

**THE BOYS'  
BRIGADE**  
& GIRLS' ASSOCIATION  
> the adventure begins here



## **Child Safeguarding Policy**

Version 2.0 – February 2018

The Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association  
Republic of Ireland Region

Unit C1 Nutgrove Office Park, Nutgrove Avenue,  
Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, D14 V5Y2

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## **Definitions**

<b>Child/Children</b>	For the purposes of this policy, a 'child' means anyone who is under 18 years of age. In Ireland, the Child Care Act (1991) defines a child as any person under the age of 18 years, excluding a person who is or who has been married.
<b>BB</b>	Used throughout this policy as a synonym for <i>The Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association in the Republic of Ireland</i>
<b>Leader</b>	For the purposes of this policy, the term leader covers all volunteers within the BB regardless of rank or title.
<b>Employees</b>	For the purposes of this policy, the term includes the National Director employed by the BB.
<b>Regional Safeguarding Panel</b>	The Regional Safeguarding Panel is the title given to the designated liaison persons in the BB appointed to respond to child protection concerns and oversee the implementation of this policy on behalf of the Management Committee.
<b>Mandated Person</b>	As defined in the Children First Act 2015, mandated persons have a statutory obligation to report concerns which meet or exceed a particular threshold to Tusla and to cooperate with Tusla in the assessment of mandated reports, where requested to do so.
<b>Relevant Person</b>	As defined in the Children First Act 2015, 'means a person who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact in respect of the provider's Child Safeguarding Statement'
<b>Management Committee</b>	The Management Committee is the group responsible for the day to day running of The Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association in the Republic of Ireland.
<b>Regional Headquarters</b>	Unit C1 Nutgrove Office Park, Nutgrove Avenue, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14 D14 V5Y2
<b>Brigade Headquarters</b>	Felden Lodge, Felden, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP3 0BL
<b>Statutory Authorities</b>	These are Tusla (Child and Family Agency) which is the statutory body responsible for the safety and welfare of children and the Garda Síochána who are empowered under legislation to investigate these matters.

## 1. Declaration of Guiding Principles

The Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association, as a Christian Youth Organisation is committed to providing a safe environment in which children can develop socially, emotionally, spiritually and form positive relationships.

We provide the following activities to children:

- Spiritual, Physical, Adventure, Community and Interest activities at company level
- Church services at company and district level
- Outings, holidays and trips away at company, district and regional level
- Inter-company competitions and events
- Training events at company, district and regional level

We believe that:

1. Our priority to ensure the welfare and safety of every child who attends our organisation is paramount.
2. Our guiding principles and procedures to safeguard children reflect national policy and legislation laid out in the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice 2018.
3. Our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures should be reviewed every two years or sooner if necessary due to organisational issues or changes in legislation or national policy.
4. All children have an equal right to attend an organisation that respects them as individuals and encourages them to reach their potential, regardless of their background.
5. We are committed to upholding the rights of every child who attends our organisation, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm, listened to and heard.
6. Our guiding principles apply to everyone in the organisation including management committee members, employees and leaders.
7. Employees and leaders must conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of our organisation.
8. We are committed to ensuring people's rights to confidentiality.

The Designated Liaison Persons for The BB are

Olive Good  
Philip Daley  
Brian Weekes  
Alan Ayling

The Management Committee should ensure that all other policies and procedures governing the activities of the BB comply with the procedures outlined in this policy.

## Code of Behaviour for Leaders and Employees

The code of behaviour for leaders and employees has been categorised under five headings:

- **Child-Centred Approach;**
- **Best Practice;**
- **Inappropriate Behaviour;**
- **Physical Contact;**
- **Health & Safety.**

### Child-Centred Approach

- Treat all children equally, treat all children as individuals;
- Listen to and respect children;
- Involve children in decision making, as appropriate;
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability);
- Use appropriate language (physical and verbal);
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere;
- Offer constructive criticism when needed;
- Respect a child's personal space;
- Encourage feedback from group;
- Use age-appropriate teaching aids and materials;
- Be aware of a child's other commitments when scheduling activities e.g. school or exams;
- Be cognisant of a child's limitations, due to a medical condition for example;
- Create an atmosphere of trust;
- Respect differences of ability, culture, race.

### Best Practice

- Ensure that a parental consent form is completed for every child in each Company on an annual basis and that attendance records are maintained;
- Ensure that parental consents are received for use of photographs and contacting members directly by mobile phone. Parent's/guardian's wishes must be respected;
- Make parents/guardians and children aware of the Child Safeguarding Policy;
- Ensure that employees and leaders are familiar with the evacuation procedures for any premises in which they are working.
- Be inclusive of children with special needs;
- Plan and be sufficiently prepared, both mentally and physically;
- Report any concerns to the Regional Safeguarding Panel and follow reporting procedures;
- Report to the Regional Safeguarding Panel any concerns that they may have about a fellow employee or leader's practice which may cause harm to a child or the reputation of the organisation and complete an incident form;
- Ensure all leaders are familiar with the BB Anti-Bullying which provides information on how to deal with bullying. Encourage children to report any bullying, concerns or worries;
- Observe appropriate dress and behaviour;
- Evaluate work practices on a regular basis;
- Report and record any incidents and accidents;
- Keep parents/guardians informed of any issues that concern their children;
- Ensure proper supervision based on supervision ratios outlined in the Child Safeguarding Policy and ensure that two leaders are present at the start and end of a session.
- Avoid, if at all possible, giving a lift to a child and if you do then make sure that parents/guardians have given prior consent;
- Maintain awareness around language and comments made. If a leader thinks that something they said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner.

### Inappropriate Behaviour

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with a child;
- Don't use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language;

- Don't single out a particular child for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule or unwelcome focus or attention;
- Don't allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form;
- Don't hit or physically chastise children;
- Don't socialise inappropriately with children e.g. outside of structured organisational activities.

#### **Physical Contact**

- Seek consent of child in relation to physical contact (except in an emergency or dangerous situation);
- Avoid horseplay or inappropriate touch.

#### **Health and Safety**

- Don't leave children unattended or unsupervised;
- Provide a safe environment;
- Be aware of accident and incident procedures and follow accordingly.

### **Code of Behaviour for Members**

- Respect the role and authority of the leaders;
- Respect the views and feelings of other members of the Company;
- Respect the right of every member to express their view and opinion;
- Respect the right of every member to be heard and listened to;
- Respect both leaders' and members' personal privacy and property;
- Show due care and responsibility for equipment and property;
- Deem unacceptable the following activities and behaviour:
  - Consumption of alcohol and smoking during Company activities;
  - Physical abuse of other members and / or leaders;
  - Verbal abuse including 'put downs' of other members and leaders;
  - Wilful destruction or damage to property or equipment;
  - The misuse of any substance or stimulant;
  - The use of camera phones in the changing facilities at any event

### **Breaches of Code of Behaviour**

#### **Disciplinary procedures if a leader is found in breach of Code of Behaviour**

Each breach of the Code of Behaviour will be assessed by the Captain. If a leader is deemed to be in breach of the Code of Behaviour the Captain will speak to the individual leader. The Captain will determine whether the leader should be given a warning on that occasion but will remind the leader of the standards expected of BB leaders.

If there is a further breach of the Code of Behaviour by leader following a warning, the Captain will meet with the leader and the Captain will ask the leader to resign from their position.

If a serious allegation of abuse is made against a leader, the Management Committee will suspend the leader until such time as the investigation has been completed and the Management Committee will then determine the position of the leader in the BB subject to the findings of the investigation.

#### **Disciplinary procedures if an employee is found in breach of Code of Behaviour**

Each breach of the Code of Behaviour will be assessed by the Management Committee. If an employee is deemed to be in breach of the Code of Behaviour the Management Committee will speak to the individual employee. The Management Committee will determine whether the employee should be given a warning on that occasion but will remind the employee of the standards expected of BB staff.

If there is a further breach of the Code of Behaviour by staff following a warning, the Management Committee will meet with the employee and the Management Committee will dismiss the employee from their position.

If a serious allegation of abuse is made against an employee, the Management Committee will suspend the employee until such time as the investigation has been completed and the Management Committee will then determine the position of the employee in the BB subject to the findings of the investigation.

### **Disciplinary procedures if a member is found in breach of Code of Behaviour**

When a member or their parents/guardians are not happy with the way members were treated by leaders of the BB (except complaints involving child protection concerns), they may lodge a complaint using the BB Complaints Policy.

Members who are found to be in breach of the Members Code of Behaviour may be subject to disciplinary actions. The disciplinary action should be agreed between at least two leaders of the Company and should be appropriate to the seriousness of the incident/s. The parents/guardians of the member and the member will be informed of the disciplinary action which will be taken. Where leaders take disciplinary action against a member, the Captain/leader in charge should be informed.

The options for disciplinary action include:

- a) Providing support to the member to get them to understand that their behaviour is not acceptable and monitoring their behaviour.
- b) For continued breaches or more serious breaches of the Members Code of Behaviour, allow the member to continue to participate in the event/activity once they have apologised for their behaviour and promised not to breach the code of behaviour again. Their behaviour would be closely monitored.
- c) For the most serious breaches of the Members Code of Behaviour or where a member fails to rectify behaviour following application of option (a) and (b) above, sending the member home; not allowing them to participate in any further company events/activities and terminating their membership of the Company will be considered.

### **Recruitment of Leaders**

The BB has specific regulations and requirements for all adults working in the name of the BB including leaders working in Companies, those with responsibilities in Districts, including Office Bearers and Reserve Officers, and those working at Regional level.

Individuals who wish to become leaders in the BB are interviewed and nominated by the Chaplain and Captain of the Company and complete the Leader Registration Form and a Vetting Invitation Form (both available from Regional Headquarters and the BB website [www.boysbrigade.org](http://www.boysbrigade.org)).

The completed Leader Registration Form Vetting Invitation Form and documents verifying identity and current address are sent to the Regional Headquarters. On receipt of the documentation from the Company, Regional Headquarters, will transfer the information from the Vetting Invitation Form onto the NYCI Vetting Request form and email it to NYCI's Youth Work Vetting Consortium Liaison Persons. The NYCI's Liaison person will create a vetting application and send an email to the individual applying to be a leader requesting them to complete the E-Vetting application on-line. Once this on-line application has been completed by the individual, the NYCI Liaison Person will review it, and if in order, submit it to the National Vetting Bureau. Once vetting has been completed the National Vetting Bureau will notify the NYCI Liaison Person that a vetting disclosure is available. The NYCI Liaison person will access the vetting disclosure and forward it to Regional Headquarters.

