



# **Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**

**Approved by the Brigade Executive 1st June 2019**

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## 1. **Our Commitment**

The Boys' Brigade, as a Christian Youth Organisation, is committed to providing a safe environment in which children and young people can develop socially and emotionally towards mature adulthood.

## 2.A **Code of Good Practice**

2.1 All Leaders must follow the Code of Good Practice for Leaders working in The Boys' Brigade, which is set out in the card that is issued to all Leaders on registration. The current Code states as follows:-

### **"YOU MUST:-**

- *Treat everyone with respect;*
- *Provide an example you wish others to follow;*
- *Plan activities to ensure that there is always more than one Leader present;*
- *Respect a young person's right to personal privacy;*
- *Have separate sleeping accommodation for Leaders and young people;*
- *Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like;*
- *Create an environment where young people feel comfortable to talk to others about any concerns they may have;*
- *Avoid physical play such as wrestling or tickling;*
- *Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned;*
- *Recognise that sensitivity is required in moments when you are discussing issues such as bullying, bereavement, abuse or personal development;*
- *Ensure that at least two adults are present whenever transporting young people in a car or minibus.*

### **YOU MUST NOT:-**

- *Permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying, etc.);*
- *Play physical contact games with young people;*
- *Have any inappropriate verbal or physical contact with young people or make suggestive remarks or gestures;*
- *Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts;*
- *Exaggerate or trivialize child abuse issues;*
- *Show favouritism to any individual;*
- *Rely on just your good name to protect you;*
- *Be friends with or interact with young people on social media.*

## **WHAT HAPPENS IF:-**

### **A. You suspect that a child is being abused, emotionally, physically, or sexually?**

1. Immediately tell your Captain, Minister or other Church Official (or for Church of Scotland Companies, your local Church Safeguarding Coordinator), and inform the Brigade Safeguarding Manager, Boys' Brigade Headquarters, Felden Lodge, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 0BL, and Regional Headquarters.
2. Record the facts as you know them.  
You **must** refer; you **must not** investigate.

### **B. A child discloses abuse to you?**

1. Allow the child to speak without interruption, accepting what is said, but **do not** investigate.
2. Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
3. Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you **must** pass the information on.
4. Immediately tell your Captain, Minister or other Church Official (or for Church of Scotland Companies, your local Church Safeguarding Coordinator), and inform the Brigade Safeguarding Manager, Boys' Brigade Headquarters.
5. Record the facts as you know them.  
You **must** refer; you **must not** investigate.

### **C. You receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself?**

1. Immediately tell your Captain, Minister or other Church Official (or for Church of Scotland Companies, your local Church Safeguarding Coordinator), and inform the Brigade Safeguarding Manager, Boys' Brigade Headquarters.
2. Record the facts as you know them.  
You **must** refer; you **must not** investigate.

***In any situation, if you think that a child is at immediate risk of harm, then contact the police or Children's/Social Services or relevant agency.***

***If you are in any doubt about what to do, contact Brigade Headquarters, 01442 231681, where an emergency number is provided for situations outside of normal office hours. You can also email [safeguarding@boys-brigade.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@boys-brigade.org.uk)***

*The Boys' Brigade operates a whistleblowing policy, which means that you can report a concern without identifying yourself."*

- 2.2 Many churches have their own safeguarding procedures, which are based on denominational 'Safe from Harm' policies and expect all those working with young people to follow those policies. All Leaders are expected to follow the policy of the Church to which the Company is attached as well as those of The Boys' Brigade.

- 2.3 The Boys' Brigade acknowledges that, in its work with children and young people, it has a duty to provide a safe environment in all circumstances, and to ensure that they are protected from any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or harm.
- 2.4 Leaders must ensure that meeting places or locations where children and young people are taken are free from hazards, that proper risk assessments are carried out (see section 3.3 of the Safety Handbook), and that, when any activity is undertaken which involves an element of risk, the person or persons supervising the activity is or are appropriately qualified and/or experienced.

