

AIR CADET PUBLICATION (ACP) 4



SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN

Including:

RAF AIR CADETS SUPERVISORY CARE DIRECTIVE FOR CADETS

(Apr 2018)

Date	Amendment	Amended By	Version No
12/01/2015	There is a new chapter one, which is a stand alone supervisory care directive.	SO3 Policy and Casework	1.00
25/09/2015	A requirement for safeguarding refresher training for all CFAV has been put in Chapter 3.	SO3 Policy and Casework	2.00
18/03/2016	Chap 8 states that there is to be no attendance at RAFAC activities without a valid criminal record check.	SO3 Policy and Casework	3.00
03/03/2017	Chap 3 details the barring of sexual relationships between staff cadets and younger cadets.	SO3 Policy and Casework	4.00
30/07/2017	Chap 8 details the briefing of CCF (RAF) cadets who have reached their 18 th birthday and are on joint ATC/CCF or and out of school activity.	SO3 Policy and Casework	5.00
27/07/2017	Replace ACO with RAFAC	lhuh1	6.00
17/10/2017	Addition of training table Page 3-2 Change to letters on 8-B-1 and 8-B-2	SO3 Policy and Casework	7.00
14/11/2017	Changes to portability of DBS Page 8-5	SO3 Policy and Casework	8.00
29/03/2018	Various changes to references and links with regards to CP in Scotland	SO3 Policy and Casework	9.00

ACP 4 – SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN

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AIR CADET PUBLICATION (ACP) 4

SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN

FOREWORD BY COMMANDANT RAF AIR CADETS

Introduction

1. ACP 4 outlines the policy and guidance to safeguard cadets from all forms of abuse and to help build a safer environment for both staff and cadets of the RAF Air Cadet (RAFAC). For CCF(RAF) Sections, the head teacher retains primacy for child protection in his or her college or school and for school-generated CCF Contingent activities. However, staff and cadets from CCF(RAF) Sections are included in this policy when they are taking part in activities off school premises when the Section is mixed with other Sections and/or ATC cadets. In addition, when CCF(RAF) cadets, as individuals, are taking part in RAFAC or other Cadet Force activities, the provisions of this ACP should be applied.

2. No document, however comprehensive, can cover all situations in which an RAFAC member of staff may be required to take action to prevent or respond to child abuse but those who follow the principles and guidelines laid down in this publication can be more confident that they are properly discharging the most important aspect of our duty of care towards cadets. Knowledge of this publication alone will give members of staff the information they need to properly discharge their child protection responsibilities in accordance with current legislation in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. All adult members of the RAFAC (including permanent staff, padres, civilian committee members and staff cadets) have a part to play in the implementation of its child protection policy and need to be familiar with this publication. Commanding Officers and line managers are to ensure that all members of their volunteer and permanent staff read this publication.

Statement of intent

3. The RAFAC will safeguard its children and young people by:

- Complying with all legal requirements in respect of child protection.
- Taking into account, in all its considerations and activities, the interests and well-being of children and young people.
- Respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of the children and young people with whom it is working.
- Taking all reasonable practicable steps to protect them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse whilst engaged in RAFAC activities.
- Promoting the welfare of children and young people and their protection in relation to a position of trust (see Chapter 2).

Supervisory care of cadets

4. Supervisory care is the expression used to define the moral component of the RAFAC's duty of care. It involves the conscious overseeing of cadets by an authorised person to ensure the delivery of an appropriate pastoral and welfare regime. Supervisory care goes beyond the delivery of air cadet training carried out during the normal syllabus. It includes aspects such as the maintenance of values and standards, ensuring appropriate behaviour, providing assistance or advice on welfare and administration and the mentoring of cadets by RAFAC or other suitable staff.

5. As the Commandant, I am responsible for ensuring that our supervisory care regime is effective, responsive and appropriate to the needs of all cadets. I place special emphasis on the supervision and management of cadets and look to all staff and volunteers, not necessarily those specifically entrusted with this task, to conduct their duties diligently and expediently. To this end, I

require Commanding Officers and line managers at all levels (volunteer members and permanent staff) to ensure that the regulations, orders and procedures described in this publication are followed and correctly applied.

5. Notwithstanding the specific directions in this publication, I expect all personnel serving in the RAFAC to understand the importance of taking a keen interest in our cadets and their well-being. I look to each and every one of you to support me in this task and to treat all individuals, whether cadets or adult members of staff, with dignity and respect. Further information on duty of care responsibilities for cadets, the complaints procedure for cadets, the cadet “freedom to speak out” and the Cadet Code of Conduct are contained in Chapter 2 of this publication and in ACP 20, PI 501 (Terms of Enrolment/Appointment and Conditions of Membership for ATC Cadets).

Anti-Bullying Policy

6. ***“Children have the right to protection from all forms of violence (physical or mental). They must be kept safe from harm and they must be given proper care by those looking after them”¹*** The RAFAC is committed to this ethos and seeks to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the prevention of all forms of bullying among members. To this end the RAFAC has a zero-tolerance to bullying by any of its members (adults and cadets) and all AC RAFAC O activities should have in place rigorous anti-bullying strategies. To this end, the RAFAC will:

- Recognise its duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all members from harm.
- Promote and implement this anti-bullying policy in addition to our safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Seek to ensure that bullying behaviour is not accepted or condoned.
- Require all members of the RAFAC to be given information about, and sign up to, this policy.
- Take action to investigate and respond to any alleged incidents of bullying.
- Encourage and facilitate children and young people to play an active part in further developing and adopting a code of conduct to address bullying.
- Ensure that all members of the RAFAC are given access to information and guidance on the prevention of bullying.

7. Each member of staff and cadet will:

- Respect every child’s need for, and rights to, participate in RAFAC activities where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect the feelings and views of others.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special which should be valued.
- Show appreciation to others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Be committed to the early identification of bullying, and take prompt individual and collective action to deal with it.
- Report incidents of bullying they see – by doing nothing you are condoning bullying.

8. Bullying.

- All forms of bullying will be addressed.
- Everyone in the RAFAC has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying.
- Bullying can include online as well as offline behaviour

¹ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19.

- Children with a disability, from ethnic minorities, young people who are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and are more likely to be targeted.

9. Support to the child.

- Children should know who will listen to them and provide support.
- Potential barriers to talking (including those associated with a child's disability or impairment) need to be identified and addressed at the outset to enable children to approach adults for help and children should have access to Helpline numbers.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported.
- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.
- Children being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to participate in RAFAC activities and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.

10. Support to parents/carers.

- Parents/carers should be advised on the RAFAC's anti-bullying policy and practice.
- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parents/carers.
- Parents/carers will be consulted on action to be taken (for both victim and bully) and agreements made as to what action should be taken.
- Support should be offered to the parents/carers including information on other agencies or support lines.

Expected behaviour

11. The guidance contained in this publication is an attempt to identify what behaviour is expected of adults who volunteer to work with children and young people in the RAFAC. Adults whose practice deviates from this guidance and/or their professional code of conduct will bring into question their suitability to work or volunteer to work with children and young people. Consequently, all volunteer and permanent members of staff and adult cadets must understand what behaviour may call into question their suitability to continue to work with children and young people in any capacity, including that of their primary employment.

(original signed)

D A McCafferty
Air Commodore
Commandant RAF Air Cadets

CHAPTER 1

THE RAF AIR CADETS (RAFAC) WELFARE AND SUPERVISORY CARE DIRECTIVE (SCD)

References

- A. ACP 1 – Ethos, Core Values and Standards in the RAFAC.
- B. ACP 4 – Safeguarding and Protecting Children.
- C. ACP 20, PI 104 – Equality and Diversity .
- D. ACP 20, PI 105 – Misuse of Drugs.

Introduction

1. The care and supervision of Servicemen and Servicewomen, including those aged under 18 yrs (U18s), has attracted a great deal of attention over recent years. Best practice supported drawing together, into a single document, the mandatory and advisory instructions pertaining to the supervision of and provision of care to U18s. This remains the purpose of this SCD. The key policy position on which the Directive is based is that the RAFAC does not act *in loco parentis* for cadets under the age of 18 and parental responsibility remains with cadets' parents, guardian or carers in accordance with Section 2 of the Children Act 1989 (England and Wales), Part 1 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and Sections 5-7 of The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. - but it **is** required to put in place care and supervisory structures and processes that are focused on the needs of U18s and indeed all Servicemen and women.

Definitions

2. Definitions, for the purpose of this publication, are as follows:

- a. **Abuse and Neglect.** Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger, for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
- b. **Adult Cadet.** The term "adult cadet" is used to describe cadets who are aged 18 or over and who remain in service as staff cadets until their 20th birthday. Staff cadets have similar responsibilities to members of staff with reference to child protection.
- c. **Children and Young People.** Throughout this document references are made to "children and young people". These terms are interchangeable and refer to children who have not yet reached their 18th birthday in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child (which was ratified by the UK on 16 Dec 91). **The definition of a child in Scotland is a little more complicated but RAFAC policies should be followed for all cadets under 18.** The RAFAC also fully recognises that a cadet aged 18 and over may remain in the RAFAC as a cadet up to their 20th birthday and, therefore, common sense must be applied in interpreting the rules and regulations, but it is implicit that the RAFAC has responsibility for their wellbeing and protection whilst they are still cadets.
- d. **Child Protection.** The process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect by recognising abuse and neglect and acting upon concerns, suspicions or allegations². Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all adults who work with children should aim to proactively safeguard

² HM Government Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013.

and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced. HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding), supported locally by Wg Ex Os, is to provide advice and support for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of cadets, including implementing safeguarding and child protection policy in accordance with this publication, with guidance from Local Safeguarding Children Boards and locally agreed inter-agency procedures.

e. **Duty of Care.** The responsibility which rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of a child or young person involved in any activity or interaction for which that individual or organisation is responsible. Any person in charge of, or working with children and young people in any capacity is considered to owe them a duty of care. A duty of care occurs in 2 ways:

(1) **Legal duty of care** has a strict definition. The most obvious example of this is in Health and Safety procedures where clear guidance is provided about what reasonable steps should be taken to minimise the hazards related to activities, substances or situations. Any person in charge of children and young people involved in RAFAC activities has a duty of care and should take all reasonable care for their safety. Those responsible for the management or supervision of children and young people in a national youth organisation should consider what steps they may need to take in order to demonstrate a *reasonable standard of care*. Examples of this could include:

- (a) Maintaining up to date attendance records
- (b) Maintaining up to date contact details
- (c) Maintaining appropriate supervision ratios
- (d) Maintaining up to date information on specific medical conditions – allergies, asthma, epilepsy, etc.
- (e) Ensuring that first aid provision is available at the venue.
- (f) Ensuring those responsible for supervising the children and young people have been subject to appropriate recruitment, selection and vetting processes

(2) **Moral duty of care** is more correctly a *responsibility* for safety and welfare. Members of staff have a responsibility for those children and young people, and other staff, who are under their control. The term is best expressed as requiring the adult to act as a “reasonable parent”. This is not necessarily the actual parent and what the child’s parent may permit, the RAFAC may not. Within the RAFAC, the duty of care would start by ensuring that an activity is authorised by the RAFAC and that relevant members of staff are qualified for the task but then would go on to ensure that it is managed in a safe manner throughout. Other steps that would be considered reasonable measures would include adherence to guidance, advice or directions provided by the RAFAC or other relevant body.

f. **Parent(s), guardian(s), carer(s).** These terms include any person who has a parental responsibility under Sections 2 and 3 of the Children Act 1989 (England and Wales), Sections 1-6 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and Sections 5-7 of The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

g. **Safeguarding.** The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables

children to have optimum life chances and enter childhood together³. Describes the broader preventative and precautionary approach to planning and procedures that are necessary to be in place to protect children from any potential harm or damage. Child protection and safer recruitment are important aspects of safeguarding.

h. **Staff.** The term “staff” includes permanent members of RAFAC staff (eg civil servants), RAFVR(T) officers, WOs and SNCOs(ATC), civilian instructors (CIs), civilian gliding instructors (CGIs), honorary chaplains, civilian committee members, Regular or Reserve Service personnel permanently engaged on cadet duties and Regular or Reserve Service personnel appointed as volunteer Service Instructors, irrespective of where they are engaged within the RAFAC.

3. **ATC and CCF(RAF) equivalents.** Whilst ATC positions and formations are referred to in this publication for ease of reference, where relevant and appropriate, the policy also applies to the following CCF(RAF) equivalents:

- Squadron Commanding Officer = CCF(RAF) Section Commander
- Wing Executive Officer = CCF TEST Area Officer
- Regional HQ = Sqn Ldr CCF, HQ RAFAC
- HQ RAFAC = Wg Cdr CCF, except where other specific posts are referred to

Outline of Training delivered by the RAFAC

4. The table below gives an outline of the courses that are delivered, highlighting those elements that put particular pressure on cadets and staff.

Ser	Organisation	Course / Activity	Course/Activity Outline	Comments
1.1	RAF Air Cadet HQ	Bespoke Activities and Training	HQ for RAFAC oversees the training/activities that the numerous Air Cadet Sqns deliver.	Vulnerable cadets due to their age.
1.2	RAF Air Cadet HQ	Adult Training Facility (ATF) Course for Combined Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs)	ATF deliver the following courses; Initial Officer (1-week), SNCO Initial Course (1-week), Sqn Cdr Course (1-week), Drill Instructors Course (1-week), Senior Staff Officer Course (1-week) and Child Protection Advisor Course (1-day). There are around 50 courses per year.	Less vulnerable and all courses are only 1 week, all trainees >20 years and are accommodated in the SNCO or Officers Mess. Duty Student appointed outside of hours.
1.3	RAFAC	Bespoke Activities and Training within Sqns	Various training/activities delivered by numerous RAF Air Cadets Sqns.	Vulnerable cadets due to their age.
1.4	RAFAC	Cadet Camps	Various locations for ‘camps’ that are short training activities for cadets, airfield facilities for leadership exercises. Staying in barrack block accommodation.	Vulnerable youths due to their age but short courses.

³ Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 and National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014

1.5	RAFAC	Shooting	A wide range of shooting activities in a wide range of locations.	Vulnerable youths due to their age, but a robust training regime.
1.6	RAFAC	Field craft	A wide range of activities in a wide range of locations.	Vulnerable youths due to their age, but a robust training regime and qualified staff.
1.7	RAFAC	Adventurous Training	A wide range of activities in a wide range of locations.	Vulnerable youths due to their age, but a robust training regime and qualified staff.

RAFAC Welfare Support

5. The RAFAC has a structure spread over a wide geographical area and the Comdt has a duty of care to provide a welfare service to a diverse mixture of Service, civilians and cadets. The initial responsibility for welfare lies at all levels and is a chain of command matter. There is a supporting welfare network available to all personnel and the chain of command is responsible to the Comdt through Wing and Region staff as necessary for the service they provide. The welfare support consists of:

- a. **SSAFA.** SSAFA units at RAF units can be approached for assistance under the RAF contract, but staff should be aware that SSAFA will prioritise cases for staff whose issue is related to their role. In the case of an RAF Air Cadet casualty (adult staff or RAF Air Cadet), where the incident occurred whilst the adult staff member or cadet was on duty, HQ RAF Air Cadets will negotiate with SSAFA for support to be provided to adult staff and cadets as appropriate.
- b. **Chaplaincy.** Each Air Cadet Sqn should have a volunteer Padre established to support them, where a Padre has yet to be identified HQ RAF Air Cadets will arrange mitigation.
- c. **Other Community / Welfare Support.** Although adult staff and RAF Air Cadets are not routinely eligible to access and use RAF community and welfare services, HQ RAF Air Cadets will treat requests for support on a case by case basis.
- d. **Casualty.** In the case of an RAF Air Cadet casualty (adult staff or RAF Air Cadet), where the incident occurred whilst the adult staff member or cadet was on duty, (or in certain circumstance off duty (on a case by case basis)) the RAF will provide a Casualty Notification Officer (if Civilian Police are happy and have yet to undertake the duty) and, with the approval of the family, appoint a Visiting Officer. A Service Inquiry may be convened as appropriate and support to this and any Inquest will be given, as for regular Service personnel.

Duty of Care Responsibilities for all Personnel Aged Under 18

6. Reference B details Commanding Officers' obligations to ensure that protocols and procedures are in place to ensure line managers fulfil their duty of care responsibilities for U18s. A 'duty of care' is the obligation to exercise such a degree of care towards an individual, as is reasonable in all circumstances, to ensure their well-being and that of their property. Breach of the

duty of care will give rise to legal liability for loss or damage suffered in consequence. Duty of care also includes statutory duties as set out at Section 2 of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 which states that it is the duty of “every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work for all his employees. It is the primary responsibility of all adult members of the RAFAC to safeguard the moral, psychological and physical welfare of children regardless of gender, religion, race, ability, disability, sexuality and social background by protecting them from any form of physical, emotional and sexual abuse or neglect.

7. All children have the right to protection from all forms of abuse and harm when engaged in RAFAC activities and when in contact with members of the RAFAC. All adult members of staff have a duty of care, which makes them responsible both for safeguarding children in their care from abuse and harm and for responding swiftly and appropriately when suspicions or allegations of inappropriate behaviour arise; this applies to all cadets and not just cadets under their immediate control.

Maintenance of Service Discipline and Standards

8. As an organisation that is regularly in the public eye, it is paramount that **all** staff and cadets maintain discipline and the highest of standards. Personnel are to comply with all regulations and instructions pertaining to the maintenance of standards and discipline. In particular, all personnel should comply with the Ethos, Core Values and Standards of the RAFAC as at Reference A. All Commanders are to ensure such compliance and are to seek advice from HQ RAFAC and take subsequent appropriate action against any individual not so complying.

a. **Equality and Diversity.** The Commandant's Equality and Diversity Directive is at Reference C.

b. **Alcohol.** In the absence of specific permission from Wg HQ, adult members of staff are not to take cadets to premises where the consumption of alcohol is taking place and staff are to follow the RAFAC's 'no alcohol' policy when cadets are in their care.

c. **Drug Abuse.** Drug abuse by personnel will lead to administrative or disciplinary action being taken against them, which is likely to result in the discharge of the individual. If any individual is concerned about drug abuse then they should inform their chain of command. Further information can be found at Reference D.

d. **Tobacco and Smoking.** All personnel are to comply with the signs regarding areas where smoking is permitted and must not smoke in any other areas other than these designated places. For the purposes of this order e-cigarettes and similar devices are to be considered as a tobacco product. It is illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone under the age of 18.

e. **Relationships between Staff and Cadets.** The policy on professional and social relationships between personnel is at Reference B.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

9. All new staff of the RAFAC are to undertake an arrival procedure. The induction must be completed immediately and individuals are required to read, understand and comply with all elements of the SCD. Individuals are to sign once completed.

Commander's Risk Assessment (CRA)

10. The Commandant's Risk Assessment, which is contained within the Total Safety Directive contains a comprehensive overall assessment of risks to personnel, particularly cadets, in the RAFAC, which underpins the SCD. The very diverse nature of the activities and the training that takes place, necessitates that in addition to an overall Risk Assessment, individual units undertake individual Commanders' Risk Assessments to capture the specific needs and risks of their cadets

and staff. Commanders' Risk Assessments are to be reviewed every 12 months or earlier if required.

16. The CRAs and the SCD will be formally reviewed annually by SO2 Pers against extant policy. The SCD will be accessible via BADER and MOSS and updates promulgated in the appropriate manner.

Summary

10. The RAFAC supervisory care regime will help sustain Cadets and staff with appropriate levels of support whenever or wherever they may need it. Accordingly, all RAFAC staff are to ensure that the key principles outlined in this directive are understood and adhered to at all times. All Commanders are to ensure that staff who have regular contact with Cadets are familiar with this document.

