

## **HMIPS Research Ethical Principles**

Ethical principles inform all our research activities. These activities include surveys, interviews, focus groups, secondary analysis of data, other desk-based research and the use of data to inform our practice.

All HMIPS staff, volunteer Independent Prison Monitors and guest inspectors conducting research activities must adhere to our ethical principles.

### **1. Informed consent**

We obtain full informed consent from individuals who take part in research activities. We provide participants with information about:

- the nature and purpose of the research activity
- how they have been selected
- what is involved and how much time it will take
- confidentiality and anonymity
- how the information they provide will be used and stored

### **2. Confidentiality and anonymity**

Information obtained from research activities remains confidential and is protected from loss or theft and unauthorised access, use, disclosure or modification by others. Individuals remain anonymous and the information they provide is not used in a way that leads to their identification. However, we have a duty to pass on safeguarding and child protection concerns to an appropriate person.

### **3. Voluntary participation**

Participation in our research activities is voluntary. Individuals have the right to withdraw at any time until a report has been published and can choose not to answer questions, without repercussions.

### **4. Enabling participation**

We make every effort to respect and accommodate the needs of individuals in terms of language, accessibility, availability and any other equality and diversity considerations, to ensure that they are included in our research activities.

## **5. Well-being of participants**

We anticipate and protect the well-being (physical, social and psychological), rights, privacy, and dignity of individuals in all research activities we conduct. We make every effort to ensure that individuals are not harmed or adversely affected during, or as a result of, participation in a research activity. For sensitive research, we offer support, highlight other help available and follow-up with participants. We do everything possible to prevent reprisals for individuals who take part in a research activity.

## **6. Professional conduct**

All HMIPS staff, volunteer Independent Prison Monitors and guest inspectors are expected to work in accordance with our values and maintain a high standard of professional conduct at all times.

## **7. Researcher safety, well-being and security**

The well-being of HMIPS staff, volunteer Independent Prison Monitors and guest inspectors is paramount and support is available when needed. All staff obtain security clearance and complete training on safety, security and personal protection. Staff adhere to the specific security and safety requirements of the establishments we inspect and monitor.

## **8. Data protection/retention**

We comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). A clear and consistent practice for data protection, information security, protective markings, loss of personal or sensitive information, data retention, data storage and the use of data is in place.

## **9. Ethical governance**

We develop research activities that are designed to generate data that will inform the development of policy and practice. An ethics checklist is completed and signed off by the HMIPS Researcher in advance of any projects involving research activities and for new research activities developed.