

New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme

DRAFT

Standard Operating Procedures

These SOPs are designed to ensure the safety, well-being, and development of all cadets, leaders, and volunteers involved in New Zealand's cadet programmes. Regular reviews and updates should be conducted to maintain compliance with current laws and best practices.

Please note that this document will need to vary for each brigade and station, depending on their facilities and how they implement the programme. All Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) written below relate directly to the New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme Youth Child Protection Policy document, and need to remain in any version created for use by a station / brigade.

Operational

1. Code of Conduct

- 1.1. All cadets, leaders, and volunteers must adhere to the highest standards of behaviour, reflecting the values and mission of their respective organisations.
- 1.2. Refer to the [New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigades Cadets Programme Code of Conduct](#)

2. General

- 2.1. *[Brigade operating cadets will need to insert their own SOPs directly pertaining to day-to-day operations - eg. timings, locations, etc. in here]*
- 2.2. a

3. a

- 3.1.

Safe Working Practices

4. Supervision

4.1. Leaders

- 4.1.1. Ensure adequate supervision during all activities to maintain safety and discipline.
- 4.1.2. For activities carried out at a home station the maximum number of cadets per adult supervision is 1:10 (ideally 1:6) and with no more than 20 cadets under one Cadet leader.
- 4.1.3. For activities carried out offsite, a risk assessment needs to be developed and using the Ministry [of Education Education Outside of the Classroom Toolkit](#) develops an appropriate ratio of adults to children to ensure safety.
 - 4.1.3.1. Activities involving water is a ratio of 1:4
 - 4.1.3.2. All other activities are a maximum of 1:8 (ideally 1:6)

4.1.4.

4.1.5.

4.2. Risk management

Identify and assess potential risks in all scenarios, implementing appropriate control measures.

- 4.2.1. At your home station

- 4.2.1.1. Regular safety checks and maintenance of equipment.

- 4.2.1.2. Regular review of hazards register and ensure risks are eliminated, minimised and mitigated where possible.
- 4.2.1.3. Assess new risks and record on a hazard register
- 4.2.1.4. Have emergency evacuation protocols
- 4.2.1.5. Every six (6) months run a drill for each evacuation procedure to ensure cadets and cadet leaders are familiar with procedures.
- 4.2.2. On FENZ property
 - 4.2.2.1. Adhere to FENZ safety protocols and guidelines.
- 4.2.3. Outside of FENZ property
 - 4.2.3.1. Conduct thorough risk assessments before off-site activities.
 - 4.2.3.2. A risk assessment needs to be developed and using the [Ministry of Education - Education Outside of the Classroom Toolkit](#) develop an appropriate ratio of adults to children to ensure safety.
- 4.2.4.

4.3. One-on-one contact

- 4.3.1. Avoid one-on-one contact. Should it be necessary see 4.3.2
- 4.3.2. Conduct one-on-one discussions in open spaces where others can observe, ensuring transparency and safeguarding.
- 4.3.3.

4.4. Adult helpers outside of programme

- 4.4.1. All adult helpers must undergo background checks before participating in cadet activities.
- 4.4.2. All cadet programme members must undergo background checks upon turning 18
- 4.4.3.

4.5. Prospective leaders awaiting background check results

- 4.5.1. Until background checks are completed, prospective leaders should not have unsupervised contact with cadets.
- 4.5.2.

4.6. Cadets as 'supervisors' and 'leaders'

- 4.6.1. Cadets may assume leadership roles under the supervision of qualified adults, with clear responsibilities and boundaries.
- 4.6.2. Cadets who become supervisors and leaders must undergo rigorous training
- 4.6.3. Cadets who assume leadership responsibilities must not be in one-on-one situations with other cadet members.

- 4.6.4. They must be supported and mentored by an adult supervisor or leader.

4.7.

- 4.7.1.

4.8.

5. Physical Contact

Limit physical contact to situations where it is necessary for safety or instructional purposes, and ensure it is appropriate and respectful.

5.1. Physical Contact

- 5.1.1. If it is required for an activity, always first ask for permission “ may I touch (*body part*) to/for (...)?” and only when other people are present, for the purpose of demonstrating.

- 5.1.2.

5.2. Restraint

- 5.2.1. Restraint should only be used in emergency situations where there is a risk of harm, and must be in accordance with organisational policies and legal guidelines.

- 5.2.2. Refer to [Ministry of Education rules and responsibilities of physical restraint](#), use these as guiding practice.

