



National Volunteer Police Cadets

The Safe To Operate Standards

A guide to the implementation of the Safe to Operate Standards for Police Forces operating a Volunteer Police Cadet Scheme

Version 2.0 (November 2023)



INTRODUCTION TO THE SAFE TO OPERATE STANDARDS

In 2019, the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) published the Volunteer Police Cadet (VPC) five-year strategy. It makes a clear commitment to ensuring the safety of the young people and leaders who make up our VPC. Significant work has progressed to understand the structural and cultural challenges and opportunities which exist in order to deliver the strategy.

Following a due diligence process, the UK Youth Safe Spaces framework was identified as a product that could ensure police forces operate to youth sector standards, while providing sufficient flexibility to implement them according to their local circumstances.

This document sets out the UK Youth Safe Spaces, enabling forces assess their performance against the standards, while providing tips and guidance. Our communities expect us to look after their young people when they are with us, and this provides the way forward.

This reference document will be of benefit to all forces as they implement the standards. It aims to complement the Citizens in Policing, Valuing Volunteer Framework which clearly sets out the need for senior leaders to oversee an appropriate, supportive culture for the delivery of the VPC.

To maximise the benefits of this document, it is vital that the implementation process is viewed as a learning journey, rather a rush to implement the policies as a one-off piece of work. This approach will ensure lessons are learnt and shared and long-term change can be affected. It is organisational culture that sets the context and expectations of all behaviour in any organisation, and a positive culture where concerns can be identified and spoken about openly, is a key element of a strong safeguarding system.

Creating a culture in which all doubts and concerns, including allegations that do not meet the harm threshold, are shared responsibly and with the right person, is crucial. This requires early identification and recording to encourage an open and transparent culture, enabling forces to identify problematic or inappropriate behaviour.

It is essential that we minimise the risk of abuse and ensure adults working in or on behalf of the police service are clear about professional boundaries and act within them. Behaviour which is not consistent with our standards and values, and which does not meet the expectations encapsulated in VPC and Police codes of conduct, needs to be addressed to promote a healthy, informed and more effective protective culture for our young people and leaders.





Introduction from DCC Jones

“Running a Volunteer Uniform Youth Group of over 18,000 young people is not without its challenges.

We, the police, must do all we can to ensure our young people and their leaders are safe, supported, and fulfilled while they are with us”

To ensure appropriate youth sector standards are adhered it was agreed at National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) in 2020 that police forces operating a VPC scheme as the youth organisation of the Police, would adopt the standards set out in the UK Youth Safe Spaces (UKYSSF) framework and the VPC Safe to Operate Standards are these standards made relevant to VPC.

The VPC Safe to Operate Standards framework **contains seven elements** that should be in place to ensure an effective and safe youth organisation can operate. The National VPC strategy, which was also adopted by the NPCC, is clear in its’ commitment to the safety of everyone involved in the VPC is made.

This guide aims to be a reference point for police forces, highlighting the minimum standards for operating the Volunteer Police Cadet (VPC)* scheme and contains links to National VPC created guidance to assist forces to deliver a safe VPC scheme which meets the adopted standards.



Deputy Chief Constable Rob Jones, Suffolk Constabulary, National Lead for the National Volunteer Police Cadet Scheme

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DCC Jones and the National VPC Team would like to thank all our partners in the youth sector and police forces who have shared their expertise as we developed this document.



Introduction from DCC Jones

An Ongoing Process

It must be noted that the introduction of these standards should be seen as **an ongoing process rather than an event where the organisational culture is addressed to ensure consistent change**. It is organisational culture that sets the context and expectations of all behaviour in any organisation, and a positive culture where concerns can be identified and spoken about openly is a key element of a strong safeguarding system. What that means in practice is, ensuring that all those who work with children behave appropriately, follow the standards set and that the early identification and prompt and appropriate management of concerns, is critical to effective safeguarding.

An Open and Transparent Culture

Creating a culture in which all concerns (including allegations that do not meet the harm threshold) are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately, is crucial. If implemented well this should encourage an open and transparent culture; enable forces to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the police service are clear about professional boundaries and act within them, in accordance with the ethos and values of the VPC and Policing. Behaviour which is not consistent with these standards and values, and which does not meet the expectations encapsulated in VPC and Police codes of conduct, needs to be addressed to promote a healthy, informed and more effective protective culture for our young people and our leaders. This standards document should be made available on Force websites.



Governance & Roles



Force Strategic Lead (Citizens in Policing Ch. Insp or equivalent)

The name responsible person for the safe delivery of their Force VPC scheme. Through effective governance and leadership, they will promote a safe culture and adherence to the UK Youth Safe Spaces Framework Standards adopted as the National VPC Standards



Force Operational Lead (e.g., CIP Manager)

This role supports the safe delivery of the Force VPC scheme as a regulated youth activity. The role holder is the link between the delivery of the VPC scheme and operational policing



Local Responsible Officer (e.g., Borough Commander / Local Area or Neighbourhood Ch. Inspector or Inspector: depending on Force structure)

The named person responsible for the safe delivery of the VPC in their policing area, and should be responsible to the force operational lead to ensure consistent delivery of the scheme . Through effective governance and leadership, they will promote a safe culture and adherence to the UK Youth Safe Spaces Framework Standards adopted as the National VPC Standards. They must have completed VPC safeguarding courses -Introduction to Safeguarding & Managing a safeguarding concern



