Girls’ Brigade Ministries

Handbook 2024

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# CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS

**‘I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full!’**

*(John Ch.10:10. NIV)*

## Context

The Girls’ Brigade England & Wales (GB) has a duty of care to its members. It gives particular attention to their social, emotional, physical and spiritual development. The purpose of this code is to set out a list of statements, which describe the standards of conduct expected of all volunteers within the mission movement, and to build on already established good practice.

The Girls’ Brigade recognises that volunteers, as responsible adults, are in a trusted position with the children, young people and families with whom they come into contact. It is important that the conduct, behaviour and relationships of leaders reflects this.

The Girls’ Brigade’s volunteers should:

* Always prioritise the welfare of children and young people
* Always seek to demonstrate and promote the Christian faith through their roles
* Aim to emulate Jesus’ example by being relational, relevant and responsive to needs through their words and actions
* Pray for, and also with, the children, young people and adults – as appropriate
* Treat all members as individuals
* Treat all members with dignity and respect by engaging with one another in ways that welcome and accept, without judgment
* Respect diversity and promote equal opportunities
* Encourage and equip each person to explore, identify and utilise their God-given gifts regardless of human condition, age, gender or circumstance
* Be aware that bullying in any form is not acceptable
* Deal with conflict in a calm and understanding manner and never act in anger
* Adhere to the relevant church and The Girls’ Brigade safeguarding, child protection and relevant policies, procedures and guidelines for safe practice in working with children and young people
* Ensure all concerns or allegations are reported in line with The Girls’ Brigade’s safeguarding, complaints and child protection policies and guidelines
* Be aware of health and safety issues and record risk assessments for all The Girls’ Brigade’s activities
* Work openly and co-operatively with other church and Girls’ Brigade volunteers
* Be honest, trustworthy, reliable and dependable
* Be accountable for their own behaviour and their relationships with children and young people, so that nothing should call into question their trusted position or their suitability to provide leadership within The Girls’ Brigade
* Never ignore any inappropriate behaviour from children or adults
* Present a positive role model and set a good example both inside and outside The Girls’ Brigade
* Regularly undertake relevant equipping to maintain and develop knowledge, skills and understanding, and commit to reading GB’s mailings sharing important updates and news.

It is the responsibility of all The Girls’ Brigade volunteers to ensure that their conduct does not fall below the standards set out in this code and to follow the policies, procedures and guidance issued by GB.

## Declaration of relationships

The Girls’ Brigade’s volunteers and staff members are in a trusted position when working with children and young people and should ensure that they do not do anything that would breach their position of trust, including through online media or in person.

The Girls’ Brigade recognises that as young people and young adults take up mentoring or leadership roles they may have pre-existing relationships in place and these must be declared before taking up a leadership role as outlined below:

* **New Leaders** should report any existing relationships with a young person accessing The Girls’ Brigade’s services as a member to their Team Leader prior to their appointment. Where the relationship is identified as a ‘partnership’, the Team Leader should inform the GB Support Centre safeguarding lead, who will record the information and should ensure that the new leader isn’t in a position of direct control over their ‘partner’ and that they work in another section.

# POLICY STATEMENT FOR SAFEGUARDING

## Aim

The Girls’ Brigade is committed to the Christian nurture of children, young people and adults within a safe, secure, caring and empowering environment.

## Objectives

In order to achieve this aim, The Girls’ Brigade will undertake to:

* Work in partnership with local churches in the appointment of appropriate people to volunteer and leader roles
* Adhere to safer recruitment policies for paid staff appointments
* Provide relevant information and equipping for all registered volunteers and paid staff
* Maintain administrative and safe recruitment processes for the registration of volunteers and a database of volunteer leadership profiles – see the data protection policy section on Page 41
* Handle all personal information in a caring and sensitive manner and with appropriate confidentiality
* Operate within clearly defined safeguarding procedures for volunteers and paid staff
* Ensure all paid staff and volunteers receive relevant support and supervision
* Designate specified personnel from the Girls’ Brigade England & Wales’ Network Executive and The Girls’ Brigade Trustee Board to advise on safeguarding issues
* Provide clearly defined procedures with regard to health and safety and risk assessment
* Provide up-to-date information on relevant legislation affecting The Girls’ Brigade’s activities.