## **2.B The Brigade Executive and Brigade Safeguarding Panels**

- 2.5 The Brigade Executive, as Trustees of the Organisation, will ensure that The Brigade's Safeguarding Policies and procedures are established and maintained in conformity with recognised best practice, with current legislation, and with advice and directions issued by the respective Charity governing bodies.
- 2.6 All matters relating to the Safeguarding of children and young people will be properly and accurately recorded. All records relating to Safeguarding matters will be maintained in a secure, encrypted digital format, and will be retained in perpetuity.
- 2.7 The Brigade Executive will appoint each year a Brigade Safeguarding Panel and a Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel. Members of each Panel will be appointed by the Brigade Executive following an application and interview process approved by the Brigade Executive. Members of each Panel must have appropriate experience and/or qualifications in the Safeguarding of children and young people. The Brigade Executive will appoint annually individuals to Chair the Brigade Safeguarding Panel and the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel.
- 2.8 The Brigade Safeguarding Panel, The Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel, The Brigade Secretary, The Brigade Safeguarding Manager, The Director for Northern Ireland, and the Safeguarding Officer for the Republic of Ireland will meet annually for training, to review the work of the past year, to consider policy, and such other matters as are relevant to their safeguarding work.
- 2.9 Such meetings may be conducted by Skype or by other electronic means.

## **3. Recruitment of Leaders**

- 3.1 Boys' Brigade Regulations govern the appointment of all Leaders working in the name of the Brigade, including those working in Companies, those with responsibilities in Battalions or Districts, Office Bearers and Reserve Officers, and those working at Regional and National level. The detailed Brigade Regulations governing the registration of Leaders and Officials are not reproduced here, but can be found in the Leaders' Handbook and on the Boys' Brigade

website. Copies are also available from Brigade Headquarters and Regional Headquarters.

3.2 The Regulations provide that it is the responsibility of the individual Church to nominate people as potential Leaders. As part of the registration process, the following steps must be taken:-

- A Leader's registration Form must be completed. This can be obtained from Brigade Headquarters, Regional Headquarters, or on the Brigade website;
- The prospective Leader will be interviewed by the Captain and the Church Minister or other Church Official;
- Written references will be obtained from two people who are not related to the Applicant;
- A Disclosure Application form is completed. All categories of Leader will be subject to an enhanced disclosure check.

3.3 The completed Leader Registration Form will be sent to Brigade Headquarters, Felden Lodge, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 0BL.

3.4 On receipt of the application form, Brigade Headquarters will ensure a disclosure check has been obtained from the appropriate agency. The disclosure will include information on any convictions, cautions or investigations not resulting in convictions. Consideration will be given to the information contained in the disclosure and, if all is satisfactory, the Leader will be registered, allocated a registration number and sent a Leader registration card.

3.5 If there is information in the disclosure that indicates, in the judgment of The Brigade Safeguarding Manager, that the individual might not be suitable for registration as a Leader, the Safeguarding Manager will refer the application to the Brigade's Safeguarding Panel, which will then determine, on the basis of the information before it, if it is appropriate that the Applicant be registered as a Leader.

3.6 In the case of a disclosure that contains information that makes it unclear whether or not an individual should be registered, then the application will be referred to the Brigade Safeguarding Panel. Members of the Panel will consider the suitability of the individual, to be registered as a Leader, and conduct a risk assessment based on whether the nature of the information in the disclosure poses any risk to the welfare of children, young people or other adults, or to the reputation of the Brigade, that question to be determined on the balance of probabilities. The Minister of the Church to which the Company is attached will also be involved in this process.

- 3.7 If the Panel and the Church agree that the applicant is suitable to work with children and young people, then Brigade Headquarters will register the individual. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for an individual to be registered for a probationary period, with a date set for review. It may also be the case that an individual may be registered with certain conditions attached (for example that he or she do not drive on Brigade activities, etc.)
- 3.8 An individual whose application for registration is rejected by the Panel, or who is registered for a probationary period, or who has conditions attached to his or her registration, has the right of appeal. The appeal should be made in writing to the Chairman of the Brigade Appeals Panel, Brigade Headquarters, Felden Lodge, and should be made within twenty-eight days of the date of the letter of notification.
- 3.9 The Chairman of the Brigade Appeals Panel may grant permission to appeal against the refusal to register only on the following grounds:-
- a. an error of fact or law on the face of the decision;
  - b. failure to consider relevant evidence, or considering irrelevant or inadmissible evidence;
  - c. the availability of compelling and relevant new evidence that was not available at the initial determination.
- 3.10 If the Chairman of the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel grants permission to appeal, he will refer the case to the members of the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel.
- 3.11 The members of the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel will consider and determine the appeal in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3.9 above, and consider whether the material before it discloses the fact that the Appellant poses any risk to the welfare of children, young people or other adults, or to the reputation of the Brigade, that question to be determined on the balance of probabilities. The Chairman of the Appeals Panel will have absolute discretion as to whether to hold a hearing to consider the appeal, which, if any, evidence to receive, whether to determine the case on the papers, or whether to allow the Appellant to make oral submissions to the Panel, and may give such directions as to the conduct of the appeal as may be appropriate. However, in reaching its conclusion, the Appeal Panel must have regard to any risk assessment carried out in respect of the Appellant, and to the reasoning of the Safeguarding Panel.