Governance & Roles



VPC Unit Lead (e.g., Force VPC coordinator)

The Unit lead coordinates the safe delivery of the Force VPC unit, ensuring identified leader roles are filled in line with expectations of the Force and the standards and confirms to the Local Responsible Officer that standards are met. Must have completed VPC safeguarding courses -Introduction to Safeguarding & Managing a safeguarding concern



Designated Responsible Officer

The named Force Executive member who is accountable for the safe delivery of their Force VPC scheme. Through effective governance and leadership, they will promote a safe culture and adherence to the UK Youth Safe Spaces Framework Standards adopted as the National VPC Standards



1. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- [1.1 Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [1.2 Health and Safety Practice](#)
- [1.3 Health and Safety Training](#)
- [1.4 Accident Reporting](#)
- [1.5 Risk Assessments](#)
- [1.6. Activity/ Event Participation](#)
- [1.7 Equipment Checks](#)
- [1.8 First Aid](#)
- [1.9 Fire Safety](#)

2. SAFEGUARDING

- [2.1 Robust Leadership](#)
- [2.2 Safeguarding Governance Processes](#)
- [2.3 Safeguarding Policies and Procedures](#)
- [2.4 Safeguarding Responsibilities](#)
- [2.5 Appropriate and Safe Communication](#)
- [2.6 Safeguarding Culture](#)
- [2.7 Safeguarding Training](#)
- [2.8 Quality Assurance of Training \(if relevant\)](#)
- [2.9 Complaints, Concerns, and Whistleblowing Procedures](#)

3. STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- [3.1 Appropriate Leaders](#)
- [3.2 Experiencing a Session](#)
- [3.3 Robust Safe Recruitment Processes](#)
- [3.4 Staff and Volunteer Induction](#)
- [3.5 Communication](#)

4. FOCUS ON YOUNG PEOPLE

- [4.1 Culture of a Youth Led Organisation](#)
- [4.2 Young People's Engagement](#)
- [4.3 Induction](#)
- [4.4 Online Safety](#)

5. DATA

- [5.1 Data Protection Policy](#)
- [5.2 Data Protection Practice](#)
- [5.3 Data Protection Training](#)
- [5.4 Retention of Record](#)

6. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

- [6.1. Effective Strategic Oversight](#)
- [6.2 Strategic Delivery Plan](#)
- [6.3 Force Governance Structure](#)
- [6.4 Quality Assurance](#)
- [6.5 Financial Controls](#)

7. DIVERSITY, EQUALITY, AND INCLUSION

- [7.1 Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- [7.2 Equality and Diversity Practice](#)
- [7.3 Equality and Diversity Training](#)
- [7.4 Protected Characteristics](#)
- [7.5 Positive Attitudes and Behaviours](#)
- [7.6 Equalities Training](#)
- [7.7 Joining with a Disability](#)

1. Health and Safety

The National VPC have agreement from the Scout Association to utilise their Health and Safety materials which, although heavily weighted to scouts, their polices are comparable to VPC delivery and we strongly recommend that DROs consider making this training mandatory for VPC leaders and can be found [HERE](#)

The health and safety of everyone involved in the VPC is of the utmost importance. Below

Below are key issues that have been identified as requiring consideration and professional judgement as forces implement the new standards.



- Reliance on operational police policies and procedures can lead to hidden risks developing, unseen, by police forces. Health and safety policies failing to consider youth sector specialisms. It is important to remember when risk assessing VPC activity that it is not a policing activity and therefore must be assessed according.
- A good governance process will drive the safe delivery of the VPC and by doing this the standards will be met. Although a huge amount of good work is being undertaken by VPC leaders, evidence of safe practice must be maintained so forces can prove that their VPC operates safely.
- There may be a temptation to progress work to prove compliance with the standards, rather than concentrating on ensuring the correct culture and processes are in place for a safe VPC. Effective leadership
- The use of police health and safety training may not always account for a specialism that requires consideration for the delivery of the VPC
- A suggested benchmarking exercise to produce a current state assessment for Health and Safety at both Force and unit level has been produced and is available here. This process will allow DROs to understand the current position and if required, improvement plans based on the areas of most risk can be started.



1. Health and Safety

1.1 and 1.2 Health and Safety Policy and Procedures

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
1.1	A written Health & Safety policy that is compliant to current legislation and guidance and is relevant to the VPC.	1.1.1	Outline roles and responsibilities	Strategic Lead
		1.1.2	Meet with the Force H&S policy lead, to ensure VPC are part of the overarching Force H&S policy	
		1.1.3	Have a named person with overall health and safety responsibility for the VPC scheme. (Force VPC H&S officer)	
		1.1.4	The policy is signed off by the Force DRO	
		1.1.5	Force insurance policy is updated to cover VPC activities and where not appropriate changes are made or alternative insurance is found.	
1.2	Evidence demonstrating that safe working practice is an integral part of your practice as defined in your Health and Safety Policy	1.2.1	A signed record showing the policy has been shared with all VPC Leaders.	Operational Lead
		1.2.2	Make the policy available for all within the VPC scheme participants including parents, guardians, carers.	

