

## Firesetting intervention scheme (FIS)

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# Summary

This policy provides information on the Firesetting Intervention Scheme (FIS). It sets out the aims and objectives of the FIS programme as well as the roles of the FIS team. The policy also explains how the scheme is delivered, training and development requirements, and highlights other corporate policies that impact on the scheme.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Policy number 305 - Safeguarding children at risk policy.
- Policy number 726 - Disclosure and barring policy.
- Policy number 351 - Data protection and privacy policy.
- Policy number 524 - Lone workers policy.
- Policy number 597 - Health and safety policy.
- Policy number 368 - Health, safety, and environmental event investigation policy.
- Policy number 369 - Reporting of injuries, diseases, and dangerous occurrences regulations 2013.

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 In 2001 the London Fire Brigade (LFB) launched an intervention scheme for children and young people who played with fire, or had set fires, known at that time as the Juvenile Fire setters Intervention Scheme (JFIS).
- 1.2 The Firesetting Intervention Scheme (FIS), as it is now known, is a referral-based programme that works with children and young people of all abilities up to the age of 18 years who have demonstrated any type of fire play or fire setting behaviour; from curiosity fire play in younger children to deliberate fire setting and arson in older teenagers. Referrals may come from parents, guardians, caregivers, Youth Offending Teams (YOT), Social Services Departments (SSD) and a range of other services. Parental/guardian permission is required before any work is undertaken with children and young people referred to the scheme.
- 1.3 The aim of the scheme is to address fire setting behaviour by delivering fire safety education. Working one-to-one with the child or young person, each intervention is tailored to meet their individual needs. Through creating and developing a safe space and therapeutic relationship with the child or young person, the caseworkers identify the motive for the fire setting and then use a variety of age-appropriate fire safety messages and teaching methods to address the behaviour. Shock tactics are not used when working with a child or young person, even if the parent, guardian or caregiver asks for this approach to be considered.
- 1.4 The Firesetting Intervention Scheme is a free and confidential service. However, FIS caseworkers must and will share information with other agencies where required by statute.
- 1.5 Adult firesetting behaviour can also be referred to the scheme, and each referral will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the FIS manager to assess the needs of the individual and determine what other agencies are in place for support.
- 1.6 FIS is cited in the London Child Protection Procedures<sup>1</sup> as a source of referral and support for families and professionals who have concerns for children and young people with fire setting behaviour. The procedures are produced by the London Safeguarding Children Board of which LFC is a member organisation.

## 2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The LFB is committed to reducing the number of fires, fire deaths and injuries caused by fire, and this is outlined further within the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).
- 2.2 FIS contributes to achieving these targets by aiming to stop child-set fires through the use of fire safety education. A 2005 independent external evaluation of the FIS service by Morgan Harris Burrows<sup>2</sup> has

<sup>1</sup> London Child Protection Procedures Edition 6

<sup>2</sup> Evaluation of the Juvenile Firesetters Intervention Scheme: Final Report, Morgan Harris Burrows

demonstrated that early intervention with children and young people who are fire setting (together with their parents/guardians), can greatly reduce the risk of fire setting re-occurring.

### 3 The FIS service

3.1 The FIS service sits within Youth Services and is managed by the FIS team based at LFB Headquarters (HQ). The service is delivered by trained staff who carry out visits to children and young people, and families, in their homes or other suitable locations, such as school or an LFB location.

#### **The FIS team**

3.2 The FIS team consists of a FIS Manager, a team of caseworkers and an administrator.

3.3 All members of the FIS team undergo child protection and safeguarding training, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and foundation training in key areas such as child development, offending behaviour, and mental health.

3.4 FIS team members must also attend training in more specialist areas such as behavioural management, special educational needs, social, emotional, and mental health difficulties, and enhanced child protection.

#### **FIS Manager**

3.5 The role of the FIS Manager is to:

- Oversee the delivery of the scheme and management of the FIS team.
- Ensure that the scheme is implemented effectively in accordance with expectations and responsibilities outlined in Policy number 597 - LFB health and safety policy.
- Assist with strategic monitoring, evaluation, and review of the FIS against LFB aims and objectives.
- Develop policy and best practice in line with new developments and latest research in youth-related fire setting, child protection and working with children and young people, and families.
- Where appropriate, carry out direct work with families referred to the scheme, including observed one-to-one work with children and young people at home as per Policy number 305 – Safeguarding children at risk policy. This includes complex cases involving very high-risk referrals and multi-agency working, and those children re-referred after previous FIS work has taken place.
- To oversee and make child protection and safeguarding referrals where appropriate.
- To oversee the triage and prioritising decisions made for all FIS referrals.
- Monitor cases awaiting parental/guardian permission and/or allocation to caseworkers.
- Monitor and oversee all open cases that are overdue and identify action required to bring the case up to date.
- Authorise the closure of all cases referred to FIS.
- Ensure caseworkers attendance at training courses to maintain competency in their roles.
- Ensure that caseworkers are supervised and debriefed as necessary, their safety and welfare monitored, and support, guidance and advice provided.
- Develop and source new educational materials for use with children and young people.
- Providing statistical information and information sharing within LFB and with external agencies.
- Carry out quarterly audits of all the open FIS cases to monitor procedures and performance.
- Allocate appropriate personnel and resources to cases, monitor progress, provide advice to advisors, and liaise with other agencies as required.

