

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

ABOUT BBNI

The Northern Ireland Boys' Brigade (BBNI) is a company limited by guarantee (NI694162) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission Northern Ireland (NIC109663).

The Northern Ireland Boys' Brigade is self-governing and independent of The Boys' Brigade UK & RoI.

Within BBNI there are over 240 local Boys' Brigade companies. These companies are attached to a church or Christian organisation.

The BBNI companies are grouped together geographically into battalions which run activities and events.

The Northern Ireland Boys' Brigade operates one residential centre, Newport, which is based at its support office in Culcavy.

BBNI DESIGNATED OFFICER

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INTRODUCTION

Children must be kept safe from harm. We have both a legal and a Biblical duty to care for the children and young people in our care.

“Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.” Matthew 18:5

We want to care for children in BBNI not just because it's the law but because children matter to God. Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone in BBNI and the guidance in this document aims to fulfil our legal and moral obligations.

The legal context is provided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which was signed by the UK government in 1991 and the Children (NI) Order 1995 which came into effect in 1996. The Children (NI) Order broadly reflects the ethos of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which sets minimum standards for children and young people's civil, political, social, cultural and economic rights.

Key principles of the Children (NI) Order 1995

- A child is anyone up to 18 years old.
- Paramountcy – we must consider the welfare of a child first when making decisions about him/her.
- Partnership – working in partnership with parents and other relevant agencies as the most effective way to meet a child's needs.
- Prevention – the state must provide support services to keep children safely within their families and to promote their health and welfare.
- Protection – children should be safe and protected by intervention if they are in danger.
- Parental Responsibility – parents have a responsibility to children rather than rights over them.

CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

A child is a person under 18 years old. Where either children or young people are mentioned in the guidelines, both are intended.

A leader is anyone 18 years old or over who is engaged in work or voluntary activity in BBNI which involves regular contact with children or young people.

A young helper is a person aged between 14 and 18 years who assists in BBNI working with children.

A leader in a regulated position is an adult working either as a volunteer or in a paid position, four or more times a year, in direct contact with children or vulnerable adults.

A vulnerable adult is anyone aged 18 or over who cannot take care of themselves. This may be because they have a mental health problem, a disability, visual or hearing problems, are old and frail, or are ill.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY STATEMENT

BBNI is committed to practice which promotes the welfare of children and young people and protects them from harm. This policy is aimed at creating a safe environment where children and young people can enjoy activities that will help them develop socially, emotionally and spiritually.

In order to facilitate this, we have a number of procedures & guidelines to be followed by all leaders:

PROCEDURES

- Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers;
- Effective management of staff and volunteers;
- Reporting concerns, disclosure of abuse and/or allegations.

GUIDELINES

- Code of behaviour for staff and volunteers;
- Sharing information appropriately with parents, children and young people, staff and volunteers;
- General safety and management of activities.

REVIEW

The Trustees of BBNI are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and are committed to reviewing it every annually.

This policy applies to all BBNI companies in Northern Ireland and Donegal.

Date of last review: August 2024

PROCEDURES

SECTION 1: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

BBNI Regulations govern the appointment of all leaders working within BBNI, including those working in companies, battalions, office bearers and reserve officers and those working at BBNI level.

1.1 GUIDANCE FOR RECRUITING COMPANY LEADERS

- 1) All adults working or volunteering in BBNI must be recruited safely **before** they begin working with children or young people. This includes leaders within companies, battalions and/or BBNI and paid staff.
- 2) It is the responsibility of the individual church to appoint leaders for its company, following church recruitment procedures which should include
 - a) an application form including a declaration statement
 - b) an interview/chat with an appropriate person in leadership eg company captain/ chaplain/designated officer
 - c) references obtained from 2 people not related to the potential leader
 - d) approval by church oversight body
 - e) background checks through AccessNI (Enhanced Disclosure Check) or Garda Vetting (Republic of Ireland) for regulated roles
 - f) Appointment
- 3) All adult leader roles within BBNI fall into the category of regulated activity and therefore are subject to Enhanced Disclosure Checks (EDC). These checks may be carried out by the church or BBNI. If completed by the church less than 6 months prior to registering as a leader with BBNI, the check does not need to be repeated, however evidence of this check must be provided to BBNI.
- 4) Young helpers do not require an Enhanced Disclosure Check but should be supervised by an adult who has been checked.
- 5) All leaders appointed by the church are to be registered with BBNI. Registration information is available on the BBNI website.
- 6) All registered leaders will be asked to complete a re-check (EDC) and will be contacted individual when appropriate.
- 7) Full details of the registration process, including an appeals process, are found in The Regulations of The Northern Ireland Boys' Brigade.

Staff and volunteers are appointed initially on a 6 month probation/trial period.

1.2 GUIDANCE FOR RECRUITING BATTALION/BBNI HQ STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

1.2.1 Appointing registered BBNI leaders to Battalion or BBNI HQ roles

- 1) Battalion office bearers should take steps to ensure that volunteers appointed to battalion roles are registered BBNI leaders.
- 2) It is the responsibility of a battalion to recruit any paid members of battalion staff following the procedure in point 1.2.2.
- 3) It is the responsibility of BBNI to recruit staff/volunteers for roles working directly for BBNI. BBNI staff should ensure that volunteers appointed to BBNI roles are registered BBNI leaders.

1.2.2 Appointing unregistered BBNI leaders to battalion or BBNI roles or appointing paid staff

- 1) Additional leaders (ie not registered BBNI leaders) or staff appointed by battalions or BBNI to roles will be subject to background checks through AccessNI/Garda Vetting as appropriate.
- 2) The process will include:
 - a. an application form including a declaration statement
 - b. an interview/chat with an appropriate person in leadership as approved by the Trustees
 - c. references obtained from 2 people not related to the potential volunteer/ staff member, 1 of whom must be their minister.
 - d. approval by oversight body
 - e. background checks through AccessNI (Enhanced Disclosure Check) or Garda Vetting (Republic of Ireland) for regulated roles
 - f. Appointment

1.2.3 Adults helping at camps/ residential

- 1) Any adult attending a camp/ residential to assist with the camp must be registered with BBNI and must complete the BBNI safeguarding training before attending the camp. A guest speaker or activity provider does not have to be registered with BBNI as these people are not attending in a supervisory capacity.

