



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



# Fire Cadet Handbook

January 2024



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



# Contents

Introduction	1	Communicating with Young People Using Phones, Technology or Social Media	19
Core Code of Ethics	1	Challenging Behaviour	20
HWFRS Fire Cadets	3	Bullying	21
Fire Cadet Code of Conduct	3	Other Policies and Procedures	23
Station Ground Rules	6	Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion	23
Health & Safety	7	Information Governance and Data Protection	24
Summary	7	Confidentially	25
Drill Ground Safety	7	Gossip	26
Fire Safety	8	Drug and Alcohol Policy	26
Accident/Incident Reporting	9	External Activities and Trips	28
First Aid	9	Complaints	29
Medication	10	General Information	30
Risk Assessment	10	Personal Property	30
Safeguarding	11	Emergency Content/ Next of Kin Information	30
Safeguarding Policy	11	Smoking	30
Child Protection	12	Whistle-Blowing Statement	31
Procedure for Allegation of Abuse or Complaint Against a Staff Member/ Volunteer	14		
Prevent Policy	17		
Photography and Filming	17		
Internet and Social Media	18		

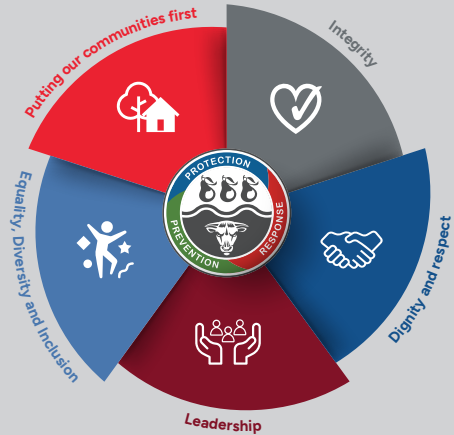
# Introduction

This handbook is designed to act as a guide and reference source for you during your time with the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) Fire Cadets and provides information on our policies, procedures and practice. As a high-profile public service organisation, it is imperative that HWFRS retains the confidence and trust of all members of the community and its staff and volunteers. We therefore expect the highest standards of conduct from our people, and have a duty to protect the public and ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place.

## Core Code of Ethics

The [Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services](#) in England sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour. The Service is committed to the ethical principles of the Code and used them as guidance when forming the Service's values.

The principles of the Code are reflected in this policy as well.



### Putting our communities first

We put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

### Integrity

We act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.

### Dignity and respect

We make decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

# Introduction continued

## Leadership



As positive role models, we are accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations and celebrate difference.

This handbook is written in line with the Service's Core Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct and informs you of the conduct and standards which we expect, and of behaviour that might be in breach of our disciplinary and grievance codes. It also explains how to look out for signs of abuse and the process for reporting safeguarding concerns. Therefore, you should read this handbook fully and carefully.

Further HWFRS policies and information can be found on the Service SharePoint site. For further details, consult the Fire Cadet Branch Leader. The policies apply to all staff and volunteers who work with the Fire Cadets and covers all members, children and young people that we work with or provide services for. The terms 'Fire Cadet', 'members' or 'young people' are often used throughout as a shorthand.

**This guidance is aimed to be clear and simple, and therefore will not cover all eventualities; however, it is intended to cover normal operational circumstances. If situations arise which are not covered, please discuss them with the Branch Leader or in certain circumstances with the Duty Group Commander via Fire Control 03333 990 043.**

## HWFRS Fire Cadets

The Fire Cadets is a uniformed youth organisation run by Volunteers, with branches based at operational fire stations within HWFRS.

New Fire Cadets take a training course that runs from September to May each year to achieve the Fire Cadet Award 1 before participating in a Celebration of Success. This is a chance to demonstrate the skills that they have learned to friends, family, local dignitaries and Fire Service Officers.

At their Celebration of Success, the Fire Cadets, who are aged between 13 and 17, are awarded their Fire Cadet Award 1 certificate. From then they are trained in greater detail in preparation for more complex drills and further Fire Cadet Awards.

Fire Cadets take part in and promote HWFRS Prevention activities to educate their communities.

Fire Cadets also take part in other adventurous activities.