#### **Caseworkers**

3.6 The role of the caseworker is to:

- Carry out direct work with families referred to the scheme, including observed one-to-one work with children and young people at home as per Policy number 305 – Safeguarding Children at risk Policy. This includes complex cases involving very high-risk referrals and multi-agency working.

- Make child protection referrals, following brigade protocol outlined in Policy number 305 – safeguarding children at risk policy, alerting the FIS Manager of any concerns identified.
- Share best practice regarding educational materials for use with children and young people.
- Stay abreast of new developments and latest research in youth-related fire setting, child protection and working with children and families.

### **Administrator**

3.7 The role of the administrator is to:

- Act as the first point of contact for all new referrals made to FIS, making initial contact with families and other agencies.
- Carry out monthly courtesy calls to all families awaiting their first FIS visit.
- Arrange home fire safety visits (HFSVs) for families referred to the scheme.
- Ensure case closures are completed once authorised by the FIS manager.
- To carry out follow-up telephone calls with families that have received FIS intervention.
- Respond to general enquiries and maintain the central team's resources.
- Produce all correspondence relating to casework and the management of the scheme.
- Book internal and external venues for meetings, training, and other events.
- Stay abreast of new developments and latest research in youth-related fire setting, child protection and working with children and families.
- Follow safeguarding children protocols, alerting the FIS Manager of any concerns identified.
- To manage translation and interpreter requests on behalf of FIS.

## **4 The referral process**

4.1 The FIS service is free and all requests for intervention must come through the FIS central team at Brigade HQ. FIS is managed centrally and covers all 33 London boroughs in its work.

4.2 Referrals are made to the scheme via the following routes:

- Parents, guardians, caregivers and families
- LFB staff e.g. fire crews, fire investigation officers, borough teams
- Schools
- Police
- Youth Offending Teams (YOT)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Social Care Departments
- Other professionals.

### **Referral by parents, guardians, caregivers, and families**

4.3 Parents, guardians, caregivers, or family members may refer their child or young person for intervention directly to the central team by telephone, email (via the link on LFB website) or via their local fire station. Standard fire safety advice available on the LFB website should also be provided (see Appendix 1) and, where available, a copy of the FIS leaflet.

### **Referrals by LFB staff**

4.4 LFB staff can make referrals to the FIS team by telephone, email or via the link on LFB website or hotwire. When making a referral, all known information should be included and especially the following:

- Name and date of birth of the child or young person being referred
- Name, address, and contact telephone number/email for the child's parent(s), guardian(s), or caregiver(s)
- Full details of the child or young person's fire setting behaviour.

4.5 Where it is evident at an incident that a fire has been set by a child or young person, the officer in charge must inform the child's parents/guardians about FIS and make an immediate referral to the FIS team. If they choose

to decline the FIS service, details of the incident are still to be passed to the FIS team. This is to ensure that children and young people coming to the attention of the LFB more than once for fire setting behaviour can be identified.

4.6 LFB personnel who are not current FIS caseworkers should not attempt to address the child or young person's fire setting behaviour. This is because the motives behind youth-related fire setting can be complex and intervention by anyone other than a trained specialist may escalate the fire setting behaviour. For example, chastising a child may provoke feelings of anger and revenge or alternatively, attempts to educate the child by arranging a visit to the fire station and/or appliances may be seen as a reward.

### **Referrals by external professional agencies**

4.7 Referrals are received from external agencies and professionals. Where the referral is not received directly from the child or young person's family, confirmation is needed that the child's parent/guardian is aware of the referral being made to FIS. If the parent/guardian has not been informed, the referring professional must contact the parent/guardian to advise them that information has been passed to FIS before contact will be made by the FIS team.

4.8 Upon receiving professional referrals, a member of the FIS team will ask if there are any health and safety considerations or identified risks for professionals entering the home and/or working with the child or young person, or their family.

4.9 Where any health and safety concerns are raised, the FIS Manager will decide on an appropriate course of action, including a referral to other agencies where necessary. Consideration will also be given to carrying out visits at venues other than the family home and/or in conjunction with other professional agencies.

### **Anonymous referrals**

4.10 If the person making a referral wishes to remain anonymous, the referral will be recorded and allocated a case number, but no contact will be made with the parent/guardian unless the referrer is prepared to be named. This will assist to minimise false allegations and malicious referrals being made to the scheme.

4.11 If anonymous referrals contain information which would constitute a risk to life and/or property if no further action is taken, or provides details of previous criminal activity, the information may be passed to the police. The FIS team may also ask the LFB Fire Investigation team to cross reference the information against the IMS database to see if there has been any previous contact with the address and/or family concerned.

### **Out of hours referral procedure**

4.12 Any member of staff referring information regarding youth-related fire setting outside of normal office hours should email the details to the FIS team for their action upon return to the office. If there are concerns about an immediate risk of further fire setting, the fitting of smoke alarms should be considered by the local fire station.

### **Procedure for all referrals**

4.13 Participation in FIS requires parent/guardian permission before any direct work with the child or young person is undertaken. Verbal permission is initially provided by the parent/guardian via telephone when first contacted by the FIS team and then in writing during the first visit to the child or young person. The signed permission form authorises representatives from the LFB to speak with the child or young person and for personal data to be held.