(original signed)

D A McCAFFERTY
Air Commodore
Commandant RAF Air Cadets

RESPONSIBILITIES AND SUPPORTING MECHANISMS FOR CADETS

Unacceptable behaviour issues	Responsibility for managing the issue	Issue tracking responsibility	Reporting timelines	Supporting resources for cadets and adults (see next page)
Child abuse – physical	Police or local authority social services	Sqn CO/WSO/Wg Ex O	Immediately to police and/or local authority; info through the chain of command to HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding (SO3 SG))	ACP 4 NSPCC, Children's Society, Children 1 st , Think u know (Internet Safety), Kidshield
Child abuse – sexual				
Child abuse – emotional				
Child abuse - neglect				
Sexual offences	Police	Sqn CO/WSO/Wg Ex O	Immediately to police; as soon as possible through the chain of command to HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Mgt Team)	ACP 4
Harassment	Police (if applicable) Sqn CO/WSO/Wg Ex O	Sqn CO/WSO/Wg Ex O	As soon as possible through the chain of command to HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Mgt Team)	There4me Respectme ACP 20 JSP 763
Bullying				
Discrimination				
Inappropriate relationships between adult members of staff and cadets	Sqn CO/WSO/OC Wg/ Wg Ex O Police or social services (if applicable)	Sqn CO/WSO/Wg Ex O	As soon as possible to the police or social services (if applicable) and through the chain of command to HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Mgt Team)	ACP 1 ACP 4
Inappropriate behaviour by adult members of staff or cadets	Police or social services (if applicable) Sqn CO/WSO/OC Wg/ Wg Ex O	Sqn CO/WSO/Wg Ex O	As soon as possible to the police or social services (if applicable) and through the chain of command to HQ	ACP 1 ACP 4 ACP 20

			RAFAC (Personnel Casework Mgt Team)	
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Other cadet issues ¹	Primary responsibility for managing the issue ²	Issue tracking responsibility	Reporting timelines	Supporting resources for cadets and adults (see next page)
Pregnancy	Parents	Sqn Cdr	See ACP 20, PI 501, paragraphs 10 & 11	Brook Advisory Centre, Youth Information.com
Depression/mental health	Parents	Not required	Not required	Youth Information.com Children 1 st (NHS)
Medical matters	Parents	Not required	Not required	
Stress	Parents	Not required	Not required	
Anorexia/bulimia	Parents	Not required	Not required	Youth Information.com beat.co.uk
Suicidal gestures/ suicidal ideas	Parents	Sqn CO	Not required	Samaritans Papyrus-uk
Suicide/attempted suicide	Parents ³	Sqn CO	Immediately for medical treatment (if required); as soon as possible through the chain of command to HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Mgt Team)	
Self-harm	Parents	Sqn CO	Immediately for medical treatment (if required); as soon as possible through the chain of command to HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Mgt Team)	NSPCC ChildLine TheSite.org There4me.com YoungMinds Self-Harm Alliance

¹ Some of these issues may also require referral to other specialist authorities (eg social services, medical practitioners, etc)

² Parents – only where the cadet is under the age of 18

³ Although suicide is not a criminal offence (Suicide Act 1961), assisted suicide is and, therefore, the police may need to be informed

				National Children's Bureau
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Other cadet issues ⁴	Primary responsibility for managing the issue ⁵	Issue tracking responsibility	Reporting timelines	Supporting resources for cadets and adults (see next page)
Drug misuse/abuse	Police, parents	Sqn CO/WSO/Wg Ex O	Immediately for medical treatment (if required); as soon as possible through the chain of command to HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Mgt Team)	Talktofrank NSPCC ChildLine
Drug possession	Police, parents	Sqn CO/WSO/Wg Ex O	Immediately to police. As soon as possible through the chain of command to HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Mgt Team)	
Other criminal offences	Police, parents	Sqn CO/WSO/Wg Ex O	Immediately to police. Serious offences through the chain of command to HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Mgt Team) as soon as possible	
Alcohol misuse/abuse	Parents	Not required	Not normally required. However if RAFAC implicated, through the chain of command to HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Mgt Team)	NSPCC ChildLine
Sexually transmitted diseases	Parents	Not required	Not required	NHS Live Well
Bereavement	Parents	Not required	Not required	Child Bereavement Charity, RD4U
Other issues	Parents	Not required	Not required	

⁴ Some of these issues may also require referral to other specialist authorities (eg social services, medical practitioners, etc)

⁵ Parents – only where the cadet is under the age of 18

Specific links, resources and points of contact

(The MOD and RAFAC are not responsible for the content of external websites and their listing here does not confer official approval)

- Children's Act 2004 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>
- JSP 763- MOD Bullying and Harassment complaints procedure
- JSP 814- Policy and Regulations for MOD Sponsored Cadet Forces
- JSP 834- MOD Safeguarding Children
- Beating eating disorders (beat) <http://www.b-eat.co.uk/Home>
- Brook Advisory Centre <http://www.brook.org.uk>
- Child Bereavement Charity <http://www.childbereavement.org.uk/>
- Children 1st (Scotland) <http://www.children1st.org.uk/>
- Children's Society Kids Zone http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/kids_zone/your_issues/Your_issues_5500.html
- Kid Shield <http://www.kidshield.co.uk/>
- NHS Live Well <http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/sexualhealth/Pages/Sexualhealthhome.aspx?WT.srch=1>
- NSPCC <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>
- NSPCC ChildLine http://www.nspcc.org.uk/whatwedo/aboutChildLine/aboutChildLine_wda56344.html
- NSPCC ChildLine (Scotland)
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/whatwedo/aboutChildLine/ChildLineScotland/childline_scotland_wda57200.html
- NSPCC Helpline (for adults) http://www.nspcc.org.uk/helpandadvice/NSPCCHelpline/NSPCCHelplines_wda59025.html
- Papyrus (prevention of young suicide) <http://www.papyrus-uk.org>
- RD4U (part of CRUSE Bereavement Care's Youth Involvement Project) <http://www.rd4u.org.uk/>
- Samaritans http://www.samaritans.org/talk_to_someone.aspx
- Talktofrank <http://www.talktofrank.com/>
- There-4-Me <http://www.there4me.com>
- TheSite.org (Self-harm, etc)
<http://www.thesite.org/healthandwellbeing/mentalhealth/selfharm?gclid=CK2R7dzYn5kCFQFhQgodCjYipw>
- Thinkuknow (Internet Safety) http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11_16/
- Respectme (Scotland's anti-bullying service) <http://respectme.org.uk/about/>

CHAPTER 2

THE RAF AIR CADETS (RAFAC) POLICY STATEMENT ON CHILD PROTECTION

References:

- A. ACP 1 – Ethos, Core Values and Standards in the RAFAC.
- B. ACP 20, PI 501 – Terms of Enrolment/Appointment and Conditions of Membership for ATC Cadets, paragraph 19.
- C. ACP 20, PIs 209 and 309 – Administrative Reports on CFAVs.
- D. JSP 893 - MOD Policy on Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups.

Introduction

1. The RAFAC recognises the importance of child protection enshrined in The Protection of Children Act 1999 (and its equivalent in Scotland and Northern Ireland) and endorses fully the provisions of the Children Act 1989 (England and Wales), the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 which all state that “the welfare of the child is paramount”. For the purposes of this policy, a “child” is a person under the age of 18 in accordance with Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child.
2. The RAFAC does not act *in loco parentis* for cadets under the age of 18 and parental responsibility remains with cadets’ parents, guardian or carers in accordance with Section 2 of the Children Act 1989 (England and Wales), Sections 106 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and Sections 5-7 of The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. The only exception to this is in the event of a cadet requiring urgent medical treatment, including any emergency operation, when parents, guardians or carers are unable to physically give consent and they have delegated this responsibility in the relevant section of the ATC/CCF(RAF) Consent Certificate or on TG Form 21 (Cadet Activities Consent and Health Form). If the guardian of a cadet is designated as the local authority social services department, but the cadet has been in long term care of foster parents or become very close to their foster family then, for minor issues, Sqn COs should consider whether it is more appropriate to contact the foster parent in the first instance. Any serious issues will need to be discussed with social services and Sqn COs are to ensure that they are in possession of the details of a point of contact in social services for the cadet. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently, or is in further education, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.

Child Protection Policy

3. It is the primary responsibility of all members of staff and adult cadets in the RAFAC to safeguard the moral, psychological and physical welfare of children regardless of gender, religion, race, ability, disability, sexuality and social background by protecting them from any form of physical, emotional and sexual abuse or neglect.
4. All children have the right to protection from all forms of abuse and harm when engaged in RAFAC activities and when in contact with other members of the RAFAC. All members of staff and adult cadets therefore have a duty of care, which makes them responsible both for safeguarding children in their care from abuse and harm and for responding swiftly and appropriately when suspicions or allegations of inappropriate behaviour arise; this applies to all cadets and not just cadets under their immediate control.
5. The RAFAC aims to ensure that all cadets are kept safe from harm while they are in its care by:

- a. Providing parents/guardians/carers with information about what we do and what they can expect from us.
 - b. Making sure that all members of staff and adult cadets are carefully selected and given training appropriate to their supervisory roles.
 - c. Providing a means for cadets and parents/guardians/carers to report their concerns if there is anything they are not happy about.
6. The RAFAC also aims to protect members of staff by:
- a. Establishing rules for an appropriate balance of male and female adult supervisors in relation to the gender of cadets.
 - b. Establishing the correct ratios of adults to cadets for best practice.
 - c. Ensuring, where possible, that a single adult is not alone with any cadet for any length of time or placed in situations where their conduct can be misconstrued.
 - d. Ensuring that only those members of staff and adult cadets who are properly cleared and appointed have regular, unsupervised, access to cadets.

Responsibility for cadets

7. Responsibility for cadets starts from the beginning of an authorised RAFAC activity and ceases at the end of an authorised RAFAC activity. However, responsibility remains with the RAFAC until cadets have departed RAFAC control and/or premises (which includes transporting them). All members of staff who work with, and on behalf of cadets, are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources and safeguard children and young people. All adults have a duty to keep children and young people safe and protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people.
8. This responsibility is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships between members of staff and cadets. It is also exercised through the behaviour of the adult, which at all times should demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement.
9. Everyone expects high standards of behaviour from adults who work with children and young people. When individuals accept such an appointment in the RAFAC, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in that role and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached.

Positions of trust

10. Although young people over 16 years of age can legally consent to some types of sexual activity, they may still be relatively emotionally immature. It is essential, therefore, that those who have a responsibility for them recognise this vulnerability and make sure it is not exploited. It is also important that those in a position of trust have a clear understanding of the responsibilities this carries to ensure they do not abuse their position or put themselves in a position where allegations of abuse, whether justified or unfounded, could be made. An individual in a position of trust may have the power to confer advancement or failure. The relationship may also be distorted by fear or favour. It is therefore vital for all those in such positions of trust to understand the power this gives them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence.

11. A position of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. Such a definition on its own could be seen as spreading over a whole range of RAFAC activities, including day-to-day relationships between adults and cadets of any age. Care is always needed when such a relationship potentially exists, but such a wide interpretation goes beyond what is reasonably defined as a position of trust. Such relationships also need to be defined by reference to the other party in the relationship, especially where the other party is particularly vulnerable, whether through age or in other personal circumstances. A relationship between a member of staff and a cadet cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable children. All members of staff therefore have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. All members of staff are, therefore, in a position of trust in relation to cadets.

12. Where a member of staff is in a position of trust with a child under 18, allowing a relationship to develop in a way that might lead to a sexual relationship is wrong. A sexual relationship itself will be intrinsically unequal whilst in a position of trust and is therefore unacceptable. It is also inappropriate since the 'professional' position of trust would be altered. For these reasons, personal relationships between members of staff and cadets of any age are not allowed. In particular, a personal relationship between a member of staff and a cadet over the age of 18 would be a contravention of Reference A.

Principle of equality

13. The principle of equality applies irrespective of sexual orientation, ie neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable in relation to a position of trust. They apply equally to all without regard to gender, race, religion or disability. In addition, it is important to recognise that females as well as males may abuse a position of trust.

Model principles

14. The following model principles are to be observed by all adult members of staff and adult cadets.

- a. The paramount need is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and protect them from abuse from those looking after them whilst in a position of trust.
- b. To protect the child and young person being looked after from an unequal and potentially damaging relationship.
- c. To protect the person in a position of trust by preventing him/her from entering into such a relationship deliberately or accidentally by providing clear and enforceable guidance on what behaviour is acceptable.
- d. A position of trust will arise where one party, through their work or activity, whether a paid or unpaid volunteer or adult cadet, has responsibility for the care of a child or young person in a way which gives them power or influence over him/her.
- e. Any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship between the person in a position of trust and the individual or individuals in their care should be avoided; any sexual relationship whilst in a position of trust is unacceptable.
- f. Great care must be taken to avoid any behaviour that could be construed as sexual by a reasonable observer. This is particularly important in areas such as training or

sporting activities which may involve non-sexual physical contact, such as celebratory embraces on the sports field.

Code of practice

15. A code of practice serves to protect children and young people from abuse of a position of trust; it serves to assist the RAFAC to deal properly with false, malicious or mistaken allegations of abuse of a position of trust and contains safeguards to protect those maliciously, falsely or mistakenly suspected or accused. It is constructed to protect children, young people and those in a position of trust and these procedures include:

- a. Ensuring there is a culture of openness within the RAFAC; that cadets know their right to say 'no' and to know that sexual relationships with adult members of staff are not allowed. It also means ensuring that they know what to do if they believe that they have been subjected to inappropriate behaviour, for example, consideration could be given to nominating a single person within the unit to whom the cadet can turn to discuss concerns or receive advice in confidence. Cadets also need to be aware of how they may complain if they consider themselves to have been wronged in anyway – see Reference B for guidance.
- b. If an abuse of a position of trust is reported or suspected, the procedures for reporting these concerns, and the action to be taken when a complaint is made are to be found in Chapter 4 (Responding to Allegations and Suspicions of Child Abuse). If a complaint is made it is vital that the particular relationship within a position of trust is suspended until the matter is resolved.
- c. To minimise the risk of situations arising where an abuse of a position of trust could occur or relationships which could lead to abuse of a position of trust could develop, or where false, malicious or mistaken accusations might be made, all members of staff and adult cadets are to adhere to the model principles and, in addition, be aware that:
 - (1) Any relationship which develops that could represent an abuse of a position of trust is to be terminated immediately.
 - (2) Any concern about another person becoming attached to an individual should be made known to higher authority.
 - (3) Where a colleague is becoming attracted to someone in his or her care they are counselled on the possible consequences by their commanding officer.
 - (4) Where an individual is concerned that their actions or words have been misunderstood, they are to resolve the possible misunderstanding immediately.
 - (5) The RAFAC views any abuse of a position of trust as extremely serious and action under Reference C could be taken resulting in dismissal from the RAFAC.

Making a Professional Judgement

16. This policy and guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not appropriate behaviour for adults in all circumstances. There may be occasions and circumstances in which adults have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of the child or young person which appear superficially to contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the cadets in their charge. Such judgements, in these circumstances, should always be recorded and shared with a superior officer. In undertaking these actions

individuals will be seen to be acting reasonably if they follow the spirit of these guidelines. Members of staff and adult cadets should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate and safe and applied equitably.

Adult Duty to Speak Out (often described as “Whistle Blowing”)

17. Any form of child protection concern can be an exception to the normal RAFAC requirement on other issues to follow the routine chain of command. Every member of staff and adult cadet is required to report any suspicions or evidence of abuse or harm concerning a child whether it is within or outside the RAFAC and no-one should feel, or be made to feel, uncomfortable, bullied or intimidated by doing so or being coerced into not reporting them.

Cadet Freedom to Speak Out

18. Cadets should feel comfortable and free to report, at any time, any child protection concerns within or outside the RAFAC to any member of staff and all commanding officers are to endeavour to create a culture to ensure there is some means for cadets to do so. Cadets should know to whom they should report concerns and also what is likely to happen as a result – they must have confidence that they are being listened to. In addition to support within the sqn/unit, contact details for the NSPCC ChildLine (0800-1111) (<http://www.childline.org.uk/pages/default.aspx>) are to be prominently displayed in all RAFAC premises.

Responsibilities of the Wing Child Protection Adviser

19. **Introduction.** The Wing Child Protection Adviser (WCPA) reports to OC Wg and, in conjunction with the Wg Ex O, is a local focal point for safeguarding and child protection in the Wing. However, the Wg Ex O retains primacy for safeguarding and child protection matters within the Wing in accordance with the provisions of this publication and Reference D.

20. **Responsibilities.** The WCPA, in liaison with HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding), and in conjunction with the Wg Ex O, is responsible to OC Wg for:

- a. Ensuring that the incumbent WCPA's name and contact details (and deputy where appointed) are publicised widely within the Wing. The WCPA's responsibilities are to be handed over to a nominated deputy when the WCPA is absent from the Wing.
- b. Acting as a local point of contact/adviser on child protection matters within the Wing.
- c. Promoting an awareness of the contents of ACP 4 to all adult members of staff and cadets aged 18 and over within the Wing.
- d. On advice from SO3 Safeguarding, or via the Wg Ex O, providing information to Wing and squadron staff on child protection issues. Visiting Wing and squadron HQs, as necessary, to provide support on child protection matters.
- e. Immediately bringing to the attention of the chain of command and Wg Ex O any child protection incidents within the Wing which come to their attention and could have the potential to compromise the RAFAC's ability to safeguard the welfare and safety of children in the organisation or that may involve the police or social services or attract significant media interest.
- f. In conjunction with the Wg Ex O, providing advice and support to adult members of staff and cadets regarding complaints or incidents involving the protection of children in the RAFAC and responding to them.

- g. Promoting awareness of the contact details of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs), Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs), local authority social services (safeguarding teams/children's social care and Emergency Duty Teams) and police child/family/public protection units in the local (Wing) area and fostering a good working relationship with those agencies when required.
- h. Providing support and advice to any member of the Wing (including cadets) who is involved in a formal child protection referral (in accordance with the procedures published in Chapters 5 and 6), to the statutory authorities (police, social services or the National Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) tel: 0808-800 5000) about a child who is considered to be at immediate risk of harm, and immediately keeping the chain of command and Wg Ex O informed of developments on a need-to-know basis.
- i. If there is no conflict of interests, and when required by the OC Wg or Wg Ex O, attending local multi-agency child protection conferences and strategy meetings with safeguarding teams and the police (although the Wg Ex O would normally attend these meetings where possible) and making reports on the proceedings to the OC Wg/Wg Ex O and SO3 Safeguarding on a need-to-know basis. When required, inviting SO3 Safeguarding to attend these meetings as a representative of the National Headquarters.
- j. As advised by SO3 Safeguarding, keeping up to date on all relevant changes in government legislation and best practice with regard to safeguarding and child protection (up to date information may also be available via the NSPCC website - www.nspcc.org.uk).
- k. Providing support and advice to the Wing Training Officer on child protection elements of training for adult members of staff and cadets aged 18 and over.

21. **RAFAC Ethos and the Law.** Whilst meeting the above objectives, the WCPA is to have a clear understanding of the ethos of the RAFAC so as not to compromise its aims of fostering the spirit of adventure and developing qualities of leadership and good citizenship in cadets; however, it must always be remembered that ***the welfare of the child is paramount*** (the Children Act 1989, Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995).

22. **Training.** Initially, WCPAs are to undertake a one day nationally recognised safeguarding/child protection awareness training course at the Adult Training Facility (ATF), RAF Cranwell; programme details are available via the ATF Bader website. Refresher training is to be undertaken every 3 years in accordance with arrangements made by HQ RAFAC ¹.

¹ The concept and method of delivery of safeguarding refresher training is under development.

CHAPTER 3

RESPONSIBILITY AND GUIDANCE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

References:

- A. ACP 5 – RAFAC Health and Safety Manual.
- B. ACP 20, PI 103 – Baseline Personnel Security Standard and Counter Terrorist Checks.
- C. AP 1919 – Regulations for the Air Training Corps.
- D. ACP 20, PI 501 – Terms of Enrolment/Appointment and Conditions of Membership for ATC Cadets.
- E. ACP 50 - Media and Communications.
- F. ACP1 – Ethos, Core Values and Standards in the RAFAC.

Introduction

1. Safeguarding the welfare of children and protecting them from harm is every adult's responsibility (not just whilst they are in the care of the RAFAC). Most child abuse can be prevented. Cadets will and should see adult members of the RAFAC as people they can trust and from whom they can seek help. It must be clearly understood that every adult has a personal responsibility for the safety and welfare of cadets and this applies not only to cadets under their immediate control, but to all cadets. In its wider sense, the protection of children includes health and safety considerations, including risk assessments, etc, in accordance with the provisions of Reference A. The safety and welfare of cadets overrides any other consideration.

Access to Cadets

2. Only formally appointed members of staff and adult cadets are to be permitted regular unsupervised access to cadets for RAFAC activities. It is the responsibility of HQ RAFAC to ensure that all personnel appointed as members of staff have been vetted and cleared in accordance with the provisions of Reference B and Chapter 8 (Disclosure and Barring Services Checks) of this publication. It is the responsibility of all commanding officers to ensure that only properly appointed members of staff and adult cadets have regular unsupervised access to their cadets.