A Fire Cadet unit is led by a Branch Leader, assisted by Uniformed and lay Instructors. The Branch Leader details are:

**Ade Taylor**  
[ataylor@hwfire.org.uk](mailto:ataylor@hwfire.org.uk)  
**07931 713 635**

**Sue Taylor**  
[staylor@hwfire.org.uk](mailto:staylor@hwfire.org.uk)  
**07713 354 992**

## Fire Cadet Code of Conduct

HWFRS are proud of our good reputation and the positive relationship we have with our young people, staff, volunteers, the local community and partner agencies. In order to maintain and develop this relationship, we expect everyone to follow our code of conduct. We take Health and Safety seriously to protect our members.

## Introduction continued

**Staff, Volunteers and young people should report any Health and Safety concerns to either the Branch Leader or via Fire Control 03333 990 043.**

We operate an Equal Opportunities Policy and this should be adhered to at all times. We operate to a Confidentiality Statement and Data Protection Policy. All personal information will be used with the strictest confidence and always discussed in private.

This policy has been specifically designed for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, Fire Cadets. All Fire Cadets, and their Parent/Guardian, must sign their acceptance of the Code of Conduct in order to become a member of the Branch:

- At all times a member's behaviour and appearance should not cause the name of the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, Fire Cadets or themselves to be brought into disrepute.
- All items of uniform belong to Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and are on loan to you, for which a £20.00 bond will be required. The uniform must be kept clean, ironed and in good condition at all times. All items must be returned in a clean condition to the Fire Cadet branch within 7 days of membership ceasing.
- All items of uniform, including cap, epaulettes and tie must be worn at Fire Cadet meetings and events, members may be excluded from certain activities if items of uniform are missing. Uniform must only be worn at Fire Cadet events. Long hair must be worn clear of ears when in undress uniform or PPE i.e. "worn up".

- Any loss or damage to any uniform or equipment on loan must be reported to an Instructor immediately. A written report may have to be completed explaining the loss or damage. The member may have to pay for repair or replacement costs. All items of uniform must be marked with the member's name.
- Eating during drill nights is strictly prohibited except during break time. Smoking the drinking of alcohol and chewing gum are all strictly prohibited on any Fire Cadet activity.
- The use of mobile phones is prohibited on station and any outside events unless Instructors give prior permission.
- Act of vandalism, bullying or swearing will not be tolerated at any time.
- Any order issued by any Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service personnel, Fire Cadet Instructor, Senior and Leading Cadet must be adhered to. Should a member consider an order given to be unfair, they should inform the officer in charge who will deal with the situation.
- Members should be punctual for all Fire Cadet events. Any member arriving late should report to an Instructor immediately.
- No member is allowed to enter any fire station, service vehicle or use equipment of any nature except when accompanied by an Instructor unless specifically instructed otherwise.
- No member is allowed off station premises during drill nights unless authorised by an Instructor.
- All areas and equipment used by Fire Cadets must be left clean and tidy.

## Introduction continued

- Any member absent for more than three consecutive weeks without good reason will be assumed to have resigned.
- Any member currently suspended or dismissed from the branch is not allowed to participate in any Fire Cadet activity and are forbidden to enter any Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service premises.
- All accidents and hazardous incidents that occur at a Fire Cadet event must be reported immediately.

## Station Ground Rules

**Respect**

**Language**

**Conduct**

**Criticism**

**Time Keeping**

**No inappropriate  
Behaviour**



# Health and Safety

## Summary

### Taken from Service Policy/ Instruction 'General Health and Safety Policy' Version 3.01, Section 5.1

HWFRS accept their duty as an employer to take all necessary action to ensure all operations are carried out as safely as is reasonably practicable. The Service recognises that safety is a management responsibility, while acknowledging that every Employee and Volunteer, whether employed directly or indirectly by the Service, has a duty to carry out their work activities as safely as practicable and to co-operate with the organisation in complying with Health and Safety legislation.

## Drill Ground Safety

HWFRS take young people safety whilst carrying out Fire Cadet drill activity very seriously. All activities are suitably risk assessed and supervised. A fundamental

part of all drills are the words of command which must be known and understood by all Fire Cadets to ensure their safety and the safety of others. These are:

## Words of Command

### **REST!**

To be used, if necessary by the Instructor when carrying out a drill to point out a mistake, the crew remain still.

### **STILL!**

Only to be used in an emergency, i.e. to prevent an accident, and stated with maximum force; the crew remain perfectly still exactly where they are it may be given by any member of the crew as well as the officer in charge.