Regional Headquarters will require individuals who have immigrated to Ireland or have resided overseas for a long period to complete a sworn declaration that there is nothing in their background which would prevent them from working with children.

Regional Headquarters will also write to the referees provided on the Leader Registration Form seeking completion of a Volunteer Reference Form for the individual wishing to become a leader. Consideration will be given to the information contained on the vetting disclosure and references received and if all is satisfactory, names of suitable leaders will be forwarded to the Management Committee for ratification of their appointment. The leader will then be registered, allocated a registration number and sent a leader registration card. The Captain of the Company will be informed that the leader can now commence working with children in the company.

If there is information on the vetting disclosure or references that indicates that the individual should not be appointed, Regional Headquarters will inform them in writing, giving reasons. An individual who is deemed unsuitable to work with children has the right of appeal. The appeal should be made in writing to the Regional Safeguarding Panel.

In the case of a vetting disclosure that contains information that makes it unclear whether or not an individual should be registered, then a referral to the Regional Safeguarding Panel will be made. Members of the panel will consider the suitability of the individual, and conduct a risk assessment based on whether the nature of the information on the disclosure poses any risk to the welfare of children or other adults. If the panel agree that the applicant is suitable to work with children their name will be forwarded to the Management Committee for ratification of their appointment, then Regional 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 could be registered with certain conditions attached (for example that they do not drive the minibus etc.). An individual who is still deemed unsuitable by the panel has the right of appeal. The appeal should be made in writing to the Chair of the Management Committee within three months of notification of unsuitability.

#### ***Leaders under 18 years of age***

The BB seeks to develop and empower children and part of that empowerment process is to encourage teenagers to take responsibility for a range of roles within the Company or Section. Giving responsibility to a teenager for a group of younger children can have immense benefits for all involved and offer opportunities to learn and develop new skills.

It is important that proper support and information is sought from and provided to a teenager taking on this young leadership role.

Teenagers who wish to become young leaders in the BB should complete the Young Leader Application Form which is available from Regional Headquarters. Where that teenager is aged 16 - 17 years of age, they should complete a Vetting Invitation Form and forward both forms to Regional Headquarters along with a Parental Consent form for Garda vetting completed by the teenager's parents. Once Garda Vetting has been completed satisfactorily, the names of suitable young leaders will be forwarded to the Management Committee for ratification of their appointment. Following this Regional Headquarters will register them as a young leader. The Captain shall be informed that the person can commence working with a younger age group.

Young leaders shall work in partnership with or under the supervision of an adult leader and never be left in sole charge of any group. Young leaders shall be provided with the necessary information to allow them to work safely within the Company/Section.

When a young leader reaches the age of 18 and wishes to continue to work in a Company, they must complete the rest of the recruitment process to become a leader.

Age appropriate Child Protection training will be provided at a level suitable to leaders under the age of 18.

#### **Re-Vetting of Leaders**

It shall be the policy of the BB that all staff and leaders will be subject to re-vetting every four years.

## Training of Leaders

All new leaders, on the first time of starting work within a Company should receive induction from the Company Captain, or delegated person. This induction will include emergency procedures and an explanation of the Child Safeguarding Policy. The new leaders will be issued the leaders card and emailed a copy of the Child Safeguarding Policy.

The BB encourages all leaders to attend Youth Leader Training as soon as is practical. It is mandatory that all leaders undertake the Child Safeguarding training module by the end of the first full session following their appointment as a leader. At the training, leaders will be asked to complete a Declaration of Acceptance stating that they will follow the procedures laid out in the Safeguarding Policy and exercise a duty of care to the children in their charge. New leaders will also be encouraged to complete the Tusla e-learning module to complement the Child Safeguarding training provided by the BB.

Employees and leaders who hold a role at Regional level will be required to complete the Tusla e-learning module within three months of their appointment.

All leaders should attend a Child Safeguarding training every three years.

Training will be provided by the Regional Training Team in each District and it is the Captain's responsibility to ensure that the appropriate training is attended by all leaders.

It is also the Captain's responsibility to ensure that any young leaders in the Company are protected by the same standards of care as other children and that they attend appropriate training.

Regional Headquarters will keep a record of all Child Safeguarding training attended by leaders and employees.

## Safe Working Practices

No activity, even a simple normal meeting night, that is ever undertaken is totally without an element of danger, however it is measured. For example, the misuse of furniture through children sitting improperly on it, tilting it back or children lifting apparatus incorrectly are common causes of simple, avoidable accidents. The activities which the BB pursues, and the places in which these activities are carried out, fall, for safety consideration purposes, into three clearly defined locations: indoors, outdoors and where high risk events are to be held (either indoors or outdoors).

## General Safety

- Leaders should be aware of any health issues, including allergies (particularly to aspirin, elastoplasts and penicillin), concerning individuals which might have implications for participation in certain activities.
- All leaders should be fully aware of the emergency exits and assembly areas to be used in the event of an emergency evacuation of the premises when necessary, including name checks to ascertain all are safely evacuated. All children should be aware of these procedures through regular emergency drills. Leaders should be aware of the location of fire alarms, extinguishers and First Aid box. Remember, a fire extinguisher will only put out a small fire.
- All emergency exits should be kept permanently clear of any obstructions. It is the responsibility of the Leader-in-Charge of the event to see that this requirement is met on an event-to-event basis.
- All leaders should have ready access to the properly maintained First Aid Kit and should have appropriate basic knowledge in its use. The First Aid Kit, however should not contain analgesics, burn sprays, expectorants and astringents for use with children or leaders. The First Aid kit should be checked and updated every six months.
- Leaders should know where the nearest telephone is located and not rely on mobile phones.
- On an annual basis, the Company Captain and leaders should satisfy themselves that the

premises in which the Company customarily operates, and the resources to be used, are safe for the activities of the Company. This annual risk assessment must not be taken lightly.

## Supervision Ratios

The minimum adult/child ratio in any group should ideally be one adult per group of eight plus one other adult, and allowing an additional adult for each group of eight thereafter. Local circumstances, the ages of the children, the experience of the leaders should be taken into consideration. Safety, ability/disability of children and the nature of the activities being undertaken may require that these ratios be considerably lower.

Number of Children	Number of Leaders
0 – 8	2
9 – 16	3
17 – 24	4
25 – 32	5

## Risk Assessment

Children derive a great deal of benefit from their time in the BB and the wide variety of opportunities that are available to them from the sectional meeting night and taking part in visits, holidays and activities as part of their BB programme.

Most activities take place without incident and it is clear that BB leaders are already demonstrating a high level of safety awareness. Potential hazards should not discourage leaders from organising trips and holidays; these present opportunities for experiences that are not available on a section meeting night. No amount of planning can guarantee that a sectional meeting or a trip or holiday will be totally incident free, but good planning and attention to safety measures can reduce the number of accidents and lessen the seriousness of those that do happen.

This section on using risk assessments sets out principles rather than trying to cover every eventuality, leaving it to the judgment of leaders as to how these should be applied. It is suggested that risk assessments should be based on the following considerations:

- what are the hazards?
- who might be affected by them?
- what safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- can the Leader-in-Charge of the trip or holiday put the safety measures in place?
- what steps will be taken in an emergency?

Risk assessments should not be over complicated. In most activities, the potential problems or hazards will be few and can be dealt with by a few simple measures. Checking them is common sense, but a necessary requirement.

### Meeting night premises

The leaders should undertake an annual risk assessment of the premises or parts of the premises that the Company uses for its meeting nights. The owners of the premises should already be undertaking a full annual assessment. The leaders should confine the assessment to those parts of the building used and to the sectional programmes. A simple form for this purpose is available from Regional Headquarters (included in the appendices). 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 leaders are brought to the attention of the church or the owners of the premises.

Assessments should have the aim of preventing the risk or reducing them. Children and leaders must not be put into situations that expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the

prime consideration. The ongoing safety of the Company should be addressed as matters arise.

### **Visits, holidays and activities**

The requirements for holidays and camps along with the regulations and notification requirements for camps, holidays and expeditions are set out in the appendices.

Leaders are encouraged to undertake a simple risk assessment before embarking on a trip or visit or undertaking a camp or holiday. A form for this purpose is available from Regional Headquarters. Risk assessments need not be complex but should be comprehensive. Frequent visits to local venues such as a swimming pool may not need a risk assessment every time. However, it is essential not to become complacent. An assessment of the risks of such visits should be made at regular intervals.

The person undertaking the risk assessment should consider the following factors when considering the risks:

- the type of visit, holiday or activity and the level to which it is being undertaken;
- the location, routes and mode of transport;
- the competence, experience and qualifications of leaders;
- the ratios of leaders to members;
- the age of the members, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity;
- any special or medical needs of the members;
- the quality and suitability of available equipment;
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing;
- emergency procedures;
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit, holiday or activity i.e. generic and site specific hazards and variable hazards e.g. environmental, participants personal abilities etc.

Wherever possible, the Leader-in-Charge should undertake an exploratory visit in order to:

- ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable for the visit, holiday or activity;
- assess potential areas of risk;
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the members and Leaders in the group;
- become familiar with the area before taking a group of children there.

## **High Risk Activities**

High risk activities can be described as "those activities where a considerable degree of training is required both in the specific skill involved, and in the safety precautions necessary to reduce to an acceptable level the danger to life and limb". Inherent in this description is an awareness of the safety implications. All those common sense precautions covered in the preceding sections concerning indoor and outdoor events remain necessary basic considerations for any high-risk activity. Particular attention needs to be given to knowledge of the children to be involved, age appropriateness and physical capabilities for the type and level of activity, health records, sense of discipline and order, parental/carer permission, planning and procedures in the event of an accident/emergency. In addition there are extra special considerations that require to be addressed, dependent upon the nature of the specific high risk activity planned. Please consult Regional Headquarters when planning high risk activities.

Under no circumstances should high risk activities be undertaken until the full range of specific training required for the activity has been properly completed, fully assessed, and where required, certified.

Some high risk activities require additional insurance cover. This is arranged through Brigade Headquarters.

