

Guidance - What activities can cadets be involved with and how?

VPC Positional Statement

Cadets **will not** be used to replace paid personnel, provide cover for vacancies, annual leave, sickness, abstraction through attendance at courses/court or undertake duties of paid staff during industrial disputes or other local disputes.

Cadet **will not** be used in situations where there is a likelihood of conflict or violence. When cadets are with officers in public these officers should ensure that conflict or violent situations are actively avoided.

Cadets **will not** be involved in tasks which could compromise information security.

Cadets **can be** used in training exercises for the training of other police staff.

Cadets **may be** used for station duties following training and under the supervision of a police officer or member of police staff where they will not be required to have individual IT user accounts.

Cadets **can be** used for Police led community events or events where the Police are working with partner agencies. However, Cadets wearing uniform in public must be supervised by officers in full uniform or cadet leaders in uniform at a ratio of 1 leader to every 8 cadets with a minimum of two leaders at all times. An activity **MUST** stop if only one leader is present.

More Detail

Undertaking general patrol duties with operational Police officers/PCSOs/Special Constables and travel in police vehicles (except for transport to and from cadet activities) should be thoroughly risk assessed. Consideration should be given to local community tensions as well as the expected duties of the employee.

The National VPC team does not recommend this type of activity for cadets due to the inherent risks, however if it is assessed that these risks can be mitigated, then this is a local decision. In addition, the National VPC does not support the deployment of cadets in body armour. The issue of body armour in any form to cadets is NOT permitted. Any deployment hazardous enough to require body armour is too hazardous to be attended by cadets.

It must be emphasised that under no circumstances will a Cadet ever undertake any role that would normally be required to be performed by a Police Officer, Special Constable, PCSO or contracted police employee.

The use of Cadets as part of any policing operation can only be done for those roles which in no way need the skills or powers associated with Police Constables or PCSOs but would out of necessity be staffed by a Police Officer, Special Constable or PCSO were it not for the use of cadets. In this way the VPC can support operational Policing, reduce costs and free up Police Officers and Police staff for roles more suited to their skills.

Cadets may only be deployed to roles that are, based on all the available information, expected to be non-confrontational. Should a cadet leader deem that a role has or is likely to become confrontational or hazardous, they may refuse to deploy the cadets, or at any time withdraw them to a safe place. If this occurs the cadet leader must immediately inform the OIC or Bronze for their sector/event of their decision.

It must be remembered that the VPC is a voluntary organisation and as such the same expectations that are placed on paid staff cannot be applied to cadets and voluntary Leaders. No cadet can be forced to attend any event or operation. However, as part of their service, cadets are expected to be a deployable resource and by becoming a cadet they must accept this fact and be prepared to play their part in this role from time to time. When asked to volunteer for events cadets may decline without providing a reason.

However, cadets who persistently refuse the opportunity to take part in cadet operations may be asked to question their motivation for being a cadet when there are others waiting to take their place who want to take part in these events.

Cadets who fail without good reason to turn up for a commitment they have previously volunteered for may face discipline procedures. It must be impressed on cadets that the staffing levels at events, including the number of cadets, are set for a reason and that the deployment of lesser numbers may pose a health and safety or operational effectiveness issue.

Suitability

When deciding which cadets should take part in an operation, consideration must be given to the nature of the tasks being performed, the hours of duty, the experience of the cadet and the cadet leaders supervising the event and the cadet's maturity. Cadets may not start taking part in community events until they have completed their Induction course.

Some events may have specific age requirements placed on them by unit cadet leader or OIC. The age range of the cadets will be stated in the tasking request, op order or briefing documents. In these cases, the directions must be complied with.

School Time events

Occasionally events will be planned or fall within the school term, during school time. On these occasions VPC representatives must not approach schools with requests to release the cadets for these events. The Police Service cannot be seen to be encouraging young people to miss out on school time. The cadets may be made aware of the opportunity; however, it must be their parents/guardians who send a letter into the school Head Teacher requesting absence for the particular reason.

Reasons for this may include:

- Work experience (e.g. Takeover Day)
- Educational trips/events (e.g. DofE expeditions/Residential opportunities)

If a briefing sheet for the event is available and suitable for dissemination (i.e. it must not contain any operationally sensitive information or be restricted in any way), this can be forwarded to the parents for inclusion in their letter to the school. It is only expected to be exceptional circumstances when cadets will be utilised during their school time.

