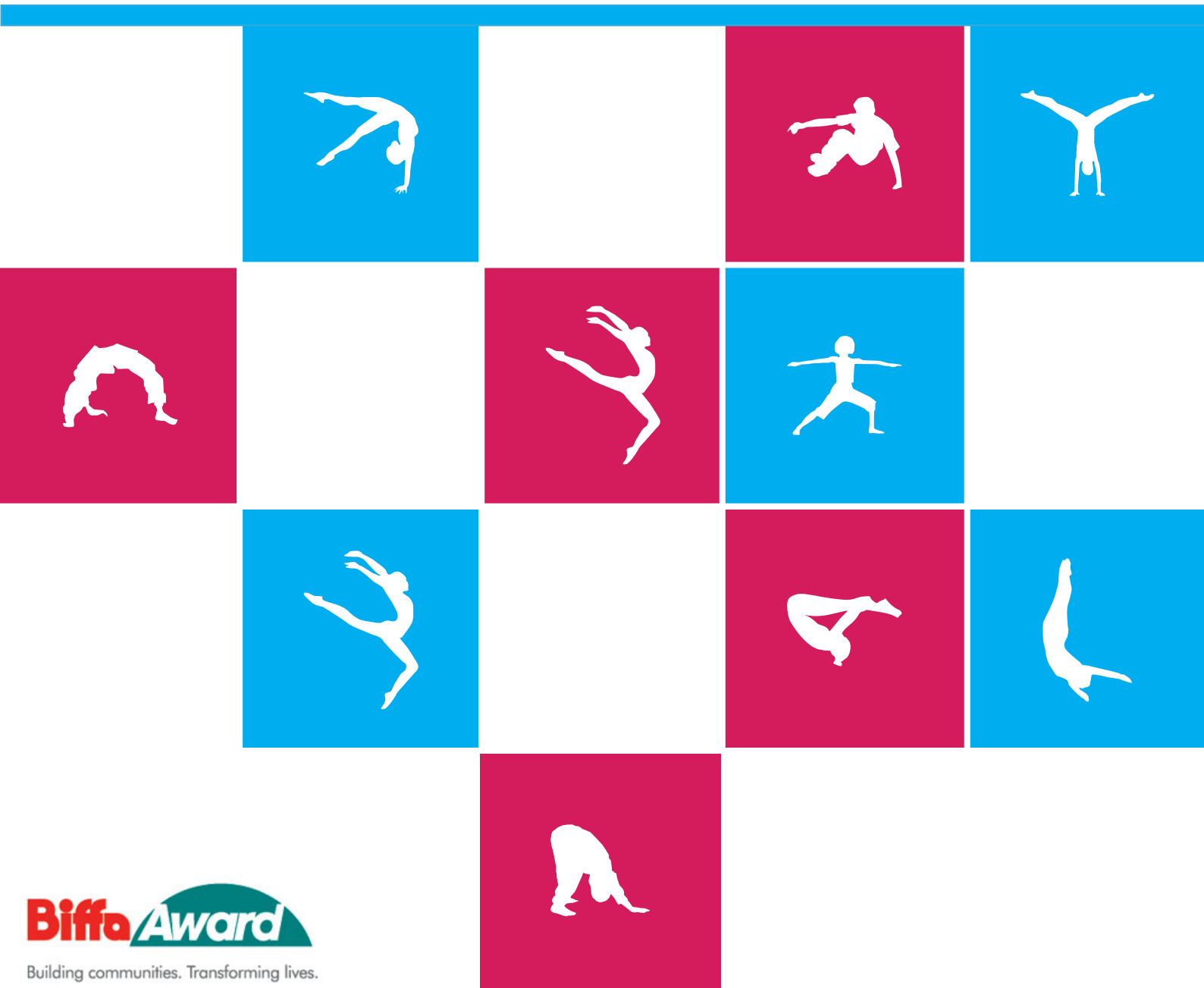


Staff Handbook





Aspire Gymnastics Club
Unit 8 St John's Business Park
St John's Grove
Hull
HU9 3RL
info@aspiregymnasticsclub.org
www.aspiregymnasticsclub.org
Tel: 01482 374808



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Welcome to Aspire Gymnastics Club

Club Contact Information

Aspire Gymnastics Club
Unit 8 St Johns Business Park
St Johns Gove
Hull
HU9 3RL
01482 374808

Email: info@aspiregymnasticsclub.org
Chair's email: jeanhlaws@outlook.com
Club Welfare Officer - Debbie Sage tel: 07786384647 email: deborahsage2@gmail.com
Club Welfare Officer - Suzanne Enderby email: aspirewelfare@hotmail.co.uk

Grievance Procedure

If a coach has a grievance regarding their contract of work it should be raised with the Chair. If it cannot be resolved by discussion, the grievance must be put into writing within 10 working days to the Chair detailing the grievance. If the Coach is not satisfied with the manner in which the grievance is dealt, the Instructor may ask to refer the grievance to the Clubs Grievance Policy which had a final contact of British Gymnastics if relating to matters of Health and Safety and welfare not resolved through policies adhered to and set.