## Physical Education

As this is a fundamental part of Company programmes it is worth highlighting some obvious safety precautions which should be taken by leaders:

- A risk assessment should be carried out prior to the start of any activity and should be held on file. Where the activity takes place at a new location such as a local sports hall, a new risk assessment is required.
- Where possible, leaders should hold a recognised National Governing Body coaching certificate in the activity taking place, or have attended an equivalent course for leaders in youth organisations.
- Children should not take part in contact sports against different age groups where there is wide disparity in physical size. It is recommended that separate competitions involving contact sports (e.g. football, rugby, etc.) be held for Company section members aged under 15 and those aged between 15 and 18 years of age. These age limits should be taken as their ages during the BB session. Children who stay within the Company until the session in which they reach their 19th birthday should not take part in contact sports competitions with those younger than themselves.
- Wherever possible, appropriate kit should be worn and children should be advised of requirements in advance. It may be necessary to stop a child or leader from taking part in an activity, if they are not properly equipped.
- Children participating in physical activities should not be allowed to eat or chew or to wear jewellery.
- Children and leaders should be warmed up thoroughly before strenuous activity.
- In contact games and sports, adults should not participate as active team members.
- When apparatus is being used it must be placed with suitable clear space around it, and be stable and firm. Numbers using a given piece of equipment must be carefully regulated, and a proper sequence of use and supervision over the whole area of activity must be maintained throughout. Suitable landing areas must be in place for children and leaders falling to, or travelling across, the floor.
- Danger is minimised when the teaching of an activity follows a carefully structured programme. Leaders must be aware of the need for progression as a child learns a new activity and, where appropriate, a record of each child's individual progress should be maintained, to which other leaders can refer.
- Particular care must be taken by leaders to satisfy themselves about the safety of their children when involving them in activities and competitions not under the auspices of the BB, for example, sports tournaments and visits to games halls, water leisure complexes, industrial and manufacturing sites or community centres.

## Trips and Holidays

Camps, holidays and expeditions make an important and valuable contribution to the programme of many companies and the provision of these is to be encouraged. The BB has regulations and training requirements in place for leaders leading these activities. The regulations covering camps, holidays and expeditions are set out in the appendices.

A leader leading a camp or holiday for any age group (of any duration involving at least one overnight) must hold a valid Holiday Leadership qualification. The leader is responsible for seeing that all BB Regulations are complied with.

For canvas camps, at least one leader attending the canvas camp must hold a valid Camp Craft qualification. At all camps and holidays, suitable arrangements must be made for first aid provision and supervision of water and adventure activities.

All camps and holidays involving at least one overnight, and for any age group, must be notified to Regional Headquarters. The leader-in-charge of the camp or holiday should ensure that all the necessary regulations and qualifications are met.

All adults assisting overnight with residential visits, camps or holidays and undertaking some responsibility at the event must be properly registered with Headquarters. Some forethought should be given to ensure that all those attending who help with the catering, the running of activities, provide first aid cover etc. are registered as leaders.

These training and notification requirements will help ensure that due account is taken of the welfare and safety of children, that these activities are led by leaders with appropriate qualifications and that the overall standard of camps, holidays and expedition work within the BB is maintained and improved. BB leaders should not run a camp or holiday for BB members in the name of their local church in an attempt to get round any BB regulations and requirements for the event.

### **Anchors**

Anchor are **not** permitted to attend overnight events.

### **Juniors**

Juniors may attend organised Junior Section weekend camps under canvas provided that the programme is suitable for the different age groups. Holidays in a school or church hall etc. are also encouraged. Junior Section members, in their last year, are permitted to attend a Company Section camp.

### **Visits outside the Republic of Ireland and United Kingdom**

Where Company, Battalion, District or other Brigade parties intend to visit countries outside of the Republic of Ireland and United Kingdom, notification must be sent, in every case to Regional Headquarters at least three months before the date of the visit, and their approval obtained

## **Accidents/Incidents**

Where an accident happens at a BB event it is obviously important that certain controlled actions take place. Each Company should have an agreed procedure for dealing with such emergencies and it should be firmly adhered to. The Company procedure should be regularly reviewed and updated where necessary.

Each Company should keep an accident/incident book(s) which are kept with the Company or each sections first aid kit. It may be appropriate for each section to have its own book.

First concern in any accident/emergency must be for the child. If necessary, appropriate First Aid assistance must be administered. Providing that the event is being properly supervised by a trained adult, then this should prove to be no problem. Any child or leader who receives First Aid treatment should have this recorded in the accident/incident book (which is the ultimate responsibility of the Captain) kept with the First Aid box. This record book should require details of time, date, nature of accident, immediate treatment rendered, notes on any later doctor/hospital treatment necessary and, if applicable, how, by whom and when parents/carers were first informed.

Where an accident occurs during the course of a BB event, parents/guardians should be informed at the first reasonable opportunity, and the circumstances of the accident, and a synopsis of the treatment rendered, be given to them verbally.

If the accident occurs at a location distant to home, then careful thought must be given to the seriousness of the accident, as compared to the distance from home, and a judgement made as to whether or not the parents/guardians should be informed immediately. If the child is on a lengthy residential stay with the Company and the nature of the accident, whilst serious, does not involve their returning home immediately, then leaders should make every effort to contact the parents/guardians promptly to inform them of the incident. Whatever the circumstances, when the child returns home, the parents/guardians must be met promptly, and given details of the incident, treatment rendered

and any professional advice given as to their after-care.

Details of all accidents requiring hospital treatment should be sent to Regional Headquarters immediately for the Brigade Insurers using the Brigade accident report form, which is available from Regional Headquarters. Where necessary, Regional Headquarters will inform the owner of the premises where the accident occurred.

## **Transportation**

### **Use of Private Cars**

Where private cars are used to transport members to and from BB events the third party insurance of the car owner applies. Due care must be exercised to see that cars do not carry more persons than authorised by the vehicle manufacturer. Overloading may well invalidate the car insurance and the driver/owner will be personally liable. There can be no claim on the Brigade's insurance policy. The leaders must remind drivers that it is their responsibility to ensure that passengers fully comply with the seatbelt law and child car seats law (See below and the Road Safety Authority website for full details [www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie)) and that the BB Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is fully complied with.

No passengers may be carried in the rear section of an estate car unless it has been adapted professionally for this purpose. At no time should children be left unattended in the vehicle without adult supervision. It is incumbent upon the leaders to satisfy themselves that children will travel in a safe manner to any event. It is his/her duty to ensure that children are only entrusted to competent drivers with roadworthy vehicles, which have sufficient motor insurance for the purpose (as a minimum there should be a current NCT (if applicable) and insurance disc on the car windscreen. It is also essential he/she satisfies him/herself that sufficient transport will be available to avoid overloading and that vehicles will be driven in a safe manner.

Leaders who are provided with company cars by their employer must check with their employer that their insurance allows the driver to use the company car for BB purposes.

### **Use of Public Transport**

Wherever use is made of public transport particular pre-planning is vital in order that leaders can pre-empt all possible difficulties. Good supervision ratios are critical and an adult should be at the front and rear of the party. Leaders should not sit entirely separate from the children, especially on buses where there is a tendency for all adults to reserve front or rear seats. Particular care needs to be taken over any emergency doors/windows and the proximity of children to these. A sense of order must prevail throughout the journey with care taken as a coach or train arrives at, or departs from, its stopping point.

On a ship children should not be allowed to roam at will, nor run around the decks, and all members of the group should have the emergency drill outlined to them, a situation which should also prevail on air flights.

Leaders must remember, as on all outdoor activities with groups of children, that regular 'head-counts' are a must!

### **Use of Hired Transport**

Where a minibus or coach is being hired for Company use then a reputable company with roadworthy vehicles and efficient drivers should be engaged; the cheapest might not always prove to be the best or the safest in the long run. It is imperative that each passenger on the coach occupies a separate seat at all times.

When hiring a minibus or coach, it is the responsibility of the leader to verify the legality and insurance cover of the operator prior to the use of the transport and request confirmation that the driver has been Garda Vetted.

### **Use of Seatbelts**

The wearing seatbelts is the law in Ireland and the European Union.

All children must travel in a child seat, booster seat or booster cushion appropriate to their age, height or weight. Rule of thumb: if there's a safety belt, you must use it. It's the drivers' responsibility to ensure their passengers are using seat belts and appropriate child restraints.

For cars and goods vehicles (including MPV and SUVs):

- Children under 3 can only travel in cars or goods vehicles if there are fitted with the appropriate child restraint. Taxis are exempt from this rule.
- Children between ages 3 and 12 must use an appropriate child restraint in cars or goods vehicles if they are fitted with safety belts
- If the car or goods vehicle doesn't have safety belts, they must sit in the back seat.
- In passenger seats with an active airbag, rear-facing child restraints must not be used.

For buses:

- Children between 3 and 12 must use safety belts if they are fitted
- If seatbelts are available, bus drivers are required to tell passengers that it is the law to wear them

The exemptions:

- Taxis, hackneys and limousines do not need to have every kind of child restraints available
- A child over 3 can wear a seatbelt in the back seat of a car or a goods vehicle if there is no more room for a child safety seat
- If it is not possible to place the child in the back seat of the vehicle, they can ride in the passenger seat, as long as they are using the appropriate restraints.
- Child restraints come in several weight classes so find the appropriate one for the child.

Road Safety Authority website for full details

[www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie)

## Children with Special Needs

The BB encourages children of all abilities to become members of the Organisation. The Company Captain or Leader in Charge will talk with parents of children with special needs to find out what those needs are and to see how she and her leaders can help the child to participate.

When dealing with children with special needs, leaders should bear in mind these action points:

### Do

- Include (not just by enrolling child into class but by including them in every aspect of what you say or do);
- Treat a child with special needs as you would any other child;
- Always speak directly to the child with special needs;
- Always ask the child with special needs if you can help them in any way;
- Integrate the child into the group;
- Try to be aware of a child's hidden disability or condition, such as epilepsy, ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, which may require assistance;
- Examine your use of derogatory language such as 'blind as a bat';
- Assume nothing – always ask! Talk to parents or carers and communicate with child too.

### Don't

- Exclude (this is demonstrated by your commitment to the child);
- Use negative terms such as 'crippled' or 'victim';
- Use language that promotes pity or charity;
- Use emotional language such as 'suffers from';
- Consider a parent or carer as a conversational go-between;
- Segregate;
- Pretend that you know what children are saying when you cannot understand them – ask them to repeat themselves or try another method of communication;
- Be embarrassed by using common expressions, for example saying 'see you later' when speaking to a child who is blind.