4.14 Upon receipt of a referral, a member of the FIS team will contact the child's parent/guardian by telephone to discuss the fire setting behaviour in detail, outline the FIS service, seek verbal permission to work directly with their child or young person to address the fire setting behaviour and advise them of the average waiting time for a first visit.

- 4.15 The first telephone contact will be made by the FIS team within 48 hours of receiving the referral except on bank holidays and over the Christmas period. If the family cannot be reached by telephone, a letter or email will be sent to the family containing information and contact details for FIS.
- 4.16 The FIS team will also contact other agencies known to be working with the child or young person and/or their family (such as the local SSD, CAMHS teams and/or YOT) to inform them that FIS work will commence.
- 4.17 There may be times when, due to circumstances within the family, other agencies may ask for FIS to delay working with the child or young person and their family. This may impact on waiting times for referrals and this will be considered by the FIS team when dealing with such requests.
- 4.18 Information received from the child or young person's parents and other agencies working with the family (where applicable) will assist the FIS team with:
  - Carrying out a generic risk assessment
  - Prioritising the referral based on the level of risk posed by the child or young person's fire setting behaviour.

Weekly case triage meetings held between the FIS Manager and caseworkers will determine whether referrals are priority or high priority on the waiting list. Criteria for high priority cases will include considerations relating to the age of the child or young person, type and frequency of fire setting, and multi-agency involvement.

- 4.19 Where intervention is accepted, parents/guardians will be offered a visit at home, a neutral setting or given the opportunity to bring their child or young person to a FIS session held at an LFB location.
- 4.20 When verbal permission has been received from the child or young person's parent/guardian, the referral passes to the FIS Manager and caseworkers for triage (see 4.18). The administrator will arrange for a Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) by the local station (within 48 hours of receipt of the referral, where possible) and send a confirmation letter/email to the parent/guardian notifying them that FIS work will commence.
- 4.21 After triage, the cases are allocated to FIS caseworkers based on their availability and case load. It is expected that the caseworkers will have no more than 20 active cases at any one time. It is expected that the FIS Manager will have no more than 5 active cases at any one time.
- 4.22 Interim contact will be made to the family by the FIS team to monitor progress of cases that remain on the monitoring list. Other agencies involved with the family will also be kept updated on waiting times.
- 4.23 Where there are concerns of ongoing fire setting by a child or young person which poses a significant risk to individuals/crews, information will be shared with the Borough Commander for them to decide on an appropriate course of action.
- 4.24 In the event of a parent/guardian declining FIS intervention, the FIS team will write to the family confirming the parent's decision and the case will be closed. The letter will advise parents/guardians to contact the FIS team in the future if the fire setting continues. A HFSV is still offered to a family, even when FIS intervention has been declined. It is standard practice to carry out a name check with the relevant Social Services department for families who decline FIS.
- 4.25 If a family advises that their child or young person has been sent overseas to live with relatives, contact will be made with the school and/or Social Services department to confirm this information.

## 5 Visits to children/young people and their families

- 5.1 Where possible, all FIS visits are carried out at the child or young person's home in the first instance. This allows for the caseworkers to meet the child or young person and their family in their most familiar setting and for any concerns at home that may be contributing to the fire setting to be identified e.g. lack of supervision. All home visits are made in pairs in the first instance. After an initial home visit in pairs, the lead caseworker can decide to continue with lone home visits if considered appropriate.

5.2 If a parent/guardian declines visits at home, or the FIS team decides it would be more appropriate, a neutral setting such as the child's school, YOT or LFB location can be suggested. After the first home visit, FIS sessions at school may then be recommended in order to allow for daytime visits to be facilitated, which ensures families are seen sooner and more frequently as school visits require only one FIS caseworker. Any visits held at a school will require parental permission and agreement that the school personnel are advised of the child or young person's fire setting behaviour. In order to maintain confidentiality a child or young person's school is not routinely contacted at the time of referral.

5.3 During the visits, caseworkers will utilise several methods to identify the level of fire setting, fire safety knowledge and the motivation behind the child or young person's fire setting behaviour. From this, they will identify a strategy to address and change the child or young person's behaviour, using the most appropriate education, advice, and method of delivery.

5.4 Following each visit, caseworkers will complete detailed notes of their visit, which will be recorded on the child or young person's electronic record. This includes details of the resources used, advice given to the family and an outline of discussions with the child or young person and their family (including their responses and behaviour). Caseworkers' recommendations regarding a date for the next visit or whether the case can be closed are also recorded, along with any safeguarding or child protection concerns, and details of any other agencies working with the family.

5.5 The detailed notes will be compiled into a final report when all visits have been completed. A record of the report will be kept on the child or young person's electronic file.

5.6 Where a child or young person's needs are complex, working with other agencies may be necessary in order to address the fire setting behaviour. Such cases will involve caseworkers and/or the FIS Manager attending meetings with other agencies such as SSD, school teachers and YOT to report on their work with the family under FIS. Written reports on FIS progress and recommendations on a case will be prepared and presented by caseworkers at multi-agency meetings where requested.

5.7 A referral to SSD or police will be made by the FIS team as per Policy number 305 - safeguarding children at risk, when a child protection concern is raised following a visit or identified by the FIS team at the time of referral.