Absence And Illness

None contracted staff

Notification of absence from work owing to illness or any other cause should be made as soon as possible to the Club no later than 8am on the first day of sickness. (By telephone conversation) In cases of sick leave pay will not be forthcoming, but after the statutory waiting days you will be entitled to statutory sick pay.

If you feel unwell at work please inform a lead coach, who will be able to assist you.

Contracted Staff as per company contract

Cover Of Hours And Holiday Procedure

None contracted staff - Various hours coaches- hours leave -Where possible staff should try and gain cover from another member of staff and record this on their sheet. Sheets should be handed into the Chair. Their signature will be approval of this time off.

Main hours staff can submit forms to the Chair. Holiday/ LIEU forms completed and authorisation given after this. All time off will then be recorded in the main Club Diary.

Contracted coaches as per company contract.



Coaches And Volunteer Guidelines

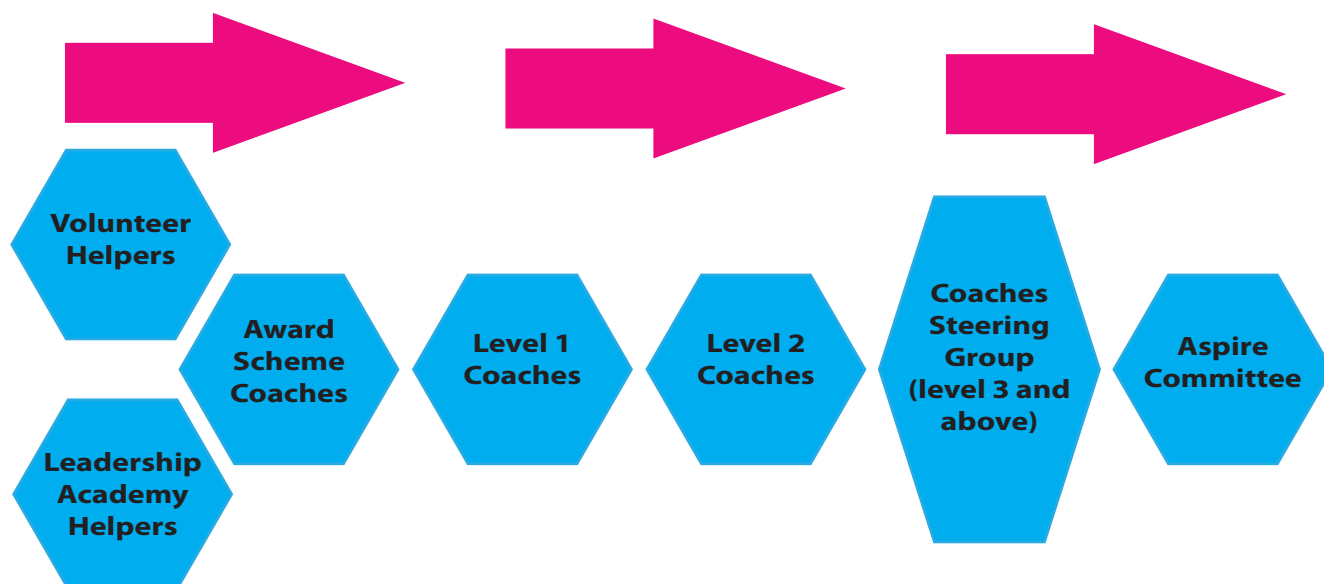
*any person who supports Gymnastic or Trampolining activities

- Coaches are expected to wear club Aqua Blue or Kukri T shirt and helpers are expected to wear the pink club T shirt.
- No Jewellery to be worn (if you cannot remove an item of jewellery this must be taped over) Hair must be tied back
- Coaches are expected to carry out the time necessary for the proper discharge of their responsibilities. Such times may include before and after lessons for set up, arrivals and dispersal.
- Coaches will work under the guidance of a qualified Coach in charge of each session.
- As a responsible member of the club and as a coach it is asked that the Club and British Gymnastics Code of Conduct and Ethics be followed and signed agreement.
- Coaches are asked to carry out their duties and support the other coaches in every lesson.
- If you are unsure of a task or support, seek advice from the Coach in charge of the session. You may also seek advice from members of the coaches steering group at any time.
- Ask for help when required
- Always report any Incidents or Accidents to the Coach in charge of the session.
- In the event of an Emergency, Fire or such like incident, you will be required to follow the clubs procedures. (See Club Policies)
- Coaches are responsible to fill in their own time sheet.
- You are asked to check the coach's notices (which may come in the form of email) on a regular basis.
- Lockers are provided to house your personal belongings. The Club holds
- no responsibility to loss or damage of your personal belongings.

**Time off: You are required to take the following action;**

- Ask permission from Chair for time off (to be written)
- Assist the club in finding relevant cover if possible
- Record this in club diary
- Record this on your time sheet
- Confirm with Chair that the above has taken place.
- Time off should be kept to a minimum. No more than one cover a month and this may be refused.

