



## Safeguarding within the Police Volunteer Cadet Programme

Owning Department:	Citizens in Policing		
Department SPOC:	Citizens in Policing Manager		
Governing Policy:	<a href="#">Police and Emergency Services Volunteer Cadets Policy</a>		
Risk Rating:	Low	Legal Sign Off: Date:	N/A

Published Date:	03/03/2023 (v1.2)	Review Date:	02/03/2027
-----------------	-------------------	--------------	------------

## Index

1. Procedure Aim and Purpose .....	2
2. Relevant Legislation .....	3
3. Key definitions .....	3
Types of abuse and exploitation .....	3
Exploitation: .....	4
Harmful traditional practices .....	5
Other types of harm and abuse .....	5
4. Detail of the Safeguarding Framework .....	5
Requirements .....	6
Maintaining Boundaries .....	6
Positional Statements .....	6
Safer Working Practice .....	7
Use of Social Media and Mobile Technology .....	7
Managing personal data and young people's consent .....	8
Online Safety / Cyber Bullying .....	8
Arrangements for overnight events/activities .....	8
Insurance .....	9
First aid provision .....	9
5. How to recognise, respond and refer any reported allegations, disclosures or concerns .....	9
VPC Principles for Responding to Disclosures and Allegations and Concerns .....	9
What to do if you believe someone is imminently at serious risk of harm or has been abused .....	10
How to listen and behave if you receive a disclosure, allegation or concern .....	10
If you notice signs or behavioural indicators of abuse or harm .....	11
The Role of the LADO .....	11
Key Features: .....	11
6. Flowchart showing process on dealing with a disclosure (Fire Leaders to refer to SFRS safeguarding policy HSP44) .....	13

## 1. Procedure Aim and Purpose

- 1.1 We acknowledge our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, young people and adult volunteers/employees.
- 1.2 We also recognise and accept our responsibility to act in loco parentis during organised events and activities and our 'duty of care' to volunteers and staff.
- 1.3 Establishing a culture of honesty and openness helps us to know and understand what issues children and young people consider likely to affect them and their safety. This is particularly important when working with diverse communities or those who have additional vulnerabilities.
- 1.4 The purpose of this procedure is to:
  - a) Ensure you are clear about **your** safeguarding responsibility as a member of the Police and Emergency Services Volunteer Cadet Programme, in

terms of recognising, responding to and referring any reported allegations, disclosures or concerns, in accordance with the child/adult protection process

- b) Ensure **you are** clear about your responsibility to follow the correct procedures laid out to protect children, young people and volunteers from harm and to create a safe space for children and young people to have fun, be challenged and develop skills for life.
- 1.5 The procedure applies to those who hold both an employed and volunteer role and who raise a safeguarding concern in either capacity.

## 2. Relevant Legislation

- 2.1 Children Act 2004, Working Together to Safeguarding Children Guidance rev 2018, Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1974, Data Protection and GDPR, Equality and Diversity Act 2010 The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Human Rights Act 1998 and the United Nations Convention the Rights of the Child, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

## 3. Key definitions

- **Child/ Young person** – Anyone under the age of 18 years
- **Safeguarding** – For the purposes of this procedure, we are using the terms ‘safeguarding’ and ‘to safeguard’ to describe the prevention and precautionary approach to planning and procedures needed to protect children, young people and adults from any potential harm.
- **Safety** – Safety is about being protected from and not causing, danger, risk, injury, loss or harm. Safety can be a feeling, a physical object or place, and an action, and sometimes refers to the laws, rules, and principles that are intended to keep people safe. Safety is not just about what happens inside the meeting place, it is also about outside it, including days out, and may be about something that is happening at home.
- **Radicalisation** – refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups
- **Wellbeing** – Wellbeing refers to a person’s sense of contentment and satisfaction with their conditions in life and their current circumstances.
- **Grooming** – is the planned and deliberate act of manoeuvring an individual into a position of isolation to ensure they become a key influencer or ‘trusted person’.

### Types of abuse and exploitation

- 3.1 An abuser might be anyone, but they are often known by the victim. An abuser will make every effort to build a trusting relationship with the victim and will often befriend or seek to maintain the respect of friends and colleagues alike, this is called Grooming.