This standards document is just for reference, to complete the standards please use the self assessment toolkit provided. To gain another copy of the self assessment toolkit please contact a member of the National VPC Team



1. Health and Safety

1.3 Health and Safety Training

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
1.3	Evidence demonstrating that safe working is an integral part of training for staff and volunteers as defined in your Health and Safety Policy	1.3.1	Maintain induction records demonstrating that all staff and volunteers receive a health and safety induction when becoming a VPC Leader which includes all aspects of the Health and Safety Policy.	Operational Lead
		1.3.2	A record of regular (e.g., annual training) to demonstrate VPC Leaders have had the appropriate level of training to carry out their role safely.	

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1. Health and Safety

1.4 Accident Reporting

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
1.4	An accident reporting, recording, informing, and reviewing process.	1.4.1	Give clear guidance on how participants, parents, guardians, and carers will be informed when there is an incident, accident or near miss.	Force/VPC Health and Safety Officer
		1.4.2	A defined retention period for accident and incident forms and details of where the accident and incident forms are kept.	

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1. Health and Safety

1.5 Risk Assessments

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
1.5	Risk assessments in place for individuals, venues, activities, and events	1.5.1	Risk assessment signed off by Force DRO (or delegated person)	Force/VPC Health and Safety Officer
		1.5.2	Maintain training records demonstrating VPC leaders receive risk assessment training (specific to youth work delivery) at induction.	Operational Lead
		1.5.3	A record of regular risk assessment (e.g., annual training) to demonstrate VPC Leaders have the appropriate level of training to carry out their role safely.	
		1.5.4	Make all risk assessments available for all within the VPC scheme participants including parents, guardians, carers.	
		1.5.5	Risk assessments should demonstrate consideration of Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) issues and Food Hygiene (if you provide catering – i.e., camping activity) if appropriate.	

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1. Health and Safety

1.6. Activity/ Participation and 1.7 Equipment Checks

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
1.6	Activity / Event participation consent form	1.6.1	Force contact information for parents, guardians, or carers – contact details of participant – contact details of the next of kin – all participant needs (medical, dietary, allergies, care, and support needs)	Operational Lead
1.7	Regular checks carried out on any equipment used	1.7.1	A record of regular checks carried out, and by whom.	Force/VPC Health and Safety Officer
		1.7.2	A documented reporting process for defective equipment	
		1.7.3	A record of Manual Handling training provided to leaders	

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1. Health and Safety

1.8 First Aid

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
1.8	First Aid available	1.8.1	Identified first aiders for cadet sessions / activities and events.	Force/VPC Health and Safety Officer
		1.8.2	A record of the location of first aid boxes	
		1.8.3	A record of regular checks of first aid boxes and reporting process for replenishing supply.	
		1.8.4	A record of appropriate first aid training provided to leaders and copies of (in-date) first aid certificates retained centrally.	
		1.8.5	An emergency procedure plan	

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1. Health and Safety

1.9 Fire Safety

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
1.9	Fire Safety	1.9.1	A documented fire safety policy, identifying a named person responsible for fire safety.	Strategic Lead
		1.9.2	A fire risk assessment with a building plan (this could be done by the landlord if in non-police premises, however if they have not done it, you must)	Force/VPC Health and Safety Officer
		1.9.3	A fire evacuation plan (includes Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP))	Force/VPC Health and Safety Officer
		1.9.4	A plan showing sensors and fire equipment	Operational Lead
		1.9.5	A documented record of fire drills conducted (at least every 6 months) with Leaders and Cadets.	
		1.9.6	A record of maintenance checks and logs, including fire extinguishers, emergency lights, call points. (These may be held by the landlord if non-polices premises).	
		1.9.7	A record of fire safety training provided to Leaders on induction and records of regular (annual) refresher training.	

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1. Health and Safety

NOTES

Report any incident where you believe there was potential for harm to be caused. This will help prevent future accidents and make your VPC safer. It is important to encourage all VPC leaders to report both accidents and near misses, using your internal systems. Further information/guidance in relation to running safe activities and events can be found [HERE](#)

ADD YOUR COMMENTS HERE

2. SAFEGUARDING

Every Police Force should support a safeguarding culture that encourages young people to challenge their beliefs and values in an informed way and in a safe space.

It is important that a senior officer takes the lead in safeguarding and a Named Person is in place so that people (both internally and externally) know where to go for support.

It is important that information is shared if a cadet or young leader is harmed, or at risk of harm and a procedure is in place that will make it clear to staff, volunteers, children, and young people under what circumstances you refer.

There is a legal requirement to protect those at risk from all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Additional vulnerability faced by some children and young people can be caused by several factors such as someone's disability, their means of communication or their care needs. In some cases, they may be dealing with complex circumstances, such as caring for a parent or sibling. Without knowledge of an individual's background and circumstances it is important to recognise that some children and young people may have had previous harmful experiences that may make it difficult for them to recognise unsafe situations or may have affected their self-confidence and sense of self-worth.

To keep safe those who are at risk of abuse and to promote their welfare, it is vital to ensure organisations work collaboratively, know how to engage with outside agencies and share appropriate information, for example when referring a child or young person or when your organisation is part of a network of agencies supporting an individual who is considered at risk. Safeguarding now includes the digital world, perpetrators can access and abuse others online and through social media platforms. The understanding of abuse, of how we can guard against it and of how we to stop it now forms part of an organisation's responsibilities.



SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY



2. SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility involved in the VPC and is of the utmost importance. Below are key considerations that have been identified as requiring thought and professional judgement as forces implement the new standards.

- There is a difference between **safeguarding in a youth organisation and child protection within the policing** environment which should be acknowledged.
- The role of cadet leader (regardless of rank) is to **support the young person and unit** should a disclosure or concern be raised at VPC not to undertake a police investigation.
- There was some evidence of VPC leaders having to use their discretion in the absence of clear standards and leadership which may lead to **blurred boundaries and a failure to recognise or address risk**.
- There should be an awareness of the **position of authority** and **power imbalance** between cadets and leaders and between police officers and adult volunteers and their lack of confidence to challenge or report.

2. SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility involved in the VPC and is of the utmost importance. Below are key considerations that have been identified as requiring thought and professional judgement as forces implement the new standards.

There is a need to document low level concerns to track patterns of behaviour, deal with leader wrongdoing and if necessary, report to DBS and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

- There is a need to share concerns and learning on a national level to identify patterns of behaviour and concerns and provide support and early intervention.
- Learning should be shared with the NPCC Safeguarding Manager and locally with internal and external partnerships (within consent/GDPR regulations) – especially regarding low level concerns that do not meet the child protection threshold.
- There is a need to ensure the context of VPC as a regulated youth activity is understood by those in the decision-making process.

Examples of this include, vetting of leaders, rather than the legal requirement of DBS checks on leaders.





2. SAFEGUARDING

2.1 Robust Leadership and 2.2 Safeguarding Governance Processes

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
2.1	Robust leadership in Force. All activity contributes to safeguarding and is everyone's business regardless of role and responsibility.	2.1.1	Appointment of Designated Responsible Officer (DRO) at Assistant Chief Constable rank (or equivalent)	Chief Constable
2.2	Transparent and accountable governance arrangements and organisational structures in relation to safeguarding.	2.2.1	NamedForce Designated VPC Safeguarding Officer appointed.	Strategic Lead
		2.2.2	Names and contact details of these must be published and clear procedures for escalating concerns relating to safeguarding and whistleblowing made available and understood by all stakeholders.	Operational Lead
		2.2.3	National VPC Safeguarding email should be displayed on all force material to give individuals an opportunity to report externally.	

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2. SAFEGUARDING

2.3 Safeguarding Policies and Processes and 2.4 Safeguarding Responsibilities

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
2.3	There are effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place and utilised.	2.3.1	Adoption of the National VPC Safeguarding Framework as a minimum standard click HERE to view.	DRO
		2.3.2	Adoption of the National VPC Reporting Process*	
2.4	All VPC leaders are made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and the expectations of them when commencing their role.	2.4.1	There is an induction process for all new VPC Leaders which includes familiarisation with VPC safeguarding policies, procedures and expected standards of behaviour.	Operational Lead
		2.4.2	VPC leaders undertake the National VPC safeguarding training as directed (receive safeguarding bulletins to keep up to date and complete full course every 3 years)	
		2.4.3	A code of behaviour as to how your organisation expects staff and volunteers to always conduct themselves. (See tips)	
		2.4.4	An attendance register should be taken for each cadet session or event and held electronically and retained. (This facility is available on Marshall Volunteer Portal)	
		2.4.5	A list of emergency contacts for each cadet must be available for leaders during each session or event. (This facility is available on Marshall Volunteer Portal)	



2. SAFEGUARDING

2.5 Appropriate and Safe Communication

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
2.5	Appropriate and safe communication	2.5.1	All VPC leaders use appropriate communication methods with Cadets / Parents or Carers such as Marshall Volunteer Portal (or equivalent).	Operational Lead
		2.5.2	No use of WhatsApp or other social media platform when communicating with Cadets.	
		2.5.3	When Marshall Volunteer Portal or equivalent system is not available communication should be via parents/carer in the first instance.	

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2. SAFEGUARDING

2.6. Safeguarding Culture

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
2.6	Cadets, Parents/Carers and Leaders are informed about their rights to protection from abuse, exploitation and mistreatment in any form and are empowered to report concern.	2.6.1	Cadet Safeguarding Session delivered to cadets each year. Consider inviting parents to session where appropriate.	Unit Leader
		2.6.2	Include code of conduct in cadet induction session so that cadets and parents are aware of how leaders should behave. Parents/guardians & carers should receive a copy of Keeping Children Safe: Parental Guidance and encouraged to ask questions of the unit or additional information about how VPC Unit keeps YP's safe	Operational Lead
		2.6.3	Ensure reporting chains (including national VPC) are advertised on handouts, and resources.	