A copy of all the Clubs British Gymnastics Guidelines and Rules are available for your information and required to be read and signed.

Club Structure



Belongings

All Staff and helpers are welcome to use the staff room at the gym. Lockers for belongings are available. Tea, Coffee and Squash is available to you in the staff room at no charge. All refreshments from the tuck shop will need to be purchased.

The club is not responsible for any loss or damage to personal belongings.

Contracts And Policy

Contracts, policy documents and associated paperwork will be given to you on joining the club. Please notify a member of the committee if any details you have provided have changed. As with these documents you will where necessary need to re submit, sign etc. as required.

All specific details of your association with the club is detailed in your contract.

Health And Safety

Employees are reminded that they have a statutory duty to observe all health and safety rules and to take all reasonable care to promote the health and safety at work themselves and their fellow employees. Wilful breaches of the health and safety policy will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

If you have an injury this MUST be reported to a member of the management coaches.

Safeguarding & First Aid

All coaches must hold a current Safeguarding and Protecting Children certificate to satisfy your BG membership and Aspire Gymnastics Club's Safeguarding and Protecting Children policy. Aspire Gymnastics Club also requires every lead coach to have a current First Aid certificate.

First Aid and SPC course dates will be posted on the staff noticeboard, enrolment and payment for these courses are the sole responsibility of each coach and not Aspire Gymnastics Club.

General Notes

- We kindly ask no phones to be taken into the gym and left on silent. During coaching times. Except for exceptional reasons.
- Attention to paid to the staff notice board on a regular basis for any notifications or information.
- If you are a member of staff who needs to record hours on the staff time sheet please do this after each coaching day.



Confidentiality

You shall not use or disclose to any person either during or at any time after your employment with the Club any confidential information about the business or affairs of the Club or any of its business contacts, or about any other matters which may come to your knowledge in the course of your employment. For the purposes of this Agreement, **“Confidential Information”** means any information or matter which is not in the public domain (except as a result of your breach of this Agreement) and which relates to the affairs of the Club or any of its business contacts.

The above does not apply to

- (a) prevent you from making a protected disclosure within the meaning of section 43A of the Employment Rights Act 1996;
or
- (b) use or disclosure that has been authorised by the Club is required by law or by your employment.

All staff (contracted or none contracted) will need to sign that they have read the handbook and policies and will abide by them.

Please ask if you have any questions or concerns.

Accidents In The Gym

Please note that in the event of an accident on the premises of Aspire the following procedure is to be followed:

1. Ensure that first aid is given straightaway. There must be no “diagnosis” of the injury by the first aider however. If further help and assistance/treatment is needed, it is to be left to the parent or the professionals to make decision as to the severity of the injury.
2. Other than very minor knocks and bruises, the parent of a child must be informed. If the parent is not on the premises and someone else is collecting the child, the parent should receive the report by telephone.
3. Head injuries should always be reported to the parent in any event.
4. An accident report form needs to be completed as soon as possible after the incident.
5. Any serious injury needs reporting to the Committee ie. for onward report to British Gymnastics and for the making of a follow-up call regarding the injury.

Please note:

- a) Ice packs are in the freezer in the staff room. Do not apply these directly to the skin. Wrap them first in kitchen towel.
- b) A list of our first aiders appears on the staff room door.
- c) The accident report book is with the first aid kit in the top right hand locker in the staff room.



Code Of Conduct

For Club Coaches, Officials and Volunteers

The essence of good ethical conduct and practice is summarised below. All Club Coaches, Officials and Volunteers must:-

- Consider the well-being and safety of participants before the development of performance
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with performers based on mutual trust and respect
- Hold the appropriate, valid qualifications and insurance cover
- Make sure all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part and ensure all participants are suitably prepared physically and mentally when learning new skills
- Display consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance, dressing suitably and not using inappropriate language at any time whilst involved with club activities
- Never consume alcohol immediately before or during training or events
- Obtain prior agreement from the parent/guardian of performers before transporting them anywhere (training/competitions)
- Never have performers stay overnight at your home
- Never exert undue influence over performers to obtain personal benefit or reward
- Always report any incidents, referrals or disclosures immediately, following the appropriate guidelines set out in the British Gymnastics Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy.
- Never condone rule violations or use of prohibited substances
- Make sure that confidential information is not divulged unless with the express approval of the individual concerned
- Promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play)
- Encourage performers to value their performances and not just results
- Never contact gymnasts out of training, always contact parents. If you need to contact a coach who is under 18 this must be through a group communication which includes a welfare officer.
- Follow all guidelines laid down by British Gymnastics.



