

Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults.

Record of Reviews		
Date Review Completed	Reason for Review	Author/Reviewer
04/03/2023	First Issue Version 1.0	Ian Butterworth
07/03/2023	Version 1.1 Adopted version after robot club review	Ian Butterworth
11/03/2024	Version 1.2 Adopted version after annual review	Ian Butterworth
02/06/2025	Version 1.3 Included monthly video conference calls	Ian Butterworth

1. Introduction

- 1.1. UKMARS is an organisation focused on encouraging Micromouse and other robotics hobbies. To support this goal UKMARS organises events and competitions that are open to members of the public. UKMARS also holds monthly video conference calls that are restricted to members. Members of UKMARS are always over the age of 16 years. There are significant benefits in STEM skills arising from the robotic challenges and as a result young people often attend UKMARS events.
- 1.2. UKMARS conducts live events in England and is bound by legislation for safeguarding in England. The Department for Education publishes guidance that indicates the areas that need to be considered:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6509558022a783000d43e81f/After-school_clubs_community_activities_and_tuition_safeguarding_guidance_for_providers.pdf
- 1.3. In all cases anyone under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults (those over the age of 18 that require community care due to disability, age or illness) attending a UKMARS in-person event are accompanied by an adult who takes responsibility for them. This is a condition of registering to attend an event.
- 1.4. Members between the ages of 16 and 18 can attend video conference calls providing prior consent has been given by a parent or guardian.

2. Safeguarding Policy

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is:
 - To protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who attend UKMARS events and video conferences to allow them to safely enjoy robotics activities
 - Provide UKMARS members, event attendees and all volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to Safeguarding and child protection.
 - To be proportionate to the activities of UKMARS and the environments in which they are conducted.
- 2.2. This policy and related procedures apply to anyone attending any UKMARS organised event or attending a UKMARS organised video conference.
- 2.3. This policy is made available to all members and all adults who attend UKMARS events.
- 2.4. In all cases anyone under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults (those over the age of 18 that require community care due to disability, age or illness) attending an in-person event are accompanied by an adult who takes responsibility for them. This is a condition of registering to attend an event.
- 2.5. Members between the ages of 16 and 18 can attend video conference calls providing prior consent has been given by a parent or guardian.
- 2.6. The officers of UKMARS are committed to ensure that robust safeguards are in place, that policies and procedures are current and fit for purpose, and that complaints are investigated and handled promptly, efficiently, sensitively and without fear or favour.
- 2.7. Enquiries about the operation of this policy may be made in the first instance to the Safeguarding Lead Person who is the Chairman of UKMARS chairman@ukmars.org . The safeguarding policy and procedures are subject to annual review and are updated accordingly.

3. Safeguarding Procedures

- 3.1. UKMARS officers will ensure that a responsible adult is identified for any person under the age of 18 or vulnerable adult registering to attend a UKMARS event.
- 3.2. Responsible adults registering anyone under the age of 18 or a vulnerable adult must ensure that:
 - 3.2.1. they maintain the required levels of disclosure and supervision
 - 3.2.2. they have appropriate training for the attendees that they have registered
 - 3.2.3. when acting for another group such as a school or club they follow the safeguarding procedures for that group
- 3.3. If any attendee at a UKMARS event or any member on a UKMARS video conference call has concerns about the behaviour or actions of anyone associated with UKMARS they should immediately inform the named person in their group initially responsible for Safeguarding **and** the Safeguarding Lead

- Person (identified in 2.7 of this document). Anyone acting in an unsafe or unwise manner may be subject to referral to the relevant authorities.
- 3.4. Any disclosure made to the UKMARS Safeguarding Lead Person will be recorded as soon as is practicable. Leading questions should not be asked but a clear factual written record made of what has been disclosed following this guidance:
- 3.4.1. Record the time and date
 - 3.4.2. Don't promise to keep what you're told a secret
 - 3.4.3. Tell the child or young person what you will do next
 - 3.4.4. Don't make promises you cannot keep
- 3.5. Confidentiality cannot be promised in any case where an individual may be in danger of any form of abuse. Abuse can include physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. UKMARS may without reference to any person seek assistance from or make a referral to any competent authority for them to advise or take appropriate further action. The adult responsible for the individual who has made a disclosure will be notified if appropriate.
- 3.6. Persons making relevant disclosures to UKMARS must co-operate fully with UKMARS and any competent authority in dealing with investigations into complaints, must follow appropriate recommendations and carry out any recommended further actions.
- 3.7. UKMARS makes every effort to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for all attendees. Inside organized events and during video conference calls UKMARS volunteers are encouraged to talk to other attendees about Micromouse, robotics and STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). Members and organisers welcome enquiries from all attendees and are always happy to provide appropriate advice and guidance on matters relating to the contests, events, robot building and robotics in general. At events this should be done publicly and not in private without the responsible adult identified when the attendee was registered.
- 3.8. Ideally responsible adults should be attendance for all conversations with attendees under the age of 18 or vulnerable adults to avoid misunderstandings, in a large hall with multiple activities this may not be practical at all times and should not inhibit the ability for under 18s or a vulnerable adult to engage in conversations.
- 3.9. In the event that an attendee loses contact with their responsible adult or if contact with the attendee is needed to ensure the safeguarding of the attendee or others, UKMARS volunteers may contact an attendee that is under the age of 18 or is vulnerable adult for the purposes of safeguarding without first obtaining the consent of the responsible adult.
- 3.10. Outside public events UKMARS volunteers should not coach or otherwise have contact with any attendee of an event that is under the age of 18 or a vulnerable adult without first obtaining the consent of the responsible adult identified when the attendee was registered. UKMARS volunteers should only conduct video conference calls with people under the age of 18 or who are vulnerable adults as part of the monthly members video conference call when more than one adult member is present. These conditions do not affect legitimate

safeguarded contact arising from a UKMARS volunteer acting in a separate capacity such as volunteering in an after-school club or a robotics club.

- 3.11. During events arrangements will be in place for individuals to request that they are excluded from photography. Monthly video conference calls will not be recorded.

4. Whistle Blowing Policy

- 4.1. UKMARS officers will, under this Whistle Blowing Policy, protect any individual making a disclosure. Should the individual making the disclosure feel that insufficient action or follow up has taken place they should inform any of the 3 officers of UKMARS: Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer without fear of repercussion.
- 4.2. The UKMARS officer will investigate the handling of the disclosure and ensure that appropriate steps are taken.

5. Further Advice and Support

NSPCC – www.nspcc.org.uk or 0116 234 7223

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline – 0808 800 5000

Criminal Records Bureau – www.disclosure.gov.uk

Save the Children – www.scfuk.org.uk