## Recognising Abuse

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger, and can be an adult or another child. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, it should be considered child welfare and protection issue for both children and child protection procedures should be followed for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

The important factor in deciding whether the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the parent/carer.

The definitions and sign of abuse outlined in the Appendices are not legal definitions. They are intended to describe ways in which a child might experience abuse and how this abuse may be recognised.

In dealing with children, employees and leaders need to be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children you come in contact with. A child needs to have someone they can trust in order to feel able to disclose abuse they may be experiencing. They need to know that they will be believed and will get the help they need. Without these things, they may be vulnerable to continuing abuse.

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be particular times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives. In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to harm.

The following are some of the complicating factors and circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to harm:

- Age of the child
- Domestic and sexual violence
- Parental mental health problems
- Parental substance misuse
- Parental intellectual disability
- Children with disabilities
- Unknown male partners and their history/association with the family
- Families who are 'uncooperative' or 'hard to engage'
- Poverty and social exclusion.

It is important to remember that identifying additional vulnerability does not mean that any specific child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

Abuse is not always committed through personal contact with a child, sometimes it is perpetrated through social media or the use of information and communication technology.

## Reasonable Grounds for Concern

The reporting procedures set out on page ??? should always be used when an employee or leader has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. If what may be symptoms of abuse are ignored it could result in ongoing harm to the child. It is not necessary to prove that abuse has occurred to report a concern, all that is required is that there are reasonable grounds for concern.

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse

- Consistent signs that a child is suffered get from emotional or physical neglect
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused.

The guiding principles on reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:

1. The safety and well-being of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made
2. Reports of concern should be made without delay to the Regional Safeguarding Panel.

## How to respond to a disclosure

A child may disclose to an employee or leader that they have been or are being harmed or abused. Children will often have different ways of communicating that they are being abused. If a child hints at or tells a leader or employee that he or she is being harmed by someone, be it a parent/carer, another adult or by a child (peer abuse), it should be treated in a sensitive way.

Remember, a child may disclose abuse to a leader or employee as a trusted adult at any time during their work with them. It is important that leaders and employees are aware and prepared for this.

- Be as calm and natural as possible.
- Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked. Do not panic.
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the child.
- Remember, the child may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child has to say. Give them time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to.
- Do not pressurise the child. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or disbelief.
- Accept what the child has to say – false disclosures are very rare.
- It is important to differentiate between the person who carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself. The child quite possibly may love or strongly like the alleged abuser whilst also disliking what was done to them. It is important therefore to avoid expressing any judgement on, or anger towards the alleged perpetrator while talking to the child.
- It may be necessary to reassure the child that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed.
- Reassure the child that they have taken the right action in talking to you.

When asking questions

- Questions should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification only.
- Avoid leading questions, such as asking whether a specific person carried out the abuse. Also, avoid asking about intimate details or suggestion that something else may have happened other than what you have been told. Such question and suggestions could complicate the official investigation.

Confidentiality – Do not promise to keep secrets

At the earliest opportunity, tell the child that:

- You acknowledge that they have come to you because they trust you.
- You will be sharing this information only with people who understand this area and who can help. There are secrets which are not helpful and should not be kept because they make matters worse. Such secrets hide things that need to be known if people are to be helped and protected from further on-going hurt. By refusing to make a commitment to secrecy to the child, you do run the risk that they may not tell you everything (or, indeed, anything) there and then. However, it is better to do this than to tell and lie and ruin the child's confidence in yet another adult. By being honest, it is more likely that the child will return to you at another time.

Think before you promise anything – do not make promises you cannot keep

At the earliest possible opportunity:

- Record in writing, in a factual manner, what the child has said, including, as far as possible, the exact words used by the child.
- Inform the Regional Safeguarding Panel immediately and agree measure to protect the child, e.g. report the matter directly to Tusla.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.

Ongoing support

Following a disclosure by a child, it is important that the leader or employee continues in a supportive relationship with the child. Disclosure is a huge step for a child. Leader/employees should continue to offer support, particularly by:

- Maintaining a positive relationship with the child
- Keeping lines of communication open by listening carefully to the child
- Continuing to include the child in the usual activities.

Any further disclosure should be treated as a first disclosure and responded to as indicated above. Where necessary, immediate action should be taken to ensure the child's safety.

## Reporting Procedures

A child will sometimes confide in a leader or employee that they have been abused or someone may witness incidents which suggest that a child is being harmed. Often it is a case of a leader or employee feeling worried and concerned about certain signs they are picking up on, such as poor hygiene; a child always appearing hungry, listless and tired; a lack of suitable clothing; or unexplained physical injuries. Other indicators may be related to the child's behaviour such as being aggressive, impulsive, or withdrawn. A cluster or pattern of signs is more likely to be indicative of abuse or neglect.

If a leader or employee has any of the above concerns or has seen or heard anything else which causes them concern about a child, they have a responsibility to safeguarding children and report those concerns by contacting a member of the Regional Safeguarding Panel and completing the Internal Reporting Form giving as much detail as possible about the concern. The Internal Reporting Form should be returned as soon as possible to the Regional Safeguarding Panel. It is important to note the report should be factual and include all details available to the leader or employee in relation to the child and their concerns.

On receipt of any concern the Regional Safeguarding Panel, in consultation with the leader or employee who raised the concern, will expediently assess the information and decide if reasonable grounds for concern exist. The Regional Safeguarding Panel, as mandated persons, also has the responsibility to assess the information, in line with the Mandated Reporting Threshold Decision Process and decide whether the concern reaches or exceeds the threshold for harm to necessitate a mandated report. The concern raised must be assessed by the Regional Safeguarding Panel in relation to both levels of report, if the concern does not meet the threshold for harm but does meet the reasonable grounds for concern it should be reported. The Regional Safeguarding Panel will make a record of their decision as to whether a report should be made and at what level and the basis for such decision.

A designated member of the Regional Safeguarding Panel should contact the parents/guardians and speak to them about the concern that has been raised in relation to their child and inform them that a report is being submitted to Tusla. This should be done in a sensitive and caring manner and should be done in line with the best practice guidelines contained in Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. However the Regional Safeguarding Panel will not inform the parents of the decision to report a concern to Tusla, if they feel that by doing so might further endanger the child, impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment or put themselves or the leader or the employee at risk of harm.

If reasonable grounds for concern exist the Regional Safeguarding Panel will, without delay, contact the Duty Social Worker at Tusla and make a verbal report and complete a Child Protection and Welfare Report form based on information held by BB on the child in question and the information provided by the leader/employee on the Internal Reporting Form and forward same to Tusla. If concern meets or exceeds the threshold for harm, the Regional Safeguarding Panel will indicate on the Child Protection and Welfare Report form that this is a mandated report.

If the Regional Safeguarding Panel is unsure if the concern meets the reasonable grounds for concern or meets or exceeds the threshold of harm to warrant a mandated report, they should contact the Duty Social Worker at Tusla and seek advice as to whether a report should be made and at what level. Where the Duty Social Worker advises that the concern does not meet the reasonable grounds for concern, the Regional Safeguarding Panel will inform the leader or employee of the advice received and advise the leader or employee to continue to monitor and support the child and if any further concerns arise to inform the Regional Safeguarding Panel. A record of the initial concern will be placed in the Child Safeguarding files of BB by the Regional Safeguarding Panel.

It is important that should future concerns be raised by a leader or employee in relation to the same child, the Regional Safeguarding Panel should assess the information on all records held in the Child Protection file on that child, in addition to the new concern, when deciding whether reasonable grounds for concern are met or the threshold of harm is met or exceeded and a report to Tusla is needed.

If the Regional Safeguarding Panel decides not to report a concern to Tusla, the following steps should be taken:

- The reasons for not reporting should be recorded
- Any action taken as a result of the concern should be recorded
- The leader or employee who raised the concern should be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported to Tusla
- The leader or employee should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to make a report to Tusla or An Garda Síochana personally.
- The leader or employee who raised the concern should also be reassured that if they do choose to further pursue the matter, they are covered by the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998.

In the event of an emergency, where it is considered that the child is in imminent danger, or the non-availability of a duty social worker, the Regional Safeguarding Panel should report to An Garda Síochana.

The Regional Safeguarding Panel should also consider if the concern should also be reported to An Garda Síochana in line with the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

### **Mandated Reporting and Assisting**

In BB the Regional Safeguarding Panel are mandated persons and as such is required under the Children First Act 2015 to report any concern that meets or exceeds the threshold for reporting under the legislation. Where the Regional Safeguarding Panel has a concern that meets or exceeds the threshold for reporting under the legislation they shall make a joint report to Tusla indicating that it is a mandated report. Where the Regional Safeguarding Panel has a concern that they believe does not reach the threshold for a mandated report, they should consider whether the concerns meets reasonable grounds for concern and if it meets the reasonable grounds for concern, a designated member of the Regional Safeguarding Panel shall report to Tusla.

Under the Children First Act 2015 there is also a statutory requirement for mandated persons to assist Tusla in the assessment of risk of mandated reports, where requested to do so. Where such a request is received, the mandated person must provide such assistance as is required. Tusla accepts the time limitations and pressures on other professional and will use mandated assisting only when necessary and only to the extent needed by each specific case.