3.12 The Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel may conclude that the Applicant should be registered as a Leader, or that he or she should not be registered as a Leader, or that conditions should be attached to the registration. The Chairman of the Appeals Panel will notify the Brigade Secretary of the Panel's decision. The Brigade Secretary, or a person designated on his behalf, will then notify the Appellant of the result of the appeal in writing, and will send copies of the notification to the Company Captain, the Battalion Secretary, the District Secretary, and the Regional Director. No oral indication of the outcome of the appeal will be given to the Appellant on the day of the hearing.

3.13 Under Brigade Regulation 68.13, the Brigade Executive retains the power to review the decisions of all other bodies for which the Brigade has responsibility, including the Brigade Safeguarding Panel and the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel. If any decision by the Brigade Safeguarding Panel or the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel is to be reviewed by the Brigade Executive, it must refer the matter to a group of at least three external independent individuals who are experienced and/or qualified to deal with Safeguarding matters, who will review all of the material considered by the Brigade Safeguarding Panel and the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel, and will report its conclusions and recommendations to the Executive, which will then decide the outcome of the review. The Brigade Secretary, or a person designated on his behalf, will then notify the Applicant of the result of the review in writing, and will send copies of the notification to the Company Captain, the Battalion Secretary, the District Secretary, and the Regional Director.

#### **4. Training of Leaders**

- 4.1 All new Leaders, when first starting work within a Company, will receive induction and instruction in Safeguarding processes from the Company Captain or other delegated person. This induction will include emergency procedures and an explanation of the Code of Good Practice for Adults working in The Boys' Brigade. The new Leader will be issued with the Code of Good Practice card.
- 4.2 The Boys' Brigade requires all Lieutenants and Captains to undertake Youth Leader Training prior to their appointment. A Warrant Officer must complete Youth Leader Training by the end of the first complete session following appointment.
- 4.3 Any registered helpers taking responsibility for groups of young people must have completed satisfactorily a Child Protection and Safety training module.
- 4.4 Captains will be sent the Safeguarding Policy and guidelines on appointment, and should familiarise themselves with all aspects of it,

particularly the duty to make reports in appropriate situations. Captains must ensure that they remain informed and familiar with current Brigade Safeguarding Policies and procedures, and must ensure that Leaders in the Company are kept fully informed of these Policies and Procedures.

- 4.5 It is a Captain's responsibility to ensure that Leaders attend the appropriate Boys' Brigade training and that Leaders also attend any additional training that may be required by the Church.
- 4.6 It is a Captain's responsibility to ensure that any Young Leaders in the Company are protected by the same standards of care as other young people and that they attend the appropriate training.

## **5. Understanding abuse and maltreatment**

- 5.1 There are many different forms of child abuse, the main categories being physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect. The NSPCC website [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) has more information about the types of abuse and recognising the signs of abuse or neglect.
- 5.2 Some children are in situations that make them more vulnerable to abuse. These situations could include living in care or in violent or abusive homes, having disabilities or learning disabilities, their sexuality, using drugs or alcohol or living with parents or carers who use drugs and alcohol, and living with mental health problems.
- 5.3 Common Misunderstandings:-

*"Children often fantasise or make up stories about being abused. They have very active imaginations"*

In fact it is extremely rare for children to lie or make up stories about being sexually abused. The far bigger problem is that children are often too frightened to tell anyone. Abusers often tell their victims that no one will believe them if they report what has happened.

*"Disabled children are less likely to be abused."*

Actually, disabled children are more likely to be abused because they are more vulnerable, dependent on others and may be less able to communicate what has happened to them.