SECTION 2: MANAGEMENT, SUPPORT, SUPERVISION & TRAINING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

2.1 COMPANY LEADERS

- 1) During induction, new leaders should be given instruction on church procedures including safeguarding and emergency procedures.
- 2) BBNI offers leader training for new leaders that includes signposting to safeguarding procedures plus a standalone safeguarding session which is delivered online.
- 3) Opportunities to access safeguarding training will be promoted regularly to all leaders regardless of their role in the company. BBNI safeguarding training should be completed in addition to church safeguarding training.
- 4) Leader training is a requirement for any adult leaders prior to appointment to the role of officer/lieutenant in the company. Helpers aren't required to attend leader training, but it is recommended.
- 5) It is a captain's responsibility to ensure that young helpers are aware of safeguarding issues and church procedures for reporting concerns.
- 6) Captains should supervise and support the leaders in the company including providing opportunities to discuss any difficulties encountered and identifying training needs.
- 7) It is recommended that company leaders are given opportunities to reflect on practice to identify any issues that may need to be addressed. This could be done in small groups or 1:1 with the captain or leader in charge of a section.
- 8) BBNI has a Designated Officer who is responsible for safeguarding in BBNI and is available to support leaders as required. In addition, each church has a designated person responsible for safeguarding. BBNI leaders should ensure they have contact details for both the church Designated Officer and the BBNI Designated Officer.
- 9) Information and relevant updates about safeguarding will be shared on the BBNI website and our social media channels.

2.2 BBNI STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- 1) It is the responsibility of BBNI to provide safeguarding training for new staff and BBNI volunteers and regular update training thereafter.
- 2) All trustees will complete BBNI safeguarding training. Staff/volunteers should be facilitated to discuss their work, and support and supervision issues at regular intervals with their line/volunteer manager.
- 3) Information and relevant updates about safeguarding will be shared on the BBNI website and our social media channels.

SECTION 3: REPORTING CONCERNS, DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE AND/OR ALLEGATIONS

3.1 RECOGNISING ABUSE

Child abuse is when a child is intentionally harmed by an adult or another child – it can be over a period of time but can also be a one-off action. It can be physical, sexual or emotional and it can happen in person or online. It can also be a lack of love, care and attention – this is neglect. (NSPCC)

There are many different forms of abuse. The broad categories of abuse are defined in “Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland” (August 2017):

Physical abuse - deliberate physical injury to a child

Emotional abuse - the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child.

Sexual abuse - when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others.

Neglect – the ongoing failure to meet a child’s basic needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of a child’s health or development.

Exploitation – the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child; to take unfair advantage of a child or situation for personal gain.

Bullying – in its more extreme forms bullying can be regarded as abuse. It can take many forms. It is behaviour, that is usually repeated, by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others. Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF). Leaders can refer to BBNI Anti-Bullying policy for guidance on preventing or handling bullying.

Leaders can refer to the NSPCC website www.nspcc.org.uk for more information about the types of abuse and recognising the signs.

3.2 RESPONDING, REPORTING AND RECORDING

A leader may become concerned about a child by:

- Noticing a child/young person showing signs of suspected abuse
- Being told by the child/young person (a disclosure)
- Being told by someone else
- noticing worrying behaviour of another leader.

The leader who is concerned about a child/young person needs to respond sensitively and following a clearly defined procedure. Leaders **must** report any concern as soon as possible.

3.2.1 Guidance on how to respond to a child/young person

DO

Stay calm.

Listen. Give the child time to say what they want to say.

Accept what the child is telling you.

Reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing in telling.

Record in writing what was said as soon as possible, in the child's own words.

Report to the person responsible for taking action (see 'reporting' guidance below). Share information on a need-to-know basis only.

Record your report.

DON'T

Don't panic.

Don't ask leading questions or enquire into the details.

Don't make the child repeat the story unnecessarily.

Don't promise to keep secrets.

Don't delay reporting.

Don't attempt to deal with the issue on your own.

Don't start to investigate.

3.2.2 Reporting concerns in a BB Company

- 1) All concerns or disclosures of abuse **must** be reported. Leaders have a responsibility to comply with procedures to keep young people safe.
- 2) A leader with concerns about alleged or suspected abuse should follow the church's procedure to report their concerns or what has been disclosed to them.
- 3) The leader should keep a record of that report and any discussions about the case.
- 4) The Designated Officer at BBNI should also be advised and can provide support with safeguarding concerns.
- 5) Details of the concern, disclosure or allegation must only be shared with others on a need-to-know basis.

NOTE: If a child is in immediate danger, then do not hesitate to contact PSNI.

