

Frequently Asked Questions

There are many people who would like to make a contribution in their communities by volunteering, but who feel unsure about how to go about it or what they could do. There are also some real and imagined barriers for people that may hold them back from offering their help. BB companies can benefit from being aware of potential barriers and be able to respond by being positive and honest about what working in the BB will entail.

If we can anticipate what would hold suitable people back from volunteering, then we can try to reassure people where the barriers are imagined. Some of the questions in volunteers' minds (and some suggested responses) may include:

Why does The Boys' Brigade need more help?

We currently have over 12,000 leaders around the UK engaging with over 55000 children & young people, but due to the lack of adult volunteers there are thousands of children & young people who currently have no access to the Boys' Brigade. If more adults helped out this would take the burden off our current volunteers and allow more children & young people to experience the adventure of The Boys' Brigade.

How can I help with The Boys' Brigade?

There are many ways in which you can give your time to help The Boys' Brigade whatever your gender, age, abilities and skills. Simply let us know about your skills, your availability and how you would like to help and we will match this to roles within your local area.

I don't have a background in The Boys' Brigade, does this matter?

No previous Boys' Brigade experience is needed. Energy and enthusiasm are what is important. In fact, getting volunteers from outside the organisation is what has kept The Boys' Brigade as an innovative organisation for over 125 years.

My child is in The Boys' Brigade, is there anything I could do to help?

The short answer is yes. Many of our helpers and leaders are parents of members. They are able to see first hand how The Boys' Brigade benefits children & young people and consequently want to give something back, moreover they can spend time with their child, learn new skills, and have lots of fun.

I will only be able to help out on a flexible basis is this ok?

Yes. There are many different ways to help in The Boys' Brigade and many of these can be adapted to suit your needs. Whether you can help out once a

fortnight, month or term or just at special events or camps, there is bound to be a role you can play.

Will I get paid?

As a voluntary organisation we are unable to pay volunteers for the time they give to The Boys' Brigade. Out of pocket expenses are often paid and many leaders are offered opportunities to take part in activities and social activities.

Will it cost me anything to become a volunteer?

Companies will need to be clear with potential volunteers about the local arrangements for the payment of registration fees. Many groups pay these on behalf of leaders, but this is not always the case. We should also point out that this is standard practice in the other uniformed youth organisations, and that we in the BB charge a lower fee than the others. It is important that we are honest about any other costs that may be incurred by volunteers so that people can make the decision to volunteer with all the relevant facts.

Do you have any policies on expenses? It would be standard practice to reimburse leaders for materials bought and even mileage for trips etc.

What are the benefits of helping out?

There are a number of benefits you can gain from volunteering. Spending time with children & young people, learning new skills, contributing to your community, and sharing your faith are just a few of the reasons why our current Leaders choose to spend some of their spare time in The Boys' Brigade.

I don't have a specific skill but am keen to help out, what can I do?

Everyone will have a skill, attribute or ability that they can pass on. One of the best things about volunteering however, is the chance to learn new skills you may not have been able to do otherwise.

The BB also provides opportunities for training in different aspects of the work; there will be an induction period when new volunteers will be given information and advice about training. People do not need qualifications to volunteer for the BB, but they may develop skills that help them in other areas of their lives.

Are there any age restrictions on helping out?

As long as you are over 18 years of age, you can help out as an adult volunteer. There is no upper age limit for adult volunteers.

What is the process for joining?

There is an application form to fill out which someone in your group will be able to help you with. References, interview and an enhanced disclosure check are also required for most roles.

Will I be insured?

Yes. All Members are covered under our comprehensive insurance scheme.

Do I need to be registered?

All volunteers who take part in regulated activities that involve frequent (once a month), intensive (three or more occasions in a period of 30 days) or overnight contact with children are required to register with The Boys' Brigade, provide references and agree to an enhanced disclosure check. It is an easy procedure and we will provide you with all the help and support you need to complete any forms. Even though this is an added burden, it better ensures the safety of children and young people in our care.

Will I have to wear a uniform?

Again, we need to be clear about the local requirements and any costs attached. It will not be necessary for leaders in some roles to wear uniform.

Would I have to lead worship sessions?

There are differing levels of Christian commitment required for different roles within the company. Even people with a strong faith may feel uncomfortable in this role and we try to fit people to the tasks that match their gifts. The BB is able to provide training and support materials to help leaders gain skills and confidence in this area.

Will volunteering for the BB affect my benefits?

Volunteers who are claiming Job Seekers Allowance or other types of benefit would need to check with their benefits office, in most cases benefits will not be affected.

I didn't realise that the BB was still around!

Although some reservations about our image may not be voiced directly, it is crucial that we take the opportunity to dispel some of the myths about the uniformed youth movement. We need to present an image that reflects the best of the work of the BB, and demonstrate that we are doing exciting and worthwhile work with children and young people. It can be useful to have examples to share of some of the national projects as well as the local work.