Confidentiality

3. Adults may have access to confidential information about cadets in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances they may have access to or be given highly sensitive or private information. These details must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when it is in the interests of the cadet to do so. The storing and processing of personal information is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998. Such information must not be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the cadet. If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from a superior officer. Members of staff:

- should be clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so
- are expected to treat information they receive about cadets in a discreet and confidential manner
- should seek advice from a superior officer, through the chain of command, if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them

Safeguarding/Child Protection Training

4. The main burden of child protection within the RAFAC falls on those in direct contact with cadets under the age of 18. All potential members of staff are issued with a copy of the RAFAC Child Protection Guide and “Yellow Card - Children First” (as reproduced in Chapter 5) on applying to join and receive specific training in child protection issues throughout their appointment to ensure best practice. In order to meet the RAFAC’s commitment as a voluntary youth organisation, as published in Chapter 3, paragraph 4 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, child protection elements are included in the Adult Volunteer Induction Programme (AVIP) and in all courses held at ATF. Specialist safeguarding/child protection awareness training courses are also held at ATF for the benefit of OCs Wgs, WCPAs and permanent members of staff who have the potential to deal with child protection matters in the course of their duties. All staff, both volunteers and permanent, with any contact with cadets, are required to undertake refresher Child Protection training every 3 years commensurate with their position. This can be during an ATF course as part of their development or on a local course. The delivery of the local training will be facilitated by WCPAs and Safeguarding Investigation Officers. As a minimum staff are expected to attend training courses as follows:

Safeguarding Training Levels				
RAFAC Role	BASIC/ AVIP	Designated SG Sunday Course	ATF Courses	External Refresher Course
Commandant RAFAC		x		
Chief of Staff		x		
Regional Commandant/OC 2FTS		x		
Assistant Regional Commandant		x		
Wing Executive Officer		x		
OC Wing		x		
Deputy OC Wing		x		
WCPA		x		
Wing Training Officer		x		
Wing / Regional Staff Officer		x		
Squadron Commanders			x	
Junior Officers	x		x	x
Sgt	x		x	x
CI/CGI	x			x
Chaplains	x			x
Service Instructors	x			x

Propriety and Behaviour

5. Adults in contact with cadets should understand and be aware, that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviour in places other than the RAFAC environment. All members of staff and adult cadets should therefore be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their appointment in the RAFAC and contact with cadets. Attention is drawn to Reference C (Chapter 3) and Reference D which directs that members of staff and cadets are required to report to HQ RAFAC, through the chain of command, when a criminal charge is to be preferred against them by the civil authorities, by their professional body or by their employer, where there are child protection concerns. Convictions, cautions, reprimands, anti-social behaviour orders or sexual offenders’ protection orders (where individuals are added to the sex

offenders' register) are also to be reported to HQ RAFAC, through the chain of command. The behaviour of an adult's partner or other family members may raise similar concerns and may require careful consideration by the RAFAC as to whether there may be a potential risk to children in the RAFAC.

Abuse of Power

6. It is the legitimate right of adult members of staff to direct and correct the behaviour of cadets where warranted. Methods used to direct and correct behaviour are to be fair, yet firm and not likely to give rise to complaints of harassment or amount to a misuse of authority or an abuse of power. Actions legitimately taken by members of staff to direct and correct the behaviour of cadets are not a misuse of authority or an abuse of power, nor do they constitute victimisation. Cadets who are not performing to a satisfactory standard should be properly counselled in accordance with Reference D.

7. Abuse of power or authority attributed to rank and position to harass, discriminate against or bully a cadet is inappropriate or unethical and on some occasions may constitute criminal behaviour. Members of staff and adult cadets must at all times be aware of their actions in relation to cadets to ensure that they do not abuse their position of power or authority. Cadets are in a dependant relationship with members of staff and should naturally respect the legitimate chain of command. When they are made to feel unsafe, vulnerable or at risk by persons in positions of legitimate power, then that power can be said to have been abused.

Adult to Child Ratios and Mixed Gender Groups

8. When working with groups of children or young people, it is important that the level of supervision is appropriate to their age group and their needs, which may be very specific. In general, younger children need to be more closely supervised and will require a higher adult to child ratio. For voluntary organisations, the NSPCC recommend that for children aged 12 – 18 years there should be at least 1 adult to 10 children. If the group is mixed gender, the supervising staff should also include both male and female members of staff, wherever possible. If this is not possible, both male and female adult supervisors are to be available 'on call' during RAFAC activities. When deciding on the number of adults required, it is important to bear in mind that these ratios are guidelines only. In certain situations it will be necessary to have a higher number of adults than the NSPCC recommendations suggest: if, for instance, the children or young people have specific support needs, or a risk assessment identifies behaviour as a potential issue for the group or event, the number of supervising adults will need to be higher. It may not always be possible to adhere to these recommended ratios, however, every effort should be made to achieve the best level of supervision of children at all times. Whilst respecting privacy at all times, an adult supervisor must attend and remain with any cadet who receives any medical or first aid treatment. If the adult supervisor is not of the same gender as the cadet, he/she must be accompanied by another person of the same gender to act as chaperone (this could be another cadet). Further guidance on adult supervision requirements can be found in the relevant ACATIs, ACTOs, ACPEdTIs and in ACP 237.

Personal Living Space

9. Other than in normal family relationships, no cadet should be in, or invited into, the home (or other domestic setting) of a member of staff, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/carers and superior officers. Members of staff should not routinely enter a cadet's home and never in the absence of the parent or carer. It is not appropriate for the RAFAC to expect or request that private living space be used for RAFAC purposes. Under no circumstances should cadets assist with chores or tasks in the home of a member of staff, neither should they be asked to do so by friends or family of that adult. In the absence of specific permission from Wg HQ, adult members of staff are not to take cadets to premises where the

consumption of alcohol is taking place. Members of staff and adult cadets are to be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries.

Transporting Cadets

10. Arrangements for transporting cadets are to be at the discretion of local management. By whatever means cadets are being transported, it is good practice to have 2 or more CFAVs present to supervise cadets.

a. **Transporting cadets by private car.** It is inappropriate for adults to offer a lift to a cadet under the age of 18, unless this has been brought to the attention of a superior officer and has been agreed with the cadet's parents/carers. There may, however, be occasions where a cadet requires transport home, or for medical treatment, in an emergency situation or where not to give a lift may place a cadet at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to a superior officer and parents/carers at the earliest opportunity so that it can be justified if questioned. Where it is necessary for cadets to be transported in a private car in relation to RAFAC activities, COs are to ensure that the vehicle is fit for purpose and adequately insured for this use. Best practice dictates that members of staff should avoid transporting a child alone.

b. **Transporting cadets by coach or minibuss.** The driver of a coach cannot count as a supervisor for the purpose of meeting the recommended ratio stated at paragraph 8 above. The driver of a minibuss, if a CFAV, may count as a supervisor for the purpose of meeting the recommended ratio; however, where possible, there should be another adult in the vehicle in addition to the driver (this may be a staff cadet).

Infatuations

11. Occasionally, a cadet under the age of 18 may develop an infatuation with a member of staff or adult cadet. Staff members and adult cadets should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. They should remain aware, however, that such infatuations carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and should therefore make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour is above reproach.

12. An adult who becomes aware that a cadet is developing an infatuation should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with their superior officer and/or parent/carer so that appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment. Members of staff and adult cadets should always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries.

Gifts, Rewards or Favouritism

13. Generally, members of staff should only give gifts to a cadet as part of an agreed reward system. They should exercise care when selecting cadets for specific activities or privileges to avoid perceptions of favouritism or unfairness. Methods and criteria for selection should always be transparent and subject to scrutiny. Any gifts should be given openly and not be based on favouritism. Adult members of staff need to be aware, however, that the giving of gifts can be misinterpreted by others as a gesture either to bribe or 'groom' (see paragraph 18 below) a child.

14. Care should also be taken to ensure that members of staff do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There will be occasions when cadets or parents/carers wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to members of staff, eg on special occasions or as a thank you, and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Social Contact

15. Other than in normal family relationships, members of staff should not seek to have social contact with cadets or their families unless the reason for this contact has been firmly established and agreed with superior officers. If a cadet or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the adult should exercise his or her professional judgement in making a response but should always discuss the situation with their superior officer. Members of staff should be aware that sending of personal communications, such as birthday or faith cards, should always be recorded and/or discussed with superior officers and understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified (see Chapter 7 for further details on using information and communication technologies). It is important to note that social contact in certain situations can also be misconstrued as 'grooming' (see paragraph 18 below).

Sexual Contact

16. All members of staff are to clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contacts with cadets of any age. Intimate or sexual relationships between cadets (including staff cadets) and the adults who work with them will be regarded as a grave breach of trust. Allowing or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship is also unacceptable.

17. Any sexual activity between a member of staff and a cadet (including staff cadets) of any age is forbidden, may be regarded as a criminal offence, and will always be a matter for administrative or disciplinary action. Any sexual activity between a staff cadet and a cadet under the age of 18 is forbidden, may be regarded as a criminal offence, and will always be a matter for administrative or disciplinary action.

18. Children are protected by specific legal provisions¹ regardless of whether the child consents. The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact, it may also include non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity, the production of pornographic material or sending inappropriate or indecent messages or images to children. **It is an offence to coerce a person, or to cause a child under the age of 16, to view a sexual image or receive a sexual communication, where it is done for the purpose of obtaining sexual gratification or causing the recipient fear, alarm or distress.** Where there is a suspicion that an adult who works with children may have committed a sexual offence against a child, the matter is to be reported to the police, even if the child or the child's parents/carers do not wish to take any action.

19. There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming'² where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child under the age of 16 and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Members of staff and adult cadets should be aware that consistently conferring inappropriate special attention and favour (sometimes perceived to be 'over-familiarity') upon a cadet might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process and as such will give rise to concerns about their behaviour.

20. **This means that members of staff and cadets of any age are not to:**

- have any form of communication with a child which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative, ie verbal comments, letters, notes, e-mail, phone calls, texts sending indecent images by whatever means, contact on social networking sites or physical contact
- make sexual remarks to, or about, a child

¹ Sexual Offences Act 2003, Sections 9-15 (and The Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009, Sections 6, 23, 24, 33 and 34 and corresponding Articles in the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008).

² 'grooming' – contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003 Section 15 (supplemented by the Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005) and the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 Article 22 – the act of gaining trust of a child so that sexual abuse can take place.

- discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children

Physical contact

21. There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for members of staff and adult cadets to have some physical contact with cadets. However, it is crucial that in all circumstances, adults should only touch children in ways that are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities. When a cadet under the age of 18 is required to be measured for their uniform, there must always be 2 adults present (one of whom may be a staff cadet).

22. Not all children and young people feel comfortable about physical contact, and adults should not make the assumption that it is acceptable practice to use touch as a means of communication. Permission should be sought from a child or young person before physical contact is made. Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity (eg safety or training). It should take place in a safe and open environment, ie one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary.

23. Children are to be treated with dignity and respect and contact with intimate parts of the body is to be avoided. Members of staff and adult cadets are to be aware of gender, cultural or religious sensitivities that may need to be considered prior to initiating physical contact.

Behaviour Management

24. All children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour. The use of foul language, degrading treatment, sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards cadets is not acceptable in any situation. The use of corporal punishment is not acceptable and whilst there may be a legal defence for parents who physically chastise their children, this does not extend, in any circumstances, to those adults or cadets aged 18 and over who work with or on behalf of children and young people. It is normally the behaviour that is not acceptable and not the cadet. Members of staff and cadets aged 18 and over should therefore deal with the problem not the person; they should be firm, fair and friendly, but not familiar. Further information may be found in Annex B to Reference D. Adults and cadets are not permitted to use corporal punishment or any other demeaning behaviour towards (other) cadets.

Children and Young People in Distress

25. There will be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance and this may involve physical contact. Members of staff should use their professional judgement to comfort or reassure a child in an age-appropriate way whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries. They should be circumspect in offering reassurance in one-to-one situations, but always record such actions in these circumstances.

Personal Care, First Aid and Administration of Medication

26. Children and young people are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, changing clothes, bathing or undertaking any form of personal care. There are occasions where there will be a need for an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard cadets and/or satisfy health and safety considerations. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs, **gender** and age of the cadets concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment. Members of staff and adult cadets should avoid physical contact when children are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour. Members of staff and adult cadets also need to be vigilant about their own behaviour, which means that they should not change in the same place as children nor shower or bathe with them.

27. When administering first aid or arranging medical treatment, wherever possible, members of staff should ensure that another adult is aware of the action being taken. If the member of staff who is administering first aid is not of the same gender as the cadet, he/she must be accompanied by another person of the same gender to act as chaperone (this could be another cadet). Parents/carers should always be informed when first aid has been administered.

28. In circumstances where children need medication regularly, a health care plan should be established to ensure that safety and protection of cadets and the members of staff who are working with them. Depending on the age and understanding of the cadet, they should, where appropriate, be encouraged to self administer medication or treatment including, for example, any ointment or the use of inhalers.

Self Harming

29. **Introduction.** In its broadest sense, self harm describes any damaging behaviour and covers “a wide range of things that people do to themselves in a deliberate and usually hidden way”³. It includes cutting, burning, scalding, banging heads or other body parts against walls, hair pulling, biting, swallowing or inserting objects and self poisoning. Self harm is always a sign of emotional distress and an indication that something is seriously wrong. People self harm for a number of reasons. For some, self harm can provide the means to cope with overwhelming emotions – a way to control feelings of helplessness and powerlessness. For others, self harm temporarily combats feelings of numbness to the world around them. No single factor has been shown to predict who will self harm. A combination of pressures at home and externally in schools and youth organisations or sports clubs can lead young people to self harm. Pressures may include being bullied, turbulent relationships with parents, parental divorce, unwanted pregnancy, abuse, rape, bereavement, emotional pressure, feeling isolated, entering care, academic pressures, mental health problems such as depression, the suicide or self harm by someone close to them, low self-esteem or poor body image. Any of these pressures make young people feel unstable and even hate themselves. Young people who self harm may do so because they feel they have no other way of coping with problems and emotional distress in their lives.

30. Myths and misunderstandings.

- **Myth: Young people who self harm are attempting suicide.**
Fact: Self harm can help people who are experiencing emotional distress to go on living with the pain they feel, rather than trying to escape it through suicide. However, it is the primary predictor of suicide and should always be treated very seriously.
- **Myth: Young people who self harm are just attention seeking.**
Fact: Young people tend to keep their self harming behaviour a secret because of feelings of embarrassment, shame or guilt. Self harm is a cry of pain and should not be dismissed as manipulative behaviour.
- **Myth: You shouldn't approach a young person who self harms – send them straight to the doctor.**
Fact: Taking time to listen without judging encourages young people to get their problems out into the open, which is often the first step along the road to recovery.
- **Myth: You will know if someone is self harming because they have cuts on their arms.**
Fact: Cutting is only one form of self harm and is not necessarily restricted to someone's arms, other behaviours including burning, hitting, bruising or poisoning.

³ “Truth Hurts” – Report of the national inquiry into self harm among young people – Mental Health Foundation 2006 (page 5).

- **Myth: Self harm is just the latest fashion and young people will grow out of this behaviour.**

Fact: Self harm is **not** a phase or fashion. Listening to certain music, or dressing in certain ways does not lead to self harm. People of all ages, backgrounds and of both genders self harm. Self harm is always a signal that something is seriously wrong.

31. **Responding to self harm.** The reaction a young person receives when they disclose their self harm can have a critical influence on whether they go on to access supportive services. It can also be hard for family, friends and volunteers to respond appropriately to a young person's disclosure of self harm. Should a member of staff become aware that a young person may be self harming, the advice is to remain calm in spite of what you may be feeling. Any indication of a negative emotion or being judgemental is likely to aggravate the situation. Members of staff should assure the young person that it's OK to talk about their need to self harm, and that you will support them even if you don't understand why they self harm or how they must be feeling. Explain to them that in order to provide appropriate help and support you will need to refer for advice. As soon as possible after a young person tells you they are self harming, you should make a written record. This should document exactly what has happened using the words of the young person where appropriate and it should be dated and signed. As with other safeguarding issues, the Wg Ex O or WCPA should be contacted for advice and support for both the young person and the person receiving the disclosure. The young person should be encouraged to discuss their self harming with their parents (unless there are indications that to do so would place them at further risk). Helpful contacts are listed at page ix above.

One-to-one Situations

32. It is not realistic to state that one-to-one situations should never take place. However, one-to-one situations have the potential to make a child or young person more vulnerable to harm by those who seek to exploit their position of trust. Consequently, individual CFAVs and adult cadets should not be alone with individual cadets under the age of 18. Members of staff and adult cadets should also avoid meetings with children in remote, secluded areas and avoid the use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs where possible; such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy. Meetings with cadets outside of RAFAC activities should not take place without the agreement of superior officers and parents or carers.

Photography and Videos

33. There are a number of public buildings, which may include swimming pools, sports centres, etc, that have a clearly defined policy of not allowing the taking of photographs or videos under any circumstances and, in these instances, such policies must be followed.

34. Members of staff may, however, be involved in the taking or recording of images as part of their normal duties and, in these circumstances, in addition to complying with local policy, they are to follow the guidance laid down in Reference E. Any such work should take place with due regard to the law and the need to safeguard the privacy, dignity, safety and well being of cadets. Informed written consent from parents or carers and agreement, where possible, from the cadet, should always be sought before an image is taken for any purpose (generic consent by parents/carers is normally given in the ATC/CFF(RAF) Consent Certificate on first joining). There may be occasions, however, when specific consent from parents or carers will be necessary when photographs of cadets are going to be published outside of the RAFAC and it is planned to include personal details. When cadets do not have parental consent for their photographs to be used in any form of publicity material, the Sqn CO or event organiser must endeavour to ensure that photographs of them are not used.

35. Careful consideration should be given as to how activities involving the taking of images are organised and undertaken. Care should be taken to ensure that all parties understand the implications of the image being taken especially if it is to be used for any publicity purposes or published in the media, or on the internet. There also needs to be an agreement as to whether the

images will be destroyed or retained for further use, where these will be stored and who will have access to them.

36. Members of staff need to remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable, for whatever reason, should recognise the potential for such activities to raise concerns or lead to misunderstandings. It is not appropriate for adults to take photographs of children for their personal use and may also be a criminal offence.

37. **Members of staff must:**

- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded
- be able to justify images of children in their possession
- avoid making images in one to one situations or which show a single child with no surrounding context
- ensure that the cadet understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity and that they are appropriately dressed
- report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found
- always ensure they have parental permission to take and/or display photographs (including on official websites or social networking sites)

38. **Members of staff are not to:**

- display or distribute images of cadets unless they have consent to do so from parents/carers
- use images which may cause distress
- use mobile telephones to take images of children (unless invited to do so by the cadet on his/her own mobile phone)
- take images 'in secret', or take images in situations that may be construed as being secretive

39. Parents/carers, family or friends of cadets who wish to take photographs at RAFAC events are to be informed that they can do so but, in order to safeguard their child whilst in RAFAC care and to protect them from inappropriate use of photographic images, they should make their intention to do so known to the Sqn CO or event organiser; this can be done verbally, either prior to, or during, the event. Cadets and parents/carers should be informed that if they have concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography, these should be reported to the sqn cdr or event organiser who will act in the same manner as they would with any other child protection concern. The current popularity of cadet 'selfies' needs to be managed appropriately so that no individual cadet feels pressurised to appear in such images.

Inappropriate Relationships between 18+ Staff Cadets and Younger Cadets

40. Cadets who reach 18 years of age, although still cadets, are adults in the eyes of the law and are deemed to be in positions of trust over younger cadets (similar to members of staff). It is therefore particularly important that all cadets aged 18 or over (Staff Cadets) are aware of the implications of any potential for inappropriate relationships with younger cadets. A sexual relationship with a child under the age of 16 is a criminal offence⁴ and such a relationship is therefore forbidden. A sexual relationship between a Staff Cadet and a cadet of 16 or 17 years of age is a contravention of ACP1 and of the guidelines contained in this publication (Chapter 2, paragraphs 10-12) when a Staff Cadet is considered to be in a position of trust over the younger cadet and is therefore forbidden.

⁴ Sexual Offences Act 2003, Section 9, the Criminal Law (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 1995, Section 5 and the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008, Article 16

Relationships between Cadets

41. Relationships between cadets occur and the RAFAC has no wish to inhibit free association, especially if such relationships do not affect discipline nor impact on the efficiency or effectiveness of the sqn or where there are no other child protection issues. However, the following may be considered to be inappropriate during RAFAC activities:

- close and exclusive emotional relationships involving public displays of affection or intimacy, including sexual relations when on RAFAC activities or premises, and,
- a relationship that involves, or gives the appearance of involving, partiality, preferential treatment or improper use of rank or appointment.