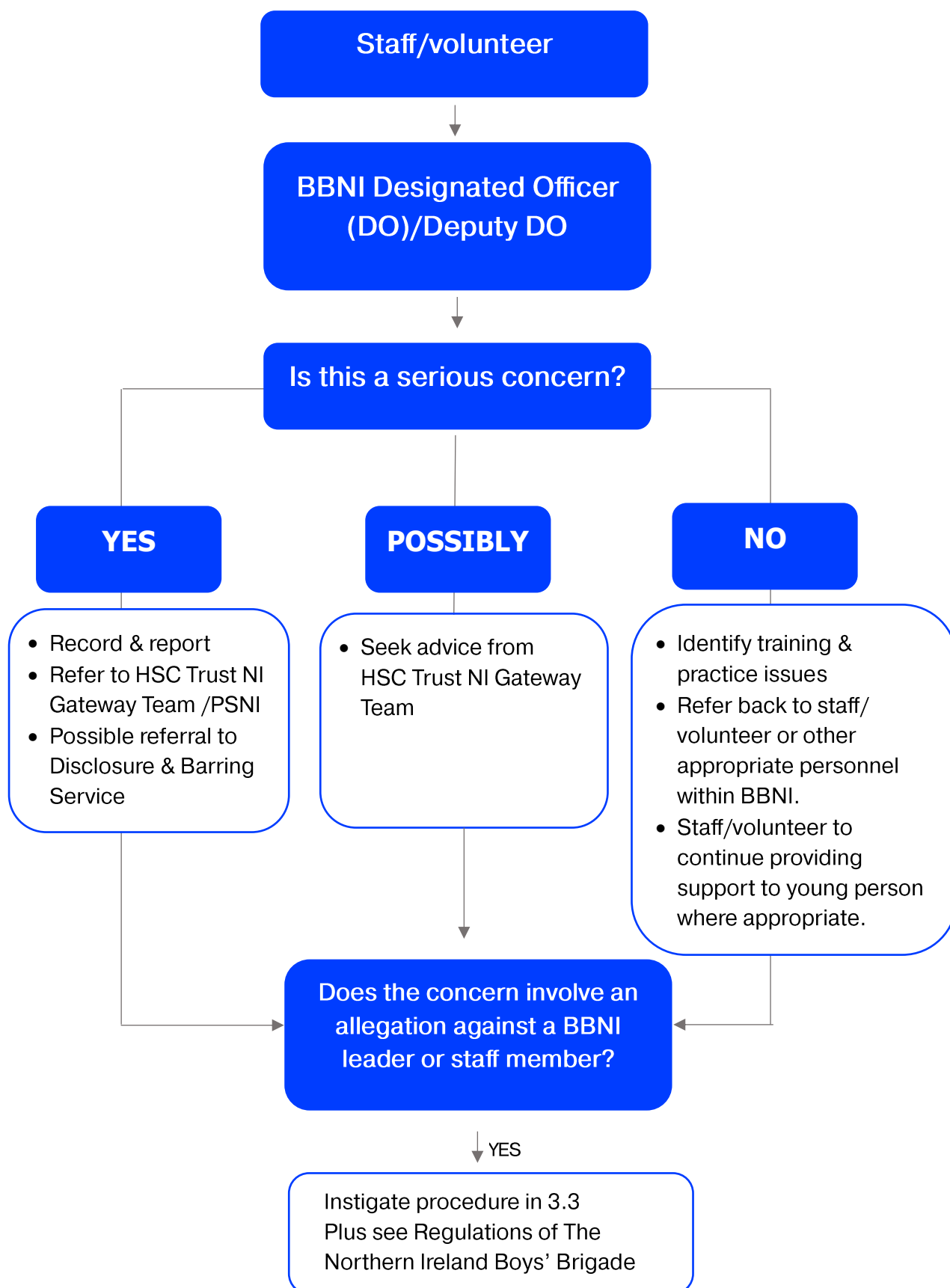
3.2.3 Reporting Concerns within BBNI – ie paid staff and volunteers working/ volunteering directly for BBNI HQ eg on a course or at an event.

This includes any paid staff, battalion volunteers, course leaders/ trainers/ instructors.

- 1) BBNI staff and volunteers should report directly to the BBNI Designated Officer or Deputy Designated Officer. . Contact details for the Designated Officer, will be displayed at the BBNI office and distributed to all leaders.
- 2) The report made should include the date, time and nature of the concern, disclosure or allegation, the parties involved, and any action taken.
- 3) The staff member/volunteer should keep a record of that report and any discussions about the case.
- 4) The BBNI Designated Officer/Deputy Designated Officer will consult with relevant trustees to assess on appropriate action. This may include referring to social services.
- 5) In all cases, details of the concern, disclosure or allegation must be share on a need-to-know basis.

NOTE: If a child is in immediate danger, then do not hesitate to contact PSNI.