## Methods

In order to assist volunteers as they seek to nurture the children, young people and adults in their care, The Girls’ Brigade is committed to:

* Providing guidelines on specific areas of concern
* Providing initial and ongoing equipping in all areas but especially in issues relating to the volunteers’ ‘duty of care’
* Updating volunteers on related issues through, for example, its websites, emails, and social media.

## Review

The Trustee Board of The Girls’ Brigade will, through its inclusion on their risk register, ensure that this policy is reviewed and updated regularly.

# GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR SAFEGUARDING

## Contextual statement

The following child protection procedures are underpinned by numerous pieces of legislation including Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, and the Care Act 2014, which is concerned with safeguarding adults with care and support needs.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that every child has the right to protection from neglect and from physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

The Girls’ Brigade acknowledges the duty of care to its members and is supportive of its volunteers in safeguarding the welfare of the children, young people and adults with whom they work. These guidelines and issues refer not just to children, but to young people and vulnerable adults too. If you have an event where vulnerable adults are present, then ensure due care is taken in line with statutory regulations and best practice guidance

These procedures provide a framework to help enable The Girls’ Brigade’s volunteers to respond appropriately to safeguarding issues and give information and guidance with regard to:

* Safeguarding processes
* Understanding what constitutes abuse
* Awareness of signs which could be indicative of abuse
* Dealing with disclosure
* Reporting concerns and/or allegations
* Good practice guidelines.

## Positions of trust

The Girls’ Brigade recognises the position of trust in which its leaders have been placed, meaning they have authority over the children and young people they work with. We all have a responsibility to ensure this power isn’t abused, in order to keep The Girls’ Brigade members safe. If there are any areas in your personal life that might affect your role in The Girls’ Brigade, such as an allegation made against you or someone you live with or a domestic violence incident, please talk to your team leader/church safeguarding lead and GB’s Support Centre.

## Safeguarding processes

* All The Girls’ Brigade’s volunteers, including emerging leaders aged 16 plus, who are working with children, young people or vulnerable adults must have a current enhanced DBS check renewed in line with The Girls’ Brigade’s appointment policy for volunteers. Young people can remain in the n:spire section until the age of 25 but require DBS checks once they’re Advanced Young Leaders (16+) or adults (18+).
* All contact with children and young people should be supervised until the required DBS clearance has been obtained.
* The Girls’ Brigade teams and the church should ensure that all The Girls’ Brigade volunteers have access to a designated independent person with whom they can discuss concerns and from whom they can seek advice.
* Regular Girls’ Brigade team meetings should be held, which will provide opportunities, not only for planning, but also for discussing any areas of concern. Safeguarding should always be a standing agenda item, and any issues or concerns properly recorded
* Remember The Girls’ Brigade groups legally belong to the church to whom they are attached and so should follow their church’s safeguarding procedures accordingly. The Girls’ Brigade have developed an agreement that clarifies the mutual responsibilities of both parties. This is available on the website for local use.
* The Girls’ Brigade volunteers will undertake safeguarding training as part of their appointment process and should refresh this training at least every four? years with safeguarding refresher training provided by the church, The Girls’ Brigade or a relevant professional body. Compliance with this requirement will be monitored by The Girls’ Brigade Support Team.
* All sleepovers should adhere to The Girls’ Brigade’s sleepover guidelines, as detailed on the *Sleepover Registration Form*.
* All residential events must meet the requirements listed in the publication *Residential Events Toolkit*, regarding qualification, registration, supervision and risk assessment.
* The Girls’ Brigade volunteers and staff members should ensure that they set appropriate boundaries in their relationship and not engage in friendships, romantic or sexual relationships with children and young people under 18 years of age.
* Young leaders and new leaders aged 18 or over should ensure that they declare new or existing relationships with The Girls’ Brigade members who are under 18 or over 18 and accessing GB’s services as a member, in line with our declaration of relationships guidance.