Travel Expense Claim Form

Travel Claim		Fill and return, returned on payment
Date		
Name		
Purpose of travel		
Vehicle type		
Registration NO.		
No. of passengers		
Date of journey		
Route	Mileage	
Total Mileage		
use of Goolgle confirmation	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> £ </div>	
rate of	per mile	
Paid Direct bank / Cheque date		



Expenses Claim Form

Expenses Claim	Fill and return, returned on payment
Date	
Name	
Expense	
Receipt date	
Total	£ <input type="text"/>
Paid Direct bank / Cheque date	

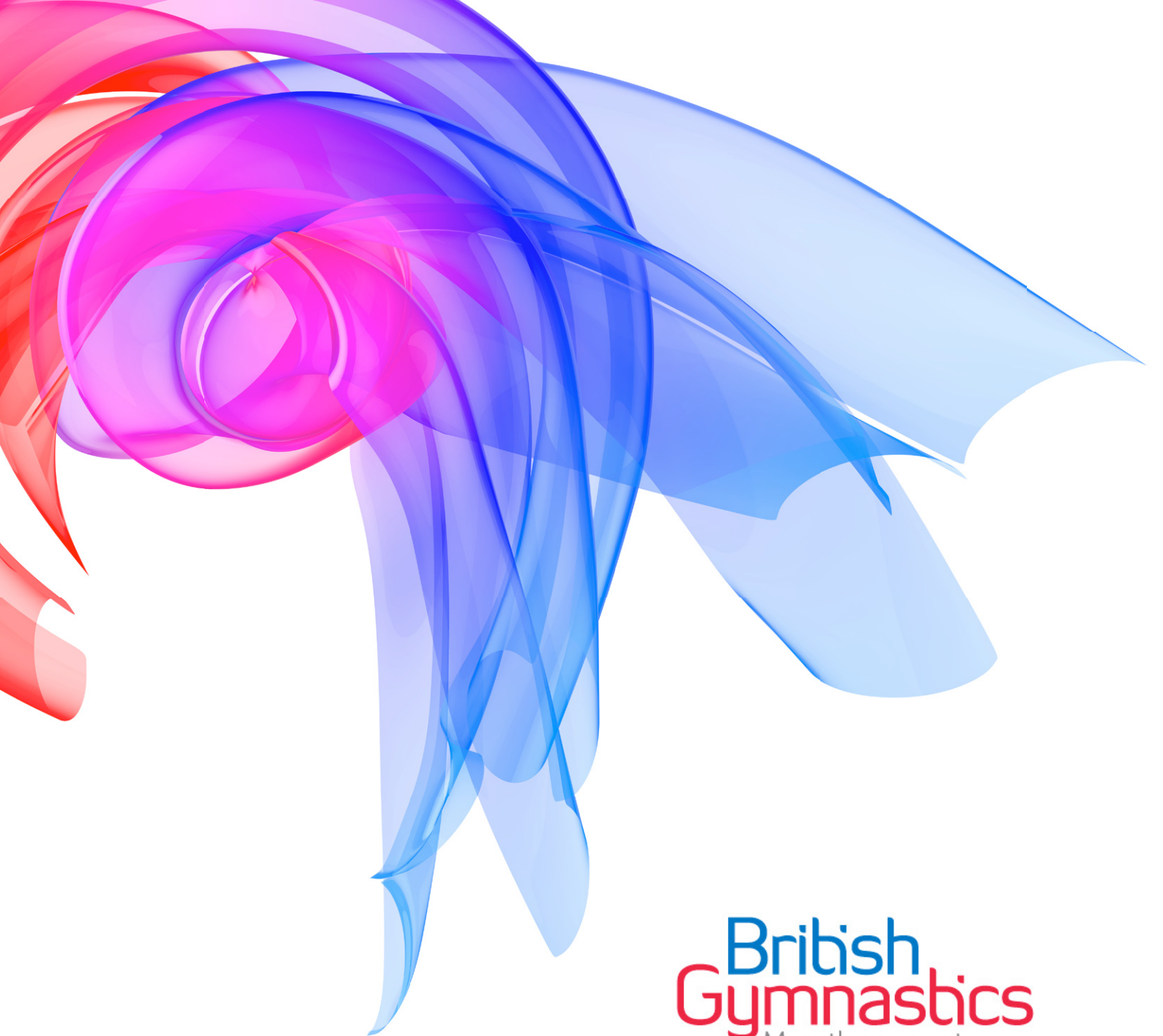


Appendix

Adpoted Policies



BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy



**British
Gymnastics**
More than a sport

Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy

british-gymnastics.org

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About British Gymnastics Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy

Contained within this section is:

- Foreword
- Definitions
- Glossary of Terms
- Acknowledgements
- Introduction to British Gymnastics Safeguarding Policy
- Background
- Core Principles
- Legislation
- Vetting and Barring Scheme
- Aims & objectives
- Responsibilities for Safeguarding
- Equality
- Monitoring

Foreword

The British Gymnastics (BG) Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy replaces the BG Child Protection Policy 2004.

BG policy and procedures comply with the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children – a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, HM Government 2006' and the all Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 (Wales). This guidance, which is applicable in England and Wales, sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and underpins the provisions set out in the Children Act 2004. BG policy and procedures are also informed by the Government Strategy 'Every Child Matters, Change for Children'.

The new government guidance summarises a shift from child protection to safeguarding reflecting the recognition that there is a much wider role for organisations to play in this area. The definition of safeguarding outlined in both the Children Act 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children focuses on safeguarding and promoting children and young people's welfare. The key elements of safeguarding include the protection of children from abuse and neglect, the prevention of practices that may be detrimental to children's health and well-being and ensuring a safe and effective environment for young people.