5.3.

- 5.3.1.

5.4.

6. Relationships

Maintain professional boundaries at all times. Personal relationships between cadets and leaders are discouraged to prevent conflicts of interest.

6.1. Disclosure

- 6.1.1. Encourage an environment where cadets feel safe to disclose concerns. All disclosures should be taken seriously and addressed promptly.

- 6.1.2. If a cadet enters into a relationship with another cadet they must disclose to their cadet leader
- 6.1.3. If a cadet leader or supervisor is in a relationship with another staff member or a cadet, this also needs to be disclosed to the programme manager.

6.2.

6.2.1.

6.3.

7. Sexual Conduct

- 7.1. Zero tolerance for any form of sexual misconduct. All incidents must be reported immediately and investigated thoroughly.
 - 7.1.1. Use FENZ investigation procedures
- 7.2. Regular training on appropriate conduct and recognising inappropriate behaviour should be provided to all members.
- 7.3.

8. Cadet Activities and Events

- 8.1. FENZ property (risk management)
 - 8.1.1. Follow all FENZ safety protocols and guidelines during activities on FENZ property.
- 8.2. Overnight Activities
 - 8.2.1. Ensure adequate adult supervision during overnight activities, as per Section 4 - Supervision SOPs.
 - 8.2.2. Separate sleeping arrangements for cadets and leaders, with clear boundaries and supervision.
 - 8.2.3. All persons to be separated, where possible, by gender, as appropriate. This applies to leaders, adult supervisors and cadets.
- 8.3. Transportation
 - 8.3.1. Use approved transport providers and ensure all vehicles are roadworthy.
 - 8.3.2. Where other adults are transporting cadets, seats with only lap belts are not to be used, the car registration, WOF's, and current valid driver's licence to be sighted before the transportation starts.
 - 8.3.2.1. These adults must also be police vetted.

- 8.3.2.2. Unless a family member, more than one cadet should be placed with a driver for transportation, so that there is no one-to-one contact.
- 8.3.3. Adequate adult supervision during transportation to and from events.
 - 8.3.3.1. If in private vehicles, the adult transporting the cadets will be responsible for them.
 - 8.3.3.2. Unless a family member, more than one cadet should be placed with a driver for transportation, so that there is no one-to-one contact.
- 8.3.4. All adult helpers must undergo background checks before providing transport assistance.

8.4. Real-life experiences (observer and participant)

- 8.4.1. As a participant
 - 8.4.1.1. When participating in an a New Zealand Volunteer Fire Brigade Cadets Programme or FENZ activity/event all participants must be briefed in full prior to the activity, including, but not limited to:
 - Health & safety precautions
 - Their roles / responsibilities at the activity / event
 - 8.4.1.2.
- 8.4.2. As an observer
 - 8.4.2.1. This follows the FENZ policy for Observers on Fire Stations. All rules shall be followed in accordance with the aforementioned policy.
 - 8.4.2.2. All cadets observing real-life situations must wear:
 - Red safety helmet, marked "OBSERVER" on both sides
 - Fluorescent yellow safety jerkin marked "OBSERVER" on the back
 - Set of general purpose gloves and a pair of ear-muffs
 - Cadets uniform

8.5.

8.5.1.

8.6.

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9.1.

Child Protection Concerns

10. Bullying

- 10.1. Zero tolerance for bullying in any form.
- 10.2. Implement anti-bullying policies and procedures. Using the [Ministry of Educations Positive Behaviour For Learning](#) framework to develop this.
- 10.3. All claims of bullying must be investigated using the FENZ process.

11. Child Abuse

- 11.1. All personnel working with cadets must undergo the Safeguarding Children online learning, every year.
- 11.2. All suspected or disclosed cases of child abuse must be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities.
- 11.3. Please discuss this with your Chief, and work through the reporting process together.
- 11.4. Reporting
 - 11.4.1. Follow organisational procedures for reporting concerns, ensuring confidentiality and protection for the reporter.
- 11.5. a

12. Allegations against personnel

- 12.1. Reporting
 - 12.1.1. Allegations must be reported immediately to the appropriate personnel and / or authorities.
- 12.2. Complaints
 - 12.2.1. Handle complaints promptly and fairly, following organisational procedures.
 - 12.2.2. Use the FENZ policy for investigating these complaints
- 12.3. Resignation
 - 12.3.1. If a person resigns during an investigation, the investigation should continue to its conclusion.
- 12.4. a

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