## Understanding what constitutes abuse

A person may abuse or neglect someone by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children, young people and adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

* **Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to someone, including fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to someone.
* **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional ill treatment of someone such as to cause adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to them that they’re worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or causing children frequently to feel frightened are also included in this concept.
* **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing someone to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact or they may include being looked at or being involved in the production of pornographic material.
* **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet someone’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, their basic emotional needs.
* **Spiritual abuse** is the term used when harm is caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. This can include the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching, or intrusive healing and deliverance ministries. Any of these could result in people experiencing physical, emotional or sexual harm. Other forms of spiritual harm include the denial to people of the right to faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God. Other forms of spiritual abuse are detailed in the government’s *Prevent* Strategy.
* **Other areas of abuse** include domestic abuse, female genital mutilation, online abuse, child trafficking, deliberate self-harming, sexual exploitation, financial abuse, child-on-child contextual abuse and forced marriage. Note: contextual safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to young people’s experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognizes that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse..
* **In some cases, more than one type of abuse may be present at the same time.**

## Awareness of signs which could be indicative of abuse

The sustained abuse or neglect of children, young people and adults, physically, emotionally or sexually can have long-term effects on all aspects of their health, development and wellbeing. The abuse is also likely to have a significant impact on their self-image and self-esteem.

Signs of abuse could include:

* Changes in behaviour
* Displaying many behavioural difficulties
* Unexplained mood swings
* Withdrawn, aggressive, bizarre or strange/harmfully addictive behaviours
* Attention-seeking behaviour
* Guarded and secretive behaviour
* Difficulty in forming relationships
* Repetitive injuries of a minor nature
* Injuries which are not able to be explained
* Inappropriate seeking of affection
* Sexualised behaviour
* Listless and unresponsive behaviour
* Seriously or frequently dirty, unkempt appearance.

On their own, these signs may not constitute safeguarding issues, however they could be indicative of abuse and should not be ignored.

## Dealing with disclosures or allegations

Responding to the person…

Do:

* Listen carefully: a person who alleges that abuse has taken place must be listened to
* Respect their point of view
* Reassure them that they’ve done the right thing in telling you/someone
* Allow them to tell the story without prompting, without asking leading questions
* Be honest about your responsibility and explain what actions you must take
* Use language appropriate to the age and understanding of the person
* Be aware of the effect of your own attitudes and values
* Make a written record of events, conversations and observations
* Write what they have shared using their own words
* Make a written record of all action taken
* Follow your church and/or The Girls’ Brigade procedure for reporting abuse (see 3.3 above)
* Seek advice from designated/appropriate people especially where there is a concern about the person’s immediate safety.

Don’t:

* Promise confidentiality or to keep secrets
* Over question them, but try to clarify information
* Ask leading questions, which direct them to certain answers
* Make assumptions or jump to conclusions
* Offer personal opinions or dismiss the claims of the child/person
* Attempt to deal with the problem alone
* Delay in following procedures or in taking action to protect them
* Panic – remain calm.

## Reporting concerns and/or allegations

All volunteers have a role in the prevention of abuse and a duty to report any suspicion, concern or allegation of abuse. All incidents of suspected or alleged abuse should be acted upon immediately, following the safeguarding procedures of the local church, if established, or by following The Girls’ Brigade procedures below. Low-level concerns, such as someone being over friendly to children/having favourites etc., which don’t meet an allegation threshold or aren’t serious enough for reporting to a LADO, should also be noted and shared in the appropriate manner. See also the *Flowchart for procedure when concerns are raised about a child/person’s safety or welfare or if they disclose abuse* which shows what action should be taken.