3.2.4 SUMMARY OF PROCEDURE FOR BBNI DESIGNATED OFFICER



3.3 RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

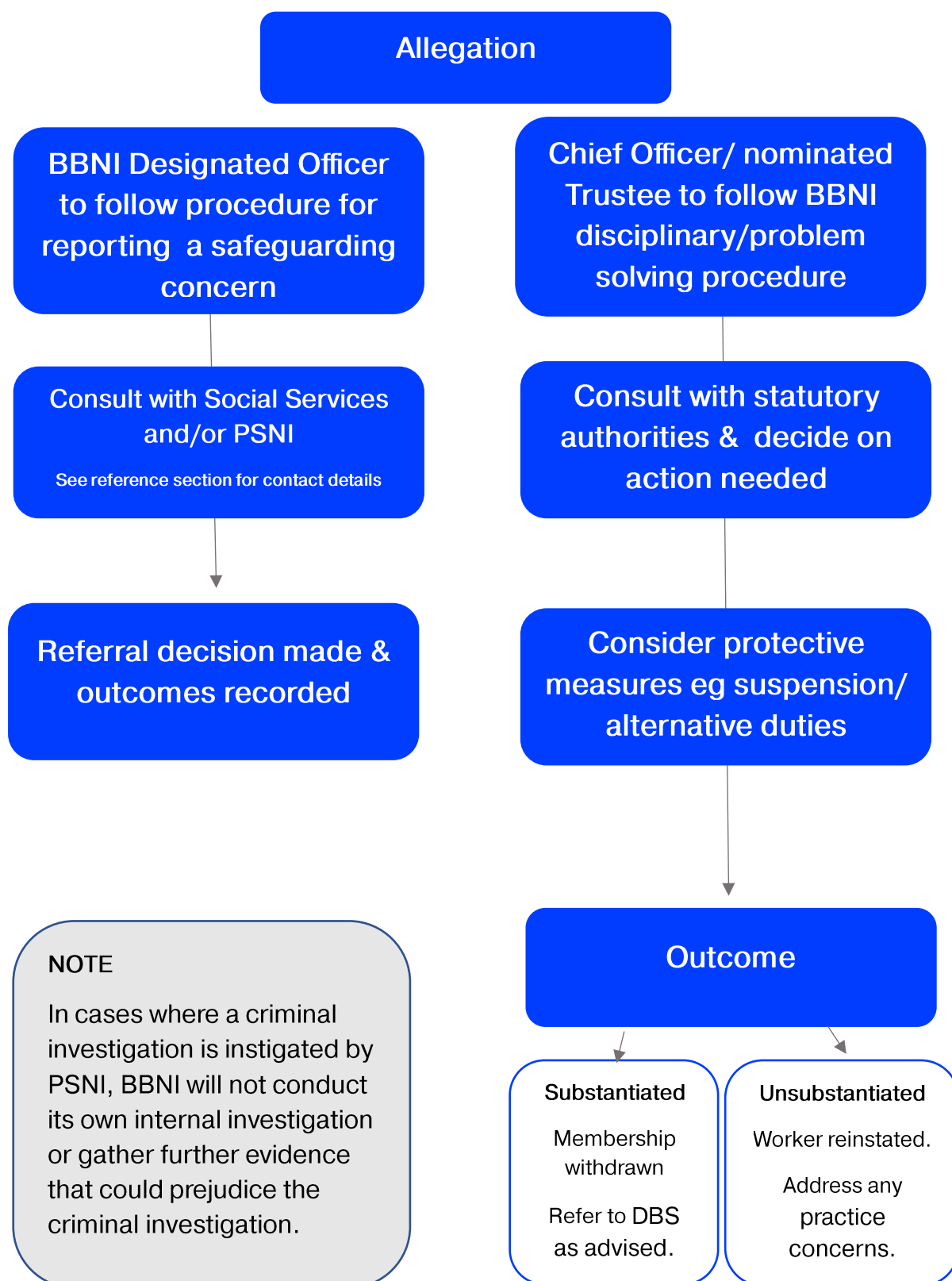
- 1) Where there is an allegation of abuse, two related but independent procedures need to be followed. One to respond to the needs of the child/young person following the reporting procedure described above. The other is an internal, organisational procedure. It is recommended that the same person does not handle both procedures.
- 2) The Designated Officer will inform the Chief Officer that an allegation has been made. If the Chief Officer is the Designated Officer a separate person will carry out the internal disciplinary/problem-solving procedure.
- 3) The Designated Officer will implement the procedure in respect of the child/young person.
- 4) The Chief Officer (or nominated Trustee) will implement the organisational policy.
- 5) The Chief Officer (or nominated Trustee) will take advice as to whether or not the alleged perpetrator should be informed.
- 6) If appropriate, the Chief Officer (or nominated Trustee) will inform that staff member/volunteer that an allegation has been made against them and provide them with an opportunity to respond to the allegation.
- 7) Protective measures will be taken as necessary to ensure that no child/young person is exposed to unnecessary risk. This may involve transferring the worker to another post without contact with children and young people, or suspension 'without prejudice'.
- 8) Any individual under suspicion, or against whom an allegation or complaint has been made may be suspended by the Chief Officer or a person appointed on his/her behalf, until the conclusion of any investigations. A letter informing the individual of his or her suspension will be sent from the Chief Officer, or a person designated on his/her behalf, and copies sent to the company chaplain (if applicable) and any other relevant personnel.
- 9) While under suspension a staff member/volunteer may not attend or be involved in any Boys' Brigade activities at company, battalion or BBNI (including DofE activities).
- 10) A leader will have the right of appeal against suspension of his/her registration. Appeals will be determined by the BBNI Safeguarding Appeals Panel. See The Regulations of The Northern Ireland Boys' Brigade.
- 11) The Chief Officer will consult with statutory authorities, as appropriate.
- 12) After consultation with the relevant statutory authorities, the Chief Officer will confirm what further action needs to be taken. In cases where a criminal

investigation is instigated by the police, BBNI will not conduct its own internal investigation or gather further evidence that could prejudice the criminal investigation.

- 13) Following the completion of an internal investigation, if there is proven harm or risk of harm to a child or young person, and the staff member/volunteer has been permanently removed from regulated activity, the Chief Officer will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

See next page for a diagram overview of this procedure.

SUMMARY OF PROCEDURE 3.3 FOR HANDLING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS (see page 12)



3.4 CONFIDENTIALITY

The welfare of the child is paramount and therefore that overrides considerations of confidentiality when it comes to disclosures. However, staff and volunteers must treat information regarding child protection issues with confidentiality, only sharing with those who need to be informed. That will include the Church Designated Person and where necessary the BBNI Designated Person, PSNI or Social Services. Parents may need to be informed depending on the incident or concern. PSNI or Social Services may offer advice on that. If an allegation has been made against a leader, advice must be taken as to whether or not they should be informed.

3.5 WHISTLE-BLOWING

BBNI is committed to the highest standards of conduct and takes poor practice seriously. Staff or volunteers with concerns about misconduct, abusive practices or practice that could cause harm or risk of harm should contact the Chief Officer or Safeguarding Trustee. This includes situations where a staff member or volunteer's concerns are not acted upon by the Designated Officer.

SECTION 4: GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

BBNI leaders can have a very positive influence on the children and young people they work with. We all have a responsibility to prioritise the welfare of the children and young people in our care.

This section outlines how staff and volunteers in BBNI are expected to behave to help us provide a safe environment and reduce situations where misunderstandings, concerns or allegations may arise.

4.1 GENERAL POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS

When working with children and young people, you should:

- treat everyone with respect and fairness
- value children and young people as individuals
- be a good role model
- encourage children to participate and have fun
- be supportive in a manner that is appropriate to the age and stage of development
- be respectful of a young person's right to privacy
- involve children and young people in decisions that affect them whenever possible
- create an environment where all members (children and adults) feel safe and able to speak out about their concerns
- take all concerns or allegations seriously
- maintain clear boundaries
- ensure that children/young people are not left unsupervised
- put a stop to any dangerous behaviour

Leaders should maintain conversation at the appropriate age for the children and young people. Leaders should speak respectfully of other leaders and not involve children/ young people in conversations that are critical of others.