3.2 Abuse can occur in any relationship at any time. It may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

- **Emotional/Psychological** – persistent emotional maltreatment of a person that results in their wellbeing or development being impaired.
- **Physical** - is an individual's body being injured or hurt e.g. hitting, pushing or assault. Physical abuse can also be in other forms i.e. drowning, inflicting illness upon another.
- **Sexual** – Involvement in a sexual act where the person does not wish to be involved or does not have the understanding to make an informed choice, e.g. rape, sexual assault, inappropriate touching or exposure i.e. imagery, film.
- **Neglect/Act of Omission** – The failure to prevent harm that damages or impairs growth or development by not meeting a person's basic physical or mental needs.
- **Financial** - The theft of a person's property or assets. Theft has a wide definition and includes acts of deception.
- **Discriminatory** – This is when someone is picked on because something about them is different i.e. race, sex, gender reassignment, age, disability, religion or belief, sexual preference, appearance or cultural background, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership.
- **Organisational/Institutional** – Where an organisation fails to prevent repeated maltreatment, abuse or neglect of children or adults at risk.
- **Peer on peer abuse** - occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their **peers** who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in **peer on peer abuse** is under the age of 18.
- **LADO** – Local Authority Designated Officer – an individual employed by the local authority who has the responsibility to oversee all investigations around someone who works with children in a position of trust.

Exploitation:

- **sexual** – is where young people, adults or children are taken advantage of for power, money or status
- **modern slavery / human trafficking** – includes forced labour, domestic servitude or coercion, deceiving and forcing an individual into a life of abuse/servitude e.g. prostitution, drug running
- **radicalisation** – a process in which a vulnerable individual comes to support terrorism or violent extremism and in some cases participates or supports terrorist groups
- **gang** - a group of people (any age) with a defined leadership and internal organisation that identifies with or claims control over territory in a community and engages, either individually or collectively, in illegal, and possibly violent, behaviour.

Harmful traditional practices

- **forced marriage** – This is illegal in the UK and is when someone is forced into a marriage without consent, where violence or threats are used in the form of coercion to this end.
- **female genital mutilation** – This is illegal in the UK or to take a female out of the UK to have this done. It refers to a procedure which intentionally alters or causes injury to the female genital organs, for non-medical reasons and without their informed consent.
- **honour based violence** – is when incidents or crimes are committed to protect or defend the families honour/or of the community it includes FGM, forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing.
- **Domestic Abuse** – abuse or violence in a relationship is about a pattern of behaviour, it can be any form of abuse and its purpose is to assert power over another.

Other types of harm and abuse

- **Bullying** – Is a pattern of behaviour that can be any of the following: threatening, aggressive or intimidating; abusive, insulting or offensive; cruel or vindictive; humiliating, degrading or demeaning. It can happen within the ‘real world’ or happen within cyberspace.
- **Online bullying or cyberbullying** - happens on social media networks such as Instagram, Facebook etc. Also other forms such as games, or mobile phones
- **Sexting** – this is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit pictures and texts. This is illegal in the UK
- **Drug or alcohol misuse** – is a pattern of behaviour which changes or alters the mood or mental state of an individual. Substances that can cause harm can be illegal or legal i.e pain relief, glues etc.
- **Self-harm or self-neglect** – deliberately causing harm to yourself by either hurting yourself or putting yourself in harm’s way. Self-harm is mainly a coping strategy. Self-neglect is when you fail to care for yourself, such as personal hygiene, health or environment i.e. hoarding.
- **Gambling addiction** – is the inability to stop gambling. Gambling addiction often co-occurs with alcohol abuse or drug addiction and it can make people very vulnerable to coercion and/or mental health issues.

**4. Detail of the Safeguarding Framework**

4.1 Everyone within the volunteer cadet programme must fully understand the safeguarding framework and understand their role and responsibility within the framework. (see [flowchart](#)).

ACC lead for Citizens in Policing (Designated Responsible Officer)

Citizens in Policing Manager

Cadet Co-Ordinator  
 Senior Cadet Leader  
 Cadet Leader  
 Cadet

### Requirements

- All Cadet Leaders (officers, staff and PSVs) will be vetted as per the Force vetting process.
- All Cadet Leaders will complete Safeguarding training for Children Level 1 e-learning and a copy of the certificate of completion will be shared with the Cadet Coordinator.
- All NCALT packages must be completed (as necessary) as per instructions from Learning & Development.
- The Volunteer Police Cadets Hub offer training opportunities for Cadet Leaders which will be made available to all Cadet Leaders via the Cadet Coordinator.

