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### Volunteer Cadet Scheme

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## 1. Aims, Mission Statement and Motto

1.1 The aims of Suffolk Volunteer Cadets Schemes - Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC) / Emergency Services Cadets (ESC) are to:

- Promote a practical understanding of Policing and Fire Fighting amongst all young people.
- Encourage a spirit of adventure and good citizenship.
- Support local policing and fire priorities through volunteering and give young people a chance to be heard.

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- Inspire young people to participate positively in their communities.
- 1.2 In order to further enhance the understanding of the purpose behind the initiative, a mission statement is provided which succinctly sums up the Constabulary's and Fire Service's rationale for implementing an Emergency Services Cadet Scheme, this is:

*'To reduce youth vulnerability to crime and social exclusion through enhancing young people's ability to contribute and achieve.'*

- 1.3 The Volunteer Cadets motto is:

*'It's not where you've come from; it's where you're going that counts.'*

## 2. General Principles

- 2.1 Each Cadet unit must be sustainable and target the needs of the community they serve.
- 2.2 Each Cadet unit should comprise of a balanced mix of young people; including those in need of diversion/guidance and those who already have a strong sense of community spirit and the desire to make a positive contribution to their community and/or police and fire services.
- 2.3 Cadets will not be used to replace paid personnel, provide cover for vacancies, annual leave, sickness, and abstractions through attendance at courses/court or undertake duties of paid staff during industrial disputes or other local disputes.
- 2.4 Each Cadet Unit should:
- Aim to engage with young people between 13 and 18 years old.
  - Aim to have 25% of their membership from a vulnerable background.
  - Support their cadets to volunteer 3 hours a month assisting in community and crime and fire prevention events.
  - Have a body of Cadets that represents the diversity of their Service Area.

**Please Note:** It should be highlighted that acceptance onto the Volunteer Cadet schemes in no way indicates that any subsequent application by a cadet for employment within Suffolk Constabulary or Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service will be treated more favourably or subjected to less scrutiny.

## 3. Management of the Scheme

- 3.1 Each unit will be run locally with the named individual having responsibility for the day-to-day running of their specific unit. The overall support is by the Cadet

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Coordinator, who will report directly to Specials and Volunteers Manager. The Co-ordinator will ensure consistency of experience across the scheme and to assist in mitigating any risk to the organisation's reputation, each unit must be set up and run based on corporate aims, objectives and methodology.

### Cadet Unit Leaders

3.2 Each unit will have nominated Cadet Unit Leaders being a mix of male and female. Cadet Leaders will be responsible for the general running of their unit. Cadet Unit Leaders will be volunteers recruited from the organisations – they can be any rank or grade, including special officers and police support volunteers. Where the Cadet Unit Leader is a Constabulary paid employee, the role of Cadet Unit Leader is a secondary duty.

### This applies to Suffolk Constabulary staff only

3.3 Cadet Leaders will be expected to attend weekly meetings and other engagements. In recognition of the importance of the role, the Constabulary has agreed the below format.

- **Weekly meetings** - The expectation is that weekly meetings are attended in the leaders own time. Leaders can attend within duty time (if agreed by their supervisor).
- **Cadet engagements outside of the weekly meetings** - these can be attended within duty time if agreed by their supervisor. If they fall on rest days the Leader can claim back the rest day as an owed rest day and should be used up as per leave and time off policy.
- There may be times when this cannot be accommodated due to operational demands and the decision on this will lie with supervisor.
- All Hours will be accredited on the DMS system and signed off by supervisors as Cadet Engagement.
- Any time away from the primary workplace is subject to the usual rules covering absences as per the Leave and Time Off policy.

3.4 Where members of the Special Constabulary act as Cadet Unit Leaders, the hours worked in that role may be included in their duty time, however, the Special's duty hours should not be exclusively made up of the Cadet Unit Leader role.

3.5 At least one Cadet Unit Leader at each meeting/event must be first aid trained.

3.6 Where an event away from the normal meeting place is taking place, a female Cadet Leader should accompany all mixed sex groups.