*"Child abusers have deprived backgrounds and are of below average intelligence."*

Abusers come from a very wide range of social and intellectual backgrounds and may be well liked and respected members of society. Although a minority of women abuse children, the majority of abusers are male. Many people want to be able to identify a category of individuals who are more likely to abuse children. In fact, there is no 'type' of person who is an abuser - they come from every class, professional, racial and religious background. They are both heterosexual and homosexual. They are also often very skilled at manipulating people and situations, at creating trust and respect within their community and profession. Most children and young people who are abused know the person who abuses them.

*"Children are always safe in groups."*

This is not always true: young children have, for example, been sexually assaulted in nursery school while other adults and children were present.

## **6. Allegations and disclosures of abuse or maltreatment**

### Procedure following allegations or suspicion of abuse by a Leader

- 6.1 All allegations of abuse or suspicions of abuse concerning Leaders must be referred immediately and directly to the Company Captain.
- Where a Captain has received an allegation of abuse or there is a suspicion of abuse, the Captain must immediately notify:-
- a. In Scotland, The Brigade Safeguarding Manager, Brigade Headquarters, Felden Lodge, and the relevant Church Safeguarding Officer;
  - b. in England and Wales, The Brigade Safeguarding Manager, Brigade Headquarters;
  - c. in Northern Ireland, The Brigade Safeguarding Manager, or the Director for Northern Ireland, Newport, 117 Culcavey Road, Hillsborough, BT26 6HH who will then report the details to The Brigade Safeguarding Manager;
  - d. in the Republic of Ireland, The Brigade Safeguarding Manager, or the appointed Safeguarding Officer, Unit C1, Nutgrove Office Park, Nutgrove Avenue, Rathfarnham, Dublin, who will report the details to The Brigade Safeguarding Manager.
- 6.2 All allegations/suspicions are to be referred to the appropriate Brigade official, as set out in paragraph 6.1 above, no matter how insignificant they seem to be, or when they occur. The Brigade

Safeguarding Manager should always be notified of allegations, even when they occur in non-Brigade settings.

- 6.3 If the Captain is implicated, the matter must be referred directly to The Brigade Safeguarding Manager, Brigade Headquarters, Felden Lodge, and to the Minister or Church Official.
- 6.4 No investigation or questioning is to be undertaken by the Leader to whom any allegation of abuse is made.
- 6.5 If the situation is immediately critical, Brigade Headquarters should be contacted on 01442 231681. If contact is made 'out of hours', the Brigade answerphone message has details of the 'out of hours' contact telephone number. If advice from Brigade Headquarters cannot be accessed then the Captain and/or the Minister or Church Official may decide to contact the police or social services if they feel that a child/children is/are at risk. Boys' Brigade Headquarters should be informed as soon as possible at the start of the next working day.
- 6.6 Any individual under suspicion, or against whom an allegation or complaint has been made may be suspended by the Brigade Secretary or a person appointed on his behalf, until the conclusion of any investigations. A letter informing the individual of his or her suspension will be sent from the Brigade Secretary or a person designated on his behalf, and copies sent to the Captain, Minister, Battalion Secretary and Regional Director.
- 6.7 While under suspension a Leader may not attend or be involved in any Boys' Brigade activities at Company, Battalion, District, Regional or National level.
- 6.8 The Brigade Safeguarding Manager will refer the case to the Brigade's Safeguarding Panel to undertake a risk assessment. Members of the Panel will conduct that risk assessment based on whether the nature of the information in the disclosure poses any risk to the welfare of children, young people or other adults, or to the reputation of the Brigade. The Minister of the Church to which the Company is attached will also be involved in this process. The Panel will consider all the information available, and will offer the Leader the opportunity of being interviewed by members of the Panel. If the Panel concludes that the Leader's registration should be cancelled, the Brigade Secretary, or a person designated on his behalf, will inform him or her in writing, and will notify the Company Captain, Chaplain, Battalion Secretary, District Secretary, and Regional Director. If the Panel concludes that the Leader's registration should continue, it may impose such conditions as it deems to be appropriate in the circumstances of the case.