### **STAND FROM UNDER!**

To be used by anybody who has to lower equipment it should also be used when equipment is dropped from a height. Nothing to go ahead until the command clear is heard.

# Health and Safety continued

## **CLEAR!**

To be used by anyone who is in the vicinity of the above command after making sure the area is clear of people.

**PLEASE NOTE THESE COMMANDS ARE SAFETY CRITICAL AND MUST BE ADHERED TO.**

## **Fire Safety**

It is an individual's responsibility to check the local fire procedures and fire assembly point for the premise where the Fire Cadet activity is taking place.

**If you discover a fire, raise the alarm by operating the nearest Fire Alarm Call point.**

## **On hearing the fire alarm:**

- Leave the building by the nearest available exit.
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
- Ensure visitors also leave the building.
- Assemble at the fire assembly point.
- Report to the Branch Leader who should check against the sign in record that everyone is accounted for.
- Remain outside until the Fire Officer in charge has given the all clear.

## **Accident/Incident Reporting**

All accidents, incidents, near misses, dangerous occurrences and observed hazards, occurring to staff, volunteers, Fire Cadets or visitors when at HWFRS facilities or at HWFRS organised activities or events must be reported to the Branch Leader or Instructor. If this involves a Fire cadet Parents/ Carers will be informed as soon as is practicably possible.

**All concerns, disclosures or incidents of abuse must be reported to the Branch Leader or Station Commander, as appropriate.**

## **First Aid**

HWFRS has a trained First Aider and appropriate kit available at all Fire Cadet activities.

Before activities take place:

- All young people, Staff and Volunteers participating in an activity should ensure a medical consent form has been completed and is up to date. These are available in an emergency by contacting the Branch Leader.
- Staff and Volunteers should be aware of any pre-existing medical conditions, medicines being taken by participants or existing injuries and treatment required including food or other allergies.

# Health and Safety continued

## Medication

Any medication that might be required by a member during a Fire Cadet activity should be clearly labelled with the young person's name, handed to a member of Staff/Volunteer and kept in a locked box, which is easily accessible in case of emergency. Staff or Volunteers are not allowed to give medication unless they have received appropriate training, but are able to assist young people to self-administer.

## Risk Assessment

Safeguarding the welfare of young people is paramount. Any activity involving any risk to young people will be risk assessed and appropriate control measures recorded and implemented. The principles of risk assessment will be applied to all activities undertaken so a satisfactory balance is achieved between the value of the activity undertaken and the risk involved.

The risks will be assessed on an ongoing basis, but will be formally checked every year and can be found on the Service's Risk Assessment database.

# Safeguarding

## Safeguarding Policy

**Safeguarding  
is Everybody's  
Responsibility.**

All individuals, regardless of age, disability, racial or ethnic origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation have a right to protection from harm. HWFRS is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all involved in its activities, and especially children, young people and adults with additional needs, and will take all reasonable steps to protect them from physical, emotional, sexual or internet abuse and neglect.

Staff and Volunteers will at all times, show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of all with whom we work. We will ensure that Staff/Volunteers know how to recognise and respond to concerns that a child, young person or adult may be abused or neglected.

A local Safeguarding Lead (The Branch Leader) is appointed as the day to day contact for safeguarding. They are responsible for:

- receiving, monitoring and recording safeguarding concerns;
- handling allegations against Staff/Volunteers;
- making referrals to Fire Control 03333 990 043 and/or the Prevention Safeguarding Team 0800 032 1155, as necessary;
- liaising with other agencies; and
- keeping written records of concerns and allegations securely.

Our Service Safeguarding Lead is the Assistant Chief Officer and the deputy is the Assistant Director, Prevention.

## Safeguarding continued

All Staff and Volunteers who come into contact with young people as part of their duties will receive appropriate Safeguarding Training, arranged through the Prevention Department.

**All Staff and Volunteers who have unsupervised regular direct contact with young people for HWFRS, i.e. those undertaking 'regulated activity', are required to have a relevant satisfactory enhanced and barred list check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before they can work unsupervised. We review our policies and procedures on an annual basis.**

### Child Protection

HWFRS recognises that the welfare of children and young people aged under 18 is paramount and that we have a duty of care when they are in our charge. We will do everything we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities.