In brief:

* Inform the team leader/The Girls’ Brigade leader in charge
* Consult with the church and/or The Girls’ Brigade safeguarding designated person and agree a course of action in line with the joint agreement about mutual responsibility.
* The Girls’ Brigade’s designated safeguarding lead is the CEO, and the deputy safeguarding lead is the Operations Manager
* If advised by church/The Girls’ Brigade safeguarding designated person, inform parents/carers of the concerns
* The Girls’ Brigade’s Support Centre should be told about the concern for its records and to offer support
* If agreed, in consultation with the designated person, LADO, Children or Adult Social Care Services, or police departments should be informed and their advice followed
* Make a written record of the events, conversations and observations, which should be signed and dated.You can use the *Reporting concerns about a child/person’s safety/welfare or they disclose abuse template* available to download for free from the GB website.
* Support should be offered to the volunteer making the report
* If the allegation of abuse is against a Girls’ Brigade volunteer, follow these guidelines in conjunction with the *Guidelines and procedures for dealing with complaints* specifically noting that there should be no contact between the volunteer and the child/person who may have been abused, until enquiries are completed and an outcome agreed
* Allegations, even false ones, will be kept on The Girls’ Brigade’s file until the volunteer’s retirement age or for 10 years if that is longer.

## Good practice guidelines

Volunteers should **always**:

* Seek to promote the Christian faith through their role in The Girls’ Brigade in a safe, caring and empowering manner
* Ensure that there’s a minimum of two adults aged 18 plus, working with any group of children and young people, both must have completed The Girls’ Brigade’s equipping training and be registered with the GB Support Centre. This could be two leaders or one leader and an assistant leader but not two assistant leaders/helpers
* Respect the privacy of children and young people in changing rooms
* Ensure that a The Girls’ Brigade leader is always present when children and young people are working with external visitors
* Ensure that children are collected by an adult known to the volunteers or by someone authorised by the carer/parent
* Ensure that young people have permission from parents/carers to go to/leave Girls’ Brigade activities on their own, if appropriate.
* Ensure that any joint activities have both male and female supervision
* Promote anti-discriminatory practice in The Girls’ Brigade
* Ensure that parental/carer’s consent is obtained for transport and activities off-site
* Allow children, young people or adults to discuss a problem with the person with whom they feel most comfortable
* Be consistent and work together as a team.

Volunteers should **never**:

* Make themselves vulnerable by working alone with a single child or young person
* Invite children, young people or vulnerable adults to their home
* Do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults, which they are able to do for themselves
* Have unnecessary physical contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults
* Allow children or young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
* Tolerate prejudice, discrimination or bullying
* Drink alcohol when they’re directly responsible for children and young people and never allow young people on The Girls’ Brigade activities to drink alcohol.

GB Ministries expects all volunteers to carry out their role:

* In harmony with the guidelines established by the denomination of the churches with whom they are partnering in mission
* In accordance with the guidelines established by The Girls’ Brigade
* In an understanding manner and working in partnership with parents/carers
* In co-operation with the professional agencies responsible for the implementation of statutory safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding procedures in isolation can’t protect the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It’s those who access the procedures through the course of their involvement who will collectively contribute to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

## Compliance with safeguarding policy

## The Girls’ Brigade requires all groups to keep up to date and accurate records of safe recruitment and training for all volunteers. The Girls’ Brigade Trustee board has a lead trustee for safeguarding, and with the staff team, will arrange for regular audits of practice to monitor compliance and identify any areas for improvement. The board will also receive reports of safeguarding incidents, review them to determine if the correct procedures have been followed. If necessary, the board will arrange for a local or organizational learning review if it is believed that policy and procedures have not been followed, or there is a perceived policy gap.