- 6.9 Support for the suspended leader, and for any other parties involved is the responsibility of the Church. Brigade Headquarters must remain neutral while investigations are carried out, and cannot offer any pastoral support to those individuals under investigation, but would look to the Church to fulfill this role.
- 6.10 Where a Leader's registration has been suspended, cancelled, or where conditions have been imposed on continuing registration, the Leader may appeal against the suspension, cancellation, or the imposition of the conditions. The Notice of Appeal must be in writing and addressed to the Chairman of the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel, Felden Lodge, within twenty-eight days of the date of the said letter of notification. The Notice of Appeal must specify the grounds on which the appeal is sought.
- 6.11 The Chairman of the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel may grant permission to appeal against the suspension, cancellation of registration or the imposition of the conditions only on the following grounds:-
- a. an error of fact or law on the face of the decision;
  - b. failure to consider relevant evidence, or considering irrelevant or inadmissible evidence;
  - c. the availability of compelling and relevant new evidence that was not available at the initial hearing.
- 6.12 If the Chairman of the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel grants permission to appeal, he will convene a hearing of the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel.
- 6.13 The members of the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel will consider and determine the appeal in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6.10 above, and consider whether the material before it discloses the fact that the Appellant poses any risk to the welfare of children, young people or other adults, or to the reputation of the Brigade, that question to be determined on the balance of probabilities. The Chairman of the Appeals Panel will have absolute discretion as to whether to hold a hearing to consider the appeal, which, if any, evidence to receive, whether to determine the case on the papers, or whether to allow the Leader to make oral submissions to the Panel, and may give such directions as to the conduct of the appeal as may be appropriate. However, in reaching its conclusion, the Appeals Panel must have regard to any risk assessment carried out in respect of the Appellant, and to the reasoning of the Safeguarding Panel.

- 6.14 The Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel may conclude that the suspension should be lifted, or that the Leader's registration should be cancelled, or that conditions should be imposed upon the registration. The Chairman of the Appeals Panel will notify the Brigade Secretary of the Panel's decision. The Brigade Secretary, or a person designated on his behalf, will then notify the Leader of the result of the appeal in writing, and will send copies of the notification to the Company Captain, the Battalion Secretary, District Secretary, and Regional Director. No oral indication of the outcome of the appeal will be given to the Appellant on the day of the hearing.
- 6.15 Under Brigade Regulation 68.13, the Brigade Executive retains the power to review the decision of all other bodies for which the Brigade has responsibility, including the Brigade Safeguarding Panel and the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel. If any decision by the Brigade Safeguarding Panel or the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel is to be reviewed by the Brigade Executive, it must refer the matter to a group of at least three external independent individuals who are experienced and/or qualified to deal with Safeguarding matters, who will review all of the material considered by the Brigade Safeguarding Panel and the Brigade Safeguarding Appeals Panel, and will report its conclusions and recommendations to the Executive, which will then decide the outcome of the review. The Brigade Secretary, or a person designated on his behalf, will then notify the Applicant of the result of the review in writing, and will send copies of the notification to the Company Captain, the Battalion Secretary, the District Secretary, and the Regional Director.
- 6.16 Captains must inform Brigade Headquarters, the Battalion Secretary and Regional Director whenever a Leader leaves a Company by completing and returning a Leader Resignation form (LREG 8 Form). This form is available from Brigade Headquarters, or Regional Headquarters, and from The Boys' Brigade website.
- 6.17 Where a Leader has left, or been asked to leave for reasons that are connected to child safeguarding matters, it is the Brigade's obligation to refer this to the appropriate regional vetting & barring authority.

#### Procedure Following Suspicion or Disclosure of Abuse Outside The Brigade

- 6.18 If a Leader suspects that a child or young person is being abused emotionally, physically or sexually he or she should tell the Captain, Minister or other Church official and seek further advice from the Brigade Safeguarding Manager, Brigade Headquarters, Felden Lodge.

- 6.19 Any facts that support the suspicion should be recorded.
- 6.20 There should be an agreement with the other adults consulted and Brigade Headquarters what action, if any, should be taken.
- 6.21 If a child discloses abuse by someone else, the Leader should listen without interrupting, note what is said, but must not investigate.
- 6.22 The Leader should advise the child or young person that he or she will try to offer support but that the Leader must pass the information on. The Leader must then tell the Captain and/or Minister or Church Official and seek further advice from Brigade Headquarters. If the Leader considers that the child or young person is at imminent risk of harm, the Leader must report the matter forthwith to the police or Social Services.