42. This guidance is not intended to inhibit friendships, camaraderie or teamwork (with no sexual connotation).

Bullying

43. **What is bullying?** Bullying is a social problem found in all walks of life. Some may say “it’s just part of growing up”, but many will be aware of the misery that bullying causes. It’s all too easy to ignore an instance of bullying and assume it is a one-off, or that young people will sort out their differences. Often this is not the case. Young people will feel powerless to stop bullying and may carry its effects long into their adult lives. Bullying can take many different forms, some less obvious than others. Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that may be repeated over a period of time. It doesn’t have to be a long-running series of incidents – it can be any occasion where someone deliberately intimidates or harasses another. Where and when do you draw the line between bullying and simply having some good natured fun? Well, if the person who it’s aimed at doesn’t see it as fun, if the teasing becomes nasty, hurtful or vicious, it becomes bullying

44. **Let’s stamp out bullying together.** According to ChildLine, half of primary school children and more than one in four secondary school students say that they have been bullied. Bullying takes many forms, some less obvious than others, and can be carried out by an individual or a group of people. Name calling is the most common form of bullying that is reported. It can include calling someone names because of their appearance, their accent, because they’re not good at something, because their parents are rich, for any reason or even for no reason at all. Other forms of bullying include threats, teasing, hitting and pushing, being left out of a group, or attacked because of religion, gender or race. It is RAFAC policy (see page ii above) that bullying in any form is unacceptable.

45. **How do I recognise the signs?** Because it often happens away from others, bullying is not always easy to detect. However, you can watch for signs, for example, a member who:

- hesitates to come to parade nights or join in activities
- asks to change flights, etc
- is the last one to get picked for a team for no apparent reason, or gets picked on when people think your back is turned
- is often the target of jokes
- is reluctant to go to certain places or work with certain individuals
- has clothing or personal possessions go missing
- has bruising or some other injury
- keeps ‘losing’ or is short of pocket money
- is quiet and nervous, withdraws from everyone else and becomes quiet and shy (especially in the case of people who are usually outgoing, loud and noisy)
- refuses to talk about a problem

- is usually quiet but becomes suddenly prone to lashing out at people, both verbally and physically.

Remember that victims of bullying may be adults and that a young person's aggressor may not be a peer.

46. **How can I help?** Bullying can only work if victims and their friends remain silent. Finding an adult they can trust and talk to can help in many ways. If a young person tells you that they are being bullied, the first and most important step is to listen. A sympathetic adult can give support just by listening to them discuss their feelings. Talk to the young person about how they want you to address the issue. They may not be ready to do anything other than talk about the bullying, or they may have some very clear ideas and want to talk them through to try to sort them out. Young people often don't report bullying because they fear adults taking over and acting unilaterally without their permission. Therefore, make sure you discuss what you are going to do with the young person first and get their agreement.

47. **Involving parents/carers.** We should always aim to work in partnership with parents/carers. If a young person is being bullied, parents/carers should be made aware of the situation. Talk to the young person and their parents/carers about actions you are proposing. Where appropriate, suggest other sources of advice and help. Where a young person is responsible for bullying others, think about whether it would be appropriate to talk to the parents/carers to help resolve the situation. You might want to think about talking to parents/carers alone first to ensure you give the same messages to the young person about their behaviour. It may be that their parents have encouraged their behaviour, eg told them to stand up for themselves. If the parents/carers disagree with you, this will give mixed messages to the bully and is more likely to make the situation worse. Seek parents'/carers' help and support in getting the young person's commitment to change their behaviour.

48. **Some final thoughts.** Bullying carries on because of the fear it creates – not just for those who are bullied, but also for others who witness the bullying. In the end, it becomes a vicious circle of fear and threats. To stop bullying it is necessary to break the circle once and for all. Adult members of staff must never become party to bullying in any form. In fact, they must make sure everyone knows they will not tolerate any form of bullying. Young people must feel confident that they can approach adult members of staff and adult cadets with a complaint and that it will be dealt with.

Other unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour

49. Other unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour is behaviour which is likely to bring discredit upon the RAFAC. Ultimately it will be a matter of judgement by the chain of command that certain behaviour, which may not be a criminal offence, has the potential to reflect negatively upon the RAFAC.

Conclusion

50. Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that this publication cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this publication, or which directly contravene the guidance given. It is expected that all adult members of staff will always advise their superior officer of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed. Good practice and the guidance laid down in this publication will help protect children from abuse and members of staff and adult cadets from false allegations. Members of staff should always conduct themselves in accordance with the provisions of Reference F and, where possible, follow the guidelines contained in this publication, especially the Codes of Behaviour detailed in Chapter 5 and the Cadet Code of Conduct as published in Reference D.

CHAPTER 4

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

References:

- A. ACP 20, PI 115 - Suspension of CFAVs, Service Instructors and Civilian Committee Members and the Roles and Responsibilities of Assisting Officers (AOs).
- B. ACP 20, PI 601 – Appointment of Service Instructors.
- C. ACP 20, PI 501 - Terms of Enrolment/Appointment and Conditions of Membership for ATC Cadets.

Introduction

1. All personnel working with children and young people are to be familiar with local procedures for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people. All adults have a duty to report any child protection or welfare concerns. All allegations must be taken seriously and properly investigated in accordance with statutory guidance.

Dealing with allegations, suspicions or concerns

2. It is not the responsibility of any individual within the RAFAC to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. The wishes of a complainant in an allegation of sexual offending, whilst important in determining the manner in which a complaint is to be managed and resolved, can often be less significant than the responsibility of a sqn or unit cdr in protecting other cadets by ensuring that an alleged criminal offence is reported to the police. Consequently, there may be occasions when the decision is taken by the RAFAC to report an alleged criminal offence to the police, against the wishes of the complainant or the parents/guardians, especially if an adult member of staff is implicated.

3. All adults have the responsibility if they are suspicious or concerned to:

- a. Take whatever action is necessary to protect a child who is the subject of concern.
- b. Report their concerns to their superior officer and/or the appropriate statutory authority for them to investigate and take necessary action.

Reporting Allegations, Suspicions or Concerns

4. Where time and circumstances allow, which should normally be the case, child protection concerns should be discussed with a superior officer (unless that officer is implicated). Responsibility for reporting child protection concerns to a statutory authority normally lies with commanding officers or Wg Ex Os where other members of staff are implicated. Their role is not to judge but to pass on information for advice and support of the cadet.

5. In **urgent** cases, if there is an **immediate** concern about the welfare of a child who may be at **risk**, all RAFAC adult members of staff must be prepared to make direct contact with the statutory authorities, reporting later to their chain of command that they have done so.

6. The statutory authorities for dealing with cases of child abuse are the police, social services or the NSPCC (0808 800 5000 – further information is available via the following link: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/helpandadvice/NSPCCHelpline/NSPCCHelplines_wda59025.html). Arrangements differ across the country and commanding officers are to ensure that all adult members of staff are made aware of appropriate local contacts and these details are to be readily available. A contact list for local authorities may be found via the following link: <http://local.direct.gov.uk/LDGRedirect/Start.do?mode=1>

7. Government non-statutory guidance states that when social services receive a referral from a member of the public, rather than a professional, personal information about referrers, including anything that could identify them, should only be disclosed to third parties (including subject families and other agencies) with the consent of the referrer. If the police are involved, social services will discuss with them when to inform parents about referrals from third parties, as this will have a bearing on the conduct of police investigations. Consequently, adult members of staff who refer cases to social services should reiterate that they are doing so as a concerned “member of the public” and not part of a professional childcare agency and, if they do not wish to have their identity disclosed to a third party, they should inform the police or social services accordingly. Further information is available via the following links:

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DFES-04319-2006&>
<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/6841-DfES-ChildAbuseSumm.pdf>

8. In all cases, adult members of staff who hear disclosures or allegations or hold suspicions or concerns are to report them to their commanding officer at the earliest opportunity, bearing in mind the “need to know” principle (ie commanding officers may not necessarily need to know full details of the disclosure, allegation, suspicion or concern, but should at least be aware that a cadet has a welfare problem).

9. In any case, where suspicions are formed or when disclosures or allegations are made, it is imperative that all the facts are recorded at the time in writing. Anyone receiving information should make appropriate notes of what is said to ensure accuracy of facts in order to properly brief the authorities. Details must not be embellished or omitted and must just reflect the words said during the disclosure.

10. The parents/guardians/carers of the cadet subject to the disclosure or allegation should normally be informed by the commanding officer that a report is being made to the statutory authorities, unless they themselves are implicated by the report, in which case advice is to be sought from the responsible authority.

11. In cases where adult members of staff hear allegations or hold suspicions or concerns in which other adult members of staff or cadets are implicated in any form of child abuse, they should normally consult their commanding officer and Wg Ex O. The Wg Ex O will inform the chain of command, including the HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Management Team).

Action to be taken if a cadet confides in an adult member of staff

12. In the event of incidents, complaints, allegations or suspicions involving cadets under the age of 18, the person in whom the cadet confides should take the action prescribed in Chapter 5 (Child Protection Guide and “Children First – Yellow Card”) (but see paragraph 5 above).

Confidentiality

13. The legal principle that “the welfare of the child is paramount”¹ means that the considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations in the organisation, should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. Whatever adult members of staff do must be in the best interests of the child, not of the RAFAC or any other organisation or individual. For reasons of confidentiality, the number of people to be informed of alleged child abuse cases reported to the authorities are to be kept to a minimum. The only people whom commanding officers, or other personnel where commanding officers are implicated, must inform of these reports are their Wg Ex Os who will normally advise the chain of command and HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Management Team). However, every effort should be made to ensure that

¹ Children Act 1989 (England and Wales), the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.

Duty to report police investigations, court proceedings, disciplinary hearings, etc

14. In accordance with current regulations, members of the RAFAC permanent and volunteer staff and cadets, who are the subject of a police investigation or court proceedings are to report the matter to HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Management Team), through their chain of command. These requirements do not apply when the civil offence is a minor offence under the Road Traffic Acts. Furthermore, if a member of the RAFAC permanent and volunteer staff or cadet is the subject of a safeguarding/child protection social services enquiry or disciplinary hearing by their employer and/or professional body (eg General Medical Council, General Teaching Council, etc), where there are any child protection implications or where there may be press interest, they are to report the matter to HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Management Team), through the chain of command.

Suspension of adult members of staff and cadets allegedly involved in child abuse, child protection incidents or sexual offences

15. Where a multi-agency strategy discussion is required, or it is clear that police or children's social care may need to be involved, formal suspension action should not normally be taken until the agencies involved have been consulted and agreed the extent of the information that can be disclosed to the accused person; premature suspension action by the RAFAC may jeopardise a police investigation. See Chapter 6, paragraphs 10 and 16, for further details.

- a. **Allegations against an appointed adult member of staff.** When an adult member of staff is being investigated by the police for an alleged sexual offence or where an allegation of child abuse, or any type of sexual offence, is made against, or there is misconduct involving cadets by a RAFVR(T) officer, WO/SNCO(ATC), civilian instructor, civilian gliding instructor, honorary chaplain or Service Instructor, the person concerned is to be suspended, without prejudice, from all RAFAC activities immediately in accordance with current regulations until the outcome of any investigation is known. See References A and B for further details.
- b. **Allegations against a probationary civilian instructor.** When a probationary civilian instructor is being investigated by the police for an alleged sexual offence or where an allegation of child abuse, or any type of sexual offence, is made against, or there is misconduct involving cadets by a probationary civilian instructor, the person concerned is to be suspended, without prejudice, from all RAFAC activities immediately until the outcome of any investigation is known. See Reference A for further details.
- c. **Allegations against members of a civilian committee.** When a civilian committee member is being investigated by the police for an alleged sexual offence or where an allegation of child abuse, or any type of sexual offence, is made against, or there is misconduct involving cadets by a civilian committee member, the appropriate committee chairman is to take measures to ensure that the person involved takes no part in RAFAC activities until the matter is resolved.
- d. **Allegations against a cadet.** When a cadet of any age is being investigated by the police for an alleged sexual offence or where an allegation of child abuse, or any type of sexual offence, is made against, or there is misconduct involving cadets by another cadet, it will usually be appropriate for the OC Wg or Rgnl Comdt to approve suspension, without prejudice, of the alleged offending cadet to prevent the cadet from attending the sqn or taking part in any RAFAC activity until the outcome of any investigation is known. The facts are to be reported to HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding) at the earliest opportunity. See Reference C for further details.

e. **Complainant/alleged victim.** Only rarely will it be appropriate to consider suspending a cadet who has made an allegation (in order to prevent potential difficulties) even if the allegation is later found to be groundless and commanding officers are to consult with the chain of command before doing so (but see paragraph 19 below and Chapter 6, paragraph 28, regarding false allegations).

16. **Support for suspended members of staff and cadets.** Support for individuals who are the subject of an allegation is important and a suitable assisting officer is to be appointed (see Chapter 6 and Reference A for further information).

Resignations and ‘compromise agreements’

17. The fact that a person tenders their resignation, or ceases to attend RAFAC duties, must not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with these procedures. It is important that every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of cadets, including any in which the person concerned refuses to cooperate with the process.

18. ‘Compromise agreements’, whereby a person agrees to resign to avoid administrative or disciplinary action, are not to be used in these cases.

False allegations

19. Where it is established beyond all reasonable doubt that a complaint of unacceptable behaviour is false and either malicious, vexatious or mischievous, serious consideration will be given to disciplinary or administrative action against the complainant. The accused person also has the right to take action at their own expense for libel or slander through civil litigation against the complainant.

Follow up action

20. Where adult members of staff or cadets are involved in allegations, Wg Ex Os may be invited to attend multi-agency child protection strategy or allegations meetings with local authorities and the police. When necessary, HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding) may also be invited to attend these meetings to share information as a representative of the RAFAC National Headquarters. See Chapter 6 for further details.

CHAPTER 5

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDE¹

Introduction

1. For the purpose of this document, a “child” is a person under the age of 18 in accordance with Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child. The main burden of child protection within the RAFAC falls on those in direct contact with cadets under the age of 18. The welfare of the child is paramount². The aim of this booklet is therefore to provide guidance to all adult members of staff³ so that they may have a clear vision of the action to take should they become directly involved with child protection issues during the course of their duties.

Child protection policy

2. It is the primary responsibility of all adult members of the RAFAC to safeguard the moral, psychological and physical welfare of children regardless of gender, religion, race, ability, disability, sexuality and social background by protecting them from any form of physical, emotional and sexual abuse or neglect.

3. All children have the right to protection from all form of abuse and harm when engaged in RAFAC activities and when in contact with members of the RAFAC. All adult members of staff have a duty of care, which makes them responsible both for safeguarding children in their care from abuse and harm and for responding swiftly and appropriately when suspicions or allegations of inappropriate behaviour arise; this applies to all cadets and not just cadets under their immediate control.

Adult Duty to Speak Out (often described as “Whistle Blowing”)

4. Any form of child protection concern can be an exception to the normal RAFAC requirement on other issues to follow the routine chain of command. Every adult member of the RAFAC is required to report any suspicions or evidence of abuse or harm concerning a child whether it is within or outside the RAFAC and no-one should feel, or be made to feel uncomfortable, bullied or intimidated by doing so or being coerced into not reporting them.

Cadet Freedom to Speak Out

5. Cadets should feel comfortable and free to report, at any time, any child protection concerns within or outside the RAFAC to any member of staff and all commanding officers are to endeavour to create a culture to ensure there is some means for cadets to do so. Cadets should know to whom they should report concerns and also what is likely to happen as a result – they must have confidence that they are being listened to. In addition to support within the sqn, contact details for the NSPCC ChildLine (0800-1111) (<http://www.childline.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx>) are to be prominently displayed in all RAFAC premises.

Working Safely with Children and Young People

6. It is the responsibility of each adult member of the RAFAC to ensure that:

- their behaviour is appropriate at all times

¹ This chapter is issued as a standalone A5 booklet (and “yellow card”) to all adult members of staff and includes some of the information found in the preceding chapters for ease of reference.

² Children Act 1989 (England and Wales), the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

³ For the purposes of this guide, the phrases “adult member(s) of staff” and “adult member(s) of the RAFAC” also includes cadets who are aged 18 or over.

- they observe the rules established for the safety and security of cadets
- they follow the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse
- they recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed, and
- in every respect, the relationships they form with cadets in their care are appropriate

7. All adult members of the RAFAC must accept and understand this policy and they must also agree to put the organisation's policy on child protection into practice and adhere to the Codes of Behaviour detailed at the end of this chapter.

What if you suspect abuse or an allegation is made?

8. Child abuse occurs when a child has suffered from, or is at significant risk of suffering from, ill treatment or impairment of development, by any person who knowingly colludes with or fails to prevent the ill-treatment of the child by not ensuring reasonable standards of care and protection. You should be aware that abusers are not just strangers; they can include parents, carers, family members, friends, people in positions of trust and authority, other children or young people, anyone who has contact with children and young people. Children who are abused are often abused by an adult they know and trust. Children will and should see you as a person they can have faith in and from whom they can seek help – listen to them, take what you are told seriously and you will be helping to reassure and protect the child.

9. **You must do something if:**

- a child tells you, or shows signs that, he or she is being abused in any way
- you have reason to believe anyone within or outside the RAFAC is abusing or harming a child
- someone tells you that a child is being abused
- you become aware that someone who has contact with and access to children has offended against them or poses a risk to them

10. **When a cadet speaks to you about a child protection matter:** Make sure that you are out of hearing and sight of others and that you have a third person (who is acceptable both to you and the cadet) present to witness what is said:

- listen carefully to what they are saying
- show you take them seriously
- avoid asking them to repeat the information; do not ask leading questions that might give your own ideas of what might have happened (eg "did he/she do X to you?") – it's better to just ask "what do you want to tell me?" or "is there anything else you want to say?"
- explain that you cannot keep what they tell you a secret, but any information will remain "in confidence"
- reassure them that they have done the right thing
- make no judgement about what you have heard and stay calm;
- make an immediate, careful, record of what has been said. Use their actual words wherever possible

The procedure to follow⁴

11. The responsibility for reporting concerns to the appropriate statutory authority normally lies with the individual who receives a complaint or who suspects abuse. However, where time and circumstances allow, which normally should be the case, the matter is to be discussed with a

⁴ Because child protection legislation in Scotland and Northern Ireland Region may differ from the rest of the UK, personnel in that Region are to follow the referral procedures laid down by their local child protection committees and local authorities.

superior officer (if the officer is not implicated) and Wg Ex O who will consult with HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Management Team or SO3 Safeguarding). The role of the chain of command is not to judge but to pass on information for advice and to support the cadet.

12. In **urgent** cases, if you have an **immediate** concern about the welfare of a child who may be at risk, you must make direct contact with the police, social services or the NSPCC, reporting later to your chain of command. Ensure you write down times, facts, observations (verbatim speech if possible). Have the cadet's name and address and the name and address of their parent/guardian/carers available.

13. If you suspect abuse, a cadet confides in you, or a complaint is made about any adult or about yourself, it is your duty to report the concern. However, it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. No investigation or questioning is to be undertaken. The proper (statutory) authorities for dealing with cases of child abuse are the local authority social services department (children's social care), the police or the NSPCC. Arrangements differ across the UK and appropriate local contacts should be readily available and advertised within your unit. Swift reporting will enable the correct authorities to give advice and take appropriate action.

14. The parents or guardians/carers of the cadet subject to the disclosure of allegation should normally be informed by the sqn CO as soon as possible that a report is being made to the police or social services, unless they themselves are implicated by the report.

15. In cases where you hear allegations about yourself or your colleagues, or hold suspicions or concerns in which your colleagues are implicated, you should consult your superior officer immediately who will, in turn, advise the Wg Ex O, where applicable. If your superior officer is implicated in any allegations or suspicions you should immediately consult your Wg Ex O. In these circumstances, the Wg Ex O is to ensure that the chain of command is informed and the matter reported to the Personnel Casework Management Team at HQ RAFAC without delay. In addition, when members of staff or adult cadets are implicated, the matter will normally be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), who is the point of contact for all agencies when there are allegations made against individuals working with children, so that cases can be dealt with across county boundaries – see ACP 4, Chapter 6, for further details.

16. For reasons of confidentiality the number of people to be involved in alleged child abuse cases reported to the authorities are to be kept to a minimum (the 'need to know' principle).

Local Information

17. Use this space for keeping your own contacts/telephone numbers:

	Contact Details
Wg Ex O	
HQ RAFAC SO3 Safeguarding (Child Protection)	01400 267088 Or (emergency only) 07773 967091
HQ RAFAC SO3 Personnel Management	01400 267639
Local Authority Social Services	
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline ⁵	0808 800 5000 http://www.nspcc.org.uk/helpandadvice/NSPCCHelpline/NSPCCHelplines_wda59025.html
Scottish National Child Protection Information	Information on how to report a concern about the wellbeing of a child can be found online at https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse https://www.childline.org.uk/ . More information is also available for parents who wish to report concerns of a child at https://www.children1st.org.uk/what-we-do/how-we-help/parentline-scotland/
Police (local number)	(or 999 in any emergency)

Contacting Social Services or the Police

- ask for the Duty Officer (or Emergency Duty Team) and say that you wish to discuss a matter of child protection
- ask for the name of the person with whom you are speaking
- discuss all the information you have (nothing is to be filtered or withheld)
- state your intention to advise your chain of command
- ask if anyone else should be informed
- keep a record of your conversation and of any advice given

Government non-statutory guidance states that when social services receive a referral from a member of the public, rather than a professional, personal information about referrers, including anything that could identify them, should only be disclosed to third parties (including subject families and other agencies) with the consent of the referrer. If the police are involved, social services will discuss with them when to inform parents about referrals from third parties, as this will have a bearing on the conduct of police investigations. Consequently, adult members of staff who refer cases to social services should reiterate that they are doing so as a concerned “member of the public” and not part of a professional childcare agency and, if they do not wish to have their identity disclosed to a third party, they should inform the police or social services accordingly.

