**Video Identification Parade Electronic Recordings (VIPER):**

**What To Expect**

**A guide for adults supporting a child or young person**

**Supporting children and young people through a VIPER**

As the child or young person you support or care for may have seen someone who broke the law, they might be able to confirm who they are for us. They can do this by watching a VIPER – which means video identification parade electronic recording.

We understand this can be worrying for them and for you. So we will do everything we can to make the process as easy as possible.

This leaflet explains:

* what a VIPER is
* what will happen
* what the child or young person will need to do
* how you can support them.

If you have any other questions you can get in touch by calling 101 and asking for the officer in charge of the case. We’ll also contact you before the VIPER to talk things over.

**What is an Identification Parade?**

This is when someone looks at a group of people similar in age and appearance to the person they described in their statement. Then they see if they can pick out who they saw.

**What is a VIPER?**

A VIPER is an identification parade that is a short film.

The person helping the police watches it on a TV or laptop, and it is about three minutes long. It includes up to nine video clips of different people. One of the clips may be of the person they told us about in their statement.

Each person in the film is in front of a grey background. They turn their head from left to right. Everyone in the film does this the same way.

Then the person watching decides if the person they told us about in their statement is in the film.

**Who should support a child or young person?**

Children and young people can bring an adult they trust to the VIPER to support them. That person must be able to reassure them about what’s happening before, during and after.

If the adult they want to bring is also helping the police in this case, you will need to ask somebody else they trust to support them.

**How to support them**

It is natural for a child or young person to feel nervous or anxious about watching a VIPER. It may also be stressful for you if you are worried it will upset them.

All the members of our team understand this. So they will always take your worries into account. They will support you both along the way and can give you advice on how to support the child or young person.

***Read their leaflet with them***

We will give the child or young person a leaflet similar to this one. It is a good idea for you, or another adult they trust, to read it with them. This will help them understand what will happen, and you or the other adult can explain anything they are not sure about.

***Let us know what they need***

Before the VIPER, we will ask whether the child or young person needs any extra support. This can be things like having to do the VIPER around school or in a specific place, if they need an interpreter or they have any special needs. For example, if they cannot recognise numbers we can label the video clips they will watch with letters or shapes instead.

Let us know about anything that will make the child or young person’s experience easier, and we will do our best to arrange it.

***Tell them there is no pressure***

VIPERs can be daunting and confusing – especially for children and young people. So it is important to reassure them they can just tell us if they get mixed up or overwhelmed, or if they do not recognise anyone.

They only need to pick someone from the film if they recognise them as the person they mentioned in their statement.

***Try to manage your feelings***

We understand you may be upset, scared, nervous or angry that the child or young person has been affected by a crime. If you do, it is really important they do not pick up on this as it could affect how they feel.

It is a good idea to focus on the fact that you are there to support them, and make the process as easy for them as you can.

**Where will the VIPER be?**

Usually, we ask people to come to a police station for the VIPER. If this might be a problem, please let us know.

**What will happen at the VIPER?**

One of our team will meet you both at reception and take you to the room where the child or young person can watch the film.

First of all, the person running the VIPER will:

* explain how it works
* explain what the child or young person will see
* tell them what they need to do.

Next, we will ask you both to confirm who you are so we have a record of everyone who came to the VIPER.

Then we will show the child or young person the film.

If there is anything you or they want to ask before the VIPER, tell the person showing the film.

**Who will be at the VIPER?**

As well as you and the child or young person, there will be:

* two members of our identification team to show the film and take notes
* the lawyer working for the person we think broke the law – they won’t ask any questions, they just need to see what happens and make sure everything is fair
* anyone else the child or young person needs – like an interpreter.

**Will the child or young person see anyone they are scared of there?**

They will not meet the person they told us about or see them face to face. But they may see them in one of the video clips in the film.

If they are worried about seeing other people involved in the same case, let us know. We will do our best to make sure they are not doing their VIPER at the station at the same time.

**What if they get confused or upset?**

We know VIPERs can be stressful and sometimes upsetting. Our team will always do their best to support children and young people throughout.

If at any point the child or young person wants to stop or ask a question, they can let us know.

We will answer any questions they have and make sure they understand what’s happening.

We will also try to reassure them and give them time to see if they feel better and are ok to carry on. They can take as much time as they need to watch the film.

**How long will the VIPER take?**

The whole process usually takes about 10 minutes. It could take longer if the child or young person wants to watch the film more than twice or needs more time.

**What happens next?**

After the VIPER, the team will explain what happens next. For example, this could be hearing from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) about the next steps in the case.

We will show you both out of the office so you know where to go, and to make sure the child or young person does not talk about the video with anyone else. Then we will pass details of what they told us to the officer in charge of the case.

If the child or young person was too confused or upset to finish the VIPER, the team will record that and let COPFS know. COPFS will decide what happens next in the case.

If the child or young person needs any extra support after the VIPER, our team will do their best to help or let you know who else can help. For example, the Victim Advice Line or Victim Support Scotland.

**Any other questions?**

We want to make the VIPER as easy as possible for the child or young person involved. So if they or you have any questions, please let us know.

You can call 101 or speak to the officer in charge of the case.

For more help and support, view this leaflet online, or to view in other languages, please

Visit [www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/viper](http://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/viper) or scan the below QR code and to read about the service you can expect from us,please visit www.scotland.police.uk/victimsandwitnesses.