### Maintaining Boundaries

4.2 Being a Leader within the VPC is based on your ability to build positive relationships with others but specifically young people, but it is important to maintain appropriate boundaries to keep ourselves safe:

- Promote and respect safe spaces, listen to others. We have a responsibility to challenge negative ideas, assumptions, behaviour and language.
- How we present ourselves, our interaction with others and our general conduct are highly significant when dealing with an allegation, disclosure, or concern. This does not mean that our relationships should be cold and detached, but we need to be sensitive and support individuals, without placing them or ourselves at risk.
- Listen to, and respond to, everyone's concerns. Avoid discussing information regarding the concerns with those who do not need to know, and be aware of being overheard while speaking or while on the phone.
- If it becomes apparent or is suspected that a Cadet has inappropriate feelings towards a Cadet Leader, this must be reported immediately to the Cadet Co-ordinator. Details of how this has presented and any further action taken must be documented and forwarded to the Citizens in Policing Manager. When appropriate parents/guardians must be informed.

### Positional Statements

- Adults must not consume **alcohol** when they are directly responsible for young people on a VPC activity and must not permit young people (aged under 18 years) to consume alcohol.

- The use of **illegal substances** at our activities is unacceptable and appropriate safeguarding action will be taken where necessary by responsible Leaders. The National (Safeguarding) Hub Team, or Force co-ordinators will support and issue additional guidance on request.
- We recognise that **gambling and gaming** has become a popular pastime for young people. When done in a controlled environment it can be fun, and a positive social activity however we also recognise that for many, left unregulated it can lead to adverse outcomes such as bullying, strained relationships, criminal behaviour, exploitation, debt depression and potentially suicide.
- Whilst engaged on cadet activities adult leaders or cadets will not take part in gambling. Any fundraising activities that involve an element of gambling should be risk assessed and monitored closely by an adult leader.
- Any person aged 18 or over who is in a position of trust as a unit leader or volunteer will not be allowed to enter a personal relationship with a cadet of any age. Any cadet that then turns 18 and becomes a young leader is subject to the same policy. If they are in a relationship with a cadet they should not be a leader at the same unit.

### Safer Working Practice

- 4.3 Safe working practice means working professionally and together to create a safe space.
- 4.4 Ensure at all times, the correct ratio between child: adult is actively enforced. VPC has defined the correct ratio as **1:10** for 13-18 year olds unless there are additional considerations such as disability, behaviour, environment, age mix, or any other variance identified.
- 4.5 At all times groups of young people should be supervised and **2 adults** should be present this is to ensure the safety of the leaders as well as the children and young people.
- 4.6 Leaders must not:
- Give young people lifts except in emergency and never without prior knowledge of both the parents/carers. If this situation arises Leaders should wherever possible arrange for another Leader to accompany them.
  - Work alone with cadets on a regular but non-planned basis unless they have discussed and agreed this with the Cadet Co-Ordinator.

### Use of Social Media and Mobile Technology

- 4.7 You must not contact young people under the age of 14 years directly – communication should be with the parents/carers. When you contact parents/carers or young people over 14 years by email or online you should:

- Use language that is suitable. Try to avoid any words or phrases that could be misinterpreted or misconstrued
- Ensure that any images you send are appropriate and that external hyperlinks you include do not lead to inappropriate content
- Always copy a parent/carer in to any messages you send to a young person. Individual instant messaging between young people and leaders is discouraged.
- Where possible, Leaders should not use social media to communicate with cadets. (Please refer to Force [Digital Engagement and Social Media Policy](#) and the [Use of Personal Devices and the Management of Risk associated with their Use procedure](#))
- When using social media to publicise the work of VPC or your Unit, you **must** ensure that the relevant photo permissions have been obtained.