4.2 BEHAVIOURS TO AVOID

When working with children and young people, you should avoid:

- spending time alone with a child/young person away from others
- taking children or young people alone in a car journey, however short
- taking children or young people to your home
- physical contact with children and young people, including games and activities
- compromising situations that could give rise to misunderstandings or allegations. Actions can be misinterpreted no matter how well intended.

When it is unavoidable that some of these things happen, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge within the organisation and/or the child/young person's parent/carer.

4.3 UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

When working with children and young people, you must not:

- use inappropriate language
- allow inappropriate language used by children to go unchallenged
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.
- engage in inappropriate games such as horseplay
- engage in inappropriate touching
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- let allegations made or concerns raised by a child/young person go unrecorded
- take unnecessary risks
- develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- do things of a personal nature that children can do themselves
- give children and young people your personal contact details or have contact with them on your personal social media account. Keep such contact in a monitored group setting and only with the permission of a parent/carer. See guidance on technology below.

4.4 GUIDANCE ON PROVIDING PERSONAL CARE

Children and young people who have a disability can be at greater risk of abuse. Some may require more help with personal care, such as washing, dressing, toileting, feeding or mobility.

- Parents/carers should provide information about their child's specific needs and provide consent for leaders to assist with their personal care.
- It is recommended that a personal care plan is drawn up by parents/carers to advise leaders on how to best meet the needs of the child. This should be reviewed regularly.
- Leaders should be aware of their own limitations and only carry out care activities that they feel competent and confident to complete.
- Leaders involved in providing intimate care need to be sensitive to the needs of the child/young person.
- Leaders should ensure that the child/young person's dignity is preserved.
- Leaders should encourage the child/young person to be as independent as possible throughout any personal care process.

- It is recommended that leaders keep a personal care log to record how the needs of the child were met.
- When working with children with additional needs a personal care plan can be drawn up in consultation with parents/ carers. This will advise leaders how best to meet the personal care needs of the child. A personal care log should be maintained and shared with the parent/ carer when appropriate.

4.5 GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Whilst the development of the internet has revolutionised communication systems and, if used in the right way, is an excellent resource, care in its application needs to be exercised so that the safety of a child/young person is not compromised.

Children/young people need to be aware of online safety in the same way they are taught road safety.

Leaders should follow these guidelines to protect children and young people but also for their own safety.

- Leaders should inform parents if they plan to communicate with young people by text, email, WhatsApp and gain their consent.
- There should not be any 1 to 1 contact children & young people. Contact should be through a group message with a minimum of 2 registered leaders in the group.
- It is best not use to personal numbers/emails for BB communications if possible. Ideally a church/BB email address or one set up for the group should be used rather than a leader's personal email.
- Leaders should not make personal contact young people through chatrooms or social networking sites.
- Staff and volunteers should not send/receive private calls or texts while supervising children and young people. Anything which compromises the ability of staff and volunteers to maintain a safe environment and give their full attention to the supervision of children and young people should be avoided.
- Staff and volunteers should never give out their personal phone numbers to children and young people they are working with or befriend them on social networking sites.
- If you are providing web access (eg at a company night/sleepover/residential) ensure that parental permission has been obtained and filtering software in place (e.g. Netnanny, Cyberpatrol or Surfwatch) to prevent access to inappropriate web sites.
- respect time boundaries when sending 'BB' related messages to young people.

4.6 GUIDANCE FOR USE OF VIDEO PLATFORMS EG ZOOM

- Parental consent must be obtained.
- There **MUST NOT** be any 1 to 1 online sessions with children & young people. Ensure there is **ALWAYS** a minimum of two registered leaders present during each session. Ideally, have three leaders in the session just in case anybody becomes disconnected. Should for any reason one of the leaders leave the session, including due to a loss of signal, the session must be terminated immediately.
- Start the session with leaders 5 minutes before so that when children & young people join there is already a minimum of two leaders online.
- Do **NOT** record sessions or allow children and young people to record or take screenshots.
- Leaders should keep a record of who attended each virtual session as they would any BB activity.
- If you become concerned about the welfare or safety of a child or young person you should follow BB safeguarding policies and procedures.

4.7 GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Many children and young people enjoy having photographs taken to mark special moments to celebrate their achievements. However, some children/young people or their parents may not be comfortable with images being shared. Safeguarding and data protection implications must be considered when making use of images of children/young people.

- Parental permission must be obtained before using any picture of a child/group of children for company, church or BBNI promotional purposes. This includes publication in print, local press, on a website or social media account.
- If a young person prefers not to have their photograph shared this must be respected.
- Images must only be used for BBNI purposes.
- Leaders must not post pictures from BBNI activities on their personal social media accounts. They may share pictures posted by the company or BBNI.
- It's better to use images of groups rather than of individual children/young people.
- As per NSPCC recommendations, care must be taken when posting photographs of children/ young people. This includes not identifying names and locations. If names

are being used, it must only be the first name. Parental permission must be sought before naming a child/ young person on social media or on a website.

-
- Only use images of children and young people in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use of the image. Avoid full face and body shots of children/young people taking part in activities such as swimming.
- Use images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.
- It is good practice to store digital images of children or young people in a password protected file. Refer to church/BBNI GDPR guidelines.
- At BBNI courses, only nominated course leaders are permitted to take photographs of young people to share with the BBNI staff member responsible for training or communications. Once saved to a secure location, photographs of young people will be deleted from the original source (phone or camera).
- Images held by BBNI will be stored in a file with restricted access. Photographs are classed as personal information and therefore fall under BBNI GDPR guidelines.
- Report any use of inappropriate images through the reporting procedures described in section 3.