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- 3.7 Two Cadet Unit Leaders from each unit will attend the quarterly meetings chaired by the Cadet Coordinator as outlined above.
- 3.8 Police Staff and officers do not require any further vetting. Fire Service and Volunteer leaders will be vetted under the Police Support Volunteer scheme.
- 3.9 The responsibilities of the Unit Leader are defined in the role profile available from the co-ordinator. Volunteer leaders are to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, and must sign the Child Protection and Safeguarding document Appendix A below and send to Cadet Co-ordinator.
- 3.10 All Cadet Leaders must complete Safeguarding children introduction e-learning LSCB by sending Name, Department and request login/password via email to [elarning@suffolkscb.org.uk](mailto:elarning@suffolkscb.org.uk)

### Ratio

- 3.11 Each unit will consist of no more than 25 cadets.
- 3.12 The required ratio of leaders (including assistants) to cadets is:
- For inside sedentary activities – 1:12 (including all activities within Suffolk Constabulary or Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service premises).
  - For inside active activities – 1:8.
  - For all outside activities – 1:8.
- 3.13 Any deviation from the above ratios must have express permission from the Cadet Coordinator.

## **4. Cadet Rank Structure**

- 4.1 Each unit will be formed into a maximum of four sections – Blue, White, Green and Red.
- 4.2 Each section will have a Section Leader who will be responsible for guiding, leading and mentoring more junior Cadets.
- 4.3 Units may also decide to appoint Section Leaders in other roles, e.g. to take responsibility for training/mentoring new Cadets. Section Leaders will be identifiable by wearing one silver bar on their epaulettes.
- 4.4 Each unit may appoint a Senior Cadet who will be responsible for mentoring and guiding the Section Leaders. Senior Cadets will be identifiable by wearing two silver bars on their epaulettes.

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- 4.5 Any cadet wishing to become Section Leader or Senior Cadet will need to apply in writing and sit an interview with the Cadet Coordinator and one of the Unit Leaders.

## 5. Recruitment

### Eligibility

- 5.1 Cadets can only be recruited between the ages of 13 and 16, but those recruited will be allowed to remain as a cadet until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. All applicants will need to have the consent of their parent(s)/guardian(s) when applying (this forms part of the application form).
- 5.2 Cadets should, where possible reside in the immediate local area of where the unit is based (unit boundaries will be set at the Local Policing Command boundaries). If applications/expressions of interest are being received from young people from outside the local/qualification area, consideration will be given on the individual merits, for example travelling distance, peer groups etc.
- 5.3 Applicants must not be or have previously been a member of the British National Party (BNP) or other similar organisations, whose aims, objectives or pronouncements may contradict the duty to promote race equality.

### Recruitment and Selection Process

- 5.4 In order to become a cadet, an application pack must be completed, which can be obtained via the force website or email by sending a request to [cadetsinfo@suffolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:cadetsinfo@suffolk.pnn.police.uk). This pack includes the application form, parental consent form, medical form and code of conduct. Application forms can be completed at any time; there is no need to wait for a recruitment drive.
- 5.5 Completed forms will be sent to the Cadet Coordinator who in consultation with the Cadet Leader for the relevant unit, will assess and score the applications.
- 5.6 The successful applicants will be notified in writing that they have a conditional place on the scheme, pending vetting checks. A suitable appointment will be arranged with the applicant to complete ID checks.

### Vetting

- 5.7 Once Cadet leaders have confirmed cadet ID to the Cadet Co-ordinator the electronic vetting application form will be sent to the applicant. The applicant then submits the form online.
- 5.8 All potential cadets will be vetted to level 2. The purpose of this check is to allow the Cadet Leaders to manage any potential risk(s) that is/are highlighted rather than to simply preclude a potential young person from membership.

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- 5.9 Results of the completed vetting checks will be sent to the Cadet Coordinator who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate Cadet Leader of the results.
- 5.10 Where there are risk(s) highlighted, the Cadet Coordinator, in conjunction with the Cadet Leader will decide if any potential risk is manageable.
- 5.11 Where the vetting highlights risks that are deemed not to be manageable, the Cadet Coordinator, in consultation with the Vetting Manager will be responsible for writing a standard letter to the candidate withdrawing their conditional offer of appointment, but will not detail why they have been declined.