## **7. Dealing with the Press**

Where there is an approach by either the local or national press on the subject of child Safeguarding, Captains or other Leaders must refer the enquirer to Brigade Headquarters, Felden Lodge, and must not engage in any discussion with members of the Press about the matter. Brigade Headquarters will inform the relevant Regional Headquarters before issuing a press release relating to that Region. Where a Press Release has been issued, the Captain and the Minister will be sent a copy for their information.

## **8. Bullying**

### **8.1 What is bullying?**

Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over a period of time that intentionally hurts or harms. Bullying constitutes physical and/or emotional abuse. Research confirms the destructive effects of bullying on the lives of children and young people.

Although some can shrug it off, bullying can induce feelings of powerlessness, isolation from others, undermine self-esteem and often convince the victims that they are at fault. For some, it can lead to serious and prolonged distress and long-term damage to their social and emotional development.

Bullying can take many forms and fits into one of two categories: emotionally or physically harmful behaviour. The focus of bullying can be more or less anything that distinguishes an individual and represents a deviation from a presumed 'norm,' for example, size, body shape, hair colour, skin, eyesight, dress, language, or mannerisms. (Care should be taken not to confuse 'bullying' with the wider problems of racism or

sexism or homophobia where unfair treatment or harassment is perpetrated against a group or an individual because of their race, sex or sexual orientation. This type of discrimination is widespread and institutional, and involves the systematic oppression of groups of people.)

Bullying can occur in different ways. It can be one-off or sustained over a period of time. It is damaging in either form. It can be obvious that bullying is taking place, but more often it is surreptitious and subtle. Bullying can be perpetrated by an individual, one on one, or by a group of young people on one individual or on another group. It can include physical violence, damaging or destroying personal property, threats, spreading malicious gossip, rumours and lies, and name-calling. It is increasingly frequently carried out via mobile phones, text messaging, and by using social networking sites.

## 8.2 Prevention.

Effective strategies to combat bullying will include the following:-

- Having clear ground rules for behaviour. Children and young people should be involved in drawing up these rules. Different rules may be required for camps, holidays, and events where Companies are joining together for these activities.
- Including activities and training in the programme that deal with fairness, inclusion, and which themselves are inclusive.
- Having time in the programme when children and young people can talk freely together.
- Informing all Leaders promptly when bullying has been observed.
- Listening carefully and sympathetically to what children and young people are telling you.
- Ensuring that all activities are properly supervised, with 'remote supervision' for periods of free time.
- Informing parents and young people of expected levels of behaviour, and of the sanctions that will be applied where bullying occurs. Consideration could be given to whether a 'Charter of Acceptable Behaviour' should be produced for parents or carers to sign.
- Informing parents promptly where their children or young people are involved in bullying, and engaging them in the process of managing and dealing with the sanctions.
- Sanctions could include exclusion from extra-curricular activities, exclusion from the Company for a period of time, or permanent exclusion.

Ignoring bullying or telling a person to 'just ignore it' or 'don't worry about it' is not an effective or appropriate method of dealing with this real and serious problem, which is increasingly prevalent.

Whilst tackling bullying is difficult, time consuming, and requires a commitment from Leaders to work so that all members of the Company feel safe, relaxed and free from bullying, it is a vitally important area of responsibility, because of the potentially destructive and devastating effects that bullying can have.

Bullying by any individual in The Boys' Brigade is never acceptable. Victims of bullying must be given appropriate sensitive support. However, it must also be recognized that perpetrators should be dealt with sensitively because they are often victims themselves of similar disturbing activity in other areas of their lives.

Further information and support can be found on the Internet, for example, at [www.antibullying.net](http://www.antibullying.net) and [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

## **9. Working with children and young people to enable them to feel safe**

- 9.1 It is part of the purpose of The Brigade to work with children and young people to enable them to assess the risks that face them, both in the Brigade and away from it. The Brigade aims to help them to develop their confidence and ability to manage risk and to be aware of the available sources of help and support. Many of The Brigade's activities include an aspect of risk assessment and management, and Leaders should develop the habit of including young people in routine risk assessments, and discussing with them the other risks that may exist in their lives.
- 9.2 Part of enabling young people to manage risk includes listening to them and knowing how to recognize the signs of when a young person is wanting to talk. The risks that young people may face in their lives include physical, emotional, legal, or financial. Leaders should recognize the importance of self-esteem in young people as a factor in risk management. The Brigade setting can be one of the most important places where self-esteem is built and where positive choices can be encouraged.
- 9.3 Research and experience have clearly demonstrated that most young people significantly underestimate the risks and dangers that are present in many on-line and social networking activities. An effective web-based resource for informing young people of these risks and dangers can be found at [www.thinkyouknow.com](http://www.thinkyouknow.com)
- 9.4 A particular current area of risk is that of grooming and 'sexting'. Leaders should familiarize themselves with these risks and the action that can be taken to advise children and young people of those risks, and the action to be taken when it is suspected that such activity is taking place.