4.8 GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY AT EVENTS

If a photographer is hired for an event, organisers should keep children and young people safe by:

- providing the photographer with a clear brief, appropriate content and behaviour
- issuing the photographer with identification which must be worn at all times
- informing parents that a photographer will be in attendance and ensure that parents consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs for Company/BBNI use. For BBNI events, we will ask leaders accompanying groups to confirm that parental consent for use of images has been obtained.
- not allowing the photographer to have unsupervised access to children/young people
- not allowing the photographer to carry out a session outside the event or at the child's home
- reporting concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography to the event organiser/leader and recorded in the same manner as any other safeguarding concern

4.9 IF CONSENT TO TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS IS NOT GIVEN

If children/young people, parents and/or carers do not consent to photographs being taken, leaders must respect their wishes. Leaders should work out in advance how those children/young people could be distinguished so the photographer knows not to take pictures of them, and ensure this is done in a way that does not single out the child or make them feel isolated. eg using wrist bands or stickers. A child/young person should never be excluded from an activity because we do not have consent to take their photograph.

4.10 OCCASIONS WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE WILL BE CHANGING CLOTHES

Leaders should consider their programme and the facilities they have available to determine an approach that safeguards the leaders and the young people, both on residential and when changing into sports gear on a BB night.

BBNI leaders must respect the privacy of children in dormitories, changing rooms, showers and toilets. During camps and residential, leaders must have separate changing, showering and toilet facilities from the children and young people.

Leaders should never enter the children or young people's rooms without knocking first.

NSPCC guidance states that it should not be necessary for adults to remain in the changing room in order to maintain good behaviour, being in close proximity and young people being aware of this may be enough. It may be possible to leave the door of the designated changing rooms slightly open so that nobody can see inside but leaders outside can hear if there is a disturbance.

Leaders should not watch children and young people when they are getting changed, or repeatedly go in and out of the room without good reason. If an adult needs to enter the room they should alert the children/ young people in advance to give time an opportunity for them to cover up if they want to.

SECTION 5: SHARING INFORMATION

5.1 YOUNG PEOPLE & PARENTS/CARERS

- 1) Parents/carers are primarily responsible for their children/young people. Therefore, leaders must seek their consent before a child/young person can take part in BBNI activities. Forms are available on the BBNI website.
- 2) Parents should be asked to provide information regarding any allergies, intolerances, and/or medication a young person needs to access during BBNI activities.
- 3) For special events/trips parents should complete a consent form specific to that event. Forms are available on the BBNI website.
- 4) Leaders should follow church guidelines on the retention and storage of completed consent forms. Company leaders should consult the church data controller for guidance. BBNI staff/volunteers should follow the BBNI data retention policy.
- 5) Children/young people and their parents/carers should be informed about who they can talk to within the company/church about any concerns they may have.
- 6) Information about our safeguarding policy and procedures and who to contact with concerns is available on the BBNI website.
- 7) In the event of a concern about a child/young person, the Designated or Deputy Designated Officer will consult a statutory agency about whether to inform parents.

5.2 COMPANY LEADERS

- 1) Information on safeguarding practice will be shared with leaders via regular updates and on the BBNI website.
- 2) Details of a disclosure or allegation of abuse must be kept confidential and only shared on a need-to-know basis.

5.3 BBNI STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- 1) At BBNI events the name of the Designated Officer should be provided.
- 2) Consent forms in relation to BBNI events should be stored securely in the office and all personal information should be handled sensitively. Medical details should be shared on a need-to-know basis.
- 3) Consent forms should be kept for only as long as they are needed. After the event they should be destroyed, securely, within six months of the activity if no safeguarding or health and safety issues arise from the activity.
- 4) Forms relating to parental consent to use photographs of a child for wider BB use should be kept as long as the photograph is in use.
- 5) Records of safeguarding concerns or incidents should be kept confidentially, in a secure place, by the BBNI Designated Officer.
- 6) Details of a disclosure or allegation of abuse must be kept confidential and only shared on a need-to-know basis.
- 7) Information received from AccessNI regarding Enhanced Disclosure Checks must be destroyed in line with AccessNI Code of Good Practice.

5.4 COMPLAINTS RELATING TO BBNI EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

General complaints about the running of a BBNI event/ activity should be directed to the person in charge of the event. The complainant should be assured that the matter will be dealt with in a prompt and appropriate manner. They should be informed, as soon as possible, of the decision and any action that will be taken. Anyone wishing to make a formal complaint should follow our Complaints Procedure.

5.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

Significant information regarding the safety and well-being of a child/young person should only be shared with appropriate personnel and agencies on a need-to-know basis.

SECTION 6: GENERAL SAFETY AND MANAGEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

This section is about creating a safe environment for children and young people to take part in BB activities.

6.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 1) Parents/carers should be kept informed of plans for activities or events.
- 2) The captain/leader in charge should have access to contact details for children/young people.
- 3) A register of attendance should be kept each week.
- 4) Medication should never be given without written consent from parents or doctors; it should be clearly marked and be kept out of reach of children.
- 5) BB leaders (staff and volunteers) should be familiar with fire drill arrangements, alarms, firefighting equipment and location of fire exits in any premises they may be using.
- 6) Carry out regular fire drills according to church guidance.
- 7) Risk assessments should be carried out for all activities, whether based in your usual premises or on special trips or residentials. See section 6.7
- 8) Leaders should do their best to remove anything hazardous from the hall/room in use before children/young people arrive.
- 9) Plan activities to ensure that there is always more than one adult leader present.
- 10) It is important to have adequate adult supervision for any activity. See Section 6.5.
- 11) A named first aid person should be available for each activity.
- 12) A first aid kit should be available on the premises, stocked appropriately and contents checked regularly.
- 13) Equipment should be in good repair and checked before use.
- 14) Leaders should only instruct or supervise activities that they are competent and/or trained to do so.
- 15) When using special equipment for one-off activities (eg inflatables) there must be adequate supervision by trained leaders. Remember to check out insurance provision with your church/BB for this type of activity.
- 16) Accidents should be recorded and reported, for insurance purposes, to your church and BBNI.