As BG is a UK wide Governing Body of Sport with affiliated Home Country Governing Bodies in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, it is imperative that the policy meets the legal requirements of all home countries. BG policy is based on the English guidance and legislation but, in the light of the common principles and similar approaches taken by all home countries, most of the procedures in this document are fully applicable to all members and affiliated organisations. Any necessary differences have been highlighted in the document and reference made to any complementary home country policy/procedures.

The development of the policy is one of the core functions for British Gymnastics in its role to support gymnastics clubs to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This reflects the fact that anyone who provides or delivers gymnastics activities has a duty of care towards the young people who are participating in the sport.

The British Gymnastics Board of Directors agreed the Safeguarding and Protecting Children policy on the 11th September 2009. The policy is an open working document and will be continually updated in line with any changes in law and legalisation.

Definitions

The key definitions shown below are taken from 'Working together to Safeguard Children' (HM Government Guidance 2006), which is the guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

“Child”

A child is anyone who has not yet reached his or her 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, does not change their status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989. The word child/children will be used throughout this policy to denote all persons under the age of 18.

“Safeguarding and Promoting the welfare of children”

The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life changes and enter adulthood successfully

“Child Protection”

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

Effective child protection is essential as part of the wider work to safeguard and promote welfare of children. However all agencies and individuals should proactively aim to safeguard and promote the welfare of children through good practice so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

“Abuse”

For definitions of the different types of abuse, and common indicators of abuse please see the Anti Bullying and Abuse Policy and Procedures section on definitions.

Who is responsible for Safeguarding?

Working Together 2006 states, “Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of the local authority (LA) working in partnership with other public organisations, the voluntary sector, children and young people, parents and carers, and the wider community” i.e. We are ALL responsible

Acknowledgements

BG wishes to express its gratitude to the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU), Lucy Smith, Barbara Barrett, and colleagues within the Home Countries gymnastics’ governing bodies and other sport’s governing bodies for their support and guidance in developing this document.

Introduction to British Gymnastics Safeguarding Policy

Gymnastics, in common with other sporting activities, can provide valuable life experiences for young people, and has the potential to offer significant opportunities for children to develop social skills, self-esteem, confidence, teamwork and leadership qualities that develop a well-rounded individual. BG and the BG board of directors is fully committed to supporting all young people to fulfil their potential in the sport both directly through BG run activities and indirectly through affiliated clubs and coaches. It is recognised that the provision of a positive environment where young people are protected from harm is critical to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people and conducive to promoting high performance. Thus safeguarding the welfare of children needs to be a priority for everyone involved in gymnastics.

People who have regular contact with young people are ideally placed to recognise signs that a child may be being abused and take appropriate steps to report these concerns. BG accepts that the welfare and safety of young people is the responsibility of everyone in the sport, whether paid staff or volunteers. Coaches and officials may be best placed to help in identifying welfare concerns, and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage and referring those concerns to BG and the appropriate statutory organisation. It is therefore essential that anyone in contact with young people through their involvement in gymnastics is fully aware of the common indicators of abuse and how to respond to concerns.

Abuse of children can occur in any environment where there are young people, including the home, at school or in a sport club. Although young people are more likely to be abused by people they know and trust in their family, cases of abuse have occurred and continue to occur in gymnastics and in other sports. BG acknowledges that as gymnastics provides significant access to young people, it can present opportunities for an individual who wants to harm children. It is therefore recognised that it is vital to provide policy and guidance to all members who may come across concerns of this nature within the context of their involvement in the sport and set out the required standards across all areas of safeguarding.

BG has a duty of care towards young people and is committed to providing information and training opportunities to make certain that those working with children adopt best practice, to ensure the safety and welfare of the participants. It is imperative that everyone involved in the sport understands their roles and responsibilities and those of others in relation to safeguarding children. Safeguarding must form an integral part of all BG and club activities and be about creating an environment where young people can thrive and realise their potential.

Background

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government Guidance 2006) (England) and the all Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 (Wales) provides the overall framework on which the BG policy is based. In line with this guidance, the BG policy requires that all affiliated organisations and their staff, members and volunteers must: -

- be alert to the possible indicators of abuse and neglect;
- be alert to the risks that individual abusers or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child’s welfare; and
- work cooperatively with parents, unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child’s safety
- pass on all concerns as set out in the BG policy (this is mandatory)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government Guidance 2006) states that to fulfil their commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children all organisations that provide services for children, or work with children, need to have in place:

- Clear priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children explicitly stated in strategic policy documents
 - A clear commitment by senior management to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare
 - A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
 - Recruitment and human resources management procedures that take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people including arrangements for appropriate checks on new staff and volunteers
 - Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers
 - Arrangements to ensure that all staff undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities effectively, and keep this up to date by refresher training at regular intervals; and that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers who work with children, are made aware of the establishment's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and their responsibilities for that;
 - Have policies in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (for example, pupils/students), including a child protection policy, and procedures that are in accordance with the guidance from the local authority and locally agreed inter-agency procedures
 - Have arrangements in place to work effectively with other organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including arrangements for sharing information
 - A culture of listening to and engaging in dialogue with children – seeking their views in ways appropriate to their age and understanding, and taking account of those both in individual decisions and the establishment or development of services;
- and,
- Appropriate whistle blowing procedures and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed.