#### Managing personal data and young people's consent

- 4.8 Before undertaking any activity, you must ensure you have considered what data is to be collected from young people and how; what it is being used for; and who will have access to it. This is to ensure you are able to give young people, parents/carers enough information during the data collection planning process, on which to make an informed choice.
- 4.9 It is important that we recognise that young people should be consulted as well as their parents/carers if between the ages of 13 – 18 years (UNCRC). Legally parents/carers under the age of 18 years do have overall responsibility for consent. Young people can from the age of 16 years sign off on medical forms as they can instruct doctors without parental consent in areas such as contraception, mental health etc.
- 4.10 When using images of young people such as online (including on social networking sites and YouTube etc) and in publications you **MUST**:
- Avoid using both the name and the photograph of a young person in a printed publication, social media or on a website
  - Only allow photographs to be taken of suitably dressed subjects and in appropriate situations

#### Online Safety / Cyber Bullying

- 4.11 Whilst the VPC is not an educational organisation it recognises its role as informal educator, the importance of building skills and knowledge on how to keep young people safe online and practises a zero-tolerance approach to bullying on line or cyber bullying.

#### Arrangements for overnight events/activities

- 4.12 When planning activities where overnight accommodation is involved, if appropriate, it is good practice to carry out a site visit as part of the risk assessment process.



4.13 Cadet Leaders and Cadets must never sleep in the same room/tent with anyone of the opposite sex.

4.14 No Cadet Leader may sleep in the same room or tent as a Cadet.

4.15 Where possible, Cadet Leaders should not share the same bathing/toilet facilities as the Cadets. Facilities should be gender specific.

### Insurance

4.16 Check that your insurance policy covers all aspects of your activities. You may need to arrange additional cover for particular one-off activities or trips.

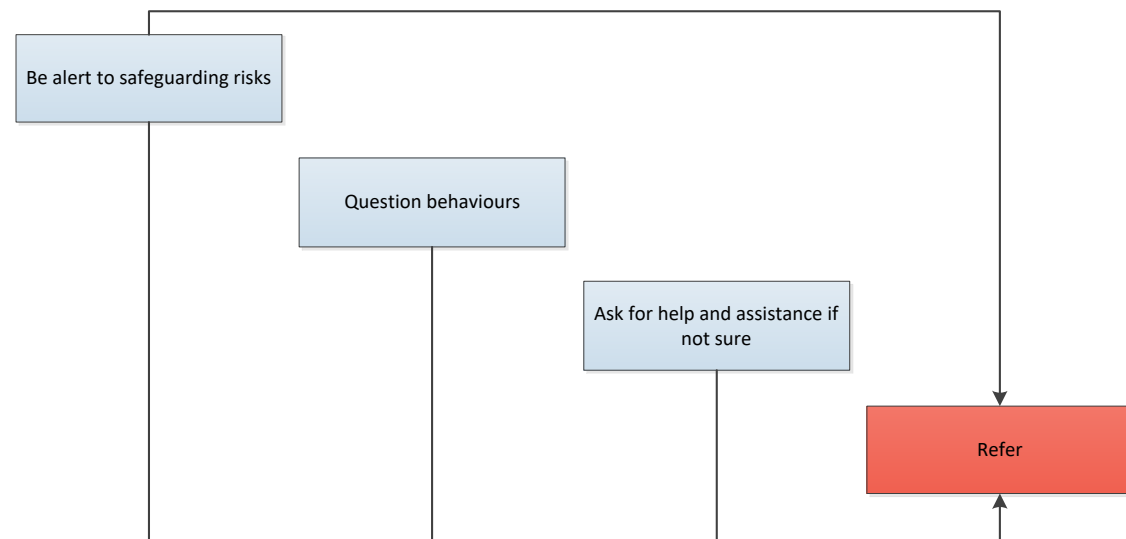
### First aid provision

4.17 A first aid kit should be available to use when at sessions and at events. Any accident or injury should be recorded following Force procedure.

## **5. How to recognise, respond and refer any reported allegations, disclosures or concerns**

5.1 This process summarises what action you must take if you receive a disclosure or allegation or if you have concerns about abuse or harm, including where you observe concerning behaviour from others in VPC or external partners.