⁵ The NSPCC Helpline advisers are all trained child protection officers. They can help with a range of child-care problems and can offer expert advice. A call to the helpline can help stop a difficult situation getting out of control and it's open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

What you must do:

ALWAYS adhere to these guidelines

ALWAYS treat everyone with dignity and respect

ALWAYS set an example you would wish others to follow

ALWAYS treat all cadets equally – show no favouritism

ALWAYS plan training and activities that involve more than one other person being present, or at least are within sight and hearing of others (except when actually flying with VGSs and AEFs)

ALWAYS respect a cadet's right to personal privacy

ALWAYS avoid unacceptable situations relating to a position of trust, eg a sexual relationship with a cadet over the age of consent

ALWAYS plan separate sleeping arrangements for adult members of staff (including adult cadets) and cadets under the age of 18 and, where possible, separate washing and toilet facilities for cadets under the age of 18

ALWAYS allow cadets to talk about any concerns they may have

ALWAYS encourage others to challenge any attitudes or behaviours they do not like

ALWAYS avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour (eg tantrums, crushes and infatuations)

ALWAYS follow the RAFAC's 'no alcohol' policy when cadets are in your care

ALWAYS keep other members of staff informed of where you are and what you are doing

ALWAYS remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned

ALWAYS take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately

ALWAYS be aware that child protection issues can be complex and distressing. You are encouraged to seek help from specialist agencies if you have been affected by these matters

ALWAYS remember this code even at sensitive moments, eg when responding to bullying, bereavement or abuse

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

What you must not do:

NEVER trivialise abuse

NEVER form a relationship with a cadet that is an abuse of a position of trust

NEVER give personal or work telephone numbers or other contact details to cadets who are not under your direct control. Always deal through unit staff.

NEVER enter a cadet's home without the parent/carer being present and then only with the agreement of the chain of command.

NEVER be alone with a single cadet in a vehicle except in an emergency

NEVER condone overt sexual behaviour between cadets

NEVER permit abusive peer activities, eg initiation ceremonies, bullying, etc

NEVER engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact, physical, verbal or sexual

NEVER play physical contact game with cadets

NEVER touch cadets unless it is a necessary part of training, or for safety reasons

NEVER make suggestive remarks or threats to cadets, even in fun

NEVER use inappropriate language or display improper behaviour towards cadets (verbally, in writing, 'phoning', text messages, e-mail or via social network sites on the internet)

NEVER accept cadets as 'friends' on personal Facebook or other social networking sites nor "chat" with cadets under the age of 18 privately on a one-to-one basis on instant messaging services

NEVER ignore an allegation because you personally find it unbelievable. Just because the person about whom the allegation is made is known to you, and may be a trusted colleague or friend, does not mean that the allegation is necessarily unfounded

NEVER attempt to contact a cadet or their parent/guardian/carer who you believe may have made an allegation against you

NEVER, under any circumstances, talk to the media, at the time or later

NEVER rely on your good name to protect you

Remember!

- **never do nothing**
- **don't assume someone else will do something**
- **never push a child for more information**
- **never discuss your worries with the suspected abuser**

RAF AIR CADETS (RAFAC) CHILD PROTECTION GUIDE
(issued as a printed pocket-sized card to all adult members of staff which contains information from the preceding chapters)

CHILDREN FIRST

“The welfare of the child is paramount”

*(Children Act 1989 (England and Wales), the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and
The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995)*

An aide-mémoire for adult members of staff in the RAFAC

It is designed for you to keep with you – carry it!

(for further details, refer to the Child Protection Guide)

It is the primary responsibility of all adult members of the RAFAC to safeguard the moral, psychological and physical welfare of children regardless of gender, religion, race, ability, disability, sexuality and social background by protecting them from any form of physical, emotional and sexual abuse or neglect.

All children have the right to protection from all forms of abuse and harm when engaged in RAFAC activities and when in contact with members of the RAFAC. All adult members of staff have a duty of care, which makes them responsible both for safeguarding children in their care from abuse and harm and for responding swiftly and appropriately when suspicions or allegations of inappropriate behaviour arise; this applies to all cadets and not just cadets under their immediate control.

What happens if?

You suspect a cadet is being abused:

- Stop and listen immediately if someone wants to tell you about an incident, or you suspect abuse. Ensure a suitable witness is present if possible
- Give sympathetic consideration to the person talking to you
- Make a note of what is said while the conversation is taking place
- Where time and circumstances permit, report the allegation/suspicion to the officer in charge
- If you have an immediate concern, report the matter to the statutory authority (police, local authority social services or the NSPCC **(0800 800 5000)**)
- If the officer or instructor in charge is implicated in any way, report to the Wg Ex O or HQ RAFAC

A cadet tells you about abuse by someone else:

- Allow the cadet to speak without interruption; accept what is said
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Ensure the cadet has access to an independent adult
- Offer support but make no undertaking to keep the matter secret
- Take the same action as in suspecting a cadet is being abused above

You receive an allegation about any adult, including yourself:

- You **must** report the matter, through the chain of command, where possible, to the statutory authority
- Do not attempt to question the person or investigate yourself
- Never ask questions which might put words into a person's mouth
- Never ignore an allegation, even if the person concerned is trusted and known to you
- Never contact a cadet or his/her parents who you believe has made an allegation against you

YOU MUST REFER – YOU MUST NOT INVESTIGATE

ACP 4 ANNEX A TO CHAPTER 5

Question	What To Do	Key Points
What should I do if a cadet asks to speak to me in confidence about what could be a child protection matter?	Arrange for a third person (who is acceptable both to you and the cadet) to be present and make sure you are out of hearing and sight of others. Reassure them and listen carefully to what they are saying – do not ask questions. Make no judgement about what you've heard and stay calm.	You cannot keep what they tell you a secret, but reassure them that anything they tell you will remain "in confidence". Ensure you write down times, facts, observations (verbatim speech if possible).
Who is responsible for reporting concerns to the appropriate authorities?	YOU ARE. However, where time and circumstances allow (which normally should be the case), the matter is to be discussed with your CO or other superior officer.	Talk to your CO and/or Wg Ex O (if applicable) or WCPA who will normally consult with HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Management Team or SO3 Safeguarding)
What do I do if I think a child is in immediate danger?	In urgent cases, where you have an immediate concern about the welfare of a child who may be at risk , you must make direct contact with one of the statutory authorities (social services, the police or the NSPCC (see contact details below)), reporting later to your chain of command.	Have the cadet's name and address and the name and address of their parent/guardian/carer available. Refer to your notes – don't filter or withhold any information. You have no right to detain a cadet but you should provide "a place of safety", if possible, until the authority assumes responsibility.
Should I contact parents/guardians/carers?	The parents or guardians/carers of the cadet subject to the disclosure or allegation should normally be informed by the Sqn CO as soon as possible that a report is being made to the police or social services.	If parents or guardians/carers are implicated, do not inform them but request advice from the statutory authority.
What should I do if I hear allegations/have suspicions/get a report about potential abuse, and members of the RAFAC are implicated?	In cases where you hear allegations about yourself or your colleagues, or hold suspicions or concerns in which your colleagues are implicated, you should consult your superior officer without delay. If your superior officer is implicated in any allegations or suspicions you should immediately consult your Wg Ex O.	The Wg Ex O will ensure that the chain of command (including HQ RAFAC) is informed.
How many people should be informed?	Only discuss child protection issues with the individuals mentioned in the Child Protection Guide.	For reasons of confidentiality, the number of people to be informed of alleged child abuse cases reported to the authorities are to be kept to a minimum ('need to know').

Local Information

	Contact details		Contact details
Wg Ex O/WCPA		Local Authority Social Services	
HQ RAFAC SO3 Safeguarding	01400 267088 Or (emergency only) 07773 967091	Child Protection Helplines	NSPCC – 0800 800 5000 http://www.nspcc.org.uk/helpandadvice/NSPCCHelpline/NSPCCHelplines_wda59025.html
HQ RAFAC SO3 Pol and Casework	01400 267418	Police (local number) (or 999 in any emergency)	

Contacting Social Services or the Police: ask for the Duty Officer (or Emergency Duty Team) and say that you wish to discuss a child protection matter.

- ask for the name of the person with whom you are speaking
- discuss all the information you have (nothing is to be filtered or withheld)
- state your intention to advise your chain of command
- ask if anyone else should be informed
- keep a record of your conversation and of any advice given

5-A-2

REMEMBER:

- never do nothing
- don't assume someone else will do something
- never push a child for more information
- never discuss your worries with the suspected abuser

CHAPTER 6

MANAGING ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AGAINST MEMBERS OF THE RAF AIR CADETS AND THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER

Reference:

- A. HM Government Statutory Guidance – Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013.

INTRODUCTION

1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of the local authority, working in partnership with other public organisations, the voluntary sector, children and young people, parents and carers, and the wider community. A key statutory objective for local authorities is to ensure that children are protected from harm. It is therefore essential that any allegation made against a person who works with children and young people, including those who work in a voluntary capacity, is dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. The framework for managing allegations in England is set out in Reference A, (<http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/chapters/contents.html>). These national guidelines are supplemented by RAFAC procedures contained in Chapters 4 and 5.

SCOTLAND, NORTHERN IRELAND, WALES, STATES OF JERSEY, STATES OF GUERNSEY AND THE ISLE OF MAN

2. Although the procedures in Reference A are applicable to England only, parallel procedures have been published in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man, as follows, which generally mirror Reference A:

- **Scotland** - by the Scottish Government - National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (Dec 10): (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/12/09134441/0>), supported by local Child Protection Committees. Further information with reference to child protection in Scotland may also be found via the following link: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/policyandpublicaffairs/scotland/system_wda87551.html
- **Northern Ireland** - by the Northern Ireland Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety - Cooperating to Safeguard Children (May 03): (http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/safeguard_contents.pdf), and supported by Area Child Protection Committees who also published their own policy and procedures in Apr 05: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/acpcregionalstrategy.pdf>.
- **Wales** - by the Welsh Assembly Government – All Wales Child Protection Procedures (2008): <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/health/protection/procedures/?lang=en>, supported by Local Safeguarding Children Boards.
- **Jersey** - by the States of Jersey – Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures (Feb 11): <http://www.gov.je/Caring/Organisations/JCPC/Pages/MultiAgencyChildProtectionProcedures.aspx> supported by the Jersey Child Protection Committee.
- **Guernsey** – by the States of Guernsey – Guernsey and Alderney Child Protection Guidelines: <http://www.online-procedures.co.uk/guernsey>

- **Isle of Man** – by the Isle of Man Government, Department of Social Care – Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures (Apr 10):
<http://www.gov.im/lib/docs/socialcare/services/scbinteragencychildprotection.pdf>, supported by the Isle of Man Safeguarding Children Board.

OVERSEAS AIR TRAINING CORPS (ATC) SQUADRONS

3. The agency responsible for investigating allegations of child abuse by members of ATC squadrons in Germany, Cyprus and Gibraltar will depend on jurisdiction arrangements in place at the time of the alleged offence (military or civilian). In the event of an allegation against a Cadet Force Adult Volunteer (CFAV) or a cadet aged 18 or over on an overseas squadron, the parent Wg Ex O is to consult HQ RAFAC (SO2 Personnel or SO3 Safeguarding), who will obtain legal advice from RAF Legal Services if necessary.

COMBINED CADET FORCE (CCF) CONTINGENTS

4. Although the provisions of Reference A and the appropriate procedures listed at paragraph 2 above are also applicable to educational establishments throughout the UK, head teachers of schools and colleges have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils under the Education Act 2002 and retain primacy for child protection whilst on school/college property. However, information about allegations made against CCF(RAF) CFAVs must be shared with HQ RAFAC (Wg Cdr CCF), who will arrange for the necessary reporting action to be taken. This is essential as the RAFAC and RAF must consider the impact of the allegations upon the CFAV status held by the individual.

ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO) IN ENGLAND (OR CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATOR IN WALES)

5. County level and unitary local authorities in England and Wales have identified designated officers (commonly referred to as the LADO) whose role is to become involved in the management and oversight of individual cases of allegations of abuse or maltreatment made against those who work with children (including those who work in a voluntary capacity). It should be noted that the LADO is not required to become involved with allegations made against cadets under the age of 18 who are not deemed to be in a professional position of trust. The LADO's role is to give advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaise with the police and other agencies, and monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible consistent with a thorough and fair process. All police forces in the UK should have also identified an officer to fill a similar role. The LADO (or equivalent in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Jersey and the Isle of Man) is to be consulted in all cases when an adult, in the course of their work (including volunteering) with children has:

- a. Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child¹
- b. Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child; or
- c. Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with children.

6. These behaviours should be considered within the context of the 4 categories of abuse, ie physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect as defined in Reference A. These include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between CFAVs (or cadets aged 18 or over) and children or young people, eg:

¹ A child is a person under the age of 18.

- a. Having a sexual relationship with a child under 16, even if consensual.
 - b. 'Grooming', ie meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence.
 - c. Other 'grooming' behaviour giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature, eg inappropriate text and e-mail messaging/social networking or images, gifts, socialising, etc.
 - d. Possession of indecent images or pseudo indecent images of children.
7. If concerns arise about a person's behaviour in regard to his/her own children, the police and/or children's social care will consider the need to share information with the person's employer or voluntary organisation (through the LADO) in order to assess whether there may be implications for children with whom the person has contact at work or during a voluntary activity.
8. In the ATC, all allegations against CFAVs or cadets aged 18 or over, are to be reported within one working day to the Wg Ex O or other RAFAC designated officer who will, in conjunction with HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding), make an initial assessment and, as appropriate, discuss the allegation with the appropriate LADO, again, where possible, within one working day. Referral should not be delayed in order to gather more information. There may be 3 strands in the consideration of an allegation against a CFAV or cadet aged 18 or over:
- Enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services.
 - A police investigation of a possible criminal offence.
 - Consideration by the RAFAC of disciplinary or administrative action in respect of the individual.
9. Some allegations are so serious as to require immediate referral to social care and the police for investigation; the police are committed to sharing information and intelligence with other organisations and are to be notified as soon as possible where a criminal offence has been, or is suspected of, being committed. Others are much less serious, and at first sight may not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by children's social care. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are seen to be followed up by the RAFAC, and that they are examined objectively by an officer nominated by HQ RAFAC, Regional Commandant or OC Wing. Consequently, the LADO should be informed of all allegations that come to the attention of the Wg Ex O or other RAFAC designated officer and appear to meet the criteria in paragraphs 5a, b or c and 6 a, b, c or d above so that the LADO can consult police and social care colleagues as appropriate. The LADO should also be informed of any allegations that are made directly to the police or to children's social care.
10. The LADO will establish, in discussion with the appropriate RAFAC representative (normally the Wg Ex O in respect of an ATC Wing) that the allegation is within the scope of a formal referral to the LADO and may have some foundation. The Wg Ex O or other RAFAC designated officer should arrange for the accused person to be informed about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the LADO. However, where a strategy discussion is needed, or it is clear that police or children's social care may need to be involved, this should not be carried out, nor suspension action taken, until those agencies have been consulted and agreed the extent of the information that can be disclosed to the accused person; premature suspension action may jeopardise a police investigation.
11. At Annex A is a flowchart which explains the process followed by the LADO and the RAFAC when dealing with child protection allegations.

STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT EVALUATION DISCUSSIONS

12. If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm², a strategy discussion in accordance with the provisions of Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 will be convened by the Assessment and Family Support Team where the child lives to consider the actions needed to protect the child from harm. The LADO will also convene an Allegations Management Strategy Discussion which should include a local RAFAC representative (normally the Wg Ex O or other local RAFAC representative (HQ RAFAC SO3 Safeguarding may also be invited as a representative from the national headquarters, when necessary)). In cases where a Section 47 strategy discussion is not considered appropriate – because the threshold of ‘significant harm’ is not reached – but a police investigation might be required, the LADO will nevertheless convene a similar allegations management discussion with the police, an RAFAC representative and any other agencies involved with the child to evaluate the allegation and decide how it should be dealt with. If the complaint or allegation is such that it is clear that investigations by the police and/or enquiries by social care are not necessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that this is the case, the LADO will discuss the next steps with the RAFAC representative and it will be for the RAFAC to deal with it by way of internal disciplinary or administrative procedures. **In Scotland an initial investigation would be the first step – p. 85 of [The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland](#), 2014 outlines the process,**

INFORMATION SHARING

13. In the initial consideration of a case at a strategy discussion or joint evaluation, the agencies concerned, including the RAFAC, should share all relevant information they have about the person who is the subject of the allegation and about the alleged victim.

14. Wherever possible, the police should obtain consent from the individuals concerned to share the statements and evidence they obtain with the RAFAC and/or regulatory body, for disciplinary or administrative purposes. That should be done as the investigation proceeds rather than after it is concluded. That will enable the police and Crown Prosecution Service to share relevant information without delay at the conclusion of their investigation or any court case.

15. Children’s social care should adopt a similar procedure when making enquiries to determine whether the child or children named in the allegation is in need of protection or services so that any information obtained in the course of those enquiries which is relevant to a disciplinary or administrative case can be passed to the RAFAC or regulatory body without delay.

SUSPENSION OF PERSONNEL

16. The possible risk of harm to children posed by an accused person needs to be effectively evaluated and managed – in respect of the child(ren) involved in the allegations, and any other children in the individual’s home, work or community life. Neither the local authority, the police, nor children’s social care can require the RAFAC to suspend a CFAV or a cadet. The power to formally suspend an individual is vested in the RAFAC alone. Where a strategy discussion or initial evaluation discussion concludes that there should be enquiries by children’s social care and/or an investigation by the police, the LADO will also canvass police/children’s social care views about whether the accused member of staff or cadet needs to be suspended from contact with children and for the RAFAC to consider suspension action being taken. However, it is RAFAC policy that where there is cause to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm, or the allegation warrants investigation by the police, children’s social care, the individual’s primary employer or professional standards organisation, or is a condition of bail, or is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal, the person is to be suspended, without prejudice, (but see paragraph 10 above with

² Significant harm is any physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, accident or injury that is sufficiently serious to adversely affect progress and enjoyment of life. Harm is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development.

reference to obtaining clearance from the police and/or LADO prior to taking formal suspension action).

RESIGNATIONS AND COMPROMISE AGREEMENTS

17. Every effort should be made to reach a conclusion in all cases, even if:

- the individual refuses to cooperate, having been given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations
- it may not be possible to apply any disciplinary or administrative sanctions if a person's period of service expires before the process is complete

18. 'Compromise agreements', whereby an adult member of staff (or cadet aged 18 or over) agrees to resign to avoid disciplinary or administrative action are not to be used in these cases. However, the fact that a person tenders their resignation, or ceases to attend RAFAC activities, will not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with these procedures.

SUPPORTING THOSE INVOLVED

19. **Alleged victim.** In cases where a child may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, children's social care or the police, as appropriate, will consider what support the child or children involved may need. Although the local authority retains primacy for the professional welfare support of a cadet who is a victim of alleged child abuse, when a CFAV or other cadet is accused, squadron and Wing management should also offer appropriate local welfare support to the cadet where possible.

20. **Parents or carers of an alleged victim.** The parents or carers of a child or children involved should be informed about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know about it. How this is done, and by whom, will be decided with the LADO during the initial discussion. Where possible, contact should be maintained by the Sqn CO, Wg Ex O or other RAFAC designated officer with parents or carers until a case is closed. Parents or carers of an alleged victim are normally informed of the outcome of the case by the police or social services, however, if the alleged victim has not been attending RAFAC activities whilst the case is ongoing, contact should be made with the parents or carers to determine if the cadet wishes to return and to formulate a plan to sensitively facilitate such action.

21. **Alleged offender.** Where a CFAV or adult cadet has been suspended, the Assisting Officer (or Wg Ex O/WSO as appropriate) is to ensure that the person is offered the necessary support and given updates at least monthly (in writing where possible). The Wg Ex O will normally assume this role for cadets who have been suspended. By virtue of a Protocol negotiated between the RAFAC and the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families (SSAFA) Forces Help, adult members of staff and cadets involved in allegations of child abuse may seek social worker support from SSAFA Forces Help Personal Support & Social Work Service RAF (PS & SWS RAF) as follows:

- a. **Those suspended.** Through HQ RAFAC (SO2 Personnel or SO3 Personnel Management) or direct to the Service Manager, SSAFA PS & SWS RAF on 01347-847327 (military 95871-7327).
- b. **Other CFAVs.** Through HQ RAFAC (SO2 Personnel or SO3 Personnel Management).