### Appointments

- 5.12 Successful applicants will then be offered a place and will be sent details of their first session. Where no current vacancies exist, successful applicants will be notified and added to a waiting list. When a vacancy arises, an applicant will be selected from the waiting list based on need and length of time on the list.

### Equal Opportunities

- 5.13 Units should ideally be representative of the community in which they volunteer and span the full age range.
- 5.14 In compliance with the Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service's recruitment policy, positive action may be taken to encourage young people from under-represented groups to apply, although all appointments will be made solely on merit.
- 5.15 Young people with special needs should be encouraged to enrol as Cadets. Cadet Leaders are at liberty to adapt Cadet Activities and events to allow inclusion of any Cadet with special requirements, within reason. Cadet Leader's should adhere to the Local Service Commitment to disability but should always consider making adjustments where it is reasonable to do so in order to support and enable the person. If necessary, this may mean utilising the support of a carer provided by the cadet. Any carer would need to be vetted and have a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check carried out.
- 5.16 In extreme cases some youths require constant close supervision and care and the Cadets structure cannot provide this. The benefits to the young person should be weighed against the impact of the required adaptations when deciding if an applicant can be accommodated. Cadet leaders should make every attempt to accommodate all potential applicants and their needs, and should note their justifications on the application documentation.

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5.17 Specialist support and advice in working with children with special needs can be found by accessing [Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board](#) or through [SCOPE](#).

### Maternity and Young Parents

5.18 Under our commitment to engage vulnerable young people we actively encourage the membership of young parents/mother-to-be. However it must be noted that local Risk Assessment and Insurance Policies make it impossible to take responsibility for the care of those under the age of 13 at any of our events, and this must be emphasised to the parent and if necessary their parent/guardian. Mother-to-be should agree boundaries to their activities within the Cadets and local Risk and Health management policies and advisors consulted. Advice should be sought from the Cadet's GP.

### Convictions

5.19 Applicants with previous convictions will be assessed on a case by case basis and their involvement risk assessed and balanced against the benefit of the young person.

5.20 The Cadet Coordinator, in conjunction with Unit leaders may also wish to implement trial periods or "Acceptable Behaviour Contracts" in order to set out clear boundaries for these cadets.

5.21 Once part of the cadet programme, cadets must report immediately to the staff in charge of their unit if he/she receives a summons/order or other notification that criminal or civil action is being taken against them or they are to appear at any court as a witness. They must also inform the unit leader if they are the subject of a Stop and Search or Stop and Account.

5.22 If a cadet is charged, bailed or summonsed for a criminal offence they will be suspended from the Cadet Scheme. The Coordinator has the authority to suspend a cadet until such time as deemed appropriate.

### Young People Identified as being 'At-Risk' or 'Vulnerable'

5.23 An 'At Risk' cadet is defined as a young person with challenging or offending behaviour. These can be identified as any young person who has come to the notice of one or more of the teams/units listed below:

- Uniformed Officers/PCSO's;
- ASB team;
- Youth Offending Team;
- Pupil Referral Units;

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- Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Referrals;
- Providers of services for young people excluded from schools or in transition.

5.24 A young person is considered as “vulnerable” if they are;

### **Vulnerable to Crime**

Vulnerable to committing crime:

- Due to domestic influence.
- Due to social influences.
- Due to peer pressure.

Vulnerable to reoffending.

Vulnerable to being a victim of crime.

Vulnerable to the effects of ‘Fear of Crime’.

### **Vulnerable to Exclusion**

Vulnerable to social exclusion:

- Through disability.
- Through language barriers.
- Through cultural barriers.
- Through isolation or commitment (young carers etc.).

### **Vulnerable to Abuse**

- Emotional.
- Physical.
- Sexual.
- Psychological.

