

## Guidance for Cadet Sanctions

### Definitions and Legal Status

Corporal punishment and smacking are unlawful in the UK

Leaders should **not** use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to sanction a cadet. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards cadets is completely unacceptable.

Where cadets display challenging behaviour, leaders should follow the Unit's behaviour and discipline policy using strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation.

Where a cadet has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour, **a behaviour plan, including assessment of risk**, should be drawn up and agreed by all parties, including, for example, a medical officer where appropriate. Training in relation to positive handling should also be given to the staff members involved.

There is some great guidance from the [Guides](#) in relation to this and the links will help.

Any sanctions should be imposed as close to the time of the misconduct as possible and appropriate to the offence.

### National VPC Statement

The VPC as a programme is built on a **restorative approach** to conflict and behaviour, and the safety and prevention of crime and conflict is of paramount importance. Failure to challenge poor behaviour appropriately and consistently suggests that such behaviour is acceptable.

Applying a restorative approach to all conflict/poor behaviour is based on the understanding that young people can often display negative behaviour and will often make mistakes as part of growing up, so it is important that they have the opportunity to learn from these experiences and do so in a safe environment.

Implementing a restorative process, when done so effectively, may often be sufficient to resolve conflict, repair harm and prevent further harm. However, there may be times when a restorative approach isn't an appropriate approach on its own but can be used to compliment other disciplinary proceedings.

## Fig 1 Sanctions Table

### Good Practice

**Area Discipline Board** - that would comprise of the VPC Coordinator with a minimum of two other VPC Leaders or the senior leader with responsibility for cadets in that area.

**Unit level emergency discipline panels** – this can be used to support immediate or emergency sanctions. However its decisions can only be used to provide a temporary solution and must be referred to the next Discipline Board for confirmation. The Board can ratify, adapt or overturn the decision of the Emergency Board with documented justification. This justification circulated to the members of the Emergency Discipline Board for information and learning. Any Board’s decision may be reconsidered if further evidence is received.

Cadets may appeal against the Board’s decision to the senior leader responsible for the VPC in that area. This review will be paper based but the senior leader may reserve to right to see the cadet in question and other relevant parties.

Discipline records are to be kept for at least seven years after the end of a cadet’s service in line with GDPR.

	Duration	Authority	Criteria:	Appeal Process
<b>Written Warnings</b>	1 – 2 weeks	Unit leaders	Warning can be for (not an exhaustive list) : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ where their behaviour is harmful to self or other cadets</li> <li>✓ discriminatory behaviour or verbally abusive</li> <li>✓ promoting extremist views</li> <li>✓ racist comments</li> <li>✓ bullying or negative use of social media</li> </ul>	Appeal to the Discipline Board
<b>Suspension</b>	Between 1-4 week	Coordinators and unit leaders	Suspension can be for (not an exhaustive list) : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ where their behaviour is harmful to self or other cadets</li> <li>✓ discriminatory behaviour or verbal abusive</li> <li>✓ racist comments</li> <li>✓ bullying or negative use of social media</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>	Appeal to the Discipline Board
<b>Withdrawal of membership</b>	Permanent	Coordinators	Suspension can be for (not an exhaustive list) : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Any of the above deemed serious enough to dismiss</li> <li>✓ Abuse of young leader position/abuse of trust</li> <li>✓ Involvement in criminal activities or being linked to and under investigation</li> <li>✓ Safeguarding concern or inappropriate use of social media.</li> </ul>	Appeal to the Discipline Board Senior Leader in the area

## Level of misconduct

Each Force should define their own definition of misconduct and should give thought to developing a panel of leaders to discuss discipline or negative behaviour as soon as possible.

It is recommended that each unit has a **code of conduct for young people** so that they are aware of the parameters they may behave within. These can be decided by the young people. It is also recommended that parents and carers are advised of the code of conduct and levels of misconduct during onboarding.

## Code of conduct

This section should be read in conjunction with the statement of expectations for cadets.

- If a cadet is unable to attend a weekly meeting, he/she will inform a VPC leader before the meeting.
- The VPC unit leader will review the membership of any cadet who fails without notice to attend meetings on three consecutive weeks.
- Cadets issued with uniform will ensure that when required it is brought to every meeting, along with suitable PT kit for physical exercise, unless otherwise directed by a member of VPC leadership.
- Cadets will treat all leaders, guests and other cadets with respect at all times. Inspectors and above and members of the public will be addressed as "sir" or "ma'am" (rhymes with jam), sergeants as "sergeant" and other VPC leaders as "staff".
- Any Cadet who gives a pledge to attend a VPC commitment must do so unless some exceptional reason prevents it, in which case a member of VPC leadership must be informed as soon as practicable.
- Subscriptions (if levied) must be paid promptly. Any persistent evasion of payment must be investigated by the VPC unit leader. **Please also note** that sometimes the late payment or nonpayment is because the family is experiencing difficulties. This may be related to parental employment or a wide variety of societal issues. Wherever possible a supportive approach should be taken when looking into nonpayment. In some cases, it may be appropriate for subs to be temporarily removed, but this should be documented and clearly understood by leaders.
- Uniform is not to be worn in public unless under the direct authority of a member of a VPC leader. Anyone not adhering to this at any time may bring the Police service or VPC into disrepute or displays an adverse image of the VPC shall have their membership reviewed.
- The VPC will not tolerate any discrimination on the grounds of an individual's nationality, gender (including transgender), race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age or disability.
- The VPC will not tolerate any bullying, aggressive, overbearing or violent behaviour.

- Cadets are not permitted to smoke/Vape or chew in uniform whilst in the public view (except when taking a recognised meal break in the case of chewing).

If deemed necessary Local Codes of Conduct may be developed to address specific needs of the unit.

Forces might also want to include guidance in relation to Social Media accounts and appropriate posts.

### **Written warnings**

A written warning will consist of a description of the breach of conduct/discipline, the date of the event, the name of the VPC leader dealing, any mitigation, and an action plan for the cadet which may include an **Acceptable Behaviour Contract**. The warning and any action plans should be written in conjunction with the cadet so they can express their understanding of how their behaviour affects others and their own ability to participate and should be signed by the cadet leader and the cadet, accepting the incident occurred and the terms of the action plan. A copy of the written warning should be kept on the cadet's personal file

A cadet may refuse to sign the written warning and request a Discipline Board if they feel that they have not been dealt with fairly.

### **Suspension**

Cadets may be suspended for between 1-4 weeks.

However, the cadet must be informed of when the suspension will end, if possible, even if there is no date attached to this (i.e. "when the case against you is disproved or NFA'd").

A record of the suspension including the reasons, the names of the VPC leaders making the decision, the period of suspension, and any action plans formulated for the return of the cadet must be placed on the cadet's file.

The Force Coordinator/Manager should also be informed.

### **Withdrawal of Membership**

The dismissal of a cadet should never be taken lightly. However conversely, failing to dismiss cadets who no longer deserve a place in the organisation can prove counterproductive.

Dismissal will be recorded in the same way as suspension on the cadet's file (see above). Notification of the dismissal will be sent to the Senior Leader with responsibility for cadets in the area for review.

There is anecdotal evidence of cadets being dismissed from one unit and attempting to join another unit. This should be guarded against by cross unit communication of the fact of the dismissal, but not the details.

### **Dismissed**

Cadets must surrender their entire uniform as soon as practicable. Refusal to surrender a uniform will be considered a theft and dealt with as such. All necessary legal and appropriate steps will be taken to reclaim the uniform.