Tasking Process

The following is a suggested method of operation for the organisation of deployment of Cadets operationally. This may be adjusted, altered or ignored in favour of a system that better compliments local requirements:

- The officer or organisation in charge of the operation will contact either the Unit Cadet Leader or the Force Cadet Coordinator to establish if the cadets are suitable for use in a specific role in an operation.
- If the OIC has contacted the Force Cadet Coordinator and it is deemed that the cadets may be used for the intended role, then they will be directed to the most appropriate Unit from which to request cadets.
- The OIC or department requesting cadet assistance will then contact the Unit Cadet Leader to formally make their request.
- If the Unit is unable to facilitate the request then the Force Cadet Coordinator will select another Unit for the OIC to recruit from and again inform them to expect contact.

The OIC will then, in liaison with the Unit Cadet Leader, decide on suitable cadet numbers to fulfil the role required. As part of this conversation, cadet leaders should ascertain the following:

- What roles are the cadets expected to undertake?
- How long will they be deployed for?
- Who will be providing Transport?
- Will there be feeding provided for cadets?
- What Uniform/clothing/equipment do they need to wear/bring?
- Who will be providing any media (leaflets etc.) they are expected to hand out?

At large scale events the VPC may be asked to provide a “Bronze (Cadets)” who will be responsible for advising on decisions regarding deployment times and locations which may change as new intelligence is received. They will work to either Silver or a higher level Bronze who must authorise any changes in deployment of the cadets.

If transport, feeding or specialist clothing or equipment is required, this will be for the OIC or organising department to arrange, in liaison with the Unit Cadet Leader.

Tasking meetings

Where possible Force Cadet Coordinators or Unit Cadet Leader should attend any local tasking meetings or liaise with Neighbourhood Teams. This will ensure that the cadets are regularly utilised to tackle priority crime and local community issues. It also ensures that the

cadets will be utilised for suitable and meaningful tasks, as often a cadet leader will have a better idea of what tasks would be appropriate for the cadets to undertake.

This also gets the cadets on the agenda of the local Senior Leadership Team and demonstrates how the cadets are adding value to policing in the local area.

Leaders

The Force Cadet Coordinator/Unit Cadet Leader must satisfy themselves that the leaders they have deployed on any operation or event are capable of safely and efficiently supervising the cadets. Leaders who are new to the role and have no experience in Policing may not be suitable for deployment without some other supervision. This should be considered when selecting leaders for any event.

The OIC may request that Leaders be Police Officers, Special Constables or PSCOs rather than volunteers, but they must justify the reasoning behind this request bearing in mind that leaders will not be responsible for any other duties other than supervising cadets,

Supervision ratios at public events will be a minimum of 1 Leaders and 8 Cadets with a minimum of 2 leaders on every operation, or a multiple thereof. The number of leaders in this ratio may be increased or decreased dependant on the Risk Assessment for the particular operation.

Cadet leaders deployed to supervise cadets must ensure that they are, at all times, in a position to supervise their cadets. This positioning will vary dependant on the nature of the event. Crowd density, noise levels, community tension levels and the character of the Cadets themselves will all play a part in determining how far the Cadets should be from a suitable supervisor.

VPC Leaders are responsible for the safety of the Cadets in their care and should be in a position to intervene should the need arise. Cadet Leaders must undertake continuous fluid risk assessments to judge the hazard level and the safety of the Cadets.

Cadet Leaders assigned to an event or operation will never be placed in charge of other officers or Special Constables other than cadet leaders and cadets. Their role is the supervision and direction of the cadets, thereby ensuring their welfare and safety. They cannot be distracted from this role with other duties or responsibilities. The safety of the cadet is paramount.

Local Events

Policing Initiatives

The involvement of cadets in Policing initiatives is the method by which cadets add value to local policing.

At a local level these activities may include:

- Age Restricted Purchasing operations
- Bike marking
- Phone registration and marking
- Assisting Proactive Internet Safety Teams (in an advisory capacity only – social media trends, terminology, jargon etc.)
- Street surveys

- Crime prevention stands
- Leafleting and “mail shot” preparation
- Representation at youth events
- Helping at primary school safety education events
- Line searches of large areas (not fingertip searches, these are the remit of specialist police search teams)
- Drink/drug drive education
- Safer Transport Initiatives
- Seasonal Safety events
- Police/public services/major incident training

Good Practice

Having 2 staff and 8 Cadets who have a “duty week” on a rotating roster means that they know that (for instance) on the Thursday of their “duty week” they have to be available in the evening for tasking. That way they can plan ahead and have a schedule.