**Or for any reason, may not achieve all of the following:**

- Be healthy.
- Stay safe.
- Enjoy and achieve.
- Make a positive contribution.
- Achieve economic well-being.

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- 5.25 Each unit should maintain 25% of available cadet places to those young people deemed as being vulnerable or at risk of offending/re-offending, with the aim being to educate and divert them from criminality, thereby minimising their vulnerability.
- 5.26 Recruitment of 'at-risk' cadets can be achieved by working with partner agencies, Youth Offending Teams and voluntary groups who provide diversion activities for at risk young people in Suffolk. However, young people deemed to be 'at-risk' candidates would go through the same selection process.
- 5.27 Cadet Leaders, in liaison with the Cadet Coordinator should continually review the process of those identified as 'at-risk', and where the risk has been mitigated the individual cadet should be nominally removed from the 25% quota for that unit, allowing for another 'at-risk' cadet to be recruited during the next recruitment opportunity.

## 6. Training and Development

- 6.1 Once accepted onto the scheme, the cadet must attend training sessions and reach a required standard before being issued with a standard cadet uniform. Sessions are weekly, and it is estimated to take twelve weeks to reach the necessary standard.
- 6.2 Cadets will follow a 12 month initial training and development programme, which will be provided for them by the Cadet Leaders. This programme will be individual to each cadet and will contain achievable, time-related tasks, for example:
- Understanding the Organisational structure;
  - Knowledge of localised community operations;
  - Tasks related to assisting local policing teams and local Fire and Rescue Staff.
- 6.3 Cadets will follow a four-tiered qualification devised by the National VPC Team / Local ESC management committee. This will allow for clear monitoring of progress and progression.
- 6.4 Cadet Leaders will be responsible for monitoring cadet's development. When agreed achievements have been reached, this will be marked by presenting awards. The cadet syllabus has therefore been designed to address those policing and fire service issues which are likely to have a particular impact on young people.
- 6.5 These include:
- Stop and Search

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- Arrest
- Custody
- Theft
- Assault
- Offensive weapons/points and blades
- Drugs
- Drink/Drug Drive
- Mispers
- Disputes
- Public Order/Anti-social behaviour
- Equality, diversity and Human Rights.
- Arson
- Fire Home Safety
- Road Safety

### Guest Speakers

6.6 Units are encouraged to arrange visits from Specialist Units both within and external to the service. However these must be in compliment to the expected learning outcomes. These may or may not be directly related to policing or firefighting.

### First Aid

6.7 All cadets will be provided the opportunity to gain first aid qualifications whilst on the Cadet Scheme. This will be delivered internally.

## **7. Activities – What will Cadets be doing?**

### Cadet Tasks

7.1 Cadets will be expected to carry out some police tasks under the supervision of Police Officers, and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). These tasks may include non-confrontational patrol activities with Police Officers and PCSOs, but not independent patrol. They will also be expected to carry out fire service tasks under the supervision of Fire Fighters and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service staff members.

7.2 Cadets will be allowed to patrol with police officers when they have:

- Reached the age of 16;

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- Completed awareness training in relation to radio usage;
- Completed first aid training; and
- Completed conflict management training.

**Please Note:** Only police officers agreed by the Cadet Coordinator may patrol with, and supervise cadet activities. These officers should ensure that conflict or violent situations are actively avoided.

- 7.3 Cadets must comply with all lawful orders given by police officers. If involved in an incident, cadets will provide statements, recorded by officers. Where appropriate, the consent of parents/guardians will be sought and the cadets treated as vulnerable witnesses.
- 7.4 Cadets will not be involved in tasks which could compromise information security. Any specific operations/tasks will be subject to specific briefings as per current practice in operations involving young people.