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2. SAFEGUARDING

2.7 Safeguarding Training and 2.8 Quality Assurance of Training (if Relevant)

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
2.7	All Leaders have undertaken the mandatory National VPC safeguarding training.	2.7.1	Leaders have been informed of the requirement.	Operational Lead
		2.7.2	Records are maintained to show when VPC leaders have completed the training, including refresher training.	
		2.7.3	Leaders are withheld from performing cadet duties if their training is out of date	
2.8	Quality Assurance of Training Delivery	2.8.1	Where a force delivers the national VPC safeguarding training in house then a member of the National VPC team should be asked to quality assure the delivery of the training on a bi-annual basis. The feedback from this observation should be kept as evidence.	Operational Lead
		2.8.2	Where a force delivers the national VPC safeguarding training in house, there should be no changes to the content of the presentation without written approval from the National VPC and the names of all attendees should be sent to the National VPC team for recording and issue of certification	

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2. SAFEGUARDING

2.9 Complaints, Concerns, Whistleblowing Procedures

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
2.9	There are clear, effective, and widely promoted complaints, concerns, and whistleblowing procedures.	2.9.1	External routes and contacts are promoted alongside formal internal procedure.	Force VPC Designated Safeguarding Officer
		2.9.2	All concerns and reports are taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.	
		2.9.3	VPC Leaders demonstrate a sound awareness of and confidence in the unit's grievance and whistleblowing procedures.	
		2.9.4	Cadets, Leaders, and their parents/carers demonstrate a sound awareness of and confidence in the Forces' VPC procedures for raising concerns and complaint.	
		2.9.5	Make the policies accessible to the public	

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2. SAFEGUARDING

There is a legal requirement to protect those at risk from all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Additional vulnerability faced by some children and young people can be caused by several factors such as someone's disability, their means of communication or their care needs. In some cases, they may be dealing with complex circumstances, such as caring for a parent or sibling. Without knowledge of an individual's background and circumstances it is important to recognise that some children and young people may have had previous harmful experiences that may make it difficult for them to recognise unsafe situations or may have affected their self-confidence and sense of self-worth.

To keep safe those who are at risk of abuse and to promote their welfare, it is vital to ensure organisations work collaboratively, know how to engage with outside agencies and share appropriate information, for example when referring a child or young person or when your organisation is part of a network of agencies supporting an individual who is considered at risk. Safeguarding now includes the digital world, perpetrators can access and abuse others online and through social media platforms. The understanding of abuse, of how we can guard against it and of how we to stop it now forms part of an organisation's responsibilities.

To report concerns or seek advice please contact VPC safeguarding vpc.safeguarding@vpc.police.uk

A VPC pocket guide to safeguarding for leaders & other adults – [HERE](#)

NOTES

ADD YOUR COMMENTS HERE

3. STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The VPC is a Regulated Youth Activity, and as such all adults involved in the direct delivery of the VPC must go through a 'safer recruitment' process. This relates to all officers, staff and volunteers and will, in most cases be in addition to normal recruitment process.

Safer recruitment is a set of practices to assist Chief Officers to make their VPC Leaders are suitable to work with children and young people. It's a vital part of creating a safe culture and positive environment and making a commitment to keep Cadets safe from harm Safer recruitment should be a continuing process of improvement

Working with Safeguarding leads in several forces the National VPC have produced a Safer Recruitment policy and supporting processes which forces can use. However, it is recognised that all forces will be required to use their professional judgement to weave this into other recruitment processes.

Previous hidden risks within the VPC have included -

- Officers with no background in VPC or experience of working with young people being posted to the unit for the evening 'to make up numbers'.
- VPC leaders inviting family and friends to help at VPC evenings as they were short of leaders without checks and being left with young people unaccompanied.
- Police forces using Police vetting rather than the required DBS process.
- Leaders not being provided with any induction to the unit or provided with support or guidance of what is expected when they initially take on the role.





3. STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

3.1 Appropriate Leaders

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
3.1	Ensure the VPC scheme operates with responsible & appropriate leaders to develop a culture of vigilance	3.1.1	Enhanced DBS with barred list checks for all leaders.	Strategic Lead
		3.1.2	Two (2) safer recruitment references obtained and verified as part of the leader recruitment process. (Including police officers and staff)	
		3.1.3	Face to face motivational interview conducted with applicant.	
		3.1.4	Safer recruitment application form to be completed by all leaders, including police officers and staff.	
		3.1.5	Observe new leaders and their interactions with young people and give documented feedback.	
		3.1.6	Periodic observation of experienced leaders with documented feedback	
		3.1.7	Provide regular line management safeguarding meetings with all cadet leaders to focus on concerns.	
		3.1.8	Checks conducted of social media accounts regarding inappropriate content.	

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3. STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

3.2 Experiencing a session and 3.3 Robust Safer Recruitment Processes

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
3.2	Provide opportunity for prospective Cadets & Leaders to experience a session.	3.2.1	Visit made to a VPC unit by applicant.	Operational Lead
3.3	Continue to develop robust procedures in relation to safer recruitment and selection.	3.3.1	Suggested – Leaders to be subject to continuing checks via the Police National Database	Operational Lead

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3. STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

3.4 Staff and Volunteer Induction and 3.5 Communication

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
3.4	Staff and volunteer induction	3.4.1	Provide full induction to the organisation and role, issues of resources, HR matters, regular check-ins and probation meetings, on-going training, and support	Operational Lead
3.5	Communication	3.5.1	Disseminate National VPC newsletters and e bulletins to all cadet leaders – Cadet coordinator responsibility.	Unit Leader
		3.5.2	Hold regular meetings with staff and volunteers both unit and one to one to update them on key issues, ask about any concerns and check on their welfare.	

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3. STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Your Recruitment and Selection Policy should have a section covering: – process and procedures, full induction to the force and role, issues of resources, HR matters, regular check-ins and probation meetings, on-going training, and support.