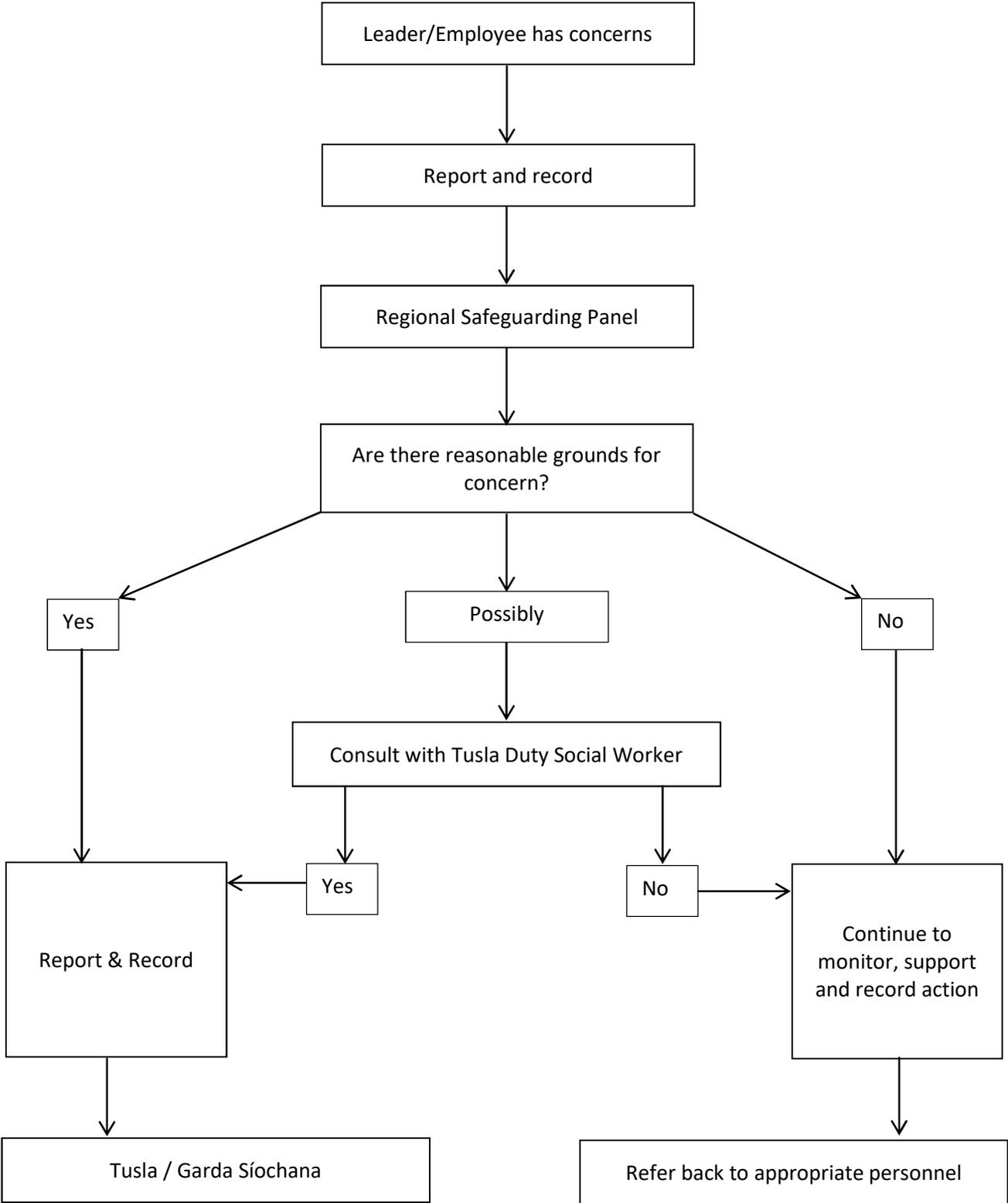
Whilst a number of leaders within BB would be mandated persons in their professional capacity, the legal obligation to report under the Children First Act 2015 only applies to information that they acquire in the course of their professional work or employment and does not apply to information they acquire outside of their professional capacity or information given to them on the basis of the personal relationship. Therefore they are not mandated persons in their capacity as leaders within BB.

**Anonymity**

Designated Liaison Persons cannot report anonymously. Similarly, mandated persons may not report anonymously as to do so does not discharge the statutory obligations for a mandated person under the Children First Act 2015.

Tusla will respect the wishes of non-professionals reporting concerns in good faith who ask to remain anonymous as much as possible, but cannot give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The Data Protection Acts and Freedom of Information Acts allow the withholding of information in certain circumstances, however, should the information be directly sought within legal proceedings, there is no guarantee it will not be released.

### Reporting Procedures



## Dealing with Allegations

### Allegation against a leader or employee

An allegation of abuse may relate to a leader or employee who works with children in BB who has:

- Behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence in relation to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they may pose a risk to a child
- Behaved in a way that is contrary to BB's Code of Behaviour for leader and employees.

If an allegation is made against a leader or employee, BB has a dual responsibility in relation to the child and the leader/employee. There are two separate procedures to be followed:

- The reporting procedure to Tusla in respect of the child and the alleged abuser;
- The internal personnel procedure for dealing with the leader/employee.

On receipt of an allegation against a leader or employee, the Regional Safeguarding Panel shall follow the reporting procedures laid out on page 19 and if making a formal report to Tusla advise them that the report is in relation to a leader or employee in the organisation. This will allow Tusla to apply the necessary policies and procedures in relation to allegations against workers or volunteers in organisations. In addition, they shall advise the Management Committee that an allegation has been made against a leader or employee and the Management Committee shall undertake the internal personnel procedure.

The first priority is to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. The Management Committee should as a matter of urgency take any necessary protective measures. These measures should be proportionate to the level of risk and should not unreasonably penalise the leader or employee financially or otherwise, unless necessary to protect children. Where protective measures penalise the leader or employee, it is important that early consideration be given to the case.

Any action taken should be guided by agreed procedures, the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice.

The Management Committee should privately inform the leader or employee of the following:

- (i) the fact that an allegation has been made against him or her;
- (ii) the nature of the allegation.

The leader or employee should be afforded an opportunity to respond. The Management Committee should note the response and pass on this information if making a formal report to Tusla. The leader or employee should be offered the option of have representation at this stage and should be informed that any response may be shared with Tusla.

The Management Committee should take care to ensure that actions taken by her do not undermine or frustrate any investigations/ assessments conducted by Tusla or An Garda Síochána. To this end it is strongly recommended that the Management Committee maintain a close liaison with the statutory authorities to ensure this.

The requirements of fair procedure and natural justice mean that Tusla usually will not share the details of any assessment regarding allegations of abuse against a leader or employee until the leader or employee has had the opportunity to fully respond to the allegation and any findings and decisions of Tusla

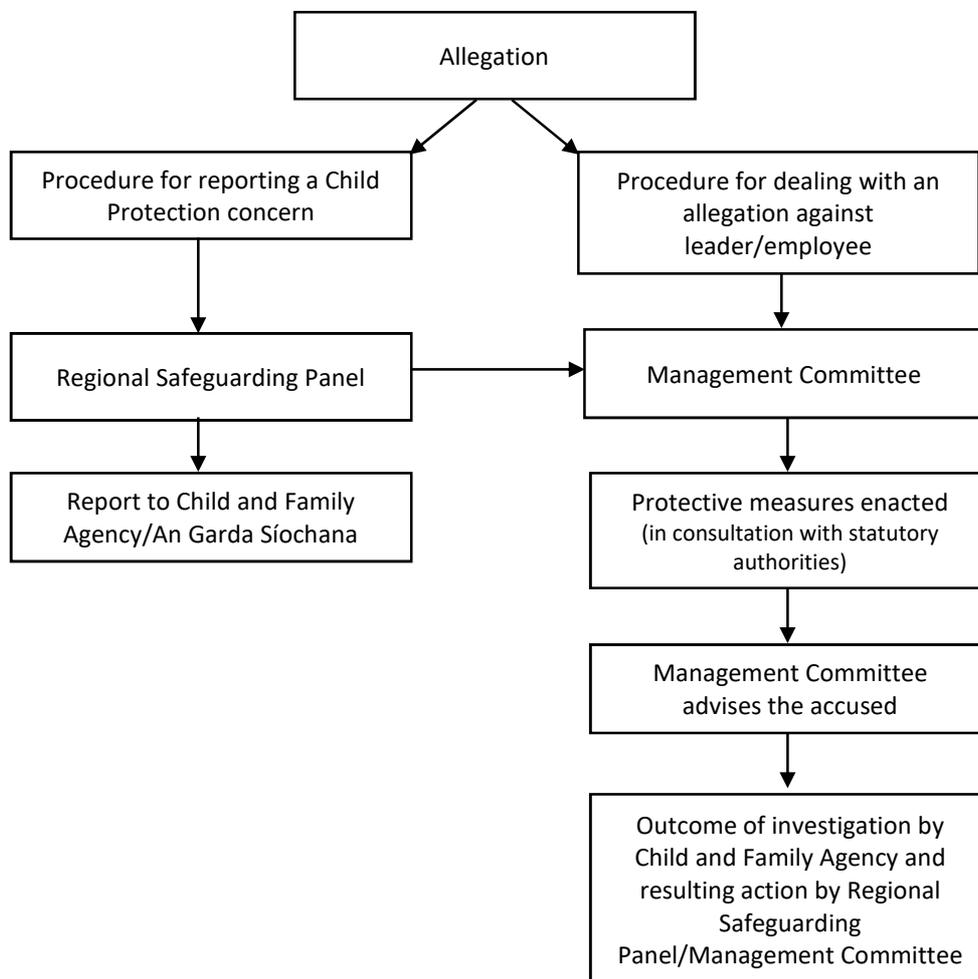
The Regional Safeguarding Panel and the Management Committee should be notified of the outcome of an investigation and/or assessment by Tusla. This will assist them in reaching a decision about the action to be taken in the longer term concerning the leader or employee.

Allegation against a child

In a situation where child abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, the standard reporting procedures (see page 19) will be followed. If an allegation, suspicion or concern of peer abuse is made against a child and meets the reasonable grounds for concern, this should be reported by the Regional Safeguarding Panel indicating that it is a case of suspected peer abuse so that Tusla can put procedures in place for both the victim and the alleged abuser, as it would be considered a child protection and welfare issue for both children.

If the allegation meets or exceeds the threshold of harm, the Regional Safeguarding Panel should indicate on the report to Tusla that the report is a mandated report.

**Reporting procedure when dealing with an allegation against a leader/employee**



## Dealing with disclosure by an adult of childhood abuse

There are an increasing number of adults disclosing abuse that took place during their childhood. Where such a disclosure is made it is essential to establish whether there may be current risk to any child who may be in contact with the alleged abuser revealed in the disclosure. This is important even where the children about whom there may be a concern are still to be identified.

Some adults disclosing abuse may not choose to personally come forward to report their concerns about children who may be currently at risk.

If any risk is deemed to exist to a child who may be in contact with an alleged abuser, the Regional Safeguarding Panel should be informed and they should follow the reporting procedures laid out on page 19 and report the allegation to Tusla without delay. The Retrospective Abuse Report Form should be used to make such a report to Tusla rather than the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form.

