



Volunteer Police Cadets Safeguarding Policy

This document is part of North Yorkshire Police policy to which all Chief Constable personnel and the functions provided by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner are required to adhere.

Policy Statement

This policy statement is open to public viewing from the NYP Website

1. Introduction

We acknowledge our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, young people, and adult volunteers/employees.

We also recognise and accept our responsibility to act in loco parentis during organised events and activities and our 'duty of care' to cadets, volunteers, and staff.

We are committed to ensuring all our activities and engagement within the wider community is held to the highest standards of safeguarding practice; is compliant with current legislation; is child and young person centred; and that we are fully accountable.

These standards are set out in our mission and values as well as our policies and procedures. We are invested in making sure our safeguarding practice places the views of children, young people, and where required adults at risk at the centre of our policy planning and implementation processes.

This approach ensures that their welfare remains paramount in all we do.

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.

The Safeguarding Policy is for all young people, staff and volunteers who receive an allegation, disclosure or are concerned about the welfare of any member of staff, volunteer, or cadet.

The purpose of the policy is to:

a) ensure you are clear about your safeguarding responsibility as a member of Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC), 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.

The policy applies to those who hold both an employed and volunteer role and who raise a safeguarding concern in either capacity.

2. Relevant Legislation

The following legislation is relevant to this policy, either because it has influenced its introduction and/or its content:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975

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- The Police Act 1997
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Human Rights Act 1998 and the United Nations Convention the Rights of the Child
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- GDPR and data protection act 2018

3. Key definitions

Child – Has a specific legal meaning of anyone below the age of 18 years.

Young Person – Has no specific legal definition. However, 12-18 years is the standard age associated with the term.

Adult – Has a specific legal meaning of anyone above the age of 18 years.

Safeguarding – For the purposes of this policy, 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.

Child Protection - Child protection is a process within the Safeguarding Policy and refers to the activity undertaken to protect children suffering from, or at risk of, significant harm (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018)

Child and young person focussed - our safeguarding practice places the views of children and young people at the centre of our policy planning and implementation processes. This approach ensures that their welfare remains paramount in all we do

Adult Protection - Adult protection is part of safeguarding and refers to the activity undertaken to protect adults suffering from, or at risk of significant harm (No Secrets – Statutory guidance (2000), and Social Care Institute for Excellence (2011): Safeguarding Adults at Risk of Harm.

Adult at risk – An adult, who is, or may be, in need of community care services i.e. adult social services, because of mental health, disability, age or illness, and/or who is unable to care for themselves or unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation

Radicalisation - refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups

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.

Wellbeing - Wellbeing refers to a person's sense of contentment and satisfaction with their conditions in life and their current circumstances. It is closely linked to emotional balance and mental health, but it also affected by an individual's attitude, values, and perspective.

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'

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 National Safeguarding Manager

The National VPC Safeguarding Manager interprets legislation and makes sure we are legally compliant and demonstrating good safeguarding practice.

The National Safeguarding Manager has a remit to provide support to all VPC leaders; engage in a supportive/guidance role in the event of a suspicion or allegation of abuse occurring at Force/Unit level. The National Safeguarding Manager will assist Force Coordinators with implementing safeguarding changes, will engage with force coordinators in relation to lessons learned and will assist with force self-assessments and action plans in relation to the UK Youth Safe Space Charter.

The National Safeguarding Manager has certain legal and regulatory obligations that all members of VPC must assist in meeting, as required. For example, we are required to provide information on a regular basis to the IOPC, in response to Freedom of Information requests and also to the DBS and in some instances the Charity Commission.

4.2 Citizens in Policing Strategic Board

Are responsible for ensuring that their VPC units are being managed correctly, are complying with policy and follow the procedure. They are accountable to their force strategic lead.

4.3 Force Strategic Lead (Citizens in Policing Coordination Manager)

This role is the main communication link between the Regional CIP/VPC Lead and the Force Cadet Coordinators. They should meet on a Tri-year basis to review good practice; lessons learnt and support National (Safeguarding) Hub Team in defining needs in training and development.