CONFIDENTIALITY

22. Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whilst an allegation is being considered or investigated. In accordance with the Association of Chief Police Officers' Guidance, the police will not normally provide any information to the press or media that might identify an individual who is under investigation, unless and until the person is charged with a criminal offence. Privileged information discussed at strategy meetings is not to be disclosed

to unauthorised persons and the minutes of these meetings are not to be copied and distributed by a recipient without the prior approval of the LADO or chairperson of the meeting.

RECORD KEEPING

23. It is important that Flight, Squadron, Wing and Regional management, as well as HQ RAFAC, keep a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how and who followed up the allegation and any resolution and conclusion. Members of the RAFAC are reminded of the requirement to enforce a strict “need-to-know” policy when dealing with sensitive child protection and personnel casework matters and care should be taken when forwarding e-mails, etc. Details of any action taken and all decisions reached will also be recorded by HQ RAFAC (Personnel Casework Management Team) on the RAF Air Cadets Casework Database. A record of allegations made will also be maintained by each area-based Safeguarding Team on behalf of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs). LADOs will record the progress and outcome of an allegation on the area-based recording system. LADOs will also retain a record of all advice and guidance given relating to concerns about any member of staff or volunteer which do not meet the threshold for a strategy discussion. LADOs report regularly to their respective LSCB.

TIMESCALES

24. Every effort should be made to manage cases to avoid any unnecessary delay. Although best practice indicates that it is reasonable to expect that 80% of cases should be resolved within one month and that 90% of cases within 3 months and all but the most exceptional cases should be completed within 12 months, these are indicative target timescales and are not performance indicators. The time taken to investigate and resolve individual cases depends on a variety of factors including the nature, seriousness, and complexity of the allegation, but they provide useful targets to aim for that are achievable in many cases.

NO FURTHER ACTION AFTER INITIAL CONSIDERATION

25. If the concern does not meet the threshold for a formal allegation, it is the responsibility of HQ RAFAC to decide whether or how to follow up that concern further. Details of the individual will not be included in the statistics recorded for reporting to the LSCB, although a record of the consultation with the LADO will be held separately in the area-based recording system and the actions of the RAFAC will not be followed up by the LADO.

ACTION ON CONCLUSION OF A CASE

26. If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed from the RAFAC, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his or her services, the LADO will discuss with the organisation whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, or the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVGS) in Scotland, for their consideration of barring the individual from working with children in the future, is required, or advisable, and the form and content of a referral. A referral must always be made if the organisation thinks that the individual has harmed a child or poses a risk of harm to children. HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding) is responsible for referrals to the DBS in accordance with Chapter 8; Wg Ex Os in Scotland, in conjunction with HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding), are responsible for referrals to the PVGS in accordance with Chapter 10.

27. At Annex B is a flowchart that explains the internal administrative process for child protection cases and the LADO's role in the decision process.

ACTION IN RESPECT OF UNFOUNDED OR MALICIOUS ALLEGATIONS

28. Where it is concluded that there is insufficient evidence to substantiate an allegation, the chair of the strategy discussion will prepare a separate report of the enquiry and forward this to the local RAFAC representative or HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding) to enable HQ RAFAC to consider what further action, if any, should be taken. False allegations are rare and may be a strong indicator of abuse taking place elsewhere in a child's life, which may require further exploration. Consequently, if an allegation is unfounded, the LADO will consider informing children's social care to establish whether the child who has made the allegation is in need of services. In the rare event that an allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the police can be asked to consider whether any action might be appropriate against the person responsible.

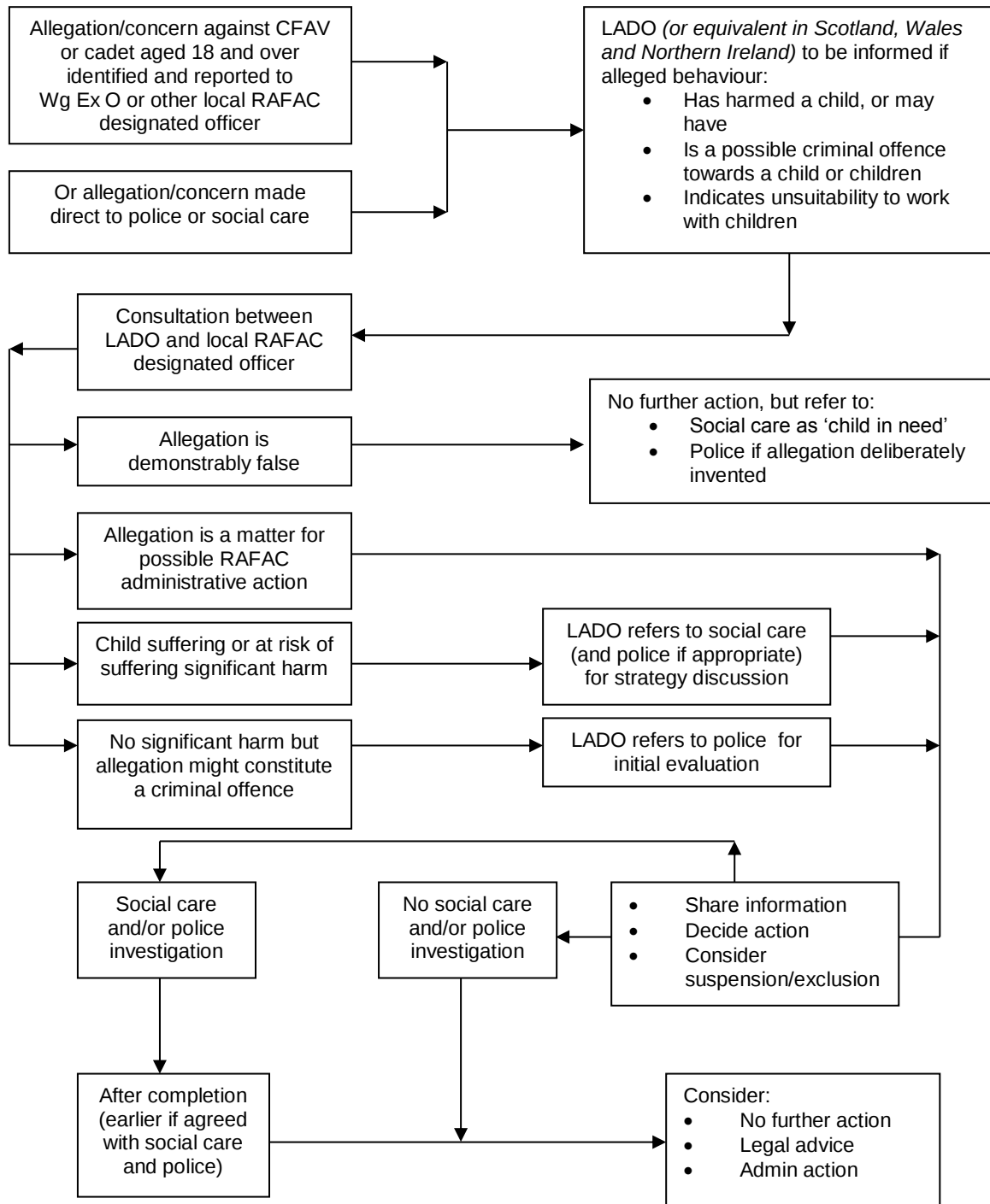
RETURN TO RAFAC DUTIES

29. If the person has been suspended, and on conclusion of the case, it is decided that the person can continue to work with children and return to RAFAC duties, local management (Wg Cdr CCF or OC Wing, in conjunction with the Wg Ex O or other RAFAC designated officer) will have to consider how best to facilitate this process. If required, social work support is available through SSAFA Forces Help, as described in paragraph 21 above.

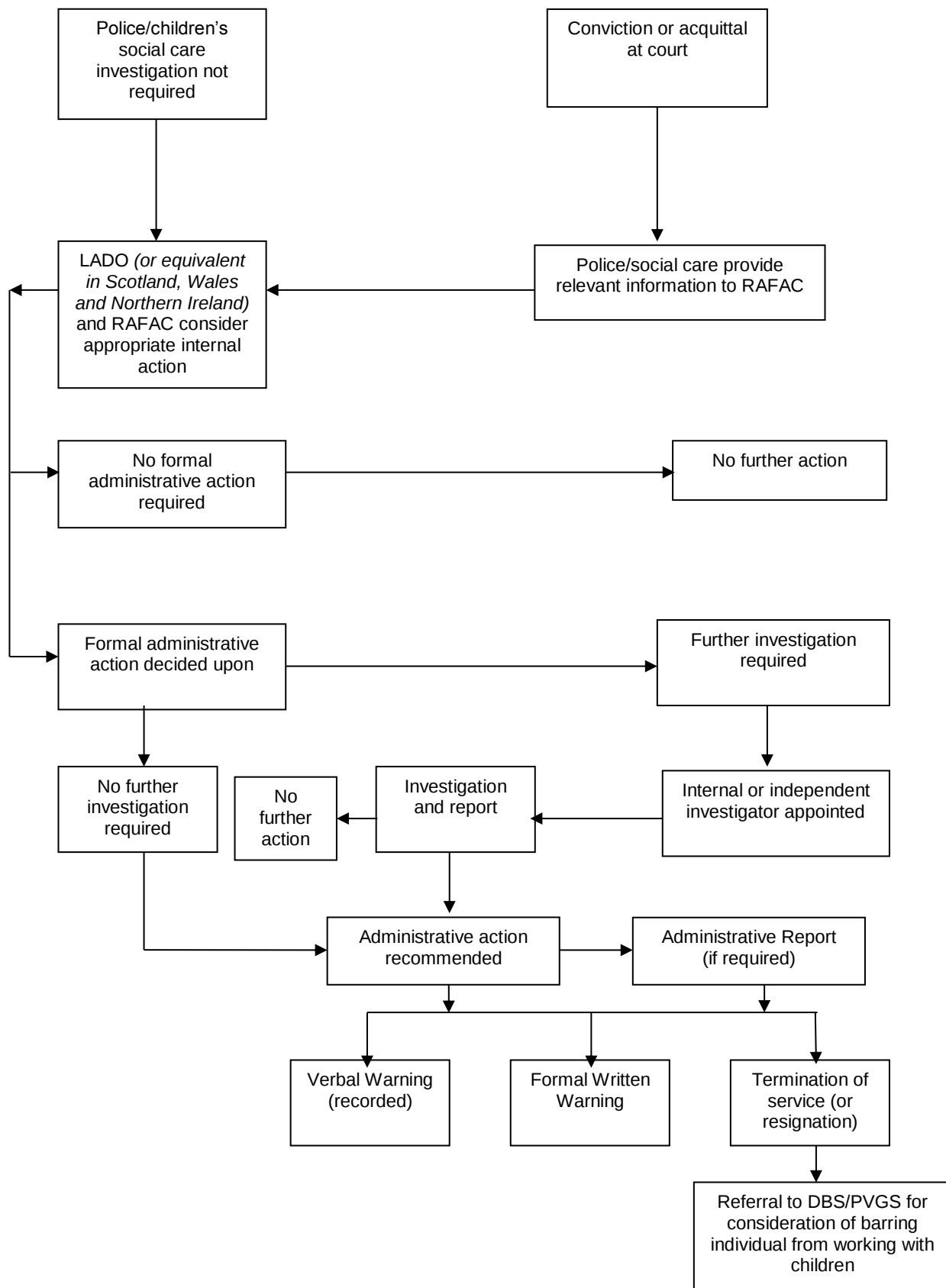
Annexes:

- A. Allegations/concerns against CFAVs and cadets aged 18 and Over – child protection process.
- B. Child protection allegations/concerns against CFAVs and cadets aged 18 and over – administrative/suitability process.

**ALLEGATIONS/CONCERNS AGAINST CADET FORCE ADULT VOLUNTEERS (CFAVs)
AND CADETS AGED 18 AND OVER - CHILD PROTECTION PROCESS**



CHILD PROTECTION ALLEGATIONS/CONCERNS AGAINST CADET FORCE ADULT VOLUNTEERS (CFAVs) AND CADETS AGED 18 AND OVER - ADMINISTRATIVE/SUITABILITY PROCESS



CHAPTER 7

A GUIDE TO USING INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Reference:

- A. ACP 50 – Media and Communications and the RAFAC Social Networking Policy (Apr 11).

Introduction

1. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) encompass electronic devices such as personal computers (PCs), mobile phones, smart phones, personal digital assistants, games consoles and digital cameras that allow communication via websites, email, instant messenger, voice and text messaging.
2. ICTs are very much a part of life in the 21st century. Children and young people in particular have embraced the digital age; pen and paper has given way to email and text messages, and owning a mobile phone is the norm, even for younger children. 95% of 12-15 year olds have internet access at home (up from 89% in 2010) and more than two in five 12-15 year olds have a smart phone capable of accessing the internet¹. Although it would be impossible to cover all situations covering the use of ICTs, this chapter is designed as a basis for guidance on the use of modern technologies within the RAFAC. Those working with children and young people need to know how to make the most of these technologies but at the same time ensure they are used appropriately and responsibly. The e-safety principles contained in this chapter should help create an ICT safety policy, will ensure cadets are protected and the integrity of adult members of staff safeguarded.
3. Although many members of the RAFAC have adapted to and indeed welcomed all the advances in ICTs, it is important to remember that not everyone has access to them. No member of staff or cadet should feel discriminated against simply because they don't have a mobile phone or PC. If necessary, alternative means of communication should be found.
4. All communication between adult members of staff and cadets should be in an RAFAC context. Adult members of staff should decide the most appropriate method of communication depending on the message/information being sent. Permission is to be sought from parents/carers to contact a cadet and ask them what the most appropriate forms of contact for that cadet is. Parents/carers should be able to appropriately monitor their children's activities on the internet and communications through mobile phones, so that they are not susceptible to being exposed to inappropriate contact and even more serious instances of child abuse.

Internet usage

5. **Access to inappropriate images.** There are no circumstances that will justify adults or cadets possessing indecent images of children. Adults and cadets who access and possess links to such websites will be viewed as a significant and potential threat to children. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children is illegal. This will lead to criminal investigation with the individual being barred from working with children and young people, if proven.
6. **Internet access for cadets involved in RAFAC activities.** Adult members of staff are to ensure that cadets are not exposed to any inappropriate images or web links. Internet equipment used by cadets is to have parental controls applied with regard to access; all computers/devices/networks are to be filtered to prevent any user accessing inappropriate content, such as abusive material or pornography; the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) report abuse

¹ Source – OFCOM.

button is to be downloaded to internet browsers, which is available at www.ceop.police.uk/Browser-Safety/. Some of the areas of risk that cadets may be exposed to are:

- **Social networking sites and chatrooms.** Sex offenders are increasingly using the internet to make contact with children and young people. Adult members of staff need to be aware that those who wish to abuse children often start with electronic communications and then attempt to lure them into an unprotected face to face meeting.
- **Unsuitable materials or sites.** Children and young people may be exposed to pornographic materials, to race or hate sites. Unsuitable material is not easily detected until the information has been downloaded.
- **Cyber bullying.** Useful guidance to combat cyber bullying is available at via the following NSPCC website <http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/bullying/pages/cyberbullying.aspx>

At Annex A to this chapter are some further internet safety tips for cadets.

7. **Use of RAFAC computer equipment.** Adult members of staff are not to use equipment belonging to, or used by, the organisation to access adult pornography or other inappropriate material; neither is personal equipment containing these images or links to them to be brought into RAFAC premises or to activities. Infringements will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the adult member of staff to continue to work with children.

8. **Reporting concerns.** To report suspicious behaviour online with or towards a child, contact the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) <http://www.ceop.gov.uk>. Childnet International also works in partnership internationally to help make the internet safe for children and have resources available covering all areas of internet safety <http://www.childnet-int.org>

Websites and photographs

9. When designing a website, care should be taken to ensure the safety of children and young people. The following are the most important principles:

- Children should not be identified by surname or other personal details such as email, postal addresses, telephone numbers, etc
- When using photographs of cadets, it is preferable to use group pictures. If a photograph of an individual child or young person is used, avoid giving personal details.
- The office of the Data Protection Commissioner has declared that photographs posted on the internet are personal data and are subject to data protection legislation. Written consent should therefore be obtained from parents or carers before using cadets' photographs on a website (this is normally achieved by completing the relevant section of the ATC/CCF Consent Certificate) on first joining).

See Chapter 3, paragraphs 32 - 38 and Reference A, Chapters 1, 10 and 11 for further information.

Communication with children and young people

10. Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, webcams, social networking sites, chatrooms and messenger services. Adults should not share any personal information with a child or young person. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child or young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their RAFAC role. Adult members of staff and staff cadets should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

11. Adult members of staff and staff cadets should also be circumspect in their communications with children so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which

could be construed as grooming. They should not give their personal contact details to children, including email addresses, home or mobile telephone numbers, unless the need to do so is agreed with a superior officer and parents/carers. Communication between adults and children outside agreed protocols (see the following paragraphs) may lead to disciplinary/administrative action and/or criminal investigation. This also includes communications through internet based social networking and messenger websites (eg Facebook, Bebo, MySpace, Twitter, MSN etc). A CFAV or staff cadet who is concerned about the way a cadet is attempting to contact them, should report the matter immediately to their superior officer.

Social networking sites

12. Social networking sites have become increasingly popular for contacting people, discussing issues and advertising events. The RAFAC recognises that they can be useful for specific RAFAC projects. However, adult members of staff and adult cadets need to be very conscious of context in which these sites are used and ensure the public cannot view any personal information belonging to cadets. See Reference A for further details.

13. Social networking sites are essentially designed for peer-to-peer contact. It is vitally important to ask “is the content of the messages and photographs available to be viewed on my profile suitable for children (or their parents) to see?”. Adult members of staff and adult cadets are to maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries when using internet or web based communication channels. It is deemed inappropriate for permanent staff, staff cadets or CFAVs to be ‘friends’ on Facebook or other sites with cadets under the age of 18, except when related to them (see Reference A for further details). In addition, further information on RAFAC policy on the misuse of the internet is at Annex B.

Chat and messenger services

14. Instant messenger services or IM (eg Facebook Messenger, MSN Messenger, AOL, AIM) are internet programs that allow people to write and receive messages in real time. Many children and young people use IM for both one-to-one (chat) and group conversations (chatrooms). Except for normal family relationships, permanent staff and CFAVs are not to engage in one-to-one private conversations with cadets under the age of 18 via chat facilities or instant messaging.

Emails

15. **Best practice.** Many cadets have email addresses and this can be a cheap and effective way of communicating with members. To help ensure that communications with cadets are appropriate, the following are some points for best practice when sending emails to cadets:

- Use clear unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation. Use an appropriate tone: friendly, but not over familiar or personal – keep it business like. Although it should be clear when an email is ending, you should never use terms such as ‘luv’ or ‘x’ (kiss) to round things off
- Try to have a separate email account for your RAFAC communications
- If you are sending images, make sure they are appropriate
- Do not forward chain emails to cadets
- Make sure that any hyperlinks you include do not lead to inappropriate content
- Always copy another adult into your emails
- Always save a copy of all the emails you send to cadets
- Blind copy email addresses to ensure you are not broadcasting other people’s contact details
- If you receive an email from a cadet which causes you concern, immediately seek advice from your superior officer

- If you receive any unsolicited messages from people you do not know which contain obscene or racist images, these should be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation at www.iwf.org.uk

16. **Giving advice and confidentiality.** Some children can find it easier to communicate via email because nobody is physically present. This means that a child may be more willing to share personal and sensitive information about themselves or a given situation than they would face-to-face. Whilst it is entirely appropriate to offer general advice and support, counselling should only be undertaken by those qualified to give it. In any event, it is advisable to add the rider below to the bottom of any email about RAFAC business stating the level of confidentiality:

“Any views or opinions presented are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the RAF Air Cadets unless otherwise stated.

If there is a concern that the sender or someone else, particularly a child, may be at risk of serious harm, we may need to share those concerns. In such circumstances we would inform the sender giving details of who would be contacted and what information would be given.”

17. **Transferring/sending files.** Bearing in mind that files and images can be sent via email and IM, adult members of staff should ensure that only legal and non-offensive content is sent/transferred. It is also important that anti-virus software and a firewall are installed on the computer being used.