The procedures section of the document puts into a gymnastics context the requirements set out in Working Together 2006, outlining the minimum standards to which all British Gymnastics members must adhere. In addition to the main policy, there are a number of complementary policies that must also be applied.

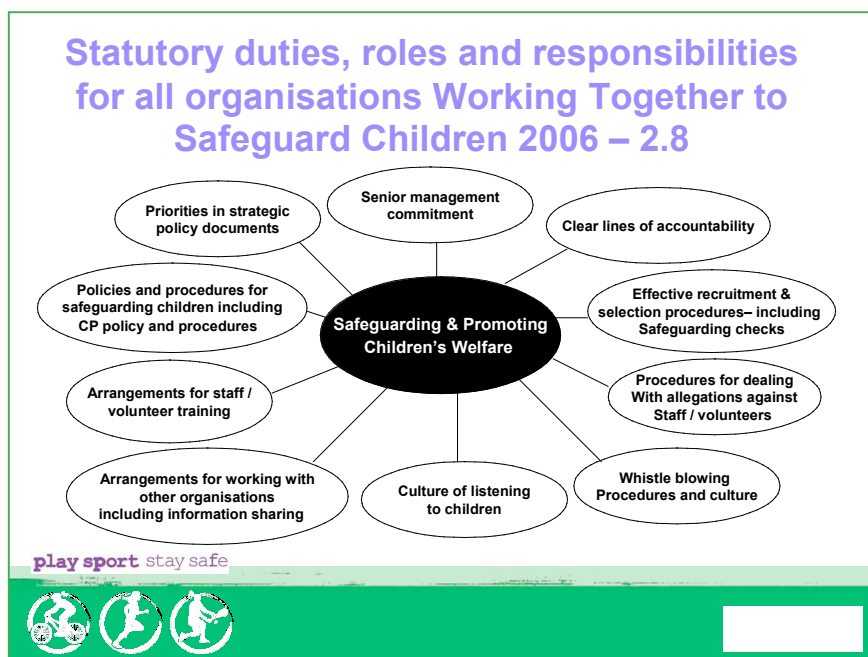
The policy and procedures have also been strongly influenced by the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes for all children: -

- **Being healthy:** enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle;
- **Staying safe:** being protected from harm and neglect;
- **Enjoying and achieving:** getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood;
- **Making a positive contribution:** being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour; and
- **Economic well-being:** not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life.

In Wales there are 7 outcomes: -

- **Have a Flying Start/Be Prepared**
- **Be Healthy**
- **Be Involved**
- **Be Free from poverty**
- **Be Skilled**
- **Be Active**
- **Be Safe**

'Every Child Matters' places the responsibility for safeguarding children with all adults who play a role with them. In the context of the sport, this would include coaches who have direct contact with children and those who perform an administrative function but who may not themselves have regular face-to-face contact with children.



Core principles

The Policy is based upon the following fundamental principles:

- The welfare of children (anyone under the age of 18 years) is paramount;
- All young people, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, parental status, disability, religion or belief, colour, race, ethnic or national origins, or socio/economic background have a right to be protected from abuse;
- Everyone has a duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children;
- Joint working in partnership with statutory authorities, other organisations, children and their parents/carers is fundamental to safeguarding;
- The child should be central throughout and their concerns and views should be acknowledged and addressed

Legislation

There are a number of pieces of legislation that impact on the policy and procedures such as:

Children and Young Persons Act 1933	Commissioner for Children and Young People (NI) Order 2003)
Children Act 1989	Commissioner for Children and Young People (Scotland) Order 2003)
United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child 1989	Children Act (England 2004)
Human rights Act 1998	Education Act 2002
Children's Commissioner for Wales Act 2001	

Legislation to protect children from adults who pose a risk

Sex Offenders Act 1997

Protection of Children Act 1999

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)

Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007

To see the full list of the Laming Report 5B Recommendations see link: <http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed33471>

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) has been created to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. This is done by working in partnership with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and other delivery partners.

It is now a criminal offence for individuals barred by the ISA to work or apply to work with children or vulnerable adults in a wide range of posts, including most NHS jobs, Prison Service, education and childcare. Employers also face criminal sanctions for knowingly employing a barred individual across a wider range of work;

The three former barred lists (POCA, POVA and List 99) are being replaced by two new ISA-barred lists;

Employers, local authorities, professional regulators and other bodies have a duty to refer to the ISA, information about individuals working with children or vulnerable adults where they consider them to have caused harm or pose a risk of harm.