### Social Activities

- 7.5 Social activities should be arranged for and by cadets throughout the year and should be encouraged. Units will be expected to give full support to multi-unit events, which may involve cadets having to spend limited time away from home.
- 7.6 All local initiatives and projects will be approved by the Cadet Coordinator and will be supervised by Cadet Leaders.
- 7.7 Cadets should be encouraged to take part in activities/events arranged by other youth organisations, such as military cadet corps, or other approved organisations.
- 7.8 Outdoor activities and/or adventure activities (e.g. canoeing, abseiling etc.) will only be led by staff or contractors who have undergone satisfactory training and are certificated and competent to run such activities. All outdoor activities will be provided in accordance with the Activities Centres Young Persons Safety Act 1995 and Adventure Activities Licensing Act 2004.

## **8. Uniform and Standards of Dress**

- 8.1 Cadets are ambassadors for Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, and as such are expected to portray a professional image and act responsibly at all times. All cadets, once attained the required standard, will be issued with a uniform, which will remain the property of Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service.
- 8.2 Cadets will be expected to provide their own black, flat-heeled uniform footwear, and plain black/navy socks long enough to fit onto the shin. Cadets

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will be responsible for maintaining their footwear at their own expense and ensuring shoes are clean and polished. When financial hardship is experienced, Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service will assist with these costs.

- 8.3 All issued uniform including rank insignia must be clean and well-presented and worn appropriately when outside, unless there are specific cultural, religious or faith justifications otherwise.
- 8.4 Lost items of clothing or equipment must be reported immediately to the local Cadet Leader.
- 8.5 Any items of uniform that are lost or damaged (other than through fair wear and tear) will be replaced at the cost to the individual cadet.
- 8.6 Any point not covered by the above should be implemented as per the force [Uniform Behaviour and Standards policy](#).

## 9. General Administration

### Data Protection and Security

- 9.1 Cadets will not have access to IT systems or sensitive documents so will not require any Information Management and Data Protection training. They will be trained on the Code of Ethics.
- 9.2 Paper and or computer records will be maintained by Cadet Unit Leaders and the Cadet Co-ordinator in line with Data Protection and Force Information Management policies.
- 9.3 Cadets will not have unescorted access to police or fire premises. If at any time door codes or passwords become compromised, they must be changed as per normal procedures.

### Regulations

- 9.4 All cadets will be informed of the regulations relating to ID cards, cadet uniform and the need for appropriate behaviour at all times. Cadets will receive a copy of the Cadets Code of Conduct as a guide for standards expected. Cadets will not be subject to Suffolk Constabulary or Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service disciplinary or misconduct regulations but PSD will be consulted on any discipline matter.

### Meetings

- 9.5 Cadet meetings will usually take place weekly throughout the year and will generally be for two hours.

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- 9.6 Organised activities should be arranged outside of this core meeting time, but must be outside of school times, e.g. weekends, school holidays.
- 9.7 Meetings will usually take place on police or fire premises, however, where a Unit is not able to use such premises (either short term or long term) other suitable premises should be used.
- 9.8 If alternative premises are used (whether paid or not), the Cadet Coordinator will require documentation from the premises', which confirms Public Liability Insurance is in place.

### Moving Units

- 9.9 Requests for transfers should be made to the Cadet Co-ordinator. Once a move has been agreed documentation must be passed from one unit to the other.

### Attendance

- 9.10 Cadets will be expected to attend all meetings. If a cadet is unable to attend, they must notify the Cadet Leader of their non-attendance.
- 9.11 Repeated non-attendance within a two-month period without notification will result in contact by the Cadet Leader to find out if they wish to continue on the scheme. Where necessary, the matter should be referred to the Cadet Coordinator. It will be at the discretion of the Cadet Coordinator as to whether they are required to leave.
- 9.12 If a cadet breaches the code of conduct, they may be requested to leave. Any misconduct will be addressed by the Cadet Coordinator. Any decision with regard to disciplinary action will be the responsibility of the Cadet Coordinator in consultation with the local Inspector and/or Fire officer and reference made to PSD. Where decisions cannot be agreed on the disciplinary action required; the case will go before a panel consisting of the Cadet Coordinator, the Manager of the Specials and Volunteers team, and an impartial Cadet Leader Advice will also be sought from PSD. If the cadet is under 17 years old, a parent/guardian will need to be contacted.
- 9.13 If necessary, cadets may be given a maximum of six months leave of absence, for example, to allow for studying or family commitments.