Good induction programs can increase retention rate, improve volunteer moral, increased productivity and increased a sense of acceptance and belonging into the organisation.

The Safer Recruitment Policy and accompanying procedures apply for volunteers and police officers and staff.

The National VPC Safer Recruitment Policy can be viewed [HERE](#).

The National VPC Safer Recruitment Procedures can be viewed [HERE](#).

Interviewing for staff or volunteers? Further information can be found [HERE](#) from the NSPCC.

Any advert for roles should include a commitment to the VPC Safeguarding statement and DBS requirements.

NOTES

ADD YOUR COMMENTS HERE



4. FOCUS ON YOUNG PEOPLE

4.1 A Culture of a Youth Led Organisation

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
4.1	Culture of a youth led organisation.	4.1.1	A young person's statement that includes: The vision, aims and governance structures are clear in terms of supporting a culture of being youth led in their practice. National VPC strategy	Strategic Lead
		4.1.2	All external facing communication are clear about the purpose of the organisation.	
		4.1.3	Evidence that there is a process for involving young people in decision making, i.e., correspondence of invites, audit trail of documents with young people input.	

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4. FOCUS ON YOUNG PEOPLE

4.2 Young People's Engagement

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
4.2	Young people's engagement.	4.2.1	Evidence young people participate and co-produce activities and services e.g., workshop notes.	Operational Lead
		4.2.2	A yearly/or monthly programme of events/activities	
		4.2.3	Evidence that demonstrates the organisation is promoting key programmes to young people e.g., website screen shot, flyer, leaflet, social media feed.	
		4.2.4	A record of training to demonstrate that Cadet Leaders know how to ensure young people participation and co-production.	

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4. FOCUS ON YOUNG PEOPLE

4.3 Induction

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
4.3	Induction	4.3.1	A statement that clearly identifies partnerships in the locality that can support individual young people and how to refer/self-refer, if appropriate. A copy of the induction for cadets. This should cover the following:	Unit Leader
		4.3.2	How to report abuse, concern of abuse	
		4.3.3	How to keep themselves and others safe by reporting hazards, accidents, and near misses	
		4.3.4	How to access information on issues affecting them like sexuality, sexual health, drugs and substance misuse, relationship abuse, bullying, self-harming	
		4.3.5	How to become a volunteer, young leader in the organisation or careers advice and guidance	
		4.3.6	VPC Code of Conduct	
		4.3.7	Activities and opportunities	

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4. FOCUS ON YOUNG PEOPLE

4.3 Online Safety

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
4.4	Online Safety	4.4.1	An Online Safety Policy that clearly defines how you intend to manage social media if using it as the main communication vehicle with young people.	Operational Lead
		4.4.2	Evidence that VPC leaders are clear around how they use social media when working directly with young people e.g., training records, signed statements.	
		4.4.3	Evidence that VPC leaders and young people are clear on boundaries i.e., privacy rules, when they can call or not, whether texting is permitted (not an exhaustive list). This evidence could be training records, training plan, feedback forms	
		4.4.4	Evidence that young people, as part of their safeguarding induction/updates, are clear about what cyber bullying is, what can be done to stop it and who to get help from. This could be a video, workshop, or poster you have provided.	Unit Leader

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4. FOCUS ON YOUNG PEOPLE

The organisation should clearly articulate that it is an organisation that is youth-led.

Young people should have the opportunity to share their ideas and comments about your organisation's services and what activities, events, or workshops they would like to see in the future.

It is good practice for young people to have an induction into Force, so they know where to get help and support from; code of behaviour, and what information is kept on them.

Young people are aware of the dangers they face online and through social media.

A National VPC Youth Voice, Good Practice guide, can be found [HERE](#)

Looking to do Social Action? The Cadet Journey Topic library on Marshall Portal has one on Social Action

NOTES

ADD YOUR COMMENTS HERE

5. RECORDING AND STORING INFORMATION

It is important that force information managers understand the context of the VPC as youth group, not operational policing and how data requirements may be affected



There are a variety of recommendations from organisations relating to the storage and archiving of data. Although police policy for retention is 7 years plus 1, UK youth recommend that organisations consider retaining personal data of the young people until the subject's 75 birthday to accommodate future 'historic child abuse reviews'.

Security is not just about keeping personal data in a locked cabinet or password protected it is about knowing that it must not be passed on and shared to third parties who may make an unauthorised or non-need to know request to access it.

Sometimes what appears to be innocent gossip may result in a breach of confidentiality. When holding a conversation which includes personal information it is particularly important to make sure that no one can overhear it.

The law says only relevant data should be stored on individuals, this makes it likely that anything recorded is, therefore, sensitive information.



5. RECORDING AND STORING INFORMATION

If using the Marshall platform information managers must be made aware that the force owns their data within Marshall and that appropriate measures are in place. It is important to have secure systems for recording, sharing, and storing information for the following reasons:

These are legal requirements under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

- Legal requirements are reinforced by inspection and organisational standards of behaviour and practice which staff must follow.
- Records can be used to abuse a person if they fall into the wrong hands, every effort needs to be made to prevent this from happening
- Individuals' data needs to be kept secure so that third parties who have no right to know about it do not have access to it either by gaining access to it deliberately or accidentally.
- Data about individuals is personal and confidential to the person and the person has the right to expect that it will be handled safely and securely.
- The law says only relevant data should be stored on individuals, this makes it likely that anything recorded is, therefore, sensitive information.
- Individuals have the right (both legally and morally) to decide what information about themselves is shared, how it is shared and with whom.
- Police Forces have a duty towards those within their VPC scheme with regards to the standards they should meet
- Frivolous attitudes towards confidentiality are a lack of respect and thus not in line with operating a safe VPC scheme.