Mobile phones

18. When adult members of staff send a text message or photograph to a cadet, they should ensure that the content of the message could not be misinterpreted – in other words, text messages to and from cadets should be professional and limited to RAFAC business. The following are some points for best practice when using mobile phones to communicate with cadets:

- Despite the statistics, not every cadet has the use of a mobile phone and, even if they do, parents/carers may not want the organisation to have the number. It is important, therefore, to have alternative means of communication
- If cadets want you to hold their mobile phone numbers, make sure their parents know and have agreed, and you use them for RAFAC business only
- Recognise that text messaging is rarely an appropriate response to a child in a crisis situation or at risk of harm. It should only be used as a last resort when other forms of communication are not possible
- Where appropriate, use group rather than individual texting
- Whilst communications should be warm and friendly, they should not suggest or offer a special relationship
- Respect a cadet’s confidentiality, unless abuse is suspected or disclosed
- Adult members of staff should take care with the language they use, avoiding ambiguous abbreviations such as ‘lol’ which could mean ‘laugh out loud’ or ‘lots of love’; using a kiss (x) at the end of a text or within a signature may be taken out of context by some recipients and is likely to be seen as inappropriate in virtually every instance.
- Be conscious of the time when sending messages or making calls to cadets; avoid late at night and the early hours of the morning
- Many mobile phones have digital cameras. Adult members of staff should ensure that they only take photographs of cadets in accordance with the policy and guidelines contained in this publication and that all images are stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act principles. It would be unwise to keep images on an adult member of staff’s mobile phone. Images should be downloaded to an official computer as soon as possible and kept securely

- Make sure that your communication is such that in no circumstances would it embarrass you for it to be seen by the cadet's parents/carers or your superior officer
- Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be saved and passed on or shown to superior officers

19. **Mobile telephones on camps.** Although mobile telephones are an excellent and almost essential modern method of communication, they can cause considerable nuisance on camps. Camp Commandants will seek advice from the ACLO on the station being visited regarding station policy for mobile telephones. Camp Commandants will also use their discretion concerning the use of telephones by cadets, especially after "lights out". Unrestricted use of mobile phones may be considered inappropriate when cadets are undergoing RAFAC activities for the following reasons:

- The mobile phone may get lost or damaged if carried when conducting a physical activity (such loss or damage is not covered by any RAFAC insurance policy)
- Uncontrolled calls home may be made when cadets are homesick or worried. Responsible supervisory adult staff may therefore be unaware of the problem until the parent/carer makes contact with staff. Cadets should be reminded to report any problem or concerns to a member of staff who can take the appropriate action.
- Many mobile phones also provide the facility to take still or video images and can therefore pose a risk of the production and transmission of inappropriate material.

The law regarding the sending of inappropriate messages and images

20. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 (which is applicable to England, Wales and Northern Ireland) was amended in Feb 07 to make it possible for offences which are not primarily sexual in nature to be punishable by a sexual offences prevention order (SOPO) (which could earn the offender a place on the Sex Offenders' Register). Improper use of a public communications network is already forbidden by Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 which defined improper use as sending a message that is "grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character". The amendment to the Sexual Offences Act adds that offence to the list of others that qualify for a SOPO. New provisions cover such activities as nuisance phone calls, obscene messages, sending indecent or inappropriate images (known as "sexting") and harassment emails of a sexual nature (especially to children). It therefore brings electronic communication firmly into the sights of the Sexual Offences Act.

General guidance for adults

21. Social networking sites are great for keeping in touch with family and friends, and letting the world know what you're up to. MOD [Online Engagement Guidelines](#) make it clear that we encourage the safe and responsible use of social networking sites but MOD have provided some further guidance on [this site](#) to help you stay safe and think about what you post online. Remember that there may be those who are using such sites for unsavoury reasons. These range from criminals looking for ways to con you or steal your identity, to those who may wish us harm. While it is unlikely that you will fall victim, you should be aware of the risk. This is why you need to be aware of how much information there is online about you. Not just that which you've put there yourself, but also that which other people or organisations have put there. You need to be especially careful if you have identified yourself as being member of the military or the RAFAC. It can be simple to collate information from various sources in order to build up a picture of who a person is. Similarly, it might only take one careless comment, or posting an image without checking what's in the background to put friends, colleagues and cadets at risk. The following link gives further information <http://www.blogs.mod.uk/onlinesecurity>

22. The following guidance is published for the benefit of all adults working or volunteering with the RAFAC and adult cadets:

- Remember you are in a position of trust as an individual working with children

- Remember that some sites have an age restriction (eg Facebook has a minimum age of 13 years)
- Conduct yourself in an appropriate way as you would face-to-face – be aware of what you say and how you say it
- Don't engage in one-to-one conversations with children via chat facilities or instant messaging – this is the same as going into a private room with a child and closing the door
- Do not provide personal details about children on your website or social networking group (this includes e-mail address, phone number ID, etc)
- Always ensure that you have parental permission to use any photos of children and only use their first name on any caption
- Only use appropriate photos on your site, the sort that you would be happy putting on a public notice board – remember that everyone has the potential to view them
- Don't use your personal social networking account to communicate with cadets
- Monitor places where interaction occurs including walls, discussion boards, comments on photos, tagging of pictures and 'Group' or 'Fan Pages'
- Only set up pages for events, activities or groups for which you are responsible
- If you sign yourself up to social networking sites you need to be aware that content is speedily updated. Photos can be tagged and posted on your account.
- Use separate profiles and communication routes for e-mail or social networking to keep contact with cadets and your private life separate
- With the exception of family members, never accept cadets as friends on Facebook.

Online safety for children

23. Most children and young people assume they are safe when using the internet because they are in their own home. They will usually assume that the person who they are chatting with is who they say they are and most of the time this is true. However, the only way to protect children is to teach them to understand the online environment – including the risks it poses – so that they can learn to stay safe themselves. This is even more important now that the internet is available on many mobile phones. It's a good idea to share the basic advice at Annex A with cadets under the age of 18.

Annexes:

- A. Internet Safety Tips for Cadets.
- B. Misuse of the Internet – RAFAC Policy.

INTERNET SAFETY TIPS FOR CADETS

- Never give out personal information to online friends. This includes an instant messaging ID, e-mail address, mobile phone number, squadron location and any pictures of you, your family and friends
- If something is published online, anyone can access it, change it or share it with others. Keep social network profiles private.
- Use webcams with caution and only with family and friends who are already known in the real world, as images can be copied, changed and shared
- Do not post inappropriate images of yourself online which send out the wrong impression and make you vulnerable
- Never send anyone indecent or inappropriate images of yourself and don't request anyone else to do the same
- Remember that online friends are just that and if they are not known to you in the real world, they may be lying about who they are
- Never arrange to meet a stranger you have contacted online.
- Know how to block someone online and report them to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP). Save the www.clickceop.net to your favourites so that you can report any suspicious behaviour straight away
- Never accept emails or open files from people you don't really know or trust as these may contain viruses or worse, an inappropriate image or film.
- If you receive spam/junk emails – **never** believe them, reply to them or use them.
- Never forward chain emails.
- Remember, people may not be who, or how old they say, they are.
- Never reply to cyber-bullying: block the sender, save the evidence, and tell a responsible adult.
- If someone is making you feel uncomfortable or worried whilst communicating online – don't be afraid to tell a responsible adult or report the matter by visiting CEOP at www.clickceop.net
- If you have seen illegal online content, ie images of child abuse, criminally obscene images, criminally racist content, you can report this by visiting the Internet Watch Foundations at www.iwf.org.uk
- Set social networking profiles to "private" and be careful who is added as a "friend" – "friends" on these sites should also be friends in real life. Except for family members, adult members of staff are not allowed to be your friend on Facebook – if you receive any requests, report them to another responsible adult
- Except for family members, adult members of staff are not permitted to chat with you privately on a one-to-one basis on instant messaging sites – if you receive any requests, report them to another responsible adult.
- Don't spend too much time online: have "real world" friends and interests too

MISUSE OF THE INTERNET – RAFAC POLICY

References:

- A. ACP 50 – Media and Communications.
- B. ACP 20 – Air Cadet Personnel Regulations.

1. The attention of all adult members of staff is drawn to Reference A. The RAFAC has a “zero tolerance” policy with regard to the misuse of the internet¹.
2. Whilst using any form of RAFAC computer equipment, it is unacceptable to:
 - Visit sites that contain obscene, hateful or other objectionable materials
 - Make or post indecent remarks, proposals or materials on the internet including racist or sexist jokes and defamatory comments
 - Upload, download or otherwise transmit commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to any other parties unless such an up or download is covered or permitted under a commercial agreement or other such licence.
 - Connect to the internet without adequate virus protection and firewall measures on the accessing computer
3. All adult members of staff are to be aware of the damage that malicious comments or accusations can cause to someone’s career, or standing in the RAFAC. Additionally, it can cause personal distress and affect families/marriages/partnerships and for this reason alone, must be strenuously avoided.
4. Any cadet making malicious, threatening, intimidating, libellous or seriously defamatory remarks on websites about another member of the RAFAC, particularly superiors, may be dismissed. Any adult member of staff doing so will be made the subject of an administrative report in accordance with Reference B, which may recommend termination of their appointment.
5. The RAFAC takes its responsibilities to all personnel (cadets and adults) very seriously and will defend them from any malicious attack on their character. It is therefore the responsibility of all personnel to ensure that unacceptable behaviour is prevented.
6. Any concerns on the misuse of the internet should be referred to HQ RAFAC, through the normal chain of command.

¹ Misuse of the internet in this context means making a defamatory or derogatory comment about anyone, whether a cadet, adult member of staff, or any third party, through the medium of a website or blog, chatroom or conversation site, or in emails. Even true statements can be defamatory when broadcast in these ways.

CHAPTER 8

CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECKS

References:

- A. JSP 893 – MOD Policy on Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups.
- B. ACP 20, PI 103 – Basic Security and Counter Terrorist Checks for Adult Supervisory Staff.
- C. ACP 20, PI 501 – Terms of Enrolment/Appointment and Conditions of Membership for ATC Cadets, paragraph 4.

Introduction

1. There are no available figures on the number of people working with children who have abused children in their care. What is available is the number of people who have been placed on the list of people barred from working with children or have been found to be unsuitable for the post they applied for. There are a number of reasons why an individual might be unsuitable to work with children, so this does not mean that all these individuals have abused children. In addition, the figures for criminal records disclosures include applications to work with vulnerable adults. According to the NSPCC, since 2004 around 150,000 unsuitable people in England and Wales have been prevented from gaining access to children or vulnerable adults as a direct result of criminal records checks.

2. In accordance with Reference A, and in order to comply with Government legislation¹, all Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) and ATC cadets aged 18 and over are deemed to be undertaking regulated activity² and are therefore to undergo a criminal records check to enhanced level by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for England and Wales, AccessNI for Northern Ireland (through the MOD Registered Body (Defence Business Services (Employment Assurance (Disclosure) Section (EA(D)S), Cheadle Hulme)), or by Disclosure Scotland (through Central Registered Body Scotland (CRBS)) for those living and working in Scotland (Wg Ex Os in Scotland are Lead Signatories in their own right in accordance with the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVGS) and deal directly with CRBS and Disclosure Scotland).

Categories of personnel

3. **Adult volunteer staff.** All adult volunteer supervisory staff (RAFVR(T) officers, WOs/SNCOs(ATC), civilian instructors (CIs)/civilian gliding instructors (CGIs), Service Instructors (SIs), honorary chaplains and staff cadets) must hold a criminal records check clearance before they can be formally appointed. Cadets who intend to apply for an extension of service to their 20th birthday are to be subjected to a criminal records check by their 18th birthday. For detailed information, see paragraph 16 below.

4. **RAFAC permanent members of staff.** Regular (and Full Time Reserve Service) RAF personnel and civil servants who are permanent members of staff at HQ RAFAC, Regional HQs, Wg HQs, CCF(RAF) Sections, VGSSs or AEFs are only eligible to have a criminal records check carried out to enhanced level if they are deemed to be undertaking regulated activity.

¹ Protection of Children Act 1999 (England and Wales), Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003, Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007, Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007, Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

² Regulated activity is work that anyone who is barred from working with children must not undertake and is the statutory term used to describe specific activities which involve working or volunteering (unsupervised) with children. Teaching, training or instruction of children or driving a vehicle used only for children, carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), or on 4 or more days in a 30-day period. It is also regulated activity if carried out (even once) at any time between 0200 and 0600 hrs and with an opportunity for face-to-face contact with children. In addition, day to day management or supervision on a regular basis of a person providing this activity would be regulated if unsupervised.

5. **Combined Cadet Force (CCF) personnel.** Applicants for CCF(RAF) service normally hold a criminal records check clearance through their school or college. The clearance is to be checked as part of the commissioning/appointment/extension of service process and must have been issued no more than 5 years prior to appointment/extension. Clearances are to be renewed in accordance with the periodicity contained in MOD policy (currently every 5 years). Should a school or college not require a criminal records check or the renewal of the clearance for their own purposes, the clearance will be undertaken via HQ RAFAC (CCF Admin). TEST officers and SNCOs are to be cleared in accordance with the policy outlined at paragraph 4 above.
6. **Managers or supervisors of personnel in regulated activity.** Line managers or supervisors of personnel who are undertaking regulated activity are themselves to undergo criminal records checks to enhanced level in accordance with the definition of regulated activity. Comdt RAFAC, COS RAFAC and Rgnl Comdts are included in this category.
7. **Civilian committee members.** Only those civilian committee members who are deemed to be in regulated activity require a criminal records check (at the discretion of the Wg Ex O).
8. **Pilots offering one-off (occasional) flights to cadets.** As stated previously, only personnel in a regulated activity (or childcare positions in Scotland) require criminal records checks. The intention is to exclude the one-off work, which means that pilots offering one-off occasional flights to cadets would not require criminal records checks, but if these flights were to become a normal, regular, part of RAFAC training, then all pilots involved in the programme would be subject to criminal records checks under normal rules.
9. **Regular or Reserve Service personnel assisting with camps.** Cadets on camps are normally supervised by fully cleared and appointed CFAVs. Consequently, Service personnel assisting with ATC camps are not normally deemed to be undertaking regulated activity if they are supervised by a CFAV and, therefore, do not require a criminal records check.

Initiation of DBS/Disclosure Scotland/AccessNI disclosure action

10. **Proof of identity.** The first and most important stage in the initiation of any criminal records check is verification of the subject's identity. It is the responsibility of the initiating authority (OC Sqn/OC Wg or Wg Ex O/OC VGS/OC AEF/CCF(RAF) Contingent Commander) to satisfy him/herself as to the identity of the applicant prior to initiating any procedure with EA(D)S Cheadle Hulme or CRBS. Identity is to be established by examination of the subject's passport, birth certificate or other authoritative document as required by the checking process. The initiating authority's signature on a completed verification form is deemed to be confirmation that satisfactory proof of identity has been obtained. This check of the applicant's identity and nationality also conforms with the initial stages of the Baseline Personnel Security Standard requirements in accordance with Reference B.
11. **Application process – ATC Sqns, VGSs and Wgs.** DBS, Disclosure Scotland, AccessNI and supplementary EA(D)S Cheadle Hulme forms are to be obtained from Wg HQs (who are to order them from EA(D)S Cheadle Hulme (see contact details at paragraph 15 below) or CRBS/Disclosure Scotland). Potential members of adult staff and cadets approaching the age of 18 on ATC sqns in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are to return their completed forms to their OC Sqn who will verify the information and then pass to Wg HQ for onward transmission to EA(D)S Cheadle Hulme. Wg Ex Os in Scotland complete all verification procedures and process/submit forms directly to CRBS/Disclosure Scotland. Applications for criminal records checks are NOT to be sent directly to DBS Liverpool, Disclosure Scotland or AccessNI.
12. **Application process – AEFs.** Forms are to be ordered from EA(D)S Cheadle Hulme (see contact details at paragraph 14 below) or CRBS/Disclosure Scotland, as applicable. After completion by prospective AEF personnel, the forms are to be verified for accuracy by OC AEF,

signed, and forwarded to EA(D)S Cheadle Hulme (for England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or CRBS/Disclosure Scotland (via a local Wg Ex O in Scotland where they are acting as Lead Signatory for the unit). Applications for criminal records checks are NOT to be sent directly to DBS Liverpool, Disclosure Scotland or AccessNI.

13. **Payment for criminal records checks and “position applied for” – England, Wales and Northern Ireland.** Unpaid volunteers (as described in paragraphs 3, 5 and 7 above) are entitled to free criminal records checks in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The ‘position applied for’ at Section 9 of the Verification Form (Annex D to JSP 893) should be annotated “child workforce”, followed by the appropriate RAFAC position in accordance with the following chart:

“Position Applied For” to read:	<i>Includes:</i>
“RAFAC - RAFVR(T) Officer”	<i>Sqn OCs Sqn officers and officer cadets CCF(RAF) officers not DBS checked by schools HQ RAFAC, Region and Wing staff/project officers</i>
“RAFAC - WO/SNCO(ATC)”	<i>Region, Wing and Sqn non-commissioned staff</i>
“RAFAC – Unremunerated Staff”	<i>Civilian Instructors Civilian Gliding Instructors Civilian Committee members Honorary Chaplains Service Instructors AEF pilots (who may be full time members of the RAF)</i>
“RAFAC – Staff Cadet”	<i>All cadets aged 18 years and over</i>

14. **Payment for criminal records checks – Scotland.** All adult volunteers (as described in paragraphs 3, 5 and 7 above) are entitled to free criminal records checks by Disclosure Scotland and membership of the PVGS, as long as applications are submitted through CRBS.

15. **Tracking applications in England and Wales.** The progress of DBS Liverpool disclosure applications may be tracked via the following link: <https://secure.crbonline.gov.uk/enquiry/enquirySearch.do> - an application number (beginning F00) and the applicant’s date of birth will be required. However, all other queries on the progress of DBS applications are to be directed to the MOD Registered Body at EA(D)S Cheadle Hulme, as follows, and **NOT** to DBS Liverpool.

Tel (Mil): 93345-7772
Tel (Civ): 0800-345-7772
option #3 then #5
e-mail: peopleservices@dbs.mod.uk

Attendance pending receipt of criminal records check clearance

16 No CFAV, Potential CFAV, SI or Cadet over 18 are permitted to attend RAFAC activities if they are not in possession of a current criminal record check (whichever document is relevant for the country they are parading) that has been received and accepted in accordance with relevant procedures. If no update service, such as that run in Scotland is available, the life of a clearance is 5 years. Additionally, HQ RAFAC are able to demand a new application is undertaken if there is reason to believe that an individual may have been subject to a process that may have resulted in a change to their clearance and the individual is not to attend until the clearance is confirmed.

a. **Current CFAVs (already appointed).** A CFAV, including a SI, who has already been appointed whose criminal records check has not expired may continue to attend RAFAC activities, providing their completed application for a criminal records check has been submitted to EA(D)S Cheadle Hulme and then only for a period of 6 weeks. If after a period of 6 weeks the clearance has not been confirmed by Wg HQ, CCF(RAF) Admin or

OC AEF they are to be suspended, without prejudice, until this has been completed. An individual who has not submitted a correctly completed application for a fresh criminal records check application by the time their current one expires is to be suspended, without prejudice, until HQ RAFAC has been informed that the (green) clearance is confirmed. A CFAV whose service has expired has ceased to be an official member of the RAFAC and is, therefore, not to attend RAFAC activities under any circumstances until their service has been extended.

b. **Amber disclosures.** A CFAV, SI, staff cadet or Civilian Committee member who has his clearance status changed from green to amber on renewal, or in the case of Scotland on update, is to be suspended, without prejudice, until a decision is made on their future by HQ RAFAC.

c. **ATC Cadets aged 18 and over.** Potential staff cadets who's service to continue past their 18th birthday has been approved by their OC Wing must have their clearance confirmed by their 18th birthday or they are to be suspended, without prejudice, until the clearance has been confirmed by Wg HQ or OC AEF. A potential staff cadet who has not submitted their application for a criminal records check by their 18th birthday is not to be appointed as a staff cadet and is to be suspended, without prejudice, from RAFAC activities until their application has been submitted to EA(D)S Cheadle Hulme and their clearance is confirmed.

d. **CCF (RAF) cadets aged 18 and over.** CCF (RAF) cadets who reach their 18th birthday do not require a criminal record check and, as they are not DBS cleared or specifically trained, they are perceived to pose an enhanced safeguarding risk to the younger cadets. Consequently, prior to activities where the MoD carry the safeguarding and reputational risk these cadets will be briefed to remind them of their responsibilities and status as adults in law. The brief which can be found on BADER is to be read to all over 18 CCF cadets attending joint ATC/CCF activity or on CCF out of school activity where they will mix with under 18 cadets. Following the brief the cadets are to sign as having received and understood the brief.

e. **Civilian committee members.** Where a current civilian committee member requires a criminal records check (in accordance with paragraph 7 above) they are not to attend RAFAC activities where cadets may be present until their clearance is confirmed.