If a leader or mandated person is unsure about whether to report or not, they should contact the Regional Safeguarding Panel who can consult with the Tusla Duty Social Worker in relation to the concern and seek advice as to whether a report should be made or not.

Reports by adults of childhood abuse will be assessed by Tusla. If there are on-going child protection concerns Tusla will take necessary actions to ensure any child may be at risk of harm is protected.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Designated Liaison Person

The Regional Safeguarding Panel shall act as the Designated Liaison Persons for the BB.

It is the role and responsibility of the Regional Safeguarding Panel to:

- Be fully familiar with BB's duties to the safeguarding of children
- Have a good knowledge of BB's guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure that BB's reporting procedure is followed, so that child protection and welfare concerns are referred promptly to Tusla.
- Receive child protection and welfare concerns from coaches and parents and consider if reasonable grounds for reporting to Tusla exist.
- Consult informally with a Tusla Duty Social Worker if necessary.
- Where appropriate, make a formal report of a child protection or welfare concern to Tusla on behalf of BB, using the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form.
- Inform the child's parents/guardians that a report is to be submitted to Tusla or An Garda Síochana, unless
  - Informing the parents/guardians is likely to endanger the child;
  - Informing the parents/guardians may place you as the reporter at risk of harm from the family;
  - The family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment.
- Record all concerns or allegations of child abuse brought to your attention as well as any action/inaction taken in response to these concerns.
- Provide feedback to the referrer, as appropriate.
- Advise the Management Committee on individual cases within the limits of confidentiality;
- Ensure that a secure system is in place to manage confidential records.
- Act as a liaison with Tusla and An Garda Síochana, as appropriate;
- Advise on best practice;
- Organise and facilitate training on Child Safeguarding;
- Keep up to date on current developments regarding provision, practice, support services, legal obligations/requirements and policy and attend relevant meetings and undertake training as necessary;

- Undertake the recruitment process and bring names of new leaders who have completed the recruitment process satisfactorily to the Management Committee. Maintain personnel records for all leaders in the Organisation.

The Regional Safeguarding Panel:

Name	Email Address	Mobile Number	Landline Number
Philip Daley	<a href="mailto:philip@philipdaley.ie">philip@philipdaley.ie</a>	+353 87 205 7320	+353 1
Olive Good	<a href="mailto:olivecgood@gmail.com">olivecgood@gmail.com</a>	+353 87 245 1310	+353 1 812 9398
Brian Weekes	<a href="mailto:brianphil59@gmail.com">brianphil59@gmail.com</a>	+353 85 229 1104	+353 1 493 3226
Alan Ayling	<a href="mailto:alanayling@eircom.net">alanayling@eircom.net</a>	+353 87 051 9723	+353 1 461 0174

### **Mandated Persons**

The National Director of the BB shall maintain a list of all mandated persons within organisation and will update this list every quarter.

The members of Regional Safeguarding Panel as mandated persons shall make a mandated report to Tusla of any child protection or welfare concerns which meet or exceed the thresholds set out in Children First and cooperate with Tusla in the assessment of mandated reports, where requested to do so.

### **Relevant Person**

The Management Committee has been appointed Olive Good as the relevant person for BB and is the first point of contact in relation to the Child Safeguarding Statement.

### **Dealing with the press**

Where there is an approach by either the local or national press on the subject of child protection, the Captain/leaders should refer the enquirer to Regional Headquarters. Where a press release has been issued, the Captain and Minister will be sent a copy.

### **Record Keeping, Access and Storage of Information**

#### **Child Safeguarding Records**

The Regional Safeguarding Panel is responsible for keeping the following records relating to the BB Child Safeguarding Policy in a locked fire-proof safe including.

- Personnel records for all leaders including Leader's Registration Form, Volunteer Reference Forms, training record, Garda Vetting and Declaration of Acceptance;
- Any disclosures, concerns or allegations of child abuse;
- Records relating to disclosures, concerns or allegations of abuse including reports from leaders, reports to Tusla, including informal advice from Tusla, informing parents/guardians, reports to Gardaí, advice given to leaders;

- Any complaints about the safety and welfare of children while under the supervision of the BB;
- Any protective measures or action taken by Management Committee in relation to an allegation against an employee/leader;
- Any actions taken by the Management Committee in response to a complaint against a leader.

The Regional Safeguarding Panel are the only personnel who have access to these records through the National Director and Training Director: Leaders may request, in writing, to view the records held by the Regional Safeguarding Panel relating to them.

All Child Safeguarding records will be held by the BB in perpetuity. Personnel records will be kept in hard copy until the registration process for a leader has been completed after which time they will be converted to electronic format and stored on external hard drive in perpetuity.

### **Company Records**

Each Company should hold:

- Parental consent forms for each member within the Company which is completed by parents/guardians on an annual basis;
- Attendance records for each meeting of the Company which includes both members and leaders;
- Parental consent forms for any outings or trips away;
- An accident/incident book or forms for any accidents/incidents which may occur in the Company:

Parental consent forms, event consent forms and attendance records should be scanned and sent to Regional HQ on an annual basis for them to be stored on an external hard drive and be kept in perpetuity. Where a Captain/leader does not have the facilities to do this, the original should be sent to Regional HQ for them to scan and keep in perpetuity.

### **Headquarter Records**

The Regional Headquarters will receive event parental consent forms for all events held at a District and National level. Once the event has taken place the event parental consent form shall be converted to electronic format and stored on an external hard drive and kept in perpetuity.

## **Confidentiality**

Youth work involves the development of trusting relationships where it may be common for children to divulge personal information. Therefore, all leaders need to be aware that a child or a colleague may disclose that they are being abused or know of someone who is being abused.

Confidentiality is about managing sensitive information in a manner that is respectful, professional and purposeful. All information provided to the BB by a child or leader must be treated in a confidential manner. All leaders have a responsibility to handle all sensitive information in line with the BB code of confidentiality.

### **Code of Confidentiality**

All information regarding a Child Protection concern or suspected case of Child Abuse must be only shared on a 'need to know basis' and always in the best interests of the child's general welfare and safety. The subject should never be discussed with other persons in the organisation, including leaders or children if they are not directly involved.

In the case of a Child Protection concern, no leader should promise to tell a person they can keep a secret to any person disclosing the information. It must be made clear to the person(s) making the disclosure that secrets cannot be kept but that the information will only be shared with the appropriate person who will handle the information sensitively.

Sharing information with an appropriate/designated person for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality. Codes of confidentiality do not intend to prevent the exchange of information between individuals who have a responsibility to protect children.

Personal information, which is gathered for a specific purpose, should never be used for any other purpose without consulting the person who provided that information.

All leaders working with children must have some training on understanding of the importance of confidentiality and the limitations of confidentiality in relation to Child Protection issues.

### **Exchange of Information**

All leaders should be aware that ensuring Child Protection is only possible in the organisation if all leaders share relevant information. Also to ensure Child Protection, the organisation must work in partnership with the Child and Family Agency and the Gardaí.

Any person who receives information from colleagues about possible or actual Child Abuse must treat it as having been given in confidence and follow the organisation's reporting procedures.

It is also necessary that any records of incidents, disclosures, or concerns of a Child Protection nature are only accessible to those who should have access to the records because of a need to know.

In line with the reporting procedures outlined on section 9, parents/guardians will be kept informed if personal information is being shared or a report is being made to the Child and Family Agency or the Gardaí.

Reports that are made to the Regional Safeguarding Panel can still be followed up on after being shared with the statutory agencies. However, it should be noted that not giving the name of the person making the report can make it more difficult to assess a situation.

### **Communications**

The BB acknowledges that good communication is essential to maintaining a positive working and learning environment. All information about communications methods and practices utilised by the BB to communicate with parents/guardians, children and the wider community are detailed in our Communications Policy.

### **Working in Partnership with Parents/Guardians**

Working in partnership with parents/ guardians helps to safeguard children. The BB sees the welfare of children as paramount and therefore seeks to form positive relationships between leaders and parents to encourage mutual trust and support and so has developed a policy for working in partnership with parents/guardians.

### **Interagency Working**

The BB Child Safeguarding Policy covers all the BB activities at Company, District and Regional level within or outside the Republic of Ireland.

It is important to ensure that where BB activities are taking place in conjunction with another group or organisation protocols are put in place to ensure that there is clarity for all those involved.

Where BB Companies, Districts or the BB are using or hiring premises for weekly meetings, competitions or other activities, they should comply with any requirements such as providing a copy of insurance and Child Safeguarding Policy. The child protection policy of any premises will not supersede the BB Child Safeguarding Policy.

Where BB Companies are using church premises for weekly meetings or other activities, the Company should complete the common protocol form for the parish on an annual basis and provide them with a copy of the insurance for the year, a copy of the BB Child Safeguarding Policy and details

of the leaders in the Company, where requested. If a report is being made under the BB Child Safeguarding Policy, the parish will be informed of the report but not the substance of the report.

Where a BB Company or District is working with another organisation or agency on a joint activity, it should be agreed at the planning stages which organisation's/agency's insurance is going to be used to cover the event and which organisation's/agency's child protection policy and procedures will be followed. Headquarters should be advised of the event and as to what insurance cover and child protection policy and procedures will be utilised at the event.

Where the BB is working with another organisation or agency on a joint activity at national level, the Training Committee or Activities Committee should agree with the other organisation/agency at the planning stages which organisation's/agency's insurance is going to be used to cover the event and which organisation's/agency's child protection policy and procedures will be followed.

## Appendices

### Relevant Legislation

There are a number of key pieces of legislation that relate to child welfare and protection. The information here gives a brief overview of relevant legislation.

#### CHILD CARE ACT 1991

This is a key piece of legislation which regulates child care policy in Ireland. Under this Act, Tusla has a statutory responsibility to promote the welfare of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection. If it is found that a child is not receiving adequate care and protection, Tusla has a duty to take appropriate action to promote the welfare of the child. This may include supporting families in need of assistance in providing care and protection to their children. The Child Care Act also sets out the statutory framework for taking children into care, if necessary.