5. RECORDING AND STORING INFORMATION

5.1 Data Protection Policy and 5.2 Data Protection Practice

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
5.1	A Data Protection Policy that is compliant to current legislation and clearly defines the data protection principles.		A data policy:	
		5.1.1	Should identify your VPC data protection officer (DPO)	Strategic Lead
		5.1.2	Show how you promote awareness and maintain high standards of practice in data protection and privacy.	Force/VPC DPO
		5.1.3	Show how your organisation processes and responds to a subject matter request.	
		5.1.4	Outline the process for responding to a data complaint and how you would respond to a data breach	
5.2	Evidence demonstrating that data protection is an integral part of your practice as defined in your Data Protection Policy.	5.2.1	A signed record showing the policy has been shared with VPC leaders.	Operational Lead
		5.2.2	A copy of an anonymised Service Level Agreement (SLA) or equivalent with clear data protection clauses	Force/VPC DPO

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5. RECORDING AND STORING INFORMATION

5.3 Data Protection Training and 5.4 Retention of Records

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
5.3.	Evidence demonstrating that data protection is an integral part of your training for staff and volunteers as defined in your Data Protection Policy.	5.3.1	Records demonstrating that inductions include data protection and the role and responsibilities VPC leaders have in keeping data safe.	Operational Lead
		5.3.2	A record of regular (at least annual) data protection training, that includes all aspects of the Data Protection Policy, to demonstrate that VPC leaders have the appropriate level of training	
5.4	Evidence demonstrating that retention of records is an integral part of your data protection practice.	5.4.1	Following the recommendations made by the IOPC.	Strategic Lead
		5.4.2	A signed record showing the policy has been shared with staff and volunteers.	Operational Lead

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5. RECORDING AND STORING INFORMATION

NOTES

Data Protection and GDPR sets out guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information and aims to give individuals more rights over how their data is used.

A Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) is a tool to help you identify and minimise the data protection risks. It is important to embed DPIAs into your processes and ensure the outcome can influence your plans. A DPIA is not a one-off exercise. You should see it as an ongoing process that is subject to regular review.

The GDPR introduces a duty for you to appoint a data protection officer (DPO) if you are a public authority or body, or if you carry out certain types of processing activities.

**** It is important to note – GDPR does not prevent the sharing of information for safeguarding reasons ****

ADD YOUR COMMENTS HERE

6. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Each Police Force and Chief Officer has autonomy over their VPC scheme. It is essential that there is strong, supportive leadership in place to support those delivering the VPC scheme. This involves a documented and robust governance structure.



In research carried out with those delivering the VPC scheme a common theme was the perception of being unsupported by senior management.

It is organisational culture and leadership at every level, that sets the context and expectations of all behaviour in any organisation, and a positive culture where concerns can be identified and spoken about openly is a key element of a strong safeguarding system.

Any governance structures should ensure a two-way dialogue, so that any concerns can be raised by VPC leader and are then progressed upwards and vice versa.

Previous learning has shown that even when a VPC unit is operating well governance and oversight should remain.



6. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

6.1 Effective Strategic Oversight and 6.2 Strategic Delivery Plan

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
6.1	Strategic oversight of the delivery of the VPC scheme in Force	6.1.1	Appointment of a Designated Responsible Officer at Assistant Chief Constable level or equivalent.	DRO
6.2	Force Strategic plan for the delivery of the VPC scheme	6.2.1	To include an organisational description, a clear mission statement which sets out your overall purpose and values and is signed and dated for review by the Force DRO Suggested organisational chart	DRO

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6. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

6.3 Force Governance Structure and 6.4 Quality Assurance

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
6.3	Force Governance structure	6.3.1	Integration of VPC governance into Force structure either existing or using National VPC recommendations	DRO
		6.3.2	Establish Force VPC Governance Board, including representation from appropriate organisational departments	
		6.3.3	If local VPC governance boards exist ensure these are accountable to the force VPC governance board	
6.4	Quality assurance of scheme delivery	6.4.1	A documented process that ensures and demonstrates that the safe to operate standards are being delivered at unit level	Operational Lead

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6. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

6.5 Financial Controls

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
6.5	Appropriate standard for financial controls	6.5.1	A signed ledger for each unit which is up to date with income and expenditure and is audited by force finance department or other accredited independent person	Operational Lead
		6.5.2	A documented process for fundraising which ensures that money is raised appropriately, is counted by a minimum of two people and is 'banked' promptly	
		6.5.3	A nominated individual who provides an input to leaders with unit financial account responsibility to ensure they are aware of the process and risks	
		6.5.4	A dated record of leaders who have received appropriate training in managing unit accounts	

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6. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

NOTES

Policy requirements - Evidence demonstrating clear aims and objectives linked to the governing document.

Practical implementation - Evidence demonstrating that good governance and organisational purpose is an integral part of your VPC scheme.