# FLOWCHART FOR PROCEDURE WHEN CONCERNS ARE RAISED ABOUT A CHILD/PERSON’S SAFETY OR WELFARE OR THEY DISCLOSE ABUSE

A screenshot of a chat

Description automatically generated

**N.B.** Support should be offered to the Girls’ Brigade volunteer making the report.

If the allegation of abuse is against a The Girls’ Brigade volunteer, follow these guidelines in conjunction with the Guidelines and procedures for dealing with complaints specifically noting that there should be no contact between the volunteer and the child, young person or adult who may have been abused, until enquiries are completed and an outcome agreed.

If an allegation is made to the local police then you must also call the LADO within 1 day of the allegation.

# POLICY, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT STRATEGY

## Policy statement

The Girls’ Brigade has a duty of care to all its members. Children, young people, volunteers and employed staff have the right to expect that they will not be bullied or harassed. Bullying is a term which arouses many emotions, in particular anger and resentment. It’s a behaviour which occurs in different forms, but is never acceptable. A bully is a person who hurts, persecutes or intimidates another person, either emotionally and/or physically. Harassment and bullying on issues such as sex, race, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender, nationality, or even personal characteristics can affect health, confidence, and morale. The Girls’ Brigade believes that bullying is never acceptable.

In order to promote an anti-bullying strategy within The Girls’ Brigade:

* Bullying or harassment within The Girls’ Brigade will not be tolerated
* It will be the responsibility of everyone to attempt to both prevent and eradicate any bullying or harassment that may occur
* All The Girls’ Brigade staff and volunteers will actively model non-bullying behaviour
* Any reported incidents of bullying or harassment will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly, in accordance with The Girls’ Brigade guidelines.

## Guidelines for all volunteers

In order to demonstrate our responsibility in this respect volunteers should:

* Ensure that other volunteers, children, young people, parents and carers are aware that bullying or harassment will not be tolerated
* Cultivate a supportive and anti-bullying environment
* Ensure young people and volunteers are encouraged to take responsibility for creating an anti-bullying environment, including outside of The Girls’ Brigade activities and on social media
* Minimise online bullying and inappropriate comments through adherence to the social media policy
* Ensure that all members are treated with dignity and respect regardless of human condition, age, gender or circumstance
* Encourage the view that reporting incidents of bullying is taking responsible action, rather than ‘tale-telling’
* Ensure that reported incidents are dealt with quickly and efficiently
* Establish a system which enables everyone to be able to share information if they suspect that bullying or harassment is taking place
* Include a procedure of written information for those who find it difficult to discuss issues
* Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak to someone, to have his/her story heard, realising that the bullied person and the bully are both in need of help
* Decide on the best action to take, for example:
  + Consideration might be given to using the five W questions as a basis for establishing the circumstances of the incident – What? Who? When? Where? Why?
  + Direct the disapproval at the behaviour not at the child/young person/leader
  + Attempt to redirect the exercise of power over others by encouraging the bully to take on a caring or nurturing role
  + Explain that the bullying must stop
  + Bring the bullied person and the bully together, if it’s thought that this could contribute to resolving the problem.
* Talk to the whole group about bullying and the importance of The Girls’ Brigade being a safe and supportive place for everyone to be
* Encourage the children, young people and adults in their care for one another.

## Procedures

If any case of bullying is reported:

* Make a written report of the incident including perceptions of witnesses, as well as the views of the bully and the bullied
* Note and record the actions taken when bullying is alleged or suspected, such as calling The Girls’ Brigade’s Support Centre or the police.
* Inform parents/carers of the incident and how it was dealt with
* Take steps to establish a period of monitoring to ensure that the bullying isn’t repeated.