### **Supervision**

5.8 It is recognised that for practitioners involved in day-to-day work with children and young people and their families, effective supervision is important to promote good standards of practice and to support individual staff members. This should include the supervisor enabling the supervisee to reflect on their handling of cases and any challenges they face in order to maintain sound professional judgements. It is recommended, the caseworkers attend monthly individual clinical supervision with a registered clinical supervisor.

## **6 Closing referrals/cases**

6.1 All decisions regarding case closure will be authorised by the FIS Manager.

6.2 Case closures are recommended under the following circumstances:

- The parent/guardian declines intervention. The FIS team will confirm this in writing to the parent/guardian and the case will close. A referral to SSD may need to be considered where the refusal of intervention may present a risk of further fire setting.
- Contact with the family is lost or there is a lack of engagement by the family. In these circumstances, communication by either phone, letter and or email will be sent to the parent/guardian. The first communication will advise the parent/guardian that FIS has been trying to contact them to arrange a visit and ask them to contact the FIS team if they still require intervention. It will also advise that if no response is received within 4 weeks the case will be put forward for closure. The parent/guardian is then contacted after 2 weeks by phone/email. If no response received, a final letter would inform the parent/guardian that

the case will be closed, and no further contact will be made. A referral to SSD may need to be considered where the lack of intervention may present a risk of further fire setting.

- Following intervention, where a minimum period of six months has elapsed since the last known fire setting incident.
- FIS is unable to address the specific fire setting behaviour of the child or young person. A referral to another appropriate agency will be made by the FIS team.
- In all cases involving multi-agency working the decision to close the case will be made in conjunction with the lead professional.

6.3 When the fire setting behaviour has stopped, it may be identified that the child or young person and their family could benefit from additional support and engagement in order to safeguard the child or young person's long-term needs. In these circumstances, referrals can be made to non-statutory bodies such as local mentoring programmes and other LFB youth services programmes e.g. Fire Cadets.

6.4 The FIS team will make follow-up telephone calls to families at the six month and two-year stage following case closure to confirm there has been no further fire setting.

## 7 Resources

7.1 Caseworkers will only use resources approved by the FIS Manager and will be directed in the selection of age-appropriate material. Suggestions for new resources, or changes to the current material, should be submitted to the FIS Manager for consideration before use.

## 8 Inclusive intervention

8.1 As FIS works with children and young people of diverse abilities and learning needs, caseworkers will on occasion be required to work with non-English speaking families, children with English as an additional language (EAL) and children with special educational needs (SEN). This may include children, young people and families with vision and/or hearing impairment.

8.2 A range of resources are available to assist caseworkers with the delivery of fire safety education to children with English as an additional language and children with special educational needs. To ensure fire safety education is delivered effectively, FIS caseworkers will ascertain, where reasonably practicable, a child or young person's educational needs, in advance of visits. This will enable caseworkers to choose resources appropriate to the age and individual learning needs of the child or young person they are working with. The FIS team will arrange for a translator or a signer to accompany caseworkers on visits, where this is required.

## 9 Record keeping and information sharing

9.1 Records relating to the children, young people and families referred to FIS will be held and used by the FIS team and all FIS caseworkers in accordance with Policy number 351 – Data protection and privacy and in line with the Children Act (2004).

9.2 Caseworkers will ensure personal data minimisation relating to their FIS cases.

9.3 The FIS team will securely destroy and delete all personal data relating to children, young people, and their families in line with the Brigade records management strategy and associated policies, with guidance from Policy number 351 – Data protection and privacy. Data will be stored for 5 years following the date of case closure. This retention period follows guidance from 'Information and Records Management Society retention guidance for Local Authorities' and data protection law guidance provided previously by the IM/Information Access Team.

9.4 In line with the agreed retention policy there may be occasions where FIS is asked to share information on their work with children and young people under the scheme with other agencies e.g. the police and/or SSD. Information sharing is vital to the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children. This must be carried out in accordance with Policy number 0351 – Data protection and privacy policy.

## 10 Health and safety

- 10.1 All LFB personnel must be familiar and comply with Policy number 597 - LFB's health and safety policy.
- 10.2 All safety events (including injuries, environmental events, near misses and road traffic collisions) should be reported in accordance with Policy number 368 - Health, safety, and environmental event investigation policy.
- 10.3 The FIS Manager will be responsible for ensuring safe systems of work are in place, are functioning effectively and are communicated to caseworkers in line with Policy number 524 - Lone worker policy.
- 10.4 Caseworkers will be responsible for following the safe systems of work put in place by the FIS Manager, including following the contact and reporting system detailed below and carrying out an 'on site' risk assessment on arrival at each visit.

### **Mobile phones/Lone Worker device (LWD)**

- 10.5 FIS caseworkers are to ensure that their Brigade issue mobile telephone and their LWD are switched on and fully charged at the start of each working day. Mobile phones should remain switched on at all times, although may be put on silent during visits. FIS caseworkers should check phones regularly for messages.
- 10.6 The LWD features an SOS alarm function linking the user directly to an Incident Management Centre. On actuation of the alarm an audio channel is automatically opened to allow dialogue at the scene to be monitored and recorded. Additionally, global positioning locates the person so that assistance can quickly be directed. Further information and guidance on the use and maintenance of the personal safety device issued to FIS caseworkers and other Fire Safety staff can be found at FSIGN 119.
- 10.7 FIS caseworkers are to ensure that their emergency contact details are accurately recorded on StARS and are kept up to date.