We will:

- treat all children and young people with respect;
- be watchful for children or young people who are experiencing harm or neglect;
- respond to disclosures, concerns and allegations appropriately;
- adopt good practice with regard to safeguarding children and young people and ensure adherence to our policies and procedures;

- ensure that safe recruitment and selection practices are followed;
- ensure Staff and Volunteers are trained in accordance with their roles;
- ensure that concerns about the welfare of any child or young person is shared with the Branch Leader, Fire Control 03333 990 043 and Duty Group Commander;
- work in partnership with children, young people, Parents/Carers and other agencies; and
- make sure that Staff and Volunteers are aware of the signs of abuse and always act on potential safeguarding concerns.

**Doing nothing is not an option. Any incidents of immediate harm or any suspicions or allegations of abuse should be reported.**

# Safeguarding continued

## Procedure for Allegation of Abuse or Complaint Against Staff/Volunteer

HWFRS is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all people.

**Young person/adult/  
Staff/Volunteer**

**Allegation made to adult/Staff/Volunteer.**

**Staff/Volunteer**

**If child/young person is at immediate risk, follow Safeguarding Reporting Procedure.**

**Ask adult to leave situation, if applicable.**

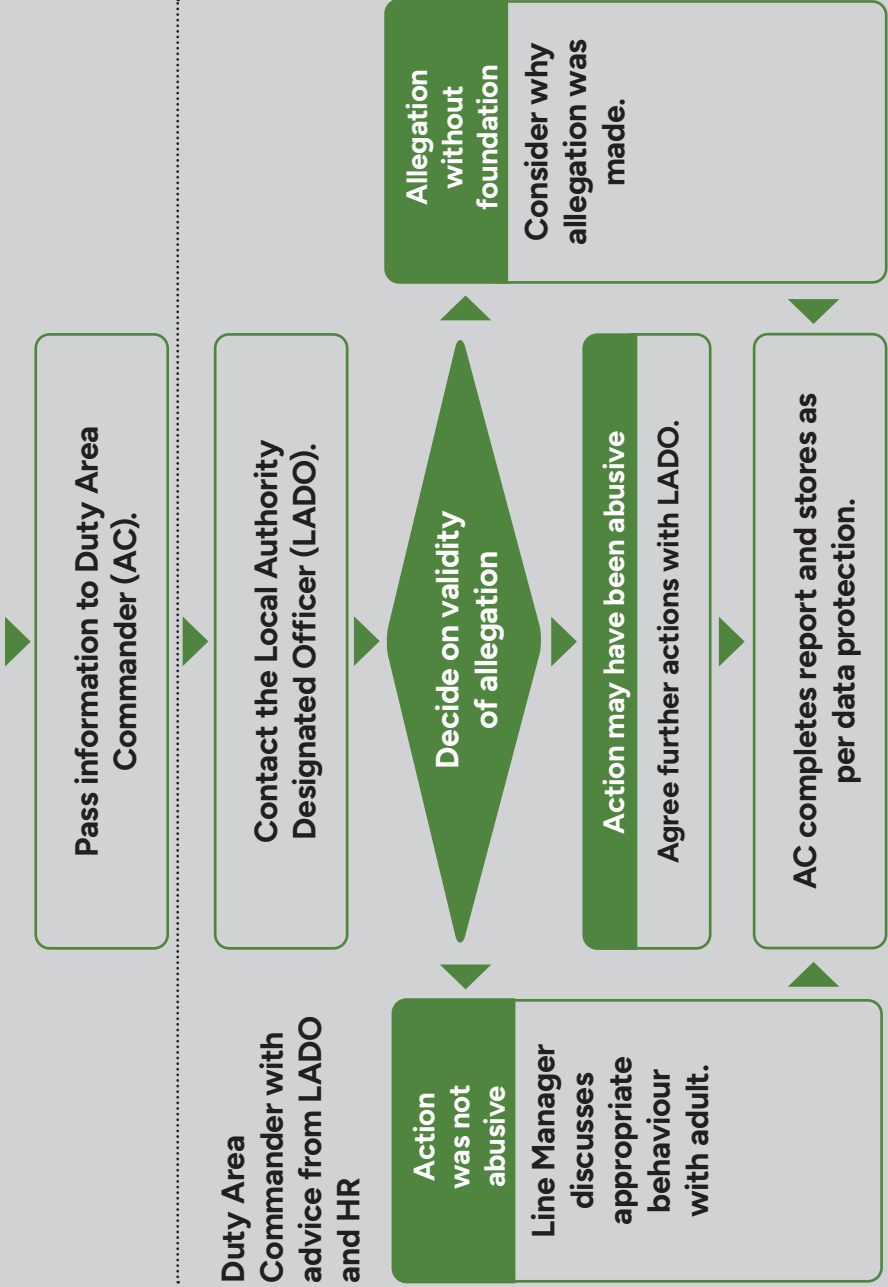
**Speak to Duty Group Commander.**

**Duty Group  
Commander**

**Find out more details and write down facts (use form SG3)  
Do not investigate –  
Police to be contacted if a crime has been committed.**

**Keep individual and Parents/Carers informed and offer support.**





# Safeguarding continued

## NOTES:

- The Branch Leader will liaise with the Prevention Management Team about whether a suspension is needed. Suspension should be seen as a neutral act without prejudice.
- Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality.
- The nature and circumstances of the allegation and the evidence will determine the outcome, with the advice of the LADO.
- Even if the individual resigns the allegation must still be followed up.
- A record must be kept of any allegations made and how it was followed up and resolved. This must be kept for 10 years. A copy will be given to the individual.
- If a reference is provided for an individual against whom an allegation has been made, then it must clearly state this even if it was found to be false or unproven.
- Following an allegation process, we will review our policies and procedures to help prevent similar events in the future.

The Local Authority Designated Officer, LADO, is part of Worcestershire County Council's Children's Services and is there to coordinate information, concerns and allegations, as well as to provide advice. They can be contacted on 01905 752 800.

## **Prevent Policy – Supporting the Prevention of Extremism and Radicalisation**

The threat from Terrorism and Extremism in the UK is real and severe and can involve the exploitation of vulnerable people, including children and young people. We support the Government's 'PREVENT' strategy and will ensure that Staff and Volunteers know how to recognise and respond to concerns that a young person may be susceptible to radicalisation.