## Guidelines for The Girls’ Brigade employees

Harassment and bullying on issues such as sex, race, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender, nationality or even personal characteristics, can interfere with an individual’s work performance and create a hostile work environment. Harassment and bullying may also occur between employees outside working hours, for example at work related social functions. The Girls’ Brigade recognises the problems that harassment and bullying can have upon health, confidence and morale. All employees of the charity therefore, have a responsibility to understand and comply with the policy statement recorded above at all times. It’s also the responsibility of all employees to report any harassment or bullying that they’re aware of within the work place to the Director or to the Chair of the The Girls’ Brigade Trustee Board.

For staff employed by The Girls’ Brigade, a clear protocol for how to deal with cases of alleged harassment or bullying in the work place is outlined in the *Staff Handbook*.This includes:

* The definition and identification of workplace harassment and bullying
* The responsibilities of managers and supervisors when aware of harassment/bullying
* The process to follow if staff feel they’re subject to harassment – this includes the reporting process and details of both informal and formal complaints and disciplinary processes available
* The legal and contractual implications involved in any cases of harassment and bullying.

# POLICY, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR APPOINTMENTS

## Policy statement

Within The Girls’ Brigade there is a large number of ‘workers’ – some are staff employed by the charity, but most are volunteers working within local settings. In all cases The Girls’ Brigade will endeavour to safeguard the children and young people with whom it works by following carefully laid down procedures for their appointment. Once appointed, both employees and volunteers will be given appropriate initial and ongoing training, relevant support and the necessary supervision to equip them for their task.

## Procedure for the appointment of volunteers

# Before starting the appointment process, local groups must ensure that published details of the opportunity to join the local team contains a reference to the safe recruitment process and the need for a DBS check.

In The Girls’ Brigade, adult volunteers are defined as anyone who is 18 years of age or older. All adult (18+) volunteers desiring to work, on a regular basis, as part of a The Girls’ Brigade team should:

* Agree their involvement in The Girls’ Brigade with the church of which the Girls’ Brigade team is a part, as the church needs to approve the appointment and ensure relevant references are secured if appropriate (use the Character reference request template available to download for free from the GB website)
* Be equipped for their role using the **n:fluence 18+** equipping material. This training will need to be arranged and delivered by the appropriately trained people e.g. the district team leader and/or designated trainer(s)
* Apply for, and obtain, an enhanced DBS check through the church or The Girls’ Brigade. You can check the privacy policy for enhanced DBS checks at [*https://www*](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-privacy-policies)*.gov*[*.uk/go*](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-privacy-policies)*v*[*ernment/publications/dbs-privacy-policies*](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-privacy-policies)
* If possible, work in the local group under the supervision of registered and trained The Girls’ Brigade volunteers while completing the relevant modules from **n:fluence 18+**
* Visit, observe and learn from children’s/youth work in another context e.g. a different The Girls’ Brigade group or an alternative youth/children’s work within a church setting
* Identify, with the help of other Girls’ Brigade team members, a local leader who will support and informally mentor them as they settle and grow in their new role
* Complete the *Volunteer Registration Form* and return it to The Girls’ Brigade’s Support Centre, confirming the receipt of a satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure, the completion of the relevant modules from **n:fluence 18+** and the church’s confirmation of the appointment
* Receive confirmation, from The Girls’ Brigade’s Support Centre, that they’re registered as leaders. This may be celebrated with a special church service or presentation evening
* Emerging leaders aged 16 plus, actively working with children, also need to obtain an enhanced DBS disclosure. Young people can remain in the **n:spire** section, or as Advanced Young Leader, until the age of 25 but require DBS checks once they’re Advanced Young Leaders (16+) or adults (18+).
* It’s not best practice for all the leaders at one group to be from the same family.
* If you’ve just got a new DBS check, you have 19 days (from the date on your DBS) to register it online with the DBS Update Service. This means The Girls’ Brigade can then view your disclosure status online and you never need to complete another DBS check for us! You then need to complete GB’s *DBS Verification Form* to let us know you’ve done this. OR, if you’re unable to register for the Update Service within the 19 days, you’ll need to show your new disclosure to the minister of your church (the DBS allow this as your church are involved in the recruitment process of all GB leaders) and they/you will need to complete GB’s *DBS Verification Form.*