### **'Outlook' Calendars**

- 10.8 FIS team members are to keep their Outlook Calendar up to date with all their daily activities, including times they are in the office and details of their planned visits. These details should include:
  - Address of location being visited
  - Case number (if appropriate)
  - Name of local contact (if known)
  - Telephone number of local contact (if known)
  - Approximate time and duration of visit.

### **Contact and reporting system**

- 10.9 On arrival at a visit, caseworkers will 'check in' using the FIS digital group chat to advise the team that they have arrived. This will be acknowledged by the FIS Administrator, or any other FIS team member. Caseworkers will also 'check out' at the end of the visit in the same way, and acknowledgement will again be made.
- 10.10 The majority of visits take place within working hours of 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday. However, if a visit does not fall within these times the caseworker will advise the FIS Manager and arrangements will be put in place to ensure the check in and out process will be managed.
- 10.11 If there has been no check in received from the caseworker, where there is a scheduled visit in the calendar, the FIS administrator will contact the caseworker to verify where they are. If no contact can be made with the caseworker, the FIS administrator will contact the visit location to confirm if the caseworker has arrived. If the caseworker has not arrived, the FIS administrator will advise the FIS Manager, or if unavailable, the Deputy Head of Youth Services or Head of Youth Services. The LFB 'missing persons' procedure will then be applied.
- 10.12 Following a visit, if there has been no contact from the caseworker one hour after the visit was planned to end, the FIS administrator will contact the caseworker to confirm they have left the visit safely. If the caseworker is unable to be contacted the FIS Manager is notified and the LFB 'missing persons' procedure will be applied.

### **Risk assessments**

- 10.13 On receipt of a referral, a generic risk assessment will be carried out by the FIS Manager. Appropriate control measures will be put in place to minimise any identified risk associated with carrying out a visit to the family and communicated to the caseworkers allocated to the case.
- 10.14 In addition to complying with the control measures put in place by the FIS team to minimise any identified risk associated with carrying out a visit to the family, caseworkers will carry out an effective dynamic risk assessment on arrival at each visit and implement appropriate control measures where necessary before going ahead with the visit.
- 10.15 Any new or ongoing safety concerns will be referred to the FIS Manager.
- 10.16 If at any time during the visit caseworkers believe it is unsafe to continue, they will end the visit and inform the FIS team administrator or FIS Manager as soon as possible.
- 10.17 FIS team members will follow the process set out in Appendix 3 when carrying out generic and dynamic risk assessments.

## **11 Child protection and safeguarding vulnerable groups**

- 11.1 Child protection and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all staff will be familiar with, and comply with, Policy number 305 - safeguarding children at risk policy.
- 11.2 The safeguarding children at risk policy contains advice on raising child protection concerns and how to record disclosures of abuse made by a child. This is also covered in the child protection and safeguarding training provided to the FIS team.
- 11.3 All concerns and/or disclosures of abuse will be referred immediately to the FIS Manager. If unavailable, or the concern is raised out of hours, the instructions and guidance provided in the relevant section of LFB safeguarding children at risk policy will be followed.
- 11.4 If for any reason during the FIS home visit the caseworkers feel threatened e.g. by an abusive child or adult, the visit will be aborted immediately, and the FIS Manager will be advised as soon as possible. If the threatening behaviour poses a risk to any children or young people in the home, **an immediate child protection referral will be made**. Where there is any immediate risk to the caseworkers, child, or family members as a consequence of perceived threatening behaviour, the caseworker will make an emergency call to the police and request attendance.
- 11.5 If the child or children are home alone, the caseworker will request police attendance in line with guidance in LFB's safeguarding children at risk policy.
- 11.6 If a caseworker receives contact socially from a child, young person or family member who has received a service from FIS, it must immediately be brought to the attention of the FIS Manager. Encouraging such contact will be viewed by the LFB as an abuse of a position of trust and could lead to disciplinary action. Caseworkers must not provide children, young people, and/or their families with any personal contact details.

### **Disclosed barring service (DBS) checks**

- 11.7 As with all posts that involve working in regulated activities with children and young people, the posts of caseworker are subject to an enhanced DBS check.
- 11.8 Administration of the disclosed barring service checks will be carried out by the People Services Department, and individuals will be reminded that their DBS is due for renewal. However, it is the individual's responsibility to stay current. Caseworkers without a current enhanced DBS check will not be permitted to carry out visits to children or young people.
- 11.9 Refer to Policy number 726 – LFB policy on criminal records checks for further information.

## Appendix 1 - Firesetters intervention scheme (FIS)

### Advice for parents/guardians

The following advice should be given to any parent/guardian who contacts the Brigade with concerns about fire setting behaviour displayed by their child or young person:

- Explain to the child or young person that fire is a tool, not a toy, and talk about the different ways adults make use of fire as a tool. Use candles on a birthday cake and BBQs for cooking as examples.
- Explain to the child or young person that fire can hurt or even kill.
- Make sure that matches and lighters (if kept in the home) are stored out of sight and reach of children and young people. Use child-proof containers for match boxes and lighters if possible.
- Use only one lighter at a time and keep it on you at all times so you will notice straight away if it is missing.
- Never leave young children alone in the house, even for short periods of time.
- Search the child or young person's bedroom and school bag for lighters and/or matches.
- Carry out regular checks for any sign of further fire setting such as burn marks on carpets/bed/furniture, particularly within the child or young person's bedroom.
- Keep outbuildings, garden sheds and garages locked to prevent access to flammable items.
- Try to keep the home free from items like newspapers and cardboard that could be set alight.
- **Make sure that the home is fitted with smoke alarms** - where a child or young person has displayed fire setting behaviour, it is recommended that a smoke alarm is fitted in each room, including the child or young person's bedroom, but not the bathroom, toilet, or kitchen. A smoke alarm will alert you to any fire setting activity quickly and give you extra time to escape safely.
- Test the smoke alarms monthly by pressing the test button.
- Change the battery once a year (unless it is a ten year battery) or when you need to i.e. when the low battery warning sounds (a quiet, intermittent bleep).
- Make an escape plan with your family and practise it so that everyone knows what to do if there is a fire in the home.
- If a fire happens:
  - Get out.
  - Stay out.
  - Get the Fire Brigade out.

For further advice, contact our switchboard on 020 8555 1200

## Appendix 2 – FIS minimum training requirements – central team

| Attendance required |                 |            |               | Module  | Requirement | Refresher |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|---|-------------|-----------|
| FIS manager         | Lead caseworker | Caseworker | Administrator |   |             |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          | ✓             | Motives and classification of firesetting behaviour                   | M           |           |
|                     | ✓               | ✓          |               | Understanding transitions   | M           |           |
|                     | ✓               | ✓          | ✓             | Child protection including domestic violence                          | M           | M         |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          | ✓             | Information sharing and <i>Working Together to Safeguard Children</i> | M           | M         |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          | ✓             | Designated person training  | M           | M         |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          |               | Impact of parental drug and alcohol abuse                             | M           |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          | ✓             | Working with difficult, dangerous and evasive families                | M           |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          |               | Common Assessment Framework (CAF)                                     | M           |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          | ✓             | Recognising self-harm   | M           |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          | ✓             | Family mental ill –health   | M           | M         |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          |               | Child development   | M           |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          |               | Attachment theory   | M           | M         |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          |               | Learning through play and the use of the senses                       | M           | M         |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          |               | Working with troubled teenagers                                       | M           |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          | ✓             | Pro-social modelling and offending behaviour                          | M           | M         |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          |               | Understanding gang culture  | M           |           |

| Attendance required |                 | Module     |               |   |  | Requirement | Refresher |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|---|--|-------------|-----------|
| FIS manager         | Lead caseworker | Caseworker | Administrator |   |  |             |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          |               | Risk, need and responsibility (RNR)                       |  |             |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          |               | Defensible decision making                                |  |             |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          | ✓             | Working with children with SEN, including Autism and ADHD |  |             |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          | ✓             | Health and safety   |  |             |           |
| ✓                   | ✓               | ✓          |               | Lone worker   |  |             |           |
|                     |                 |            | ✓             | Personal safety at work                                   |  |             |           |

**Key:** **M** = Mandatory      **R** = Required

## Appendix 3 - Firesetting intervention scheme (FIS) - risk assessment for visits to children and their families

| LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT FOR FIS CASE WORKERS ON EXTERNAL VISITS |  |  |                                    |                |   |   |        |   |  |  |  |                |   |   |        |
|--|--|--|------------------------------------|----------------|---|---|--------|---|--|--|--|----------------|---|---|--------|
|  |  |  |                                    | Initial rating |   |   |        |   |  |  |  | Amended rating |   |   |        |
| No   | Hazard   | Risk   | Person at risk                     | Sev            | L | R | Rating | Control measure   |  |  |  | Sev            | L | R | Rating |
| 1  | Health and safety of the caseworkers on visits to client's home or other external locations. | Violence, threatening behaviour or abduction which can lead to physical injury and emotional distress. | Caseworker or any one in the home. | 3              | 3 | 9 | M      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarisation with Lone Working Policy and follow guidance on using the lone working device issued to individuals in team</li> <li>• Initial FIS visits are carried out at the client's home by two caseworkers. Subsequent visits are booked at schools or other similar locations and carried out by one caseworker. If the Parent/Guardian requests all visit to be at the home, the caseworker must risk assess this and decide if these need to be carried out by one or two caseworkers.</li> <li>• The caseworkers record the locations, times, and details of all visits in their Outlook calendar. All members of the team can access these details at any time.</li> <li>• Every caseworker has a Brigade mobile telephone. The FIS administrator monitors and records the safe arrival and departure of caseworkers on client visits. If a caseworker fails to check in/out at the scheduled time, attempts to contact them on their mobile and the client's phone numbers are made.</li> <li>• Caseworkers issued with a personal safety device - (MySOS) to be carried with them at all times. The device features an SOS alarm function linking the user directly to an Incident Management Centre. On actuation of the alarm an audio channel is automatically opened to allow dialogue at the scene to be monitored and recorded. Additionally, global positioning locates the person so that assistance can quickly be directed.</li> </ul> |  |  |  | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      |

| LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT FOR FIS CASE WORKERS ON EXTERNAL VISITS |  |   |                |                |   |   |        |  |  |  |  |                |   |   |        |
|--|--|---|----------------|----------------|---|---|--------|--|--|--|--|----------------|---|---|--------|
|  |  |   |                | Initial rating |   |   |        |  |  |  |  | Amended rating |   |   |        |
| No   | Hazard   | Risk  | Person at risk | Sev            | L | R | Rating | Control measure  |  |  |  | Sev            | L | R | Rating |
|  |  |   |                |                |   |   |        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caseworkers have been advised to terminate the visit and call 999 if they are in an emergency situation where there is risk.</li> <li>• Conduct research and speak to social services to identify if there is a history of complaints made regarding violent behaviour.</li> <li>• If there are any concerns for safety, arrange the visit to take place at a school, Youth Offending Team office or other similar, neutral location</li> </ul> |  |  |  |                |   |   |        |
| 2  | Inappropriate conduct towards case workers by anyone present at visit (i.e. sexual advances, inappropriate comments , attempt to find out personal details of case workers). | Physical, emotional harm to caseworker.                               | Case worker.   | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caseworker to terminate the visit and contact the police if they are threatened.</li> <li>• Caseworkers are instructed to never give their personal information to any client. Report any inappropriate behaviour during visits to the FIS manager.</li> </ul>  |  |  |  | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      |
| 3  | Allegation of inappropriate behaviour against caseworkers by any person present during the visit.  | Professional reputation impacted and emotional upset for case worker. | Caseworker.    | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caseworker to follow guidance in the safeguarding children at risk policy at all times.</li> <li>• Caseworker must ensure there is an adult present in the home before they enter it.</li> </ul>  |  |  |  | 1              | 3 | 3 | L      |

| LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT FOR FIS CASE WORKERS ON EXTERNAL VISITS |   |  |  |                |   |   |        |   |  |  |  |                |   |   |        |
|--|---|--|--|----------------|---|---|--------|---|--|--|--|----------------|---|---|--------|
|  |   |  |  | Initial rating |   |   |        |   |  |  |  | Amended rating |   |   |        |
| No   | Hazard  | Risk   | Person at risk                             | Sev            | L | R | Rating | Control measure   |  |  |  | Sev            | L | R | Rating |
| 4  | Intoxicated person in the home during the visit.  | Client/person may behave unpredictably with violence or become verbally abusive. | Caseworker, child, any person in the home. | 3              | 3 | 9 | M      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If any person appears to be under the influence of drugs/alcohol consider termination of the visit.</li> <li>If there is a risk to the child or young person call the police and follow child protection procedures.</li> </ul>  |  |  |  | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      |
| 5  | Presence of any person known to be excluded from the home/denied access to the family by court order. | Violence, verbal abuse, abduction.   | Family or caseworker.                      | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If a person known to be excluded from the home or denied access to the family by court order is present, caseworker to terminate visit, call the police and inform the FIS manager.</li> </ul>   |  |  |  | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      |
| 6  | Any member of the household smoking during the visit.   | Passive smoking, unpleasant, sore eyes.  | Caseworker.                                | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caseworker to politely ask them to stop smoking, smoke in a different area or consider terminating the visit.</li> </ul>   |  |  |  | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      |
| 7  | Visiting an area known as high risk for crime.  | Violence, verbal abuse, theft.   | Caseworker.                                | 3              | 3 | 9 | M      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan journey to and from the visit and research the area. Caseworker to ensure their mobile is fully charged before the visit and check in and out with the central team on time.</li> <li>Ensure personal safety device (MySOS) is carried on visits and avoid wearing or displaying valuables. Park vehicle in a well lit area on main roads where possible.</li> <li>Do not make mobile telephones visible and lock vehicles securely.</li> </ul> |  |  |  | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      |
| 8  | Scald injury caused by hot drinks.  | Injury to caseworker.  | Caseworker or clients.                     | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep hot drinks out of reach of children at all times. Caseworker to report any injuries to themselves to the FIS manager.</li> </ul>  |  |  |  | 1              | 3 | 3 | L      |

| LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT FOR FIS CASE WORKERS ON EXTERNAL VISITS |   |   |                |                |   |   |        |   |  |  |  |                |   |   |        |
|--|---|---|----------------|----------------|---|---|--------|---|--|--|--|----------------|---|---|--------|
|  |   |   |                | Initial rating |   |   |        |   |  |  |  | Amended rating |   |   |        |
| No   | Hazard  | Risk  | Person at risk | Sev            | L | R | Rating | Control measure   |  |  |  | Sev            | L | R | Rating |
| 9  | Aggressive pets/bite/allergy.   | Injury to case worker, allergic reaction.   | Caseworker.    | 3              | 3 | 9 | M      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request prior/during the visit that pets are excluded from the meeting room. Consider termination of visit if this does not occur. Report all bites or allergic reactions to FIS manager.</li> </ul> |  |  |  | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      |
| 10   | Slips, trip and fall hazards (e.g. loose carpets).  | Physical harm to case worker.   | Caseworker.    | 3              | 3 | 9 | M      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caseworkers to be mindful of possible hazards and exercise due caution. Caseworker to wear appropriate, professional clothing and footwear. Report incidents to FIS manager</li> </ul>               |  |  |  | 1              | 2 | 2 | L      |
| 11   | Exposure to contagious infections (e.g. flu, contagious skin conditions, chicken pox, shingles, impetigo).  | Illness, allergic reaction, spread of infection to caseworker.                        | Caseworker.    | 3              | 3 | 9 | M      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If on arrival the caseworker observes the client to have symptoms of contagious infectious, consider terminating and rearranging the visit. Report these to the FIS manager.</li> </ul>              |  |  |  | 2              | 2 | 4 | L      |
| 12   | Exposure to environmental conditions and substances which are unhygienic or hazardous (e.g. infestations of rodents, parasites, human or animal excrement, drugs, chemicals). | Illness, allergic reaction, spread of infection, skin irritation, breathing problems. | Caseworker.    | 3              | 3 | 9 | M      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terminate the visit and refer to child protection/adult safeguarding procedure.</li> <li>Avoid skin/eye contact or inhalation of substances. Contact line manager for advice.</li> </ul>             |  |  |  | 2              | 2 | 4 | L      |

| LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT FOR FIS CASE WORKERS ON EXTERNAL VISITS |  |                                       |                |                |   |    |        |   |   |   |   |                |   |   |        |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---|----|--------|---|---|---|---|----------------|---|---|--------|
|  |  |                                       |                | Initial rating |   |    |        |   |   |   |   | Amended rating |   |   |        |
| No   | Hazard   | Risk                                  | Person at risk | Sev            | L | R  | Rating | Control measure   |   |   |   | Sev            | L | R | Rating |
| 13   | Emotional impact of working with vulnerable children in distressing circumstances or with challenging behaviour. | Stress, burn out and mental wellness. | Caseworker.    | 3              | 4 | 12 | M      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workload and severely emotionally challenging cases are monitored by the FIS manager at one to one meetings and peer support is available. Caseworkers attend monthly individual clinical supervision meetings. They can also arrange to access the Brigade Advisory and Wellbeing Service individually if necessary.</li> </ul> | 2 | 3 | 6 | L              |   |   |        |

\*although many of these risks are specific to case workers on external visits, some will apply to clients seen at Brigade HQ aswell.

| LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT FOR BRIGADE VISITS TO LFB LOCATION |                                    |                              |                |                |   |   |        |   |   |   |   |                |   |   |        |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---|---|--------|---|---|---|---|----------------|---|---|--------|
|   |                                    |                              |                | Initial rating |   |   |        |   |   |   |   | Amended rating |   |   |        |
| No  | Hazard                             | Risk                         | Person at risk | Sev            | L | R | Rating | Control measure   |   |   |   | Sev            | L | R | Rating |
| 1   | Unsupervised children in building. | Accident or injury to child. | Client/Child.  | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children are to be accompanied at all times by their parent(s)/guardian(s) or member of the FIS team.</li> <li>At the time of referral, all families are advised that no crèche facilities are available at LFB locations and only children taking part in the session should be brought to the building.</li> <li>FIS staff will not accept responsibility for, or supervise, children who are not part of the FIS session.</li> <li>If a parent/guardian arrives for a visit with children who are not part of session and are unable to provide supervision outside of LFB location, the visit will be cancelled and rescheduled for another time.</li> </ul> | 1 | 2 | 2 | L              |   |   |        |

| LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT FOR BRIGADE VISITS TO LFB LOCATION |   |                 |                |                |   |   |        |   |  |  |  |
|---|---|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---|---|--------|---|--|--|--|
|   |   |                 |                | Initial rating |   |   |        | Amended rating  |  |  |  |
| No  | Hazard  | Risk            | Person at risk | Sev            | L | R | Rating | Control measure   |  |  |  |
|   |   |                 |                |                |   |   |        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children needing to use the toilet facilities are to be accompanied by their parent/guardian.</li> </ul>   |  |  |  |
| 2   | Meeting rooms used for sessions which are not designed for children to carry out activities in. | Physical injury | Client/ child. | 2              | 3 | 6 | L      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All electrical sockets are to be covered and sharp edges e.g. furniture are to be taken into consideration when arranging the layout of the room.</li> </ul> |  |  |  |

- These risk assessments are dynamic and need to be assessed at every visit.
- Staff instructed to report all incidents and near misses to their line manager who will complete an injury/accident event report.

L=Likelihood S=Severity R=Risk

**RISK** = SEVERITY x LIKELIHOOD

**Rating** : H= High M=Medium

# Document history

## Assessments

An equality, sustainability or health, safety and welfare impact assessment and/or a risk assessment was last completed on:

|     |          |      |              |       |          |    |    |
|-----|----------|------|--------------|-------|----------|----|----|
| EIA | 09/04/10 | SDIA | L - 05/01/10 | HSWIA | 29/03/18 | RA | NA |
|-----|----------|------|--------------|-------|----------|----|----|

## Audit trail

Listed below is a brief audit trail, detailing amendments made to this policy/procedure.

| Page/para nos.     | Brief description of change   | Date       |
|--------------------|---|------------|
| Page 10, para 10.3 | Reference to DPA updated to data protection law.                                      | 23/06/2022 |
| Throughout         | Changes made throughout the document to remove out of date references.                | 02/12/2024 |
| Page 1             | Policy title amended to read 'Firesetting' instead of 'Firesetters' .                 | 07/03/2025 |
| Page 8             | Reference to cancelled PN0621 -Information sharing arrangements replaced with PN0351. | 10/02/2026 |

## Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

|                                 |              |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Firesetting Intervention Scheme | Young people |
| FIS                             | Prevention   |
| Fire Setting                    |              |
|                                 |              |
|                                 |              |

## Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

| Considered by:<br>(responsible work team) | FOIA exemption | Security marking classification |
|---|----------------|---------------------------------|
|   |                |                                 |
|   |                |                                 |