In cases where there is an allegation or suspicion of abuse from a member of VPC the Strategic Lead MUST immediately be informed and it will be their responsibility to liaise with the ongoing Police investigation. This liaising role must continue and involve the management of the safeguarding concern with parents/carers; any communication on behalf of the VPC National Hub Team; and/or more specifically the National Safeguarding Manager.

4.4 Force Co-ordinators (Citizens in Policing Liaison Officer – Cadet Responsibilities)

This role is to be the main conduit for communication from Unit level to Force Strategic Leads. They have overall responsibility for ensuring any request for guidance and support is met by either Strategic Lead or National VPC Hub Team. They are responsible for undertaking quarterly reports for all Units and Forces. They have responsibility for supporting Strategic Leads and Regional VPC Lead in maintaining compliance to the 'Licence to Practice' and striving to achieve UK Youth Safe Spaces Standards.

This role MUST be satisfied that all those whom become Leaders (staff and volunteers) in the VPC are correctly appointed and are: (a) appropriate persons to carry out the responsibilities of the appointment, and (b) if required, maintain a current valid disclosure check and the appropriate level for their role (DBS, Police Vetting) They must ensure that all applicants demonstrate an understanding of and a commitment to the principles and procedures supporting the VPCs Safeguarding Policy, and such on-going continual safeguarding procedures, which have been approved by the National Safeguarding Manager or VPC Hub Team, such as additional training or CPD.

4.5 Named Person – Cadet Leaders

This role exists for every leader aged 18 years and above. Every Leader will receive the appropriate training to be a 'Named Person'. This person is identified in each Unit on a rota basis for standard meetings. If the Unit attend an event or run an activity external to the usual meeting place, this person will be named on the appropriate documentation. This role can be held by both Staff and volunteers and there must be a clear adherence to the process.

This role is to ensure all allegations, disclosures and concerns are raised, actioned, and recorded appropriately at Unit level. They also ensure that the Leader involved directly with the young person is free to support them. Whilst this is happening, the named person is free to co-ordinate an appropriate response and ensures that all other young people not impacted upon. They are the key communication channel in the early days between the Leader directly involved with supporting the young person, and the Duty Inspector.

4.6 All Leaders (Inclusive of Leaders 16 plus)

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all, and it is important that all understand their role and responsibility not only when they receive an allegation, disclosure or have a concern but in the whole way in which a 'Safe Space' is maintained. All Leaders (staff and volunteers) MUST attend training appropriate to their role and Unit requirements, to enable them to do this and follow the Codes of Conduct.

5. The Safeguarding Framework

NYP's VPC seeks to provide an environment where everyone can work safely, and children, young people and adults at risk can engage with and enjoy the activities and sessions provided.

It is the policy of NYP's VPC to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk involved in the work we do by protecting them from neglect, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. It is also NYP's VPC policy to provide those working for or volunteering with NYP's VPC with a framework to operate within to keep everyone who is engaged in NYP's VPC activities safe. It is therefore NYP's VPC policy to:

- Ensure that all staff and volunteers (legally responsible adults) working with children, young people, or adults at risk: are carefully selected, are checked by North Yorkshire Police Vetting level 2 Full that includes checks that include that within a DBS, have two appropriate references and understand and accept their responsibility for the safety of children, young people, and adults at risk in their care.
- Ensure that children, young people and adults at risk's, welfare is of paramount importance, regardless of age, gender, ability, or race, when planning, organising, advising on and delivering programmes.
- Ensure that all children, young people, adults, and parents/carers have all the information they need to make an informed decision before choosing whether to take part in activities, events, trips, and overseas visits.
- Ensure that when working with partner organisations, a term of our agreement will be that they state: "We confirm that we have read and understood NYP's VPC Safeguarding Policy and agree to abide by it." (See National VPC Guidance Document if this doesn't happen)
- Ensure that electronic communication between adults and young people follows strict guidelines so that we don't place anyone at risk of harm. (See National VPC guidance document in relation to social media best practice)
- Ensure that we encourage volunteers and staff to discuss their concerns with their Named Person, Force Co-ordinator or through supervision.
- Ensure that young people, have access to adults that they trust or are clear on how to report their concerns.
- Respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and to ensure confidential information is restricted to the appropriate external agencies.
- Raise the awareness of relevant staff and volunteers of child protection issues through the provision of training and regular updates
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis and that leaders and coordinators regularly refresh and review their understanding of this and all associated policies.