Template suspension and reinstatement letters are at Annex B.

Clearance criteria and requirements

17. **Validity of criminal records checks.** Although a criminal records check is only a "snapshot" on the day it was issued, MOD and RAFAC policy states that certificates of suitability for working with children are valid for 5 years or until a break in service of 6 months or more occurs. A reminder will therefore be sent out by HQ RAFAC (Personnel Department) at least 6 months before the expiry of a clearance alerting Rgnl HQs, Wg HQs and other unit commanders/line managers when a new criminal records check is required. In Scotland PVG run an update system so the check continues to be valid; however, Wg HQs are to obtain an oral update every 5 years to ensure a notification has not been missed. Adult members of the CCF (RAF) will be responsible for obtaining disclosure renewals as and when required by the employing educational establishment or by CCF(RAF) Admin. Sqn COs are responsible for initiating criminal records checks for their cadets who intend to apply for service beyond age 18 on reaching 17½ years of age, including those flight staff cadets who are attached to a VGS or AEF. In addition, HQ RAFAC retains the right to insist, at any time, that an adult volunteer or cadet aged 18 or over undertakes a new criminal records check if there are ever any child protection concerns regarding an individual. Failure to comply with this HQ request will result in the adult volunteer or cadet aged 18 or over being immediately denied

access to cadets under the age of 18 and RAFAC facilities and appropriate administrative action will be taken against the individual.

18. **Procedure on extension of service or change of status.** Providing an individual is in possession of a current criminal records check (valid for 5 years), a new criminal records check is not required on extension of service, transfer from CI to SNCO or from CI or SNCO to RAFVR(T), or vice versa, provided service does not have a break of 6 months or more. A change in status after more than 6 months has elapsed will require a new criminal records check to be carried out. An individual who is returning to duty after a period of non-effective service exceeding 6 months is to be subject to a new criminal records check. Although, according to the provisions of Reference C, staff cadets are not to be charged with overall accountability for the conduct of an activity (that is always to rest with a fully appointed and cleared CFAV), RAFAC policy states that all cadets aged 18 years of age and over are to undergo a criminal records check to enhanced level in accordance with paragraph 16d above. Providing a cadet is in possession of a current criminal records check, a change of status from cadet service to adult staff will not require a fresh criminal records check to be completed.

19. **Portability of criminal records checks.** Disclosures are normally portable within the MOD unless otherwise stated. **Criminal record checks made outside the MOD are portable into the RAFAC where the individual:**

- a. **Provides an original disclosure certificate that is less than 6 months old and involves the same level of checks, ie child workforce to enhanced level; or**
- b. **Is registered with the Disclosure and Barring Service update service (England and Wales only) in accordance with paragraph 20 below or for CCF(RAF) personnel who are cleared by their school or college in accordance with paragraph 5 above.**

Criminal records checks are not portable between England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, when personnel travel from one country to another within the UK, for a camp or AEF/VGS flying detachment, for example, as long as individuals have been the subject of a criminal records check by at least one UK agency, further criminal records checks are not required provided the visit is temporary. Reference A states that disclosures for personnel who are or will be working/volunteering with children in Scotland must be obtained from Disclosure Scotland (through CRBS). This affects anyone who is working in Scotland in a regulated/childcare position, or about to be, and who has not already been checked through Disclosure Scotland irrespective of whether they have been checked previously through DBS Liverpool. Personnel who work on a regular basis in Scotland, even though they may be based in England, Wales or Northern Ireland should also have a check in place from Disclosure Scotland.

20. **The DBS Update Service (England and Wales).** An individual who applies for a DBS check after 17 Jun 13 may apply to subscribe to the Update Service (which is free of charge for volunteers). By subscribing to this service, applicants can have their DBS certificate kept up-to-date and take it with them from role to role, within the same workforce (RAFAC = child workforce), where the same type and level of check is required (RAFAC = enhanced). An applicant's guide to the process is available [here](#)

- a. **Action by nominating authorities (normally a Wg HQ).** When an applicant is a member of the Update Service, nominating authorities can, with the applicant's permission, use their current DBS certificate (which must have been issued in the last 5 years) to carry out a free, instant, online check to see if any new information has come to light since its issue. After viewing the original DBS certificate (see [link here](#) for information on the security features of a DBS certificate), nominating authorities will be able to carry out a status check via this [link](#) in accordance with the procedures available [here](#). Nominating authorities carrying out online status checks must ensure that the original certificate is seen to:

- ensure through robust ID checks, that the person being checked is the same person that is named on the actual DBS certificate,
- check that it has been issued in the last 5 years,
- check that it is to an enhanced level and for the child workforce and,
- see what, if any, information was revealed about the applicant (where information is revealed, this must be considered as part of the recruitment process – see paragraph 20b, second bullet point, below)

b. **Interpreting status check results.** On carrying out online checks, one of the following results will be available:

- **The DBS certificate did not reveal any information and remains current as no further information has been identified since its issue.** *This means that the DBS certificate when originally issued was blank, ie did not reveal any information about the person and no new information has been found since its issue and can therefore be accepted as being still current and valid.* Nominating authorities should then take action in accordance with paragraph 21a(1) below; the date of clearance will be the date the certificate was issued.
- **This DBS certificate remains current as no further information has been identified since its issue.** *This means the DBS certificate revealed information about the person but no new information has been found since its issue.* Action must be taken in accordance with paragraph 21a(2) below (as an “amber” disclosure”).
- **This DBS certificate is no longer current. Please apply for a new DBS check to get the most up-to-date information.** *This means that new information has come to light since the DBS certificate was issued and the individual will have to apply for a new DBS check to enable us to see this new information.* The applicant should be interviewed by an appropriate officer to ascertain the reasons why the current information is not the most up-to-date (the most likely reasons are new convictions, cautions or reprimands or new relevant police information or they have been barred from working with children). A report of the interview is to be e-mailed to HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding) who, with the applicant’s permission, can request an Early Confirmation Check from DBS Liverpool to see if the change is because the applicant has been barred from working in regulated activity ([application form available here](#)). In the meantime, the individual should be asked to apply for a new DBS check.
- **The details entered do not match those held on our system. Please check and try again.** *This means either the individual has not subscribed to the Update Service or the DBS certificate has been removed from the Update Service or the correct information has not been entered.*

Notification of disclosures³

21. **“Green” notifications.** A “green” disclosure certificate confirms that a criminal records check has been completed to enhanced level and there is no known reason why an individual cannot work with children. These notifications are to be processed as follows:

³ The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 introduced a single certificate system in England and Wales on 17 Jun 13, whereby copies of disclosures will no longer be sent to employing/appointing authorities and it is now the applicant’s responsibility to produce their certificate to the employing/appointing authority. The Government plan to launch this process during Spring/Summer 2014 (estimated) in Northern Ireland.

a. **England and Wales (including overseas squadrons).** Only one disclosure certificate is issued directly to the applicant by DBS Liverpool. It is the applicant's responsibility to produce their disclosure certificate to the nominating authority (ie Rgnl HQ, Wg HQ, OC AEF or CCF(RAF) Admin, etc), via their CO, where applicable, to prove their clearance. Applications may be tracked as explained in paragraph 15 above. With effect from 1 Jan 14, an applicant who fails to produce their disclosure certificate to their nominating authority within 6 weeks of issue by DBS Liverpool, without good reason, is to be suspended from all RAFAC activities, without prejudice, until the certificate is produced and verified (the template letters at Annex B may be adapted as appropriate). If an applicant refuses to produce their certificate, they will not be appointed to a position in the RAFAC (and the circumstances are to be reported to HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding)) or, if already appointed, they will be subjected to administrative action which will invariably lead to the termination of their service. Following receipt of the disclosure certificate, the nominating authority is to take the following action:

(1) **"Clear" disclosure certificates** (ie a certificate that does not disclose any convictions, cautions, reprimands, warnings or any other relevant information revealed by the police):

(a) **For current CFAVs and all staff cadets:** enter the clearance details onto the template criminal records check spreadsheet and send it to HQ RAFAC (P2a1: ACO-HQAC-PERS-P2a1) by e-mail (or via a link on MOSS) at regular intervals so that individuals' clearance details can be recorded on the HQ RAFAC central personnel database. There is no requirement to submit documentary evidence of a criminal records check.

(b) **For new CFAV applicants:** Part 6 of Pers Form 1-10 (initial application form for adult volunteers) is to be annotated with the disclosure number and date of issue by Rgnl HQ/Wg HQ/OC AEF/CCF(RAF) Admin as appropriate. There is no requirement to attach documentary evidence of a criminal records check.

(2) **"Amber" disclosure certificates.** Without exception, nominating authorities are to forward copies of all adverse disclosures (commonly known as "amber" disclosures, ie those containing details of convictions, cautions, reprimands, warnings or any other relevant information revealed by police authorities) to HQ RAFAC (for the personal attention of SO3 Safeguarding), without taking any further action. HQ RAFAC (ACOS Support) is the sole authority for approving service with the RAFAC where adverse information has been disclosed. A certified true copy of the certificate may be scanned (where this facility is available) and e-mailed (or filed and linked on unit's MOSS LTD area) or sent by post (by recorded delivery) to HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding). Applicants are to be informed that the final decision on their RAFAC service will be made by HQ RAFAC (see paragraph 22 below for further details).

b. **Northern Ireland.** EA(D)S Cheadle Hulme will issue a "DBS Disclosure Notification for Working with Children" letter to Northern Ireland Wg HQ or other point of contact. Further action is to be taken as described in paragraph 21a(1) and (2) above.

c. **Scotland.** Following confirmation from Disclosure Scotland of suitability for working with children in Scotland and membership of the PVGS, Wg HQs are to forward clearance/PVG membership details to HQ RAFAC as described in paragraph 21a(1) and (2) above.

22. **Retention of "Amber" disclosures.** HQ RAFAC (ACOS Support) is the sole authority for deciding on an applicant's suitability, or otherwise, for working with children in the RAFAC, taking

into account any relevant information revealed on the disclosure certificate and following any necessary discussion or consultation between HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding) and the appropriate nominating authority. In accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997, disclosure information is only to be passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. Once an appointing decision has been made, all hard copies of consultation correspondence are to be destroyed by secure means and electronic copies are to be deleted. HQ RAFAC are only permitted by law to retain “amber” disclosure information for a maximum of 6 months in England, Wales and Northern Ireland or 3 months in Scotland after the appointment decision has been made.

Appeals and disputes

23. Details on the appeals and disputes procedures for DBS Liverpool, Disclosure Scotland and AccessNI are available via the following links:

- England and Wales <https://secure.crbonline.gov.uk/enquiry/enquirySearch.do>
- Scotland <http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/understanding/dispute/more>
- Northern Ireland http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/accessni/support/accessni_complaints_policy.pdf

Disputes are to be raised within 3 months from the date the certificate was issued. When an applicant intends to dispute an “amber” disclosure, HQ RAFAC (SO3 Safeguarding) is to be informed.

Annexes:

- A. RAFAC Policy Statement on the appointment of ex-offenders.
- B. Template Suspension and Reinstatement Letters for CFAVs and adult cadets.

RAFAC POLICY STATEMENT ON THE APPOINTMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

1. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)/Disclosure Scotland/Access NI disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the RAF Air Cadets (RAFAC) complies fully with the DBS/Disclosure Scotland/Access NI Codes of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for volunteer positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
2. The RAFAC is committed to the fair treatment of its volunteers and potential volunteers, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
3. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for volunteer service based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
4. All volunteers in the RAFAC are subject to disclosure and this is made clear to applicants from the outset. We encourage all applicants to provide details of their criminal record under separate cover as part of the verification of identity and application process and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the appointment process.
5. We ensure that all those in the RAFAC who are involved in the appointment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the appointment of ex-offenders, eg the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
6. We ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of appointment.
7. We make every subject of a criminal records disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS, Disclosure Scotland and AccessNI Codes of Practice and make a copies available on request.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from volunteering with the RAFAC. This will depend on the circumstances and background of your offence(s) or the information revealed to us. However, HQ RAFAC retains the absolute right for appointing and retaining individuals to volunteer positions within the organisation and is not required to give a reason when an applicant is not appointed or retained.

**TEMPLATE SUSPENSION LETTER PENDING THE RECEIPT OF A CLEAR CRIMINAL
RECORDS CHECK
(CFAVs and Staff Cadets)**

Dear

SUSPENSION FROM RAF AIR CADETS ACTIVITIES

1. This letter is formal notification that you are suspended from all RAF Air Cadets (RAFAC) activities until a clear criminal records check application has been received. This suspension is without prejudice to any further action and does not constitute any form of judgment or finding against you. You are not to attend squadron or any other RAFAC premises, nor take part in any air cadet activities of any sort until further notice. You will be reinstated when your clearance has been confirmed.

2. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

(ARC, Wg Ex O, Wg Cdr CCF or OC AEF as appropriate)

Copy to:

HQ RAF Air Cadets (SO3 Safeguarding - **for appointed CFAVs only**)

**TEMPLATE REINSTATEMENT LETTER FOLLOWING THE RECEIPT OF A CLEAR
CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK**

Dear

RAF AIR CADETS – REINSTATEMENT

1. We have now received your clear (Green) DBS Certificate and you may resume your membership of the RAF Air Cadets with immediate effect.
2. If you require any further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

(ARC, Wg Ex O, Wg Cdr CCF or OC AEF as appropriate)

Copy to:

HQ RAF Air Cadets (SO3 Safeguarding – **for appointed CFAVs only**)

CHAPTER 9

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) REFERRALS IN ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

BACKGROUND

1. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (SVG) Act 2006 was introduced in the House of Lords on 28 Feb 06 and received Royal Assent on 8 Nov 06. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 was laid at the Privy Council meeting on 2 May 07 and was made on the 9 May 07. The full text of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 and explanatory notes are available on the Office of Public Sector Information website, www.opsi.gov.uk.
2. Under the terms of the SVG Act, a new scheme for England and Wales covering those who work or volunteer, or seek to work or volunteer, with children or vulnerable adults was introduced. Certain provisions of the Act extend to Northern Ireland; the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 replicates those provisions which do not extend to Northern Ireland. The Scheme operates across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Certain provisions of the Act are devolved responsibility for the Welsh Assembly Government and may be applied differently. The Scottish Government introduced its own parallel Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVGS) to deliver on the provisions outlined in the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 (see Chapter 10).
3. If an individual is considered unsuitable by the DBS they will be barred from working with children and vulnerable adults in regulated activity. Individuals will be barred either automatically – if they are convicted or cautioned for certain offences – or following a decision by the DBS taking into account other offences, cautions or any other relevant information. New robust information sharing processes have been introduced and the DBS will continually review new relevant information about individuals in regulated activity.

REGULATED ACTIVITY *(see page 7-1)*

4. **Regulated activity provider.** The RAFAC (HQ RAFAC) is a regulated activity provider, as described in the legislation, that is responsible for the management or control of regulated activity and makes arrangements for members to be appointed in that activity.

LEGAL DUTY TO REFER TO THE DBS

5. A referral is information sent to the DBS which indicates that a person has harmed or posed/poses a risk of harm to children. A referral to the DBS ensures that an independent, impartial and structured approach is used in assessing future risk on people who may continue to be a safeguarding concern because of their actions or behaviour. There is a legal duty on HQ RAFAC to refer individuals to the DBS for consideration for barring in relevant circumstances and to provide information to the DBS upon request. The duty to refer applies when permission is withdrawn for an adult member of staff or adult cadet to perform a regulated activity or if an individual has left while under investigation. In particular, HQ RAFAC must refer the case to the DBS if they think that the individual has committed an offence that would lead them to be automatically included on a barred list under the automatic barring provisions. Failure to provide information to the DBS is a criminal offence.
6. SO3 Safeguarding at HQ RAFAC is responsible for staffing referrals in accordance with the DBS referral guidance document. The duty to provide information to the DBS will override any obligation to withhold information on the grounds of confidentiality. Failure to provide the

information to the DBS without reasonable justification may result in, on summary conviction, a fine up to level 5 on the standard scale (presently up to £5,000).

NOTIFICATION OF BARRING DECISIONS

8. When the DBS notifies HQ RAFAC that it has barred a member of staff or adult cadet from working with children, the individual will be removed immediately from regulated activity. In order to remove a barred individual they will be suspended, without prejudice, and adult members of staff will be placed in the RAFAC non-effective pool, until formal dismissal action can be taken (after taking professional human resources and/or legal advice). In many cases, HQ RAFAC can instigate termination of service or dismissal action as soon as it becomes aware of the conduct that led to the bar (ie before receiving formal notification of the bar from the DBS) for gross misconduct or a conviction of a criminal offence or, where applicable, failure by an individual to notify HQ RAFAC of the conduct.

PENALTIES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS

9. Any individual undertaking, or attempting to undertake, work from which they have been barred is committing an offence. Organisations that appoint barred individuals to regulated activity with children are committing an offence. On conviction on indictment the penalty is up to 5 years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.

10. The only way to establish that an individual is not barred is to carry out an enhanced criminal records check. If an offence is suspected, then the organisation would be prosecuted but a relevant individual in the organisation can also be prosecuted.

CHAPTER 10

PROTECTING VULNERABLE GROUPS SCHEME SCOTLAND

BACKGROUND

1. In Feb 11, the Scottish Government introduced a new membership scheme that replaced and improved the previous disclosure arrangements for people who work or volunteer with vulnerable groups. The Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVGS):

- Helps to ensure that those who have regular contact with children and protected adults through paid and unpaid work do not have a known history of harmful behaviour.
- Is quick and easy to use, reducing the need for PVGS members to complete a detailed application form every time a disclosure check is required.
- Strikes a balance between proportionate protection and robust regulation and makes it easier for employers/volunteer organisations to determine who they should check to protect the children or vulnerable adults in their care.

2. The PVGS is managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland which, as an agency of the Scottish Government, has taken on additional responsibilities. This includes taking decisions, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, about who should be barred from working with vulnerable groups.

3. People who work, on a regular basis, with vulnerable groups join the PVGS and, from then on, their membership records are automatically updated if any vetting information arises. Vetting information is conviction information retrieved from criminal justice systems and non-conviction information held by the police that is considered relevant. Further information is available via the following hyperlink: <https://www.mygov.scot/pvg-scheme/>

APPLICATION PROCESS

4. Full details on the application process may be obtained from Wg Ex Os in Scotland, who are Lead Signatories for the Scheme. OCs AEFs and CCF TEST staff who require their members to be registered with the PVGS should contact their local Wg Ex O.

WHEN A PVGS MEMBER LEAVES THE RAFAC

5. Disclosure Scotland maintains a record of all the organisations that have an interest in a PVGS member. Where an organisation has requested a Scheme Record or Scheme Record Update in respect of an individual, that organisation is assumed to have an interest in that individual until Disclosure Scotland is notified otherwise. Additionally, any regulatory body whose registration number has been provided on an application form will also be assumed to have an interest in that individual.

6. Where a PVG Scheme member ceases to do regulated work for an organisation, the individual should notify Disclosure Scotland. If that happens, Disclosure Scotland will seek confirmation from the organisation. Once that is received, the organisation will be removed from the record of scheme membership.

REFERRAL TO THE PVGS FOR CONSIDERATION OF BARRING

7. The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 places a duty on the RAFAC (normally the Wg Ex O) to make a referral when certain criteria are met, broadly speaking, as follows:

- a. An individual doing regulated work has done something to harm a child or protected adult **and**
- b. The impact is so serious that the RAFAC has (or would) permanently remove the individual from regulated work.

8. Making a referral is very important. Failure to refer an individual may mean that an individual who is unsuitable to do regulated work does not get barred from doing that type of work and can go on and harm other vulnerable people in other settings. Further information is available via the following hyperlink: <http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/guidance/index.html>

NOTIFICATION OF BARRING DECISIONS

9. When the PVGS notifies HQ RAFAC that it has barred a member of staff or adult cadet from working with children, the individual will be removed immediately from regulated activity. In order to remove a barred individual they will be suspended, without prejudice, and adult members of staff will be placed in the RAFAC non-effective pool, until formal dismissal action can be taken (after taking professional human resources and/or legal advice). In many cases, HQ RAFAC can instigate termination of service or dismissal action as soon as it becomes aware of the conduct that led to the bar (ie before receiving formal notification of the bar from the PVGS) for gross misconduct or a conviction of a criminal offence or, where applicable, failure by an individual to notify HQ RAFAC of the conduct.

PENALTIES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS

10. Any individual undertaking, or attempting to undertake, work from which they have been barred is committing an offence. Organisations that appoint barred individuals to regulated activity with children or protected adults are committing an offence. On conviction on indictment the penalty is up to 5 years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.

11. The only way to establish that an individual is not barred is to confirm that they are a PVGS member. If an offence is suspected, then the organisation would be prosecuted but a relevant individual in the organisation can also be prosecuted.