### **Referral and Intervention Process**

**Staff and Volunteers will report any concerns to the Branch Leader as soon as possible. The Branch Leader will pass the information to the Duty Group Commander via Fire Control 03333 990 043 who will if necessary, make a referral to the local authority.**

Concerns in relation to violent extremism are most likely to require a Police investigation and Service Management will liaise with the Police as necessary.

If it is deemed that there are no concerns around radicalisation, appropriate and targeted support will be considered for the young person.

### **Photography and Filming**

The taking or recording of images must take place with due regard to the law and the need to safeguard the privacy, dignity, safety and wellbeing of young people. The following is required for the photography and/or filming of any HWFRS activity:

- Written and signed consent from the Parent/Carer and agreement, where possible from the young person, **prior** to the event or activity.
- Written and signed consent from the Parent/Carer and agreement, where possible from the young person, for any such material being used for publicity purposes prior to its use using consent form

## Safeguarding continued

(to include displaying or the distribution of images).

- An understanding between all parties about the purpose of the photography and/or filming and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded.
- Only use equipment provided or authorised by HWFRS.
- Ensure compliance to HWFRS policy guidance on the use of IT equipment and the Internet at all times.

Personnel must **never**:

- Use images that may cause distress;
- Take images 'in secret'.
- Reveal personal phone numbers or email addresses to young people.

### Internet and Social Media

HWFRS is fully committed to all people we work with in relation to the safe and acceptable use of the internet and social media sites.

We will do this by:

- supporting and encouraging everyone to use the opportunities offered by the internet and mobile phones in ways which keep them safe and shows respect for others;
- dealing firmly with any examples of inappropriate use of the internet or mobiles by young people, Volunteers or Staff;
- reviewing and updating the security of our systems regularly;

- ensuring that the personal information of young people, Staff and Volunteers is not published on our website;
- ensuring that that images of young people are used only when written permission has been given;
- providing information and support for Volunteers and Staff in their use of the internet and social media on behalf of our group/ organisation; and
- examining and risk assessing any emerging new technologies before using them.

We will make every effort to safeguard against all risks but recognise that it may never be able to completely eliminate them. If any incidents occur they will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with our policies.

## **Communicating with Young People Using Phones, Technology or Social Media**

Social media encompasses many variations of online media such as Twitter, WhatsApp, Facebook and media content sharing websites, such as Flickr and YouTube. HWFRS use social media to engage with specific target groups in a way that is more accessible and convenient for them.