The Child protection and the protection of adults at risk procedures also seek to manage effectively the risks associated with activities and events involving children, young people, and adults at risk by:

- Completing a risk assessment process which involves identifying risks and means of reducing or eliminating these; All activities should be properly risk assessed, insured, and have appropriate adult to cadet ratios, 1 leader to 8 cadets. (See guidance document)
- Implementing the required actions identified by the risk assessment process and reviewing the effectiveness of these on a regular basis.
- Requiring new employees and individuals involved in working or volunteering with children, young people, and adults at risk to familiarise themselves with the content of this policy and the associated code of conduct and receive appropriate training.
- Safeguarding practice is not just about having a Child/Adult protection process, but a way of working that is embedded in everything we do and the way that we do it. As such, all of us must ensure the following happens, whatever part of NYP's VPC we work in.

6. Safeguarding Behaviours

As Leaders you must uphold our values and adhere to our Code of Behaviour, which sets out the standards of behaviour expected of you alongside the College of Policing (code of ethics), VPC Code of Conduct and ensures a safe space for all of us.

In addition, all Leaders need to follow the following Safeguarding Behaviours which help ensure a safe space for all of us:

- **Vigilance and Understanding:** take time to understand situations and be alert so that you notice when something is wrong.
- **Early Help:** act and provide support as soon as a problem emerges and before it gets any worse.
- **Inclusion:** safeguard every individual because everyone is equally important and valuable. Everyone involved in the VPC has a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse.
- **Resilience:** support individuals to develop the knowledge, ability, and the confidence to be actively involved in and responsible for their own safety and wellbeing and to cope with life's challenges.
- **Stability:** develop on-going stable relationships of trust with all those you work with. This means you are more likely to notice if something is wrong.
- **Respect:** treat everyone with the expectation that they are responsible and accountable rather than not.
- **Advocacy:** help others to put forward their own point of view.
- **Accountability:** always respond if you are concerned; never assume someone else has or someone else will.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility within NYP's VPC, but what does this mean?

It is the responsibility of all adults to ensure that:

- your behaviour is appropriate at all times as laid out in the Code of Behaviour and reflective of the VPC Code of Conduct and Police Code of Ethics
- you observe the rules established for the safety and security of young people through processes, procedures and guidance provided
- you follow the procedures laid out following an allegation, disclosure, or the raising of a concern
- you recognise the position of trust in which you have been placed

If you feel that this is not happening in your unit then please follow the Child Protection Process in the guidance document or report confidentially to the National VPC safeguarding line.

VPC.Safeguarding@vpc.police.uk

7. Maintaining Boundaries

See Safeguarding Guidance document here

8. Positional Statements

See Safeguarding Guidance document here

9. CSE

See Safeguarding Guidance document here

10. Bullying

See Safeguarding Guidance document here

11. Radicalisation

See Safeguarding Guidance document here

12. Sexual Harassment

See Safeguarding Guidance document here

13. Inclusivity

Whilst not a specific safeguarding issue we take matters of inclusivity extremely seriously and will look to accommodate a young person or volunteer leader regardless of defining characteristics.

See Safeguarding Guidance document here

14. Health and Safety

To ensure we create a safe space for our children and young people to learn we must ensure that ALL activities are correctly risk assessed and insured and that the staffing ratios are appropriate for the activity and the requirements of the group.

See Safeguarding Guidance document here

15. Our Leaders

How do we ensure adults are safe to work with children and young people?

- Ensure all leaders who work with young people or adults at risk, are carefully selected.
(See Volunteer Cadet Procedure)
- All leaders are vetted to the appropriate level before they start their role as Leader.

How do we train our volunteers to meet their responsibilities?

- Volunteers are asked to complete a safeguarding course provided by National VPC.
- Leaders are inducted by the Cadet Co-ordinator when they are recruited, this induction includes a section on safeguarding procedures. This includes:
 - Raise awareness of relevant child/adult protection issues through the provision of training and regular updates
 - How to recognise, respond and refer any reported allegations, disclosures, or concerns
Leaders are encouraged to notify Management staff immediately if a safeguarding issue is raised. Leaders can then be supported through the process.
- Volunteers are sent updates on policies when and where appropriate