Governance board - The board is not unduly influenced by those who may have special interests and places the interests of the organisation before any personal interest. This applies whether organisations are elected, nominated, or appointed. Collectively, the board is independent in its decision making. The board safeguards and promotes the organisation's reputation and, by extension, promotes public confidence in the wider sector. Members of the board and those working in or representing the organisation are seen to be acting with integrity, and in line with the values of the organisation.

ADD YOUR COMMENTS HERE

7. Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

As stated in the National VPC strategy, Police Forces should aim to recruit 25% of their Cadets from a vulnerable or at-risk background.

The VPC scheme is not a recruiting ground for policing, although it is recognised that many join with a view of pursuing a career within policing.



A good VPC programme will cater to the needs of a range of young people. Forces should have a written statement showing that their VPC scheme is open and accessible to all young people. The Forces' website and promotional material should reflect this statement.

It should be made clear to cadets when starting on a scheme that there is no guarantee that being cadet will lead to employment with policing, but should they wish to they will be supported in their efforts. However, by being a member of the VPC young people from any background will develop essential skills that will benefit them into adulthood.

To be inclusive, it is important that Forces have a written specific VPC Equality and Diversity Policy which reduces or eliminates barriers to participation and prevents discriminatory practice and prevents the Force and individuals within it undertaking prohibited practices which could result in legal action. Activities and arrangements should be adapted where possible to ensure they are inclusive to all members.

The vetting of cadets has long been a source of discussion. To this end a legal position has been obtained. The position of the National VPC, in line with the legal advice received, is that the operation of a VPC scheme is not for a 'policing purpose' and therefore the vetting of cadets is not proportionate or justifiable. Should a VPC scheme conduct vetting of cadets then the Designated Responsible Officer should record that decision along with their justification for doing so.

Chief Officers must see diversity, in all its forms, as an integral part of the VPC scheme. They should recognise the value of a diverse group of young people. Chief Officers should make reasonable adjustments when necessary (vetting decisions, risk assessments) for their VPC Leaders and Cadets – this is good practice.





7. Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

7.1 Equality and Diversity Policy

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
7.1	A written Equality and Diversity Policy that is compliant to current legislation and guidance, is relevant to the needs of the VPC.	7.1.1	Signed off by the Force DRO	Strategic Lead
		7.1.2	A document control sheet that identifies regular reviews and updates	
		7.1.3	A list of supporting policies and procedures.	
		7.1.4	A process in which young people can access all activities additional support, resources to participate.	
		7.1.5	A section outlining how staff and volunteers are trained.	

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7. Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

7.2. Equality and Diversity Practice and 7.3 Equality and Diversity Training

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
7.2	Evidence demonstrating that equality and diversity is an integral part of your VPC scheme.	7.2.1	Signed record showing the policy has been shared with staff and volunteers.	Operational Lead
		7.2.2	Proof the policy is available for all participants of the VPC (if applicable) and their parents, guardians, carers, for example a link to the Equality and Diversity Policy on the force website or a copy of the welcome pack for new cadets/leaders with the Equality and Diversity Policy included.	
		7.2.3	Vetting of cadets is not carried out (as per guidance and legal advice)	Strategic Lead
7.3	Evidence demonstrating that equality and diversity is an integral part of training for VPC Leaders.	7.3.1	A record of VPC Leaders training in equality and diversity.	Operational Lead

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7. Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

7.4. Protected Characteristics and 7.5 Positive Attitudes and Behaviours

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
7.4	The equality and diversity policy references how you ensure equality and diversity and individuals with protected characteristics are not unfairly discriminated against.	7.4.1	Procedures on how to manage a situation in which someone has been treated unfairly or disrespectfully reviewed on a regular basis.	Strategic Lead
		7.4.2	Outline your harassment & complaints procedure.	
7.5	Promote positive attitudes and behaviour towards equality to all Leaders and cadets alongside the planning and development of programmes.	7.5.1	Your activities should consider the individual abilities and needs of Cadets and Leaders.	Operational Lead
		7.5.2	Consideration should be given to the changing facilities available at venues ensuring these are suitable for all, including those with protected characteristics.	

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7. Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

7.6 Equalities Training and 7.7 Joining with a Disability

No.	Objective	No.	How to Achieve	Responsible Person
7.6	Create opportunities for Leaders to gain awareness or access to training on equalities and their responsibility to comply with any legislation.	7.6.1	A staff/volunteer training schedule or matrix showing equality training.	Operational Lead
		7.6.2	Training certificates	
		7.6.3	Induction materials and checklist	
		7.6.4	Training notes	
		7.6.5	Group or individual feedback on training	
7.7	The policy must set out how anyone with a disability who wishes to join the VPC scheme can be included.	7.7.1	Details of how steps have been taken so that people wanting to use the premises and equipment can access these.	Operational Lead
		7.7.2	Consider potential issues that might prevent individuals or groups accessing your services.	

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7. Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

The term 'diversity' includes the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 as well as different backgrounds, life experiences, career paths and diversity of thought. Boards should try to recruit people who think in different ways, as well as those who have different backgrounds.

All policy and procedures must comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Click [HERE](#) for advice about the Equality Act 2010. Training should cover The Equalities Act of 2010

Not all premises are or will be fully accessible; this should be addressed by your Equality and Diversity policy. Where possible, appropriate toilet facilities must be available to people with disabilities.

NOTES

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