When local tasking meetings take place to discuss the crime trends/priorities for that week, the Cadet Unit Leader, who has a working knowledge of what Cadets can and can't do, attends and between them they come up with a suitable tasking for the Cadets that's meaningful and useful.

The Cadets parade on later in the week and are briefed about the task. This gives the Leader/OIC the time to arrange any necessary equipment or media.

Care must be taken that the cadets are never used in a role that should be undertaken by a Police Officer or PCSO. All activities should be thoroughly risk assessed, and consideration given to the possibility of the cadets becoming part of the evidential chain. If this is a possibility, then this must be made clear on the form Notification/Permission form for Parents/Guardians.

Community Events

The use of Cadets at local community events should be a regular occurrence. These events promote the Cadets to local communities and build good will with other organisations.

Examples of activities that Cadets have been used for previously include:

- Stewarding at Mayoral events
- Car parking attendants at local fetes
- Route lining at Parades
- Local remembrance services
- Litter picking
- Allotment clearing
- Community Gardening
- Social visits to Care Homes

Good Practice

During a recent child abduction incident Cadets were deployed at the site of a “Roadblock” where members of the public were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding their movements on the day of the abduction. By utilising the Cadets, the investigators had an extra 30 pairs of hands to complete a simple task quickly so that members of the public were inconvenienced as little as possible. Cadets completed close to 500 surveys in the 3 hours they were deployed

Cadets are also often used for the training of Special Constables (as stooges), at major events (Olympics) and practice opening of large public buildings (Heathrow Terminal 5 was tested by about 1,000 cadets who acted as passengers etc.).

Due to the fact that the vast majority of these activities involve working with outside agencies, the cadet leaders supervising these will be responsible for the completion of all of the necessary paperwork, including the Risk Assessment.

Age Restricted Purchasing Operations

Possibly the favourite activity of most cadets, age related test purchasing should be part of any cadet calendar. Early contact should be made with the local Trading Standards Office (TSO) to offer the services of cadets for this purpose.

However, it has been found that different Trading Standards Offices interpret the law regarding these operations differently and hence may have different procedures in place. If this is the case the cadet leader liaising with the TSO should satisfy themselves that the procedures and interpretations are robust and protect the cadets used. It is recommended to agree a service level agreement or test purchasing policy beforehand.

Cadets should not be required to give statements for this type of operation. The events are witnessed by a police officer who provides the statement, simply stating that he knows that the young person concerned is under the required age limit. A photo of the cadet may also be used as evidence (prior permission from parents required). This will also avoid the necessity for an A.B.E. interview (as the cadets will be under 18yrs old). If this is challenged in court, then the TSO will drop the proceedings. Local advice should be sought from Legal services on interpretation of this method of operation.

Age Restricted Purchasing Operations should be led by the local Trading Standards office. The only age restricted items that cadets may be used to purchase are knives, alcohol, tobacco, sunbeds, fireworks, to test the service provision of Bookmakers and entry into nightclubs, CSE reports with local hotels and B and B's.

Under no circumstances should any cadet be allowed to ever; consume any alcohol; smoke any tobacco, get on any sun bed or set off any firework which has been obtained as part of an age-related test purchase operation.

Good Practice

In Northumbria Cadets run an online youth forum where the County's young people can chat to them about their community and crime related concerns.

In South Yorkshire the Cadets help out with "UK Online". They receive funding to enable them to support people in their local communities to learn more about computers, how to use the internet safely, how to access local services etc. These sessions are run from libraries and community centres.

There are some operations that due to the size and nature of them require the input of the Force Cadet Coordinator. Their role will be to facilitate access to a suitable number of cadets and leaders. The Force Cadet Coordinator will identify which Units are to be offered the opportunity to staff these events and direct the department organising them accordingly. The Force Cadet Coordinator may also act in the role of "Bronze" for cadets if necessary, advising and informing the command structure in the use of cadets.