## Guidelines

For clarity and explanation, the following should be noted:

* All volunteers will need to undertake the safeguarding modules from **n:fluence 18+** or from their local church, if they’re volunteering in The Girls’ Brigade after their 18th birthday
* All new volunteers are required to undertake the relevant parts of the **n:fluence 18+** equipping materials
* The **n:fluence 18+** resource provides the following modules of training:
  + Mission
  + Children/young people
  + Pastoral care
  + Relationships
  + Programme
  + Leadership (for team leaders) and safeguarding
* Some modules/units are compulsory, others may be chosen according to the role which the volunteer will undertake (or the skill that they already have). Please refer to the **n:fluence 18+** equipping guide for more information
* Those with previous experience/training/professional qualifications may be exempted from certain modules. All exemptions should be noted and the reason for the exemption recorded
* As required by their church all volunteers will be expected to complete denominational training at the appropriate level e.g. foundation or advance. This is in part because this training is set in a faith context.
* Volunteers are expected to participate in ongoing development and equipping opportunities, to help ensure that activities are relevant and that good practice is developed in their work among children and young people i.e. volunteers should engage with the **Gather, Grow and Go** process – as detailed on our website
* Specialised equipping is available for areas such as Residential Events
* Ongoing support, training and nurture is provided for all leaders in local, regional and national spheres and, where appropriate, is advertised on The Girls’ Brigade’s websites and social media
* Those elected to serve on the The Girls’ Brigade Trustee Board and Network Executive receive induction training, and are also safely recruited.

## Procedure for the appointment of staff

* When a staff vacancy arises, job descriptions will be drawn up.
* The post will be advertised via the The Girls’ Brigade websites and relevant local and Christian press with a closing date of not less than 15 days from the placing of the advert. The advert will reference the The Girls’ Brigade safe recruitment policy and the need for a DBS check.
* All applicants will be required to complete an application form.
* Once the closing date is passed, a short-listing process will take place.
* Throughout the appointment process, The Girls’ Brigade will adhere to its equal opportunities policy.

At interview all applicants will be asked a set of questions and will undertake a task as appropriate to the role.

* Interview panels will include senior staff as relevant to the role.
* Reasons for non-selection of candidates will be clearly identified and might include:
  + Poorly completed application form/withdrawn application
  + Lack of relevant experience/qualifications
  + Inability to demonstrate professional or technical ability
  + Inappropriate attitude/demeanour
  + Communication or language difficulties/medical grounds
  + Poor interview performance/unsatisfactory references.
* Once a candidate is selected for appointment, references will be taken up.
* If satisfactory references are received, a conditional, formal offer letter will be given.
* At the same point the person will start an enhanced DBS check, which needs to show that the person is acceptable for the position.
* All employees will be given an induction plan which covers items such as health and safety, job specific elements and expectations and will be overseen by the line manager in consultation with the Director.
* Each employee is responsible to a line manager with whom update meetings are held to establish work patterns and monitor work load.
* An ongoing appraisal programme is used to provide support, monitor performance, assess training needs and measure competency.

## Policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders (staff and volunteers)

It’s The Girls’ Brigade’s policy to require applicants to disclose any ‘unspent’ criminal convictions as part of their application. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Legal Aid and Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 state that ex-offenders are not required to disclose to prospective employers convictions defined as ‘spent’ under the Act (unless the post is covered by the Exceptions Order).The Act defines time periods after which different types of convictions become spent. It also makes it illegal for employers to discriminate against an ex-offender on the grounds of a spent conviction.

All Girls’ Brigade roles that involve working with children and young people come into the scope of the Exclusions and Exceptions Order. This means that even ‘spent’ convictions must be declared when applying for a post. See point 4 below.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual from working with The Girls’ Brigade, this will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstan