

Youth Engagement and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

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This Info Sheet is designed to highlight youth engagement programmes and partnership opportunities with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). Currently the SFRS have 4 youth engagement services available depending on local partnerships, funding and need. All programmes are supported by their own procedures and governance.

Other ad-hoc or local level partnership programmes may be available depending on capacity and local planning. Our overarching aim is to reduce service demand and to work with partners to create opportunities to improve life chances and empower young people to work together for a safer Scotland.

FireSkills

FireSkills is a fully flexible programme for those aged 12-18, consisting of a range of sessions based on firefighter drills, adapted to provide a unique learning experience for children. Sessions contain links to Curriculum for Excellence and can be delivered for a duration of up to 35 hours to suit local need. It is intended that (SFRS) personnel will work closely with partner agencies to identify local needs and select the appropriate sessions to meet these.

With prior consent and willingness from the young person, partners such as Education, Social Work, Police Scotland, voluntary organisations and Community Learning & Development will refer young people onto this programme. SFRS aim to develop core skills, including problem solving techniques and CPR awareness through a series of drill ground activities.

FireSkills will usually take place during school hours and children will be supported by a member of staff from the referring agency. The FireSkills programme has been designed to suit a wide range of learners and there are no pre-requisites for entry on to the programme. Some of the key skills that our programmes try to develop in young people include:

- Team-working and team-leading
- Self-discipline skills
- Problem-solving techniques
- Confidence and communication
- Improved physical capability
- Citizenship skills
- An awareness of health and safety
- An understanding of the contribution that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and other agencies make to our communities
- Basic first aid skills

FireSkills Employability Award (FEA)

Building on the sessions from FireSkills, the FireSkills Employability Award has been developed in partnership with Ayrshire College and demonstrates the SFRS commitment to providing the best opportunities for young people by providing formal recognition of their achievement. The FireSkills Sessions have undergone the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Credit and Levelling process to become a recognised accredited learning programme, providing 4 credit points at level 4.

For more info contact SFRS.youthengagement@firescotland.gov.uk or visit our [website](#)

This enables learners to:

- Build a portfolio of evidence based on activities within informal education settings;
- Identify transferrable skills and recognise prior learning for further education and employment opportunities.

The FEA has been designed to suit a wide range of learners and there are no prerequisites for entry on to the programme. However, because of the delivery level it is suggested this programme would be best suited for those 14 years and over. It can be delivered in any environment by Fire and Rescue personnel as long as the set criteria for the programme are adhered to with all the learning outcomes undertaken and successfully achieved.

Fire Safety Support and Education

The SFRS work in partnership to deliver Fire Safety Support and Education (FSSE) to those under the age of 18. Through a programme of tailored interventions, FSSE offers a flexible approach to assist in the education of those who demonstrate an unsafe interest in fire or fire related anti-social behaviour, including deliberate fire setting, malicious actuation of fire alarm systems, hoax calls, hydrant abuse and attacks on personnel.

When referred to the programme a trained Fire Safety Advisor or coordinator will make contact with the referrer to arrange a visit with the child. A meeting will usually take place in the home but can be delivered where the child feels most comfortable. Typically the SFRS Fire Safety Advisors will offer up to 3 sessions but depending on circumstances this may be reduced or extended based on an individual's circumstances. A Home Fire Safety visit will be offered to the home of the child to ensure working smoke detectors are within the premises.

Youth Volunteer Scheme

SFRS Youth Volunteer Scheme (YVS) is a national youth initiative that creates opportunities for children aged 12-18 to work together for a Safer Scotland. The main objective of YVS is to provide a safe, welcoming, enjoyable and fun environment where young people can learn as individuals, develop positive relationships and actively work together for a safer Scotland. The scheme provides a great opportunity for children across Scotland to develop their skillset and make a valuable contribution to their local communities, whilst gaining a unique insight into life at a working fire station.

By participating in the programme, children will have a practical understanding of the SFRS and play a supportive role in their communities as SFRS youth volunteers, supporting development and enhancing interpersonal skills and confidence.

All our staff, volunteers and youth volunteers play a crucial role in making Scotland safer. Being part of SFRS is a rewarding experience and many of the people who contribute to our shared vision share a strong sense of belonging and commitment. People who represent the SFRS are widely viewed as role models within our communities. Youth Volunteers will develop this representation to ensure that our future engagement continues to promote safer communities whilst developing our young citizens' skills for life, learning and work, promoting fairness and equality through active participation and engagement opportunities.

The YVS is not about recruiting future firefighters and we cannot guarantee any further employment or involvement in SFRS. However, what we can guarantee is that we will offer as much support and guidance as possible to those with an interest in the Service and anyone who participates in this scheme will grow in confidence and be equipped with improved life skills as they volunteer as young ambassadors for SFRS.

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