The Boys' Brigade and Methodist Church joint Safeguarding Procedures

The Boys Brigade and the Methodist Church have developed a strong partnership links over many years, sharing an ethos of Christian outreach towards young people. Each Boys Brigade company is partnered with a local church and a chaplain is appointed to support and nurture that relationship. Both organisations share a commitment to provide a safe environment in which young people can flourish and realise their full potential.

For the purposes of safeguarding, The Boys' Brigade and Methodist Church are operating jointly in relation to reporting, sharing of information, referring to statutory agencies and ongoing case management. This will ensure that where safeguarding concerns or allegations arise, they are responded to appropriately and managed in line with the procedures and policies for each organisation, taking account of any statutory guidance and legislation.

The joint procedures should be followed when a safeguarding concern or allegation is raised about a

- Leader / helper, in relation to their volunteer role
- Leader / helper, in relation to their private life
- parent
- young person
- Chaplain, Minister or Church Officers, and the circumstances relate to a BB setting

Reporting Process and Initial Action

BB leaders and Church officers will report safeguarding concerns or allegations in line with Boys' Brigade and Methodist Church policies and procedures.

BB procedures can be found on the BB website Safeguarding - The Boys' Brigade

https://boys-brigade.org.uk/safeguarding/

Methodist Church safeguarding procedures can be found on the MC website: Safeguarding - The Methodist Church

https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/

On receipt of the initial report, the BB Safeguarding Manager and the relevant Methodist Regional Officer for Safeguarding (ROS) will ensure

- Information will be shared promptly, as soon as possible in emergency circumstances, or within 24 hours. This should include a written report.
- Initial action will be agreed via a joint case-planning meeting, which may be online. This may include gathering further information to establish if the threshold is met meet for statutory reporting; initial risk management of the person concerned; referrals to statutory agencies; agreeing responsibilities around ongoing case management and review.
- A written action plan will be developed and a casework record will be started
- Where required, a joint Media Strategy is agreed.

There may be circumstances where a leader has failed to comply with BB or Church procedures, BB Leaders Code of Conduct, or that areas of poor practice have been identified. To prevent this developing into a safeguarding concern it may be appropriate for the relevant ROS and BB Safeguarding Manager to have a case discussion to agree a means to address this situation.

Information sharing, records and record retention

Under the terms of the Methodist Church and Boys' Brigade information-sharing agreement (yet to be drafted), the two organisations will share all relevant information about safeguarding concerns and allegations. In emergency, this should be done as soon as possible or within 24 hours in receipt of information.

Each organisation will securely hold all electronic and paper safeguarding records in line with its own procedures. Each organisation will manage and retain data in compliance with their Data Protection Policy and GDPR. Where a subject access request is received, each organisation will respond separately, and seek consent to share information that has been provided by the other.

In respect of DBS (and PVG) certificates, the Boys' Brigade and The Methodist Church agree to inform one another when blemishes occur. This is so each organisation can carry out their duties with regards to safer recruitment in line with their policy and procedures.

Statutory Agency Liaison

As part of case management, The Boys' Brigade and Methodist Church will agree responsibilities regarding making referrals, ongoing liaison with Statutory Agencies and attendance at meetings arranged throughout an enquiry. Where one organisation takes responsibility for this, the lead agency representative will remind the professionals involved at any meeting or in any correspondence that relevant information will be shared between the BB Safeguarding Manager and the relevant Methodist ROS as part of the joint approach to safeguarding governed by local agreements and the overall Boys Brigade/Methodist Church partnership agreement.

This information will be documented within the casework record management systems of both organisations.

Concerns about Adults in a position of trust.

In England, where it is alleged that a leader, helper or Church Official has

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. (includes transfer of risk, risk by association)

a referral must be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

There is not a separate process for position of trust concerns in Scotland and Wales. When making referrals to statutory agencies in these regions it is important that the BB Safeguarding Manager and ROS emphasise the concerns relate to an adult in a position of trust.

Risk Assessment

Consultation will take place between BB Safeguarding Manager and the relevant ROS to agree responsibility for completing risk assessments, and the format. Where appropriate, consideration can be given to the completion of joint assessments. Methodist guidance will determine if the risk assessment will be undertaken at a District or Connexional level, according to the individual's role and the seriousness of the matters under consideration.

Where risk assessments have been completed separately, recommendations, outcomes, and any resulting contracts or conditions need to be discussed together and understood. Any subsequent

actions and decisions will be under the provisions of The Boys Brigade and Methodist Church partnership / SLA.

When a risk assessment concludes and it is determined by the Methodist Church that a leader is not suitable to undertake regulated work within their Churches, even if the BB Safeguarding Panel have not reached that outcome, the leader will be unable to continue within the denomination.

Conversely, where the Methodist Church finds that a leader is suitable, and The Boys Brigade disagree, the BB have the right to withdraw the Leaders membership from the organisation.

DBS Referrals

Where a leader/ helper or Church Official has left, or been asked to leave because of a Safeguarding concern, and the organisation believes the person has caused harm or poses a future risk to children and young people, a referral will be made to the appropriate vetting and barring authority. In England and Wales, this is the DBS. In Scotland, the referral is made to Disclosure Scotland.

The BB Safeguarding Manager and ROS will agree and document who will take responsibility for this. Ordinarily, where the concerns relate to a leader/helper in a BB setting, the BB Safeguarding Manager will undertake this action. Where the leader holds additional roles in the Church, both the ROS and BB Safeguarding Manager may be required to make the referral.

Charity Commission Referrals

Where there is a "Serious Incident to Report" the BB Safeguarding manager will make referrals to the Charity Commission for matters concerning BB leaders/ helpers and young people.
The Methodist Church will also make a referral where the person concerned holds additional roles in the Church.

Conflict resolution

Where agreements cannot be reached regarding case management, decisions and actions, in the first instance attempts at resolution should be sought between the BB Safeguarding Manager and the ROS. Where this is not successful, the BB and ROS will need to escalate in line with each organisation's processes.

Provision of pastoral support

Pastoral support to those involved in a Safeguarding concern or allegation, whether they are the victim or perpetrator, will be provided by the local church. Ordinarily the Chaplain or church Minister will take responsibility for providing this.