Aims and objectives of the policy

The aim of the BG policy is to ensure that anyone participating in the sport of gymnastics can do so in an environment where all appropriate safeguards are in place. It is important that the culture in the sport is one where young people are at the centre (and, together with their parents/carers) are consulted and where appropriate fully involved in decisions that affect them. This can only be achieved if everyone involved in the sport is fully compliant with the policy. The key objectives of the policy are as follows: -

- To ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and there are robust procedures, support and guidance available.
- To ensure all BG members are able to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- To promote safe practice and challenge poor practice
- To ensure that appropriate action is taken as a result of any concerns or allegations.
- To ensure that all BG members who are involved in a role with children have been through appropriate pre-recruitment checks.
- To ensure that all BG members who are involved in a role with children have attended safeguarding training at a level appropriate to their role in the sport, which covers the above areas.

Policies, legislation, structures and procedures are, of course of immense importance but they serve only as the means of securing better life opportunities for each young person. It is the robust and consistent implementation of these procedures, which keeps children and young people safe.

Protection of Children in England: A progress Report (2009) Lord Laming, Crown Copyright

Responsibilities for Safeguarding

BG is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children engaged in the sport. BG has prepared a clear policy and associated mandatory procedures that provide a framework for any club or individual working with children.

The overall responsibility for safeguarding children in gymnastics rests with the Chief Executive and the BG Board, who are fully committed to ensuring the welfare and interests of young people are central to all decision making and programs.

Central to the policy is the commitment to ensuring that there is a designated welfare officer for any BG activity or event involving young people. BG also requires any organisation that wishes to register with the Association to appoint a welfare officer who will have the key responsibility for safeguarding within the organisation.

BG recognises that it has a duty to help ensure members accept their responsibilities through the provision of clear guidance and instruction. BG guidance has been formulated with the underlying aim of minimising risk to children and wherever possible, avoiding situations where it is known that abuse or neglect can occur. BG will support this duty through the development and provision of learning opportunities for members.

BG has established an Ethics and Welfare Management Committee that is responsible for:

- Monitoring the implementation of the policy and procedures.
- Agreeing training needs.
- Monitoring compliance with the policy.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and procedures and reviewing the policy as required.
- Providing reports to the Board on all matters relating to safeguarding.
- Development of Policy, rules and regulations.

BG, in the position as regulator for Gymnastics in the UK, will work in partnership with home country gymnastics organisations to ensure that all allegations or suspicions of abuse or significant harm to any child are reported to the Police and/or Social Care Services department. BG will share all relevant information with the respective statutory child protection agencies (children's social care services and/or police) without delay and within agreed protocols.

BG will ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities to work jointly with others to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people as stated in the BG Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures.

BG has an established Case Referral Management Group, which is responsible for determining: -

- The referral route for all cases that deal with the welfare of children
- Whether suspension of BG membership is required
- The appropriate course of remedial action

BG will comply with the principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998 and Information Sharing for Practitioners (HM Government, 2006) in relation to confidentiality and information sharing. Information that is confidential in nature may be shared without consent where there is a legitimate and lawful reason for disclosure.

Case Referral Management Group Terms of Reference

1. The members of the Case Referral Management Group herein known as "The Group" will have experience in dealing with welfare issues.
2. The Group will be managed and co-ordinated by the Ethics and Welfare Manager, who will be the first point of contact for any referral.
3. The Group will be chaired by the Chair of the Ethics and Welfare Committee
4. The Group will operate independently from the CEO and disciplinary panel members to ensure the separation of each of the four stages of the process; referral, suspension, disciplinary and appeals.

Procedures

1. The group will determine the referral route for all cases that deal with the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Consideration will be given to any signed written evidence including any written representation from the accused. (Any preliminary collection of information will be carried out by the Safeguarding and Compliance Officer)
2. Within seven (7) days, the Safeguarding and Compliance Officer shall write to the accused to notify them of any investigation that is to take place, the nature of the investigation and the reasons for this.
3. The CEO will sit outside this group and cannot intervene in any decisions unless there has been concern raised about a significant prior relationship, connection or interest between the accused and a member of the group.
4. Where abuse is suspected and any delay in action may compromise the welfare of a child/children, British Gymnastics is authorised to inform the relevant Children's Social Care services/Social services or police.

5. Members of the group must meet or be consulted within ten working days of the receipt of any referral where it is unclear if a case should be considered potential poor practice. Although it is not the responsibility of the panel to decide if abuse has taken place, the panel must quickly decide if the case needs to be referred to social services or the police.
6. Any case that has already been referred to the police or Children's Social Care service/Social services will only be considered in relation to whether suspension from British Gymnastics is required. The group will only reconsider referral of the matter on completion of any investigation or action by Children's Social Care service/Social services or the police. Anyone who is convicted of a child protection related offence or receives a caution in respect of an offence will be deemed to be in breach of the Association Rules.
7. In cases of potential poor practice or where convictions information is received from a CRB disclosure, the group may decide on an appropriate course of action. The matter will be passed back to the Safeguarding and Compliance Officer to manage the implementation of the agreed actions. Any actions will be reached after a fair appraisal of the case and will be in proportion with the severity of the incident. Previous allegations of a similar nature will also be considered.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS

- a. Recommendation that no further action taken
 - b. A warning and remedial action plan
 - c. Referral out/back to Club, Region, Line Manager etc to deal with advice on how to proceed
 - d. Further Enquiries/interviews
 - e. Referral to CEO for full disciplinary hearing
 - f. Recommendation made to CEO to suspend member
 - g. Devolvement to independent review panel
 - h. Referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority by the Governing Body
8. Members of the Group should declare immediately (to the group) any significant prior relationship, connection or interest which could disqualify them from any discussion on the referral pathway of a case.
 9. Any concerns over the independence of the Group on a case-to-case basis should be raised with the CEO. This can be done without fear of victimisation or reprisal. This or any other valid reason can be just cause for the CEO to request the resignation of the member from the group.
 10. All group decisions will be communicated to the CEO for information and any necessary further action.
 11. An individual has the right to appeal against any course of action determined by the group. This must be done within ten working days of receipt of the letter informing the individual of the decision reached by the group. If a member of the group is unhappy with the final decision taken by the group, the matter should be referred to the Child Protection in Sport unit for an independent determination.
 12. The group can choose to call on Legal or other advice where deemed necessary.
 13. The group will carry out a case monitoring function and should refer back to the steering group any recommendations about changes to policy, procedures and practice
 14. All case information is regarded as highly confidential and should not be disclosed outside the group except when it is relevant to inform an external agency.

Home Country NGB Responsibilities

In partnership with BG, the responsibility for leading the implementation of this policy rests with the home county gymnastics governing bodies and they will therefore need to:

- adopt the BG policy and procedures or have in place a full or supplementary policy and procedures that are compliant with relevant home country legislation and guidance;
- ensure there is a Lead Officer operating at a senior level in the organisation responsible for safeguarding children;
- establish and strengthen Welfare Officer networks;
- provide support and professional development for Welfare Officers;
- offer sufficient learning opportunities to meet local needs; and
- work in partnership with British Gymnastics to provide timely solutions to the resolution of poor practice concerns and disputes.

Club Responsibilities

All clubs who provide services to children or young people have a common law duty of care to take such steps that in the circumstances of a gymnastics club are reasonable to ensure that the young person is safe. The BG policy and procedures sets out the minimum standards that clubs should adopt. The adoption of these procedures will ensure that clubs fulfil their duty of care towards young people.

All clubs must ensure that: -

- The overall responsibility for safeguarding lies at the most senior level of their organisation.
- There is at least one individual designated within the club to take the lead role in dealing with safeguarding issues.
- All staff and volunteers who are working directly or indirectly with children receive appropriate training and have access to advice on child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children through the club welfare officer.
- All young people and their parents are aware of behaviour that is not acceptable and how they can help to keep themselves safe.
- They adopt the BG whistle blowing procedures and steps are taken to ensure members, their parents/carers and others feel able to raise concerns without fear of negative repercussions.
- Confidentiality is maintained in relation to concerns and referrals and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis in line with BG Confidentiality and Information Sharing Guidance.
- They comply with the BG procedure on safe recruitment to prevent unsuitable people from obtaining or remaining in positions of trust or responsibility. Clubs must ensure that anyone who is operating in a regulated position meets the requirements of the BG safeguarding licence.
- Work in partnership with BG to ensure poor practice is addressed and any required remedial action is taken.

It is not the role of club officials to investigate possible abuse or neglect, however they have a key role to play by referring concerns about those issues to Children's Social Care Services and/or British Gymnastics and providing information for police investigations.

Equality

The BG Equality Policy provides further information. Additional guidance in relation to safeguarding can be found in Chapter 11 of Working Together 2006.

Children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable and at greater risk of all forms of abuse. The presence of multiple disabilities increases the risk of both abuse and neglect. Some of the common factors that can lead to increased vulnerability include social isolation, communication and learning difficulties, lack of understanding of boundaries, need for assistance with personal care and more likely target for bullying and abuse. Children with disabilities have the same rights to protection as any other child and clubs working with these children need to be especially alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse and have strategies in place to ensure all children are able to raise concerns.

Monitoring

BG will review its Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy on an annual basis and in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- As required by the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit, UK Sport and Home Country Sports Councils
- Following the introduction of any new internal or external safeguarding process, including the Vetting and Barring Scheme.
- As a result of any significant child protection case within gymnastics or other sports

Anti Bullying and Abuse Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Objectives of this policy
Indicators of Abuse
Definitions of Physical, Emotional, Sexual, Neglect and Bullying
Abuse of position of Trust
Poor Practice

Objectives of this policy

- All Gymnastics staff, volunteers, members, and parents should have an understanding of what abuse is.
- All Gymnastics staff, volunteers and members should know what the clubs policy is on any form of abuse, and follow it when abuse is reported.
- All children and parents should know what the club policy is on abuse and what they need to do should abuse arise.
- As a club you take bullying seriously. Children and parents should be assured that they would be supported when abuse is reported.
- Any form of abuse will not be tolerated