HWFRS sometimes use social media, email and mobile phones to communicate with our young people. We will make sure this is done in an appropriate way and that our Staff, Volunteers and young people are not at risk of abuse:

- Any member of Staff or Volunteer who is given an HWFRS mobile phone to use to contact young people must show the phone contents to the Branch Leader at any time, if requested.

## Safeguarding continued

- The communication must always remain professional and not contain any Staff personal information.
- Staff and Volunteers must never give their personal contact number or email address to young people or allow young people to use their personal phone.
- Staff and Volunteers should not have any contact with young people through their personal accounts on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat or WhatsApp. HWFRS accounts will be created and used, if necessary, to communicate with young people and their families.
- Staff and Volunteers should never ask young people to post personal identifying details on the internet such as address, age or phone number. If these can be seen, the Staff member or Volunteer should remove the

details, if they have access to the site, or ask the young person to remove them.

### Challenging Behaviour

Challenging Behaviour is behaviour by a person that is causing nuisance, harassment or physical threat to other people, i.e. any behaviour that is detrimental to the wellbeing of others whilst in contact with our services, or behaviour that makes it difficult to provide the person with support or a service.

In working with people who are challenging, we will seek to understand the behaviour and its causes and work with the person in a structured way to help lessen the behaviour and its impact. The safety of the person and those around them will be of primary concern when managing incidents of challenging behaviour, and we will take legal action where necessary.

Behaviour that is a criminal offence will be reported to the Police and we will pursue legal action such as pressing charges where this is necessary in order to manage behaviour and ensure the safety of Staff and other young people.

The following should never be used as a means of managing challenging behaviour:

- Physical force or the threat of such.
- Refusal to speak to or interact with a Staff member, Volunteer or young person.
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

The use of physical intervention should be avoided as far as possible. It should only be used in exceptional circumstances if it is necessary to prevent personal injury. If it is used, it should be undertaken in such a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned.

**Any physical intervention must be recorded, the Duty Group Commander should be notified via Fire Control 03333 990 043 and the situation discussed for future learning.**

## **Bullying**

Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Bullying doesn't have to be a series of incidents, it can be any occasion when someone deliberately intimidates or harasses another.

## **Types of Bullying**

Bullying can take many forms, physical, verbal, emotional or cyber, and can often be a mix of these types and may involve others as witnesses or active participants. Cyber-bullying

## Safeguarding continued

includes receiving abusive phone or text messages or emails.

Bullying can include:

- being called names or being teased;
- being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched or kicked;
- having their bag, mobile or other possessions taken;
- being forced to hand over money;
- being forced to do things they don't want to do;
- being ignored or left out; and/or
- being attacked because of religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance, ethnic or racial origin.

HWFRS believes that any form of bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

- We will provide opportunities for people to tell us about incidents of bullying.
- We will listen to people and take seriously what they tell us about bullying.
- We will take steps to deal immediately with incidents of bullying.
- We will be aware of the vulnerability of specific individuals and groups such as those with disabilities and from black and minority ethnic communities.
- We will ensure that both victims of bullying and bullies themselves receive support.
- We will keep a record of any incidents of bullying, how we dealt with them and whether there is anything HWFRS can do to learn from the incidents.



## Other Policies and Procedures

### Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion

HWFRS recognises that certain groups and individuals are at risk of being unfairly discriminated against for many reasons, including: age, appearance, class, colour, culture, disability, employment status, ethnicity, nationality, political belief, race, social class, religious belief, sex, sexual orientation or size.

**We will treat all of our Staff, Volunteers and young people equally; we expect all people to respect each other and will not tolerate discrimination or abuse in any form. If any discrimination is identified we will take positive steps to counter this.**

We recognise that each young person is an individual with their own skills and abilities and we will seek to respond to the needs of each individual in a way that is fair and equitable.

We recognise that there is diversity in family life, education, faith and culture. We undertake to embrace and celebrate such differences in ways that make our services better for young people.

We value and encourage the participation and contribution of all individuals. We recognise that people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions. We believe that life is positively enriched for us all by the diversity of individuals in society and that everyone has a valuable contribution to make.