6.2 DEALING WITH ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

- 1) Staff/volunteers should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency.
- 2) Establish the nature and extent of the accident/emergency and seek appropriate medical or other emergency help.
- 3) Advise parents as appropriate.

- 4) Arrangements should be in place for immediate travel home in the event of an emergency and adequate supervision levels to cope if one leader has to leave a group.
- 5) Keep a record of the accident/emergency and the action taken.
- 6) Company leaders should report accidents as per church guidance.
- 7) BBNI staff and volunteers should report accidents to the Chief Officer.

6.3 EMERGENCY FIRST AID

- 1) The object of first aid in a company situation is not to cure the patient but to ensure, as far as possible, that the injury is not worsened before professional help is obtained. It is not necessary for leaders to be fully qualified in first aid, although it is helpful to have persons with such qualifications.
- 2) On a BB activity or meeting night, any leader is likely to be faced with a first aid situation and should be prepared to act. In all cases the most important part of first aid is to reassure the patient both by speaking and acting in a composed and confident manner.
- 3) First Aiders should only commence treatment within their own capabilities.
- 4) Advise the child/young person's parent/carer of any first aid given.
- 5) As soon as the opportunity presents itself, a detailed written note should be made of the main factors, the time and place of the accident, first aid given and by whom. Names and addresses of any witnesses should be noted.

6.4 MEDICATION

- 1) Prescribed Medication
Leaders should exercise extreme care in giving medication to children & young people. It is best to limit such action to minor complaints and to consult a qualified person for further advice. Details of any prescribed medications should be set out on the Parental Consent form. It is unlikely that during the course of a normal evening, a child or young person will need to take any prescribed medication. If on a day visit or residential activity, prescribed medication should only be administered following written permission from the parent/guardian, and the medication is in its original packaging, is clearly named and dosages stated.
- 2) Non-Prescribed Medication
Leaders should not give any non-prescribed medication to children or young people in BBNI.

6.5 SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

- 1) Adequate supervision is essential with any group of children/young people.
- 2) There should be **at least 2 leaders** present at all times with any group of children/young people.
- 3) Several additional factors should be considered when working out the number of leaders required to supervise children/young people:
 - Number and age of children & young people
 - Needs of individual children & young people
 - Activity being undertaken
 - Duration of the activity
 - Areas of risk highlighted by carrying out a risk assessment of the activity, and its location.
 - Transport required
 - Expertise & experience of leaders
 - Requirement for specialised training
 - Emergency cover eg in case one leader has to leave the group in an emergency
- 4) Leaders can use the recommended ratios below as a guide. These should be regarded as minimum numbers as the actual number will depend on all of the factors above.
- 5) BB companies should abide by the ratios recommended in their church safeguarding policy.
- 6) There should be a gender mix of leaders with a mixed gender group of children or young people.
- 7) Young helpers (14-18 years old) should not be left alone to supervise children/young people and should not be counted in your leader ratio unless the 17 year old has completed Step Up which includes registration as a BBNI leader.. However, they can be counted in the ratios as long as other adult leaders are present and in charge.

6.6 RECOMMENDED RATIOS

These should be regarded as *minimum* numbers as the actual number will depend on all of the factors above.

Indoor activities

3 to 7 years 1 leader to 8 children

8 years + 1 leader to 10 children/young people.

Outdoor activities

1 to 7 years 1 leader to 6 children

8 to 13 years 2 leaders to 15 children/young people

13 years + 2 leaders to 20 young people. 1 additional leader for every 10 young people, or part thereof.

6.7 RISK ASSESSMENT

Thinking through the potential hazards of an activity can help leaders identify risks and make plans to reduce the potential for accidents and lessen the seriousness of those that do happen. Risk assessments don't need to be complex but should be comprehensive. They are for company/church use and BBNI doesn't need to see them.

The company captain should ensure that:

- 1) An annual risk assessment is carried out of the premises or parts of the premises that the company uses for its meeting nights. This may be delegated to an appropriate person but it is the captain's responsibility to ensure that it is undertaken and that matters of concern that cannot be addressed by the company leaders are brought to the attention of the church.
- 2) Risk assessments must be completed for company nights, all activities, outings, residentials, expeditions and special events.

Further information on risk assessments is available on the BBNI website.

6.8 ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SPECIAL EVENTS/TRIPS/EXPEDITIONS

- 1) Parental permission must be sought prior to a child or young person's involvement in any activity, which is, in any way, outside the normal company programme by using the Special Event/Activity Consent Form. This form should be used for any overnight events, sleepovers, residentials, camps and holidays, day trips, outings, visits or participation in competitions. Consent Forms are available from the BBNI website.

- 2) Wherever possible, the leader in charge should undertake a pre visit in order to check that the venue is suitable for the activity and the needs of the group; to assess potential risks; and to become familiar with the area.
- 3) A risk assessment must be carried out before embarking on a trip (eg visit/ daytrip/ outing/holiday/camp).
- 4) Members in the Anchors age group are not to take part in sleepovers/ overnight stays.
- 5) Sleepovers can't be held in a leader's home.
- 6) Overnight stays with young people are classed as regulated activity and therefore all leaders involved **MUST** be AccessNI checked in advance. This includes any additional leaders involved in the overnight stay. Please also refer to church guidelines for any additional guidance on overnight stays.
- 7) Separate sleeping accommodation for leaders and children/young people should be arranged.
- 8) A home contact should be identified in case of emergencies. This person should act as the link between the group and parents/carers and provide support to the group leader as required.
- 9) Transport used must be roadworthy and adequate for purpose
- 10) Leaders supervising or training groups of young people for expedition activities must be adequately trained and qualified to do so. Qualifications include the expedition & outdoor leadership qualification or other suitable mountain leadership qualification.
- 11) Leaders attending a residential must have completed the BBNI online safeguarding session.
- 12) Further guidance on BBNI requirements for camps, holidays and expeditions is available on the BBNI website.

