

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Orion Wildlife

1. Policy Statement

Orion Wildlife is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people, and adults at risk who engage with our activities. We recognise our duty of care to protect individuals from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Orion Wildlife takes a **zero-tolerance approach** to abuse and is committed to acting in the best interests of those at risk at all times.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, trustees/directors, contractors, partners, and anyone acting on behalf of Orion Wildlife.

2. Definitions

- **Child / Young Person:** Anyone under the age of 18.
- **Adult at Risk:** An adult who has care and support needs and may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.
- **Safeguarding:** The action taken to promote welfare and protect individuals from harm.

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

Orion Wildlife works in line with relevant UK legislation and guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection legislation (UK GDPR)

4. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all Orion Wildlife activities, including:

- Education sessions and events
- Fieldwork and outdoor activities
- Volunteering and training
- Online engagement and communications
- One-off events, workshops, or outreach programmes

5. Types of Abuse

Safeguarding concerns may include, but are not limited to:

Children

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

Adults at Risk

- Physical abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Neglect or acts of omission
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse

6. Safeguarding Principles

Orion Wildlife follows these core principles:

- The welfare of the child or adult at risk is paramount
- Everyone has the right to be safe and respected
- Safeguarding concerns must be taken seriously
- Concerns will be responded to promptly and appropriately
- Confidentiality will be respected but **never guaranteed**

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding Lead

Orion Wildlife will appoint a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** responsible for:

- Receiving safeguarding concerns
- Deciding appropriate next steps
- Liaising with statutory agencies where required
- Ensuring records are kept securely

Name: Tina Rout

Role: Company Secretary

Contact: via contact details on website

All Staff, Volunteers, and Representatives

Everyone is responsible for:

- Acting in a way that protects others from harm
- Following this policy and procedures
- Reporting concerns immediately
- Attending safeguarding training where required

8. Safer Working Practices

Orion Wildlife is committed to safer recruitment and working practices, including:

- Clear role descriptions
- Appropriate references and checks (including DBS where required)
- Safeguarding induction and training
- Clear codes of conduct
- Risk assessments for activities involving children or adults at risk

9. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

If Someone Is in Immediate Danger

Call **999** immediately.

Reporting Procedure

1. **Listen calmly** and take the concern seriously
2. **Do not promise confidentiality**
3. **Do not investigate** or ask leading questions
4. **Record** what you have been told as soon as possible
5. **Report immediately** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

If the concern involves the DSL, report it to a senior officer or relevant external authority.

10. Responding to a Disclosure

If a child or adult at risk discloses abuse:

- Stay calm and supportive
- Listen carefully and without judgement
- Reassure them they have done the right thing
- Explain what will happen next
- Report the disclosure immediately

11. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Information will be shared only on a **need-to-know basis**
- Records will be stored securely
- Data protection laws will be followed
- Safeguarding concerns override confidentiality where someone is at risk

12. Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

Any allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be:

- Taken seriously
- Managed sensitively and fairly
- Reported to the appropriate authority where required
- Handled in line with employment or disciplinary procedures

Suspension may be considered as a neutral act while investigations take place.

13. Online and Digital Safeguarding

Orion Wildlife will:

- Promote safe and appropriate online behaviour
- Avoid private one-to-one online contact with children
- Use moderation for online platforms where possible
- Report online safeguarding concerns promptly

14. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually
- Updated following changes in legislation or guidance
- Communicated to all relevant individuals

15. Policy Approval

This Safeguarding Policy and Procedures were approved by Orion Wildlife management.

Effective Date: 15 Jan 2026

Review Date: 15 Jan 2027

Signed: Nick Rout

Role: Director