- 9.5 Leaders should also be aware of the possibility of 'peer on peer' sexual, physical and emotional abuse, and should be conscious of how to deal with such activity if it is suspected or reported.

## **10. Safe Working Practices**

The Boys' Brigade Safety Handbook contains guidance and policy on a range of issues connected with safe working practices and can be found on the Brigade website:-

<http://www.boysbrigade.org.uk/safetyhandbook.pdf>.

Leaders are encouraged to review the handbook regularly as the online version is updated as circumstances and legislation change.

Risk assessments are dealt with at section 3 of the Safety Handbook.

Good practice for Trips and holidays are dealt with at section 9 of the Safety Handbook.

### Online and mobile technology

Leaders should make sure they are familiar with the potential risks posed by the Internet and chat rooms for young people. (See the websites below).

### Boundaries

Boys' Brigade Leaders need to be clear about their boundaries and good safeguarding practice when using the Internet and mobile phone technology. Social networking sites can be valuable peer youth work tools in terms of relationship building. However, adult leaders need to remember that as volunteer youth workers, they are in positions of trust, not 'friends' and that the Youth Leader's role is only to be carried out in supervised settings. Clear boundaries about when, where and how Boys' Brigade Leaders carry out their volunteering roles are essential.

Clear boundaries serve two purposes:-

- They protect young people
- They protect the leader from getting into situations that become difficult to manage.

Texting, MSN and networking sites can be useful for sending round messages about events or cancelled meetings etc. but should not be used to develop a separate relationship with young people outside of the Brigade. Websites such as Facebook and Twitter can be good for young people to use among themselves outside of the Brigade, but Leaders should be aware of blurring the boundaries between themselves and the young people they work with. Leaders should not be in one to one online communication with young people outside of Brigade hours.

Care must be taken in using Internet access for Brigade activities. Any PCs or laptops use in The Boys' Brigade should be installed with control software to monitor website viewing and to ensure access is restricted to appropriate sites. Chat rooms on Boys' Brigade Company websites are to be discouraged.

Useful websites:

Internet Watch Foundation:- [www.iwf.org](http://www.iwf.org)

Government Home Office site:- [www.thinkyouknow.com](http://www.thinkyouknow.com)

BBC Home Pages:- [www.bbc.co.uk/chatguide](http://www.bbc.co.uk/chatguide)

Child Exploitation and Online Protection centre:- [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)

Photographs and Videos

Some Companies use photographs and videos of their activities in newsletters, on their websites, and in the local press. It is important to ensure that permission is obtained from the young people concerned and their parents or carers before photographs or videos are used for publicity purposes, or are published. The Brigade Annual Consent Form contains a section about the use of such images.

Care should be taken in the release of information. Addresses of children and young people should never be given. However, in appropriate circumstances, and with the prior consent of the young person concerned and his or her parent or carer, the name of the young person may be used. If any person indicates that he or she does not wish to have a photograph or video published, that wish should be respected and complied with.

Any Leader storing digital images of children or young people on a computer or other electronic media must ensure that the files are held securely and are password protected.

**11. Whistle-blowing and Anonymous Referrals**

- 11.1 If any Leader is concerned by any practice or behaviour of another Leader, he or she must first inform the Captain. The concern must be discussed openly and confidentially, and if the subject matter of the concern involves a potential safeguarding question, the Captain must report the matter to one of the individuals referred to in paragraph 6.1 above. If the concern relates to the Captain, the Chaplain or one of the individuals referred to in paragraph 6.1 above should be informed.
- 11.2 If, for any reason, the Leader is unable or unwilling to speak to the Captain or the Chaplain, or feels that the matter is unresolved, the

Leader should inform one of the individuals referred to in paragraph 6.1 above, with the option of remaining anonymous. This is termed 'whistle-blowing'.