## Other Policies and Procedures continued

### Compliance with this Policy

**It is the responsibility of every member of Staff member and volunteer to eliminate discrimination by ensuring the practical application of the equal opportunities policy and reporting incidents of discrimination or harassment to the Branch Leader or Duty Group Commander/ Fire Control 03333 990 043.**

Any person, whether directly involved or not, can raise an issue regarding equal opportunities at any time. This should be done by contacting the Branch Leader or Duty Group Commander/Fire Control 03333 990 043 and will be guaranteed confidentiality. Any issue will be initially dealt with informally, however, we

will investigate all allegations of contravention of equal opportunities and instigate disciplinary procedures where there appears to be a breach of these procedures and policies.

In addition, we expect all partners engaged with to adopt the principles of this policy during any HWFRS activities. Furthermore, partners may be asked to produce evidence of their own equal opportunities policies and procedures. Partners who have Staff working directly with HWFRS users will be asked to produce valid DBS certificates before undertaking work with certain groups.

### Information Governance and Data Protection

[Information Governance and Data Protection \(sharepoint.com\)](https://www.sharepoint.com), accessed via your Branch Leader.

To find out how the Service manages your information, please visit [www.hwfire.org.uk/your-right-to-know/privacy-notice](http://www.hwfire.org.uk/your-right-to-know/privacy-notice)

## **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is important to us but in the event we are made aware that a young person is at risk of harm, we have a responsibility to share this information with the appropriate agency. This is because we believe that the protection of a young person is the most important thing.

Some personal information is provided on the membership form. This will be kept in a secure place and is available only to members of the Staff team.

In addition, young people often build up trusting relationships with adults working with them and share personal and family information with them. This information will only be recorded if, in exceptional cases, it may have an impact on the young person or their contact details.

Information will only be shared as follows:

### **Staff Team**

Details of information will be shared among the Staff/Volunteer team only if it is considered to be relevant, for example medical issues in relation to an activity or the taking of medicine.

### **External Agencies**

In most circumstances, and taking into account their understanding, we will not share personal information without talking to the young person. This may include the Parent or Carer. We will encourage young people to share information or discuss issues with Parents/Carers or appropriate outside organisations that may help them.

If a young person however, is at risk of harm or in need of protection, or if a Parent/Carer is at risk of harm, or if an offence may be committed, we have a responsibility to try to prevent this happening.

## Other Policies and Procedures continued

In these circumstances, we would pass on any relevant information to Children's Social Care or the Police. We will also try to talk to the young person first.

### **Gossip**

Staff members and Volunteers will not gossip or upload information about any young person or their family with anyone involved in HWFRS or with any outsiders.

Any Staff member/Volunteer who breaches this policy will be subject to disciplinary proceedings and may be asked to leave.

### **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

This policy covers illegal drugs, alcohol and volatile substances. HWFRS recognises that whilst some people may have involvement in drug and alcohol use, we must work within the law and in order to provide a safe environment for all people and Staff, we have the following requirements:

- Young people, Staff, Volunteers and members of the community must not bring illegal drugs or alcohol onto premises where HWFRS is conducting activities, this includes the building, surrounding areas and any vehicles.
- Staff and Volunteers should provide accurate information and advice to young people about drugs when appropriate. This may include referral to other organisations, giving leaflets and signposting to websites.
- If any person is found in possession of, or using, illegal drugs, alcohol or volatile substances on the premises or at activities, they will be asked to leave. If they do not leave, the Police will be called and the incident reported. Personal safety of Staff and other young people are most important and Staff should only intervene if it is safe to do so. If in doubt, the Police must be called.

- If Staff or Volunteers find, or are handed, an illegal drug or suspect substance, they must either:
  - dispose of it safely by flushing down the toilet in front of another Staff member; or
  - take it to the Police station for destruction if the quantity of drug suggests supply. If taking to the Police, the Police should be informed before setting off.
- If Staff or Volunteers are concerned that a person may be supplying drugs on the premises, they should first discuss this with the Branch Leader who may choose to speak to the person. If they are still concerned that the person is continuing to supply drugs, they should inform the Police.
- Anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be allowed onto the premises. If the person is unconscious, confused, disorientated, having trouble breathing or has taken a harmful toxic substance, this will be treated as a medical emergency. An ambulance will be called, first aid given and next of kin informed. **Immediately after the incident, Staff should record the incident via Fire Control 03333 990 043 and discuss with the Branch Leader/Duty Group Commander.**