Availability & Location of Consent Forms

Contact and medical details must be immediately available in the event of an emergency. A copy of the forms must be kept with the leader of the activity/event in addition to a named contact person who is not on the activity/event, e.g. someone in a supervisory capacity at the home station of the Cadet Unit or the control room Supervisor. For VPC Units going on overnight stay activities copies of the consent forms are to be lodged in the home station front office safe or control room in a docket which also has details of the event and its location. This would allow for access by the Duty Officer in the event of an incident. This means there is an intermediary between the group on the event/activity and the parents, etc. The nominated supervisor with the copies of the forms should also monitor progress and provide the alert if the group fails to report back as expected (e.g. on expeditions).

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should be completed for every event, unless a corporate risk assessment already exists which is deemed, by an accredited Risk Assessor, to be suitable for the event. The officer or organisation in charge of the operation or event will be responsible for completing or arranging the risk assessment which must include the cadets and their activities and transport. They must provide the Unit cadet leader with a copy of the R.A. for inclusion with the cadet event form.

These forms should be submitted to local H&S and Insurance branches in line with local policies. Protective marking system for storage and retention of this document applies. Insurance - local policies regarding the insurance of cadet events should be complied with.

Briefings

Cadets must be given a full briefing as to their role for the event. The responsibility for giving this will be decided between the OIC/organising department and the cadet leader for the event. Briefing officers must pitch this briefing at the correct level for cadets, without the use of common Police jargon. The cadet leader will make a note of the briefing or keep a copy of any briefing sheet with the health and permission forms. Retention rules for these documents apply.

It is the responsibility of the cadet leader for the event to satisfy themselves that the briefing is appropriate for the expected role of the cadets. If they are not satisfied, they must inform the briefing officer and request further details. If this is not forthcoming, they must inform the Bronze responsible for their deployment immediately and appraise them of their concerns.

Cadets must know and understand their role in the event and what actions to take in an emergency. They must know who their supervisor is and how to contact them.

Behaviour and Appearance

When deployed at any event as a member of the VPC, cadets are representing the Police Service and therefore must behave in a manner that represents the values of the organisation.

- Cadets must be polite, attentive, professional, punctual and disciplined.
- Cadets must be reminded that they are deployed at these events as part of the Policing Operation and as such are not there as spectators. The use of cameras, mobile phones and personal stereos is strictly prohibited when deployed at these events.
- Cadets must not swear, shout or behave in a raucous manner. They will address everyone as “Staff”, “Sergeant.”, “Sir”, or Ma’am” (rhymes with jam not farm), according to their rank, or position. Members of the public will always be addressed as “Sir” or “Ma’am”.
- Cadet will not stand with their hands in their pockets or lean against walls, railings or each other. Cadets will not chew or eat whilst at post but may drink water.

Uniform dress codes for cadets will be decided by the officer in charge of the event in liaison with the cadet leaders. These standards must be adhered to strictly in order to present a “Uniform” appearance.

When in uniform cadets will comply with their Force’s dress standards, Leaders attending events and operations with cadets should attend in cadet leader uniform. The intention of this is to identify the leader as a supervisor of the cadets, which will always be their primary role. The only exceptions to this will be ceremonial or other stipulated events where Police Officers and Special Constables are expected to wear dress uniform.

Special Constables who are deployed in police uniform to events, but as cadet supervisors (for instance at ceremonial events) must have Independent Patrol Status. If they do not they must wear cadet leader uniform.

Any Cadets falling below the expected standards may be excluded from the operation by the cadet leader in charge on the day. The OIC, Bronze, Silver or Gold for the event may also request a cadet be excluded. However, this decision will ultimately lie with the cadet leader for the event. The decision to remove a cadet from an operation may bring about the need to remove VPC Leaders from the operation to escort the cadet home and so should only be done in extreme circumstances.

IAGs

One of the great benefits of running a cadet scheme is the ease of access to a body of young citizens to advise on Youth engagement and community issues. It is strongly recommended that Forces develop local and force wide Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs) utilising the cadets as a voice for the local community. If the cadet scheme truly represents the diversity of their local community, then they can be used as a reliable source of opinion and advice to steer police policies and events.

The form of the IAGs should be decided locally, however something as simple as a gathering of all the Head Cadets can provide a forum of cadets who have already proved themselves to be reliable and engaged.

Good Practice

As well as having local IAGs, some forces have a Senior Cadets Forum that meets quarterly, and which reports its suggestions and feedback to the Force Cadet Coordinator and even the Chief Officer Group. In addition, Forces might want to consider appointing a "Chief Constable's Cadet" who should be available to advise on Youth matters and accompany the Chief Constable to youth related events.