

STYLE GUIDELINES



THE BOYS' BRIGADE
> the adventure begins here



What is Style Guidance, why it is important?

When communicating what we do, consistency is important.

The Style Guidelines are designed to help us communicate as one organisation, with a single, recognisable and consistent voice, even when different people are 'talking'.

Please refer to the Style Guidelines when writing or creating any content (emails, website pages, social media posts, training material, programme resources etc). These guidelines should support and compliment our existing Branding Guidelines.



Find our Branding Guidelines at:
<https://boys-brigade.org.uk/our-brand>

'Style' encompasses:

- Our organisational personality
- What our voice sounds like
- The language we prefer to use and its tone

Our style should be reflective of and rooted in our **Object, Vision, Mission and Values**, which provide a wider sense of our identity and purpose.

Faith: We are a Christian youth organisation, and our work is rooted in the Christian Faith. We have a hope in Christ as our anchor that sustains us throughout life (Hebrews 6:19).

Caring: The Boys' Brigade is a family. We believe in building loving, caring and inclusive relationships, as well as creating a safe and fun environment that is supportive and nurturing. We are responsive to the needs and aspirations of others regardless of ability, identity or background.

Inspiring: We seek to inspire children and young people, challenging them to live their lives in the fullest sense. We also believe in people's abilities to inspire and act as positive role models to others.

Trusting: We are honest and trustworthy. We seek to empower children and young people to participate and to lead, believing in their skills, abilities and ideas.



Read more about our Vision, Mission and Values at:
<https://boys-brigade.org.uk/ourvision>

Our organisational personality

We endeavour to communicate through our communications that the BB is:

- Youthful *
- Confident
- Professional
- Principled and values driven
- Friendly and accessible

* Past versus Present . . .

One of the challenges we face is around how often we refer or focus on our past. Celebrating our rich history and heritage is obviously incredibly important and has a valuable place in our communications. It can be important for connecting with some of our leaders, emphasising our credentials / organisational experience with funders, or could be an effective way of engaging with former BB members (alumni).

However, for those with no BB background there is a risk that it may come across that we are more interested in our past than our present (or future). Also, what does it say to children and young people today if we spend too much time reminiscing and celebrating the past?

"In truth, I have found much nostalgia in some quarters, I've looked at so many old photographs of camps, heard about the great events of yesteryear, that I'd want to issue a challenge. Cherish your memories by all means... but don't dwell in the past. Don't create a sense among the membership of this generation that things are not as good as they once were. They need leaders who can seize the present moment and squeeze it for all it's worth. Our children and young people are living in perilous times. Today and tomorrow are challenging enough. Measuring themselves against benchmarks from yesterday isn't really helpful."

– Lord Griffiths, Brigade President from 2011-2020

Our voice

Our BB voice defines how we sound, look and feel and is representative of what we believe (values). Our voice should be:

Clear: By writing and communicating clearly and making sure spelling and grammar are correct we ensure that what we say is seen as reliable, trustworthy and professional. The BB commits to speaking in plain English.



The BBC's grammar, spelling and punctuation guide should be used as a reference:
<https://bbc.in/3Sgxnxs>



You can also find out more at:
<https://plainenglish.co.uk>

Accessible: Avoid organisational jargon / lingo and bureaucratic language. However we should recognise that we have a variety of audiences e.g. young people, leaders, Churches, partner organisations, donors etc. Some of our organisational language / jargon may well be useful for internal audiences, but we must remember will make little sense or could even represent a barrier to people with no BB knowledge / background. Where abbreviations are used, they should always be explained in full initially.

Warm and friendly: Avoid being overly formal or fussy. Use chatty, personable and inclusive language to talk about the organisation. For example:

- “we are”, “we have”, “our members”, “join us” and “the BB family”

Confident: To explore and discuss what we do and why, without the need for comparisons with other organisations. For example:

- “We are a Christian youth organisation”
- “We believe it's important that young people have the opportunity to...”

Our use of specific language

Previously used	Preferred internal (including with membership)	Preferred external (including Church communications)
Organisation name: Various, including – the BB, The Boys' Brigade, the Brigade	Organisation name: Various, including – the BB, The Boys' Brigade, the Brigade	The Boys' Brigade and thereafter “the BB”
Boys	Children and young people (Children – Anchors/Juniors, Young people – Company/Seniors)	Children and young people (Children – Anchors/Juniors, Young people – Company/Seniors)
Parent or Guardian	Parent/carers	Parent/carers
Officers	Leaders or volunteer leaders	Leaders or volunteer leaders
Officer-in-Charge	Leader-in-Charge	Leader-in-Charge
Captain	Captain	Group Leader or Senior Volunteer Leader
Company/Companies	Company/Companies (capital “C” but encouraging use of “BB groups (Companies)”)	Groups or local groups
Battalions/Districts	Battalions/Districts (Area Support Networks) – in first instance	Area Support Networks
Brigade Executive	Brigade Executive (Trustees) – in first instance	Brigade's Trustees
Brigade HQ, Felden, Carronvale	BBHQ	BBHQ
Sections	Age groups	Age groups
Anchor Boys	Anchors	Anchors
Junior Section	Juniors	Juniors
Company Section	Company	Company
Senior Section	Seniors	Seniors
Badge work	Programme	Programme
Advanced / Elite Awards	Major Awards	Major Awards
Host Church, venue etc	Church partner	Church partner or partner Church

- When referencing children or young people in our communications (with correct parent/carers consent) we use their first name only, Company name or town. For example “John, 1st Felden”.
- When quoting leaders we use their full name, Company name or town. For example “William Smith, 1st Glasgow”.
- Biblical references are formatted as, for example, “John 10:10”.



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If you have any questions about anything that appears in these guidelines or how to use them, please contact BB Headquarters.

For more details about the elements that make up our brand, including logos and artwork, please visit the web address below.

BOYS-BRIGADE.ORG.UK/OURBRAND