6.9 TRANSPORT

If transporting children/young people leaders should:

- 1) Have adequate supervision in place during travel.
- 2) Use transport that is fit for purpose.
- 3) If using their personal car, leaders should check that their insurance covers such journeys.
- 4) Seek parental consent for the method of transport being used.
- 5) Children/ young people should travel in the back of the car. Seat belts must be worn and age appropriate car seats used where applicable.
- 6) Leaders should avoid transporting children on their own. If a situation arises where a leader has to transport a child/young person alone, they should ensure that a parent and another leader know this is happening.

VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

BBNI is committed to practice which promotes the welfare of adults at risk and safeguards them from harm. This policy aims to create a safe environment for all adults in our organisation.

WHO IS A VULNERABLE ADULT?

The term is used to describe an adult, over 18, who is at risk of harm because of their personal characteristics such as age or disability or life circumstances. Some adults may become vulnerable for a limited time, following a medical procedure or accident. Vulnerable adults often depend on others for care.

LEGAL CONTEXT

The main legislation relating to safeguarding vulnerable adults in Northern Ireland includes:

The Human Rights Act 1998

Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007

TYPES OF ADULT ABUSE

Adult abuse can take a number of forms including physical, sexual, emotional, financial abuse; neglect or exploitation. Abuse could occur from parents, carers, partners, friends, family, neighbours, strangers or adults in a position of trust.

Victims may be afraid to raise a complaint or unsure of who they can trust. There may be some situations where victims are unaware that they are being abused or have difficulty in communicating this to others.

RECRUITMENT

New leaders, who will be working with vulnerable adults in a regulated position, should complete the BBNI appointment process which includes an AccessNI check.

REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT YOURSELF

If you are experiencing harm please ask for help. Talk to the company captain or, if you prefer, the chaplain.

If you are in immediate danger or need medical help please contact emergency services 999.

REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT OTHERS

If you suspect adult abuse it must be reported, as soon as possible. Inform your captain, chaplain or Church Safeguarding Person according to the policy of the church. In an emergency, please contact PSNI immediately.

If the vulnerable adult needs medical attention call an ambulance on 999.

Record your concerns and the report made.

Do not start to investigate.

If it will not put them at further risk, discuss your concerns with the adult and ask them what they would like to happen next.

Do not confront the person thought to be causing the harm.

REVIEW

This policy was last reviewed: Aug 2024

REFERENCE SECTION

DEFINITION OF REGULATED ACTIVITY RELATING TO CHILDREN

From 10 September 2012 regulated activity relating to children includes:

- 1 **Unsupervised activities:** teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, providing advice/guidance on wellbeing, driving a vehicle only for children;
- 2 Work for a limited range of establishments (specified places) with opportunity for contact with children, for example, schools, children's homes, childcare premises, children's hospitals.

Work undertaken by supervised volunteers in these places is not regulated activity; Work under 1 or 2 is regulated activity if undertaken **regularly**. **Regular means** carried out by the same person **frequently** (once a week or more) or on four or more days in a 30 day period or **overnight**.

- 3 Relevant personal care, for example washing or dressing, or health care by or supervised by a professional (even if carried out once);
- 4 Registered childminding and foster care.

Note: the day to day line manager/supervisor of an individual in regulated activity is also in regulated activity.

BBNI requests that all volunteers complete an enhanced check with AccessNI.

AccessNI states in training materials:

'many groups who volunteer with children (for example Scouts or Boys' Brigade) have found that whilst they do have a supervising leader, the leader is not always in attendance when the group meets – as such they have decided that their volunteers are not supervised and are therefore eligible for an Enhanced check with a check of the children's barred list'

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

BBNI Trustees

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding measures and procedures are in place, rests with the BBNI Trustees.

Trustees' safeguarding responsibilities include:

- Adopting BBNI's Safeguarding Policy and reviewing it every year.
- Appointing a BBNI Designated Officer and Deputy Designated Officer.
- Ensuring appropriate policies and procedures are followed within BBNI.
- Attending relevant safeguarding training

BBNI Safeguarding Panel

The panel includes:

- Chief Officer
- Designated Officer
- Safeguarding Trustee
- At least 1 other Trustee

Responsibilities to include:

- Reviewing cases
- Support the Designated Officer

Safeguarding Appeals Panel

This panel includes 2 Trustees and may include other suitable qualified individuals appointed by the trustees.

Responsibilities to include:

- Appointment appeals

Designated Officer

Responsibilities include:

- Taking the lead in the event of a safeguarding complaint or concern about a member of staff.
- Ensuring that policy and legislation are adhered to
- Referring matters to the BBNI Safeguarding Panel as appropriate
- Safe and secure storage of relevant information
- Being a point of contact for church Designated Officers
- Making referrals to Gateway Teams or PSNI
- Attending relevant safeguarding training

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS - CHILDREN

Gateway Service

The Gateway Service for Children’s Social Work is the first point of contact for people who wish to share a concern about a young person who is not already known to social services.

HSC Trust Area	Social Services Gateway Team	Adult Protection Gateway Team
Belfast Trust	028 9050 7000	028 9504 1744
South Eastern Trust	0300 1000 300	028 9250 1227
Western Trust	028 7131 4090	028 7161 1366
Southern Trust	028 3756 7100 or Freephone: 0800 7837 745	028 3756 4423
Northern Trust	0300 1234 333 or 028 9442 4459	028 9441 3659
Out of hours contact Regional Emergency Social Work Service (RESWS)	0800 197 9995	0800 197 9995

PSNI

Non emergency 101
Emergency number 999

NSPCC

Helpline 0808 800 5000

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS – VULNERABLE ADULTS

Gateway Service

Vulnerable Adults: Adult Safeguarding Team

TRUST	CONTACT NUMBER
South Eastern Trust	028 9250 1227
Belfast Trust	028 9504 1744
Western Trust	028 7161 1366
Southern Trust	028 3741 2334 adultsafeguard.team@southerntrust.com
Northern Trust	028 9441 3659