### Funding

- 9.14 Cadets will be required to pay a small weekly amount, which will go towards the purchase of items required for events and activities. The level of the subscription will be reviewed and decided annually. Lack of contribution due to personal circumstances will not exclude an individual from taking part. In this instance, other options will be explored by the Cadet Coordinator.

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- 9.15 Each unit will manage their own cash account and records as per the directions issued from the Constabulary Finance Department via the Cadet Coordinator. Funds will be subject to normal security and audit purposes.
- 9.16 The fund can be increased via appropriate fund-raising activities and/or donations. The Cadet Coordinator must agree all fundraising activities and donations before they take place or are accepted.
- 9.17 Details of all funds and donations will be recorded and retained for audit purposes.
- 9.18 Cadet Leaders will be responsible for all monies.
- 9.19 Each unit must maintain a spreadsheet of all monies in and out of their account and submit this to the coordinator on a monthly basis.

### Safety

- 9.20 Under the Police Health and Safety Act 1997, cadets will be treated as employees while under the control of police and fire organisations. Therefore, risk assessments must be completed for cadets, as is the case with all other employees.
- 9.21 Young Persons' Risk Assessments will be completed prior to any training event and this will show that all necessary controls have been put in place.
- 9.22 Prior to deploying cadets, Cadet Leaders should ensure that operational supervisors are aware of cadets intended activities (as outlined in [Section 7](#) above), and that all precautions to prevent injury or danger have been taken. If there is doubt that precautions are adequate, the Cadet Coordinator should be consulted.
- 9.23 Any injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences (RIDDOR 1995) suffered by cadets will be reported using the appropriate form, as will near miss incidents.

### Welfare

- 9.24 Should a cadet be subjected to any incidence of bullying, inequality or believe they are being treated unfairly, they should contact their Cadet Leader.
- 9.25 If the issue involves their Cadet Leader, or they do not feel comfortable raising the issue with the Cadet Leader, they should contact the Cadet Coordinator.

## **10. Leaving the Scheme**

- 10.1 When a cadet turns 18 years old, they are no longer eligible to be a cadet and must leave the scheme.

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- 10.2 A cadet may leave the scheme at any time. Notice of leaving should be given in writing (exception for compulsory leaving on age grounds) and all uniform and equipment must be returned.
- 10.3 A cadet may be asked/requested to leave the scheme if they show poor attendance and/or unacceptable behaviour.
- 10.4 When leaving the scheme, if the cadet has served for one year or more, they will receive a certificate of service and an assessment of their character over the period of them being on the scheme and their attendance record.

### 11. Instructions for transport of cadets/young people by Leaders

- 11.1 No cadet is to be transported in a Leaders' own private motor vehicle. No Leader should be alone with a cadet in any vehicle; there must be at least one other person present, preferably an adult. Transport arrangements must be documented in the risk assessment for the event or activity, to include supervision and ratio and gender.
- 11.2 If breaching these instructions is unavoidable, they must only occur with the full knowledge and consent of a supervising officer and/or the child's parents/guardians. A written record must be made by the supervising officer of their decision to allow the situation to take place.
- 11.3 If it is not possible to obtain authorisation from the supervisor or consent from the parents/guardians then a dynamic risk assessment of the situation takes place. This means that the risk of the young person being conveyed in the vehicle, rather than being left alone and vulnerable, must be assessed.
- 11.4 If the young person is to travel in the vehicle alone with a Cadet Leader, then they should sit in the rear of the vehicle. A written record must be made of the circumstances, effectively showing details of this dynamic risk assessment. The young person should give their consent, verbally and if possible in writing. The parent/guardian should be informed of the circumstances at the earliest possible opportunity.

**Department:** HR

**See Also:**

**Authorised By:** DCC

**Author:** Specials and Volunteers Manager

**JNCC Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017

**Next Review Date:** March 2021

**Date Reviewed:**

**Date Created:** December 2016

**Document Classification:** OFFICIAL