**Under no circumstances can Staff hand any illegal substances back. All incidents must be reported to the Duty Group Commander via Fire Control 03333 990 043.**

## Other Policies and Procedures continued

- HWFRS, its Staff and Volunteers, will co-operate with the Police. This includes allowing access to the premises when needed. It does not include volunteering information about a person's drug use as, apart from when there are safeguarding concerns, information given is treated confidentially. However, Staff will not actively obstruct the Police or hamper a Police enquiry as this can result in prosecution. **Any queries must be discussed with the Branch Leader or Duty Group Commander/Fire Control 03333 990 043.**
- Staff or Volunteers must not use any controlled or non-prescribed drug during working hours. Such use will be a serious disciplinary issue and may result in dismissal.

### External Activities/Visits/ Trips

Offsite visits and trips are an important part of the Fire Cadet programme as they offer great opportunities for learning, development and fun. They can also carry greater risk, so need to be carefully planned and risk assessed. It is good practice to involve our young people in planning the trip including the risk assessment process.

### Communicating with Parents/ Carers

Before any visit or trip information must be provided for Parents/Carers. They must be made aware and given written information including:

- Purpose and location of the trip.
- Cost.
- Date and times of leaving and returning.
- Details of transport to and from the visit, if applicable.

- Name and contact number of the Branch Leader.
- Name and contact number of the person acting as 'Home Contact'.
- Safeguarding.

### **Home Contact**

- Identify a responsible person as the 'Home Contact'. They must be given the details of all participants and Staff/Volunteers and their contact details. If an accident happens, or the return home is delayed, the 'Home Contact' person will inform Parents/Carers.
- Give Parents/Carers the contact details for the 'Home Contact' person.

### **Information required from Parents/Carers**

- Consent detailing emergency contact details, any specific medical information and special dietary requirements.
- Consent for emergency medical treatment.

### **Complaints**

HWFRS actively encourages:

- Enquiries into what we do and why we do things in the way that we do;
- Suggestions about how we might do things better;
- Feedback on what we have done well and on things we need to improve on;
- Raising concerns and complaints so that we can address issues as quickly as possible.

Feedback or a complaint can be made verbally, in writing or by email. For more information, see the Complaints Procedure via your Branch Leader.

# General Information

## Personal Property

Fire Cadets have responsibility for the safe keeping and care of any personal property they bring to HWFRS premises, activities or while are carrying out HWFRS work. We will not be held responsible for any loss or damage to personal property unless it can be proven that we have been negligent in our security or Health and Safety responsibilities.

## Emergency Contact/Next of Kin Information

We ask all Parents/Guardians to complete an emergency contact/next of kin form to give us information on who to contact in the case of emergency whilst on HWFRS premises or activities. This information will be held confidentially in your personal file and only used in emergency situations. Please ensure that you tell the Branch Leader if you change any of

your details. It is important to ensure that you inform the Branch Leader of any changes to the following information:

- Your name.
- Your address.
- Next of kin/person to contact in emergency.
- Next of kin/person to contact in emergency contact details.
- Your mobile and home telephone number.
- Serious health conditions.
- Medication details.

## Smoking

HWFRS is a non-smoking organisation and smoking is not allowed in any of its offices or work locations, nor in personal vehicles when carrying work-related passengers.



## **Whistle-Blowing Statement**

If a Parent/Guardian or Fire Cadet becomes aware that an activity, practice or policy carried out by HWFRS is illegal, contrary to best practice, or otherwise gives cause for concern, they should 'whistle-blow' by informing the Branch Leader, Station Commander or if necessary the Police or children's services.

HWFRS are fully aware of their responsibility under the law and they will respect the legal protection afforded to a whistle-blower.

For more details on Whistle-Blowing, contact your Branch Leader.

## Version history

Version	Date	Description
1.0	09/2022	Initial issue
1.1	10/2023	2nd issue (Annual Review)
1.2	01/2024	Into Corporate branded template

**If you require this handbook in an alternative format, please contact the Branch Leader.**



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Q HWFire



© 2023 Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service  
Service Headquarters, Hindlip Park, Worcester WR3 8SP  
0345 122 4454 | [info@hwfire.org.uk](mailto:info@hwfire.org.uk) | [www.hwfire.org.uk](http://www.hwfire.org.uk)