#### PROTECTION FOR PERSONS REPORTING CHILD ABUSE ACT 1998

This Act protects you if you make a report of suspected child abuse to designated officers of Tusla, the Health Service Executive (HSE) or to members of the Gardai as long as the report is made in good faith and is not malicious. Designated officers also include persons authorised by the Chief Executive Officer of Tusla to receive and acknowledge reports of mandated concerns about a child from mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

This legal protection means that even if you report a case of suspected child abuse and it proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that you had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report. If you make a report in good faith and in the child's best interests, you may also be protected under common law by the defence of qualified privilege.

You can find the full list of persons in Tusla and the HSE who are designated officers under the 1998 Act, on the website of each agency ([www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie) and [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)).

#### CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT 2006

Section 176 of this Act created an offence of reckless endangerment of children. This offence may be committed by a person who had authority or control over a child or abuser who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by:

1. Causing or permitting the child to be placed or left in a situation that creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse; or
2. Failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation.

#### CRIMINAL JUSTICE (WITHHOLDING OF INFORMATION ON OFFENCES AGAINST CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PERSONS) ACT 2012

Under this Act, it is a criminal offence to withhold information about a serious offence, including sexual offence, against a person under 18 years or a vulnerable person. The offence arises where a person knows or believes that a specified offence has been committed against a child or vulnerable person and he or she has information which would help arrest, prosecute or convict another person for that offence, but fails without reasonable excuse to disclose that information, as soon as it is practicable to do so, to a member of An Garda Síochána.

The provisions of the Withholding legislation are in addition to any reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015.

#### NATIONAL VETTING BUREAU (CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PERSONS) ACTS 2012-2016

Under these Acts, it is compulsory for employers to obtain vetting disclosures in relation to anyone who is carrying out relevant work with children or vulnerable adults. The Acts create offences and penalties for persons who fail to comply with their provisions. Statutory obligations on employers in relation to Garda vetting requirements for persons working with children and vulnerable adults are set out in the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012-2016.

#### CHILDREN FIRST ACT 2015

The Children First Act 2015 is an important addition to the child welfare and protection system as it will help to ensure that child protection concerns are brought to the attention of Tusla without delay.

The Act provides for mandatory reporting of child welfare and protection concerns by key professionals; comprehensive risk assessment and planning for a strong organisational culture of safeguarding in all services provided to children; provision for a register of non-compliance; and the statutory underpinning of the existing Children First Interdepartmental Implementation Group which promotes and oversees cross-sectoral implementation and compliance with Children First.

#### CRIMINAL LAW (SEXUAL OFFENCES) ACT 2017

This Act addresses the sexual exploitation of children and targets those who engage in this criminal activity. It creates offences relating to the obtaining or providing of children for the purposes of sexual exploitation. It also creates offences of the types of activity which may occur during the early stages of the predatory process prior to the actual exploitation of a child, for example, using modern technology to prey on children and making arrangements to meet with a child where the intention is to sexually exploit the child. The Act also recognises the existence of underage, consensual peer relationships where any sexual activity falls within the strictly defined age limits and the relationship is not intimidatory or exploitative.

## Definitions and Signs of Abuse

### NEGLECT

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences.

Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of a n omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influences in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child one.

The following are feature of child neglect:

- Children left alone without adequate care and supervision
- Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding
- Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. A child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation
- Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation
- Inadequate living conditions - unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture
- Lack of adequate clothing
- Inattention to basic hygiene
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age.
- Persistent failure to attend school
- Abandonment or desertion

### EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationships between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.

Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways:

- Rejection
- Lack of comfort and love
- Lack of attachment

- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. Fun and play)
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g. Frequent moves, particularly unplanned)
- Continuous lack of praise and encouragement
- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child
- Bullying
- Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child depends on his or her behaviour or actions
- Extreme overprotectiveness
- Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. Locking child in bedroom)
- Ongoing family conflicts and family violence
- Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his/her age and stage of development

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour.

It should be noted that no one indicator is conclusive evidence of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is more likely to impact negatively on a child where it is persistent over time and where there is a lack of other protective factors.

#### PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health or development is, or may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

Physical abuse can include the following:

- Physical punishment
- Beating, slapping, hitting or kicking
- Pushing, shaking or throwing
- Pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling
- Use of excessive force in handling
- Deliberate poisoning
- Suffocation
- Fabricated/induced illness
- Female genital mutilation

The Children First Act 2015 includes a provision that abolishes the common law defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings. This defence could previously be invoked by a parent or other person in authority who physically disciplined a child. The change in the legislation now means that in prosecutions relating to assault or physical cruelty, a person who administers such punishment to a child cannot rely on the defence of reasonable chastisement in the legal proceedings. The result of this is that the protections in law relating to assault now apply to a child in the same way as they do to an adult.

#### SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography.

Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and in some instances occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members.

Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms.

It should be remembered that sexual activity involving a child may be sexual abuse even if the child concerned does not themselves recognise it as abusive.

Examples of sexual abuse include the following:

- Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child
- An invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or the involvement of a child in an act of masturbation
- Sexual intercourse with a child, whether oral, vaginal or anal
- Sexual exploitation of a child, which includes:
  - Inviting, inducing or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography [for example, exhibition, modelling or posing for the purposes of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means]
  - Inviting, coercing or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent or obscene act
  - Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse
- Exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person

An Garda Síochána will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation. The prosecution of a sexual offence against a child will be considered within the wider objective of child welfare and protection. The safety of the child is paramount and at no stage should a child's safety be compromised because of concern for the integrity of a criminal investigation.

In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not be regarded as child sexual abuse.

#### Welfare

The Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook defines a child welfare concern as "a problem experienced directly by a child, or the family of a child, that is seen to impact negatively on the child's health, development and welfare, and that warrants assessment and support, but may not require a child protection response".

## National Contacts for Tusla Social Workers

Area	Address	Telephone No.
<b>DUBLIN NORTH</b>	Child and Family Agency, 180 – 189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, County Dublin	(01) 8708000
<b>DUBLIN NORTH CITY</b>	Child and Family Agency, Health Centre, Wellmount Park, Finglas, Dublin 11	(01) 8567704
<b>DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL</b>	Child and Family Agency, Bridge House, Cherry Orchard Hospital, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10	076 6955749
<b>DUBLIN SOUTH EAST</b>	Child and Family Agency, Unit 9 Nutgrove Retail Park, Churchtown, Dublin 14	(01) 9213400
<b>DUBLIN SOUTH WEST</b>	Child and Family Agency, St Mary's Craddockstown Road, Naas, County Kildare	(045) 882400
<b>CARLOW</b>	Child and Family Agency, Yellow House, Wester Road, Clonmel, County Tipperary	(052) 6177302
<b>CAVAN</b>	Child and Family Agency, Support Services Building, Rooskey, Monaghan	(047) 30475
<b>WEST CAVAN</b>	Child and Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack Street, Sligo	(071) 9155133
<b>CLARE</b>	Child and Family Agency, Unit 3, St Camillus Hospital, Shelbourne Road, Limerick	(061) 588688
<b>CORK</b>	Child and Family Agency, Referrals Section, Floor 2, Blackpool, Co. Cork	(021) 4927000
<b>DONEGAL</b>	Child and Family Agency, Millennium Court, Pearse Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal	(074) 9123672
<b>GALWAY</b>	Child and Family Agency, 25 Newcastle Road, Galway, Co. Galway	(091) 546235
<b>KERRY</b>	Child and Family Agency, Rathass, Tralee, Co. Kerry	(066) 7184501
<b>KILDARE</b>	Child and Family Agency, St Mary's Craddockstown Road, Naas, Co. Kildare	(045) 882400
<b>KILKENNY</b>	Child and Family Agency, Yellow House, Wester Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.	(052) 6177302
<b>LIMERICK</b>	Child and Family Agency, Unit 3, St Camillus Hospital, Shelbourne Road, Co. Limerick	(061) 588688
<b>LAOIS</b>	Child and Family Agency, Athlone Health Centre, Coosan Road, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	(0906) 483106
<b>LEITRIM</b>	Child and Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack Street, Sligo	(071) 9155133
<b>LONGFORD</b>	Child and Family Agency, Athlone Health Centre, Coosan Road, Athlone, County Westmeath	(0906) 483106

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<b>LOUTH</b>	Child and Family Agency, Meath Enterprise Centre, Trim Road, Navan, Co. Meath	(046 9098560
<b>MAYO</b>	Child and Family Agency, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Mill Lane, Bridge Street, Castlebar, Co. Mayo	(094) 9042284
<b>MEATH</b>	Child and Family Agency, Meath Enterprise Centre, Trim Road, Navan, County Meath	(046) 9098560
<b>MONAGHAN</b>	Child and Family Agency, Support Services Buidling, Rooskey, Monaghan	(047) 30475
<b>OFFALY</b>	Child and Family Agency, Athlone Health Centre, Coosan Road, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	(0906) 483106
<b>ROSCOMMON</b>	Child and Family Agency, 25 Newcastle Road, Galway	(091) 546235
<b>SLIGO</b>	Child and Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack Street, Sligo, Co. Sligo	(071) 915 5133
<b>NORTH TIPPERARY</b>	Child and Family Agency, Unit 3 St Cammillus Hospital, Shelbourne Road, Limerick	(061) 588688
<b>SOUTH TIPPERARY</b>	Child and Family Agency, Yellow House, Wester Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary	(052) 6177302
<b>WATERFORD</b>	Child and Family Agency, Ely house, Ferrybank, Co. Wexford	(053) 9185680
<b>WESTMEATH</b>	Social Work Department, Athlone Health Centre, Coosan Road, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	(0906) 48 3106
<b>WEXFORD</b>	Child and Family Agency, Ely House, Ferrybank, Co. Wexford	(053) 9185680
<b>WICKLOW</b>	Child and Family Agency, Unit 9, Nutgrove Retail Park, Churchtown, Dublin 14	(01) 9213400
<b>WEST WICKLOW</b>	Child and Family Agency, St Mary's, Craddockstown Road, Naas, Co. Kildare	(045) 882400

## Holiday Leadership Regulations

### Holiday Leadership Scheme

The *Holiday Leadership Scheme* comprises a *Holiday Leadership Certificate* and a *Camp Craft Certificate* for canvas events (but not including overnight expeditions, for which a separate Expedition and Outdoor Leadership qualification is required). The person leading the holiday is referred to as the Leader-in-Charge.