### VPC Principles for Responding to Disclosures and Allegations and Concerns



- **Being alert** to signs of abuse and neglect - Everyone should be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect.
- **Question behaviours** - The signs of abuse or neglect might not always be obvious and a vulnerable person might not tell anyone what is happening to them. You should therefore question behaviours if something seems unusual and try to speak to the person, if appropriate, to seek further information but remain within sight and sound of other staff.

- **Seek help** - Concerns about a person can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness, how they have been identified and over what duration they have arisen. If you have concerns about a young person or adult that leads you to think they have been or could be harmed, you must ask for help.
- **Report** - If in doubt about whether a concern is well founded or whether you should report, you should ALWAYS report.

### What to do if you believe someone is imminently at serious risk of harm or has been abused

5.2 In any situation where someone is, or could be at imminent or serious risk of harm you must contact control and contact room (CCR) and then ensure Parent/Guardian is advised (unless risk is from parents). They will record details and allocate a police officer. Any delay could result in unnecessary further harm or abuse. The person at risk could be a young person or adult within or external to VPC or an associated person such as a partner or member of the public.

5.3 Here are some examples to help you identify what this means:

- They have said they intend to self-harm or are having suicidal thoughts
- The alleged abuse or harm is being carried out at a place they are about to go to (for example, in the home)
- They have a life-threatening physical or psychological injury or condition
- Someone who is causing them harm is coming to collect them at the end of the activity

### How to listen and behave if you receive a disclosure, allegation or concern

5.4 Sometimes, a young person or adult will entrust you with personal information or you will have a concern about their safety or wellbeing. It is extremely important that you understand your role, including what to say and how to behave.

5.5 If someone shares information with you directly (either about themselves or about someone else) you must follow the 5-step model: LISTEN, BELIEVE, AFFIRM, REFER and SUPPORT:

- **Listen** carefully and **believe** that what is being said is correct
- **Affirm** to the person that you cannot keep it a secret. Explain that you may need to pass the information on to keep them, or other people, safe
- Follow [disclosure process flowchart](#)
- Offer immediate **Support**, stay calm. Try not to show signs of anxiety or shock
- Do not investigate, but try to find out as much as you can from them, using open questions

- Record an account of the conversation immediately, using the individual's actual words wherever possible. Sign, date and keep the record safe

#### If you notice signs or behavioural indicators of abuse or harm

##### 5.6 Follow the process below:

- Give facts. State clearly your concerns. If you also share your personal opinion, make it very clear that it is your personal point of view.
- Don't investigate. Don't try to find out more from the young person or adult before sharing your concerns. Don't question them or try to investigate in any way.
- Discuss with immediate leaders. Share your concerns within the confidential setting of your immediate team, for instance, during your end of activity meeting. Use this time to identify if anyone else has similar concerns. This must be a confidential discussion.
- Bear in mind the following when reporting your concerns:
  - State very clearly if you are concerned about the person's immediate safety
  - Keep fact and opinion separate
  - Identify any help given to the individual to address their immediate needs or, if this is required.

#### The Role of the LADO

5.7 The [Working together to safeguard children](#) guidance refers to local authorities having a designated officer or a team of designated officers involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people that work with children.

