkness, the Society requires a minimum ratio of 1 responsible/vetted adult to 8 children. Organisations that do not adhere to the above will not be able to participate in such restricted light events.

Society members are reminded that physical assistance of children at telescopes or during other activities must be undertaken by a Responsible Adult. The exceptions are to prevent imminent injury to the child or to offer visible and passive support for balance with prior consent from the child and Responsible Adult.

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. The member should also ensure that the Society's CPRO is notified.

When in doubt about any observed abuse, discussion must take place as soon as possible with the Society's CPRO. 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's Social Work Services on **01225 396111** or 01225 477929

Disabled Children's Team on **01225 396967** or email ChildCare_Duty@bathnes.gov.uk

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

Find information at <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/webforms/concerned-about-a-child-or-family/>

[Local Police](#)

For in progress/imminent danger, dial 999.

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

For reporting suspected abuse, dial 101 or use the online reporting form <https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/report/child-abuse/>

Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding

The Society will ensure that all participants, particularly those who are vulnerable, are treated with respect and care. The Society's Chairperson, CPRO or a specifically delegated person will be the Designated Person for referral of any concerns.

Reporting Concerns

Any Society member noticing abuse has a responsibility to immediately report such abuse to either the Police or to B&NES Social Work Team. The member should also ensure that the Designated Person is notified.

When in doubt about any observed abuse, discussion must take place as soon as possible with the Designated Person. It is good practice to make contemporaneous notes for future reference of exactly what was observed. These notes must be kept confidential.

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

[Local Authority Adult Services](#)

If you are worried a vulnerable person could be in danger, please contact the B&NES Social Work Team on **01225 394200**. The team is available 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

Find information at <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/tell-us-about-adult-being-abused-or-neglected>

[Local Police](#)

For in progress/imminent danger, dial 999.

Concerns can be raised with the local police who will provide further advice. For reporting suspected abuse, dial 101 to get in contact with the Safeguarding Coordination Unit.

<https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/crime-prevention-advice/protecting-vulnerable-adults/>

Policy Updates

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 and vulnerable adults.

Reference documents: FAS Child Protection Guidelines v1.3 (Child Protection Guidelines v1.3.pdf)

Approved by the Coordination Team: May 2025