### Requirements to Lead a Holiday

- a) Anyone leading a camp or holiday of any duration, involving at least one overnight stay, must hold a valid Holiday Leadership Certificate.
- b) The Leader-in-Charge must be a Leader who has completed Youth Leader Training (or Officers' Basic Training), holds a valid Holiday Leadership Certificate and has the approval of the Company Captain to take charge of the holiday.
- c) The Leader-in-Charge has overall responsibility for ensuring that adequate arrangements are made for the safe management of the holiday.
- d) Notification of the holiday must be sent using the forms provided direct to the appropriate Regional Headquarters as follows:
  - one or two nights duration - at least 14 days in advance;
  - more than two nights - at least four full weeks (28 days) in advance.

The Regional Headquarters will ensure that certificates are appropriate and current.

- e) Where Company, Battalion, District or other Brigade parties intend to visit countries outside the Republic of Ireland and United Kingdom, notification must be sent in every case to Regional Headquarters at least three months before the date of the visit for approval.

### Holiday Leadership Certificate Requirements

To gain the Holiday Leadership Certificate, the holiday leader must:

- a) Be a Leader who has completed Youth Leader Training (*or Officers' Basic Training*).
- b) Participate in a training event leading to the award of the Holiday Leadership Certificate.

Both of the above requirements must be in place before the leader takes responsibility for leading the holiday.

### Camp Craft Certificate

As part of the safe management of the event, the Leader in Charge is responsible for ensuring that at least one person attending the camp holds a current Camp Craft Certificate if it is a canvas camp:

- a) A Leader can hold the Camp Craft Certificate.
- b) A Camp Craft Certificate can be held by non BB personnel, provided that she or he is aged 18 or over and is fully committed to the objectives of the BB and its policies and meets the requirements of our policy on child protection.

### **Camp Craft Certificate Requirements**

To gain the Camp Craft Certificate, the person concerned must:

- a) Be a Leader or be aged 18 or over, fully committed to the objectives of the BB and its policies and meets the requirements of our policy on child protection.
- b) Participate in a training event leading to the award of a Camp Craft Certificate.

Both of the above requirements must be in place before attending the canvas camp.

### **Duration and Renewal of the Certificates**

Holiday Leadership Certificates last for a period of five years and can be extended by further periods of five years by undertaking appropriate re-training.

The Camp Craft Certificate lasts for a period of five years and will be kept "live" by attending at least one canvas camp within the five-year period and undertaking a responsible role at the camp. Log sheets are available from the appropriate Regional Headquarters for leaders to keep brief details of the canvas camps they have attended. These should be kept by the individual leader in his or her Training Record file. Applications for five-year extensions should be made to the appropriate Regional Headquarters, sending in the completed log sheets.

## **Expedition and Outdoor Leadership Regulations**

### **Requirements to Lead an Expedition**

A leader supervising Expeditions or Explorations must hold an Expedition and Outdoor Leadership Certificate at the appropriate level. Certificates are valid for five years and are subject to renewal.

### **Expedition and Outdoor Leadership Certificate**

The Certificate in Expedition and Outdoor Leadership for all those who train children in Expedition skills, and/or supervise Expeditions, is set at three levels:

- i) Basic: for those who have passed the Theory part of the assessment, allowing them to instruct children and lead accompanied training expeditions in moderate and familiar terrain and in doing so, gain experience.
- ii) Standard: for those leaders training and supervising Expeditions within the Brigade's Award Scheme (i.e., up to the Founder's Badge or Gaisce Silver Award standards).
- iii) Advanced: for those leaders training and supervising Expeditions to Gaisce Gold Award standards (i.e., in wild country).

The BB will recognise externally operated training schemes such as the Basic Expedition Leadership Award (BELA) and Mountain Leader training schemes. Locally provided training is also recognised but the BB retain the responsibility for assessment of locally trained candidates. To obtain a BB Expedition and Outdoor Leadership Certificate, an application should be made to your Regional Headquarters including copies of externally gained certificates.

A valid First Aid Certificate is required prior to the award of any certificate. It is recommended that these certificates are kept updated at the appropriate times.

### **Expeditions Other than on Foot**

To supervise expeditions other than on foot (e.g., by canoe, yacht, cycle, horseback), leaders should hold a certificate of competence issued by an appropriate association or club, in addition to the Brigade's Expedition and Outdoor Leadership Certificate.

### **Duration and Renewal of the Certificates**

The Expedition Certificates last for a period of five years and will be kept "live" by undertaking the equivalent of one expedition per year. Log sheets are available from the appropriate Regional Headquarters for leaders to keep brief details of their expedition experience. These should be kept by the individual leader in his or her Training Record file. Applications for five-year extensions should be made to the appropriate Regional Headquarters, sending in the completed log sheets.

### **Brigade Insurance**

The Brigade has a comprehensive range of insurances in place including public liability, employer's liability and personal accident cover. The insurances provided via the Brigade cover a wide range of activities; the insurance does not include personal property, money or property owned by BB companies or Battalions for which a separate Unit Scheme is in place. A synopsis of the insurance provided is circulated annually to Company Captains and Battalions Secretaries. The synopsis includes details of the levels of cover provided by the Brigade and the Unit Scheme whereby Companies and Battalions can take out additional insurance to cover personal property, money and equipment.

The Brigade has tried to make the insurance cover as wide as possible in its scope and as automatic as possible within the constraints of reasonable costs. However, Company Captains and those taking responsibility for activities being organised by Battalions and Districts should make sure that attention has been paid to any relevant BB regulations and that all matters relating to safety have been addressed. The safe supervision of activities and any risk assessments that may be deemed appropriate should be undertaken. Our brokers advise us that we should in all circumstances, 'act as if uninsured.' All leaders must ensure that due diligence is given to the safe supervision of all events and activities, and that at all times, proper instruction is given.

In the unfortunate event of an accident, do not accept liability or make any offer or promise of payment. All accidents should be recorded in the accident/incident book. Any accident that requires medical treatment by a doctor, or at a hospital or medical centre should be reported to Regional Headquarters. Reporting forms are available for this purpose.

Where activities are 'bought in' from a specialist provider, i.e. mountain biking, canoeing, archery etc., leaders should make sure that the provider has insurance for Public Liability cover and have sight of their policy certificate, which is usually displayed in their offices or public areas of their premises. If their level of Public Liability cover is less than €3m, Brigade Headquarters should be notified before the activity takes place.

In several recent incidents, leaders and parents/guardians have been asked by activity providers to sign insurance waiver forms in case of any accidents or incidents. Under no circumstances should these waivers be signed.

Any enquiries regarding insurance should be directed to Regional Headquarters in the first instance.

### **Insurance Requirements for Community Service**

The Underwriters of the Brigade Insurance Scheme have informed Headquarters that community service is only covered by the Brigade's insurance where a BB leader supervises the work; this includes community work undertaken for the Founder's Badge or the service element for the Gaisce Award. Where a BB leader does not supervise the work, insurance cover must be provided by the placement agency, i.e. charity shop, residential home, hospital etc. This is usually included in their employer's liability insurance, (which covers both paid and voluntary employment) and their public liability insurance. Most employers have this level of insurance, although some may not be aware of it.

Leaders who are responsible for the community service need to ensure that all the proper arrangements for the safety of BB members are in place before any work takes place. Most placement agencies (charity shops, residential homes, hospitals etc.) will have safe working practices

in place for their leaders and volunteers. Safety checklists are included in the record books for The Founder's Badge and Gaisce Award schemes; these should be completed prior to the start of the community service work.

If you are unsure of what might be required or have any queries about these procedures, please contact Regional Headquarters. Additional copies of the checklists and insert pages are also available from Regional Headquarters. These can also be downloaded from the BB web site [www.boys-brigade.org](http://www.boys-brigade.org)

Annual Consent form



## DECLARATION BY A LEADER OR EMPLOYEE FROM ABROAD

1. **Whether in your present country of residence or elsewhere**, have you ever been investigated in respect of or charged with or convicted of a criminal offence or have you ever been the subject of a court order binding you over to keep the peace or have you ever been subject to criminal proceedings in which the court has found the charge or charges against you to have been proved but in respect of which the Probation Act (or any foreign equivalent thereof) has been applied, or are you at present subject to any criminal charges or criminal investigation?

Yes  No

(If yes give details on separate sheet)

2. Have you ever committed any criminal act or been engaged in any criminal conduct for which you have not been prosecuted, whether in your present country of residence or elsewhere?

Yes  No

(If yes give details on separate sheet)

3. Has any court in your present or any other jurisdiction ever found you liable for a civil offence?

Yes  No

(If yes give details on separate sheet)

4. Have you been placed on a sex offenders' register **in your present or any other jurisdiction?**

Yes  No

(If yes give details on separate sheet)

***I the undersigned, who have applied to work as a Leader in The Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association do hereby certify and warrant that in completing this form and in furnishing all the information contained herein or attached hereto, I am doing so in good faith and I further certify and warrant that all such information is true and accurate and constitutes a full disclosure of all material facts known to me.***

Signed .....

Full Name (BLOCK CAPITALS) .....

Date .....

When completed and signed, return this form to:  
The Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association, Unit C1 Nutgrove Office Park, Nutgrove Avenue,  
Rathfarnham, Dublin 14 D14 V5Y2



**DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE**

I have attended a training event which has introduced me to The Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association Safeguarding Policy and Procedures to be followed when working with children have been explained to me.

I acknowledge receipt of a copy of The Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and declare I will uphold the same as a leader in The Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association.

I further state that I shall exercise a duty of care for any children in my charge.

Name *(print)*.....  
Signed .....

Company.....

Date.....

***NB This declaration is to be retained by the Regional Safeguarding Panel***

Risk assessment check list for Company meeting place

Risk assessment form for visits, holidays and activities



## INTERNAL REPORTING FORM

*To be filled out by leader in the event of an alleged or suspected abusive situation*

Date : \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Reporting: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of child involved: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Guardians Name(s)/: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

Contact telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person allegedly causing concern: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the incident or situation, which is causing concern *(continue on blank sheet if necessary)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Source of information (i.e. child, adult, injury/distress noticed): *(continue on blank sheet if necessary)*

\_\_\_\_\_

Any explanation offered to account for injury / distress etc: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Child's own statement (if relevant) *(continue on blank sheet if necessary)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

When completed and signed, return this form to: The Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association, Unit C1 Nutgrove Office Park, Nutgrove Avenue, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14 D14 V5Y2