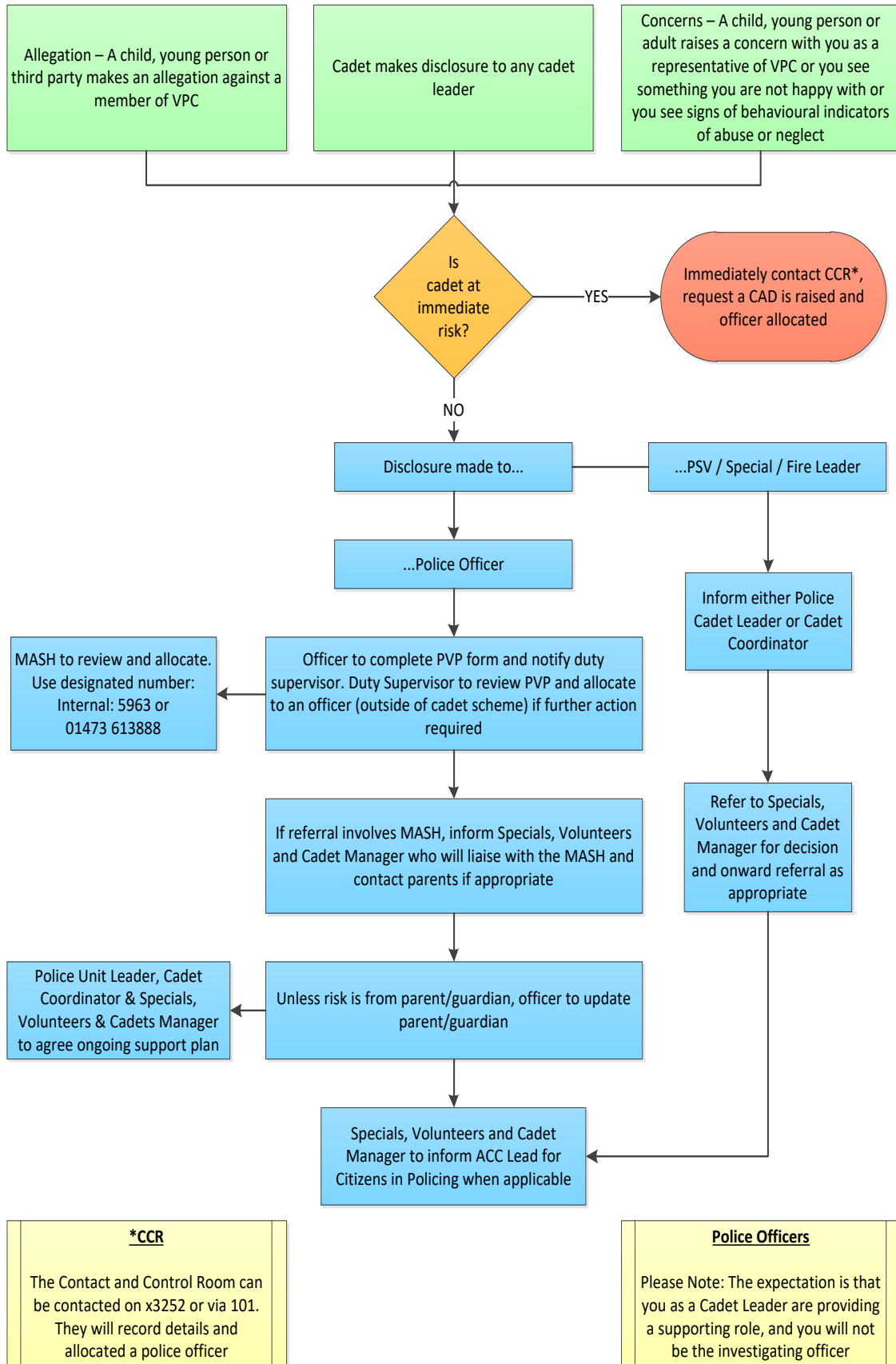
#### Key Features:

- The LADO has management and oversight of the investigation process from beginning to end following an allegation against people in a position of trust who work with children
- The LADO is **not** the decision maker – this remains with the employer. However, the LADO will provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaise with police and other agencies, monitor progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistently and ensure a fair and thorough process.
- The LADO process applies to everyone who works or volunteers with children
- **The threshold for an allegation that leads to consideration by the LADO**, in respect of all people working or volunteering with children in a position of trust, is where they have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Whilst some behaviours may not constitute a criminal offence, consideration will need to be given as to whether the allegation may indicate unsuitability to work with children.

5.8 Concerns may arise due to an individual's behaviour within the Police Cadet Service or outside of this role, including within their private life.

### 6. Flowchart showing process on dealing with a disclosure (Fire Leaders to refer to SFRS safeguarding policy HSP44)



6.1 As soon as possible after the allegation is made and following immediate action, the matter should be referred to the local authority for consideration of whether the incident meets the threshold for Child Protection Enquiries or, in the case of a vulnerable adult, Adult Safeguarding Enquiries. Where the alleged perpetrator is in a Position of Trust, a LADO referral should also be made. Details of how to refer will be found on the Local Authority's website:

<https://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/working-with-children/local-authority-designated-officers-lado/>

6.2 Local Authority Designated Officers can be contacted via:

- Email: [LADO@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@suffolk.gov.uk)
- LADO central telephone number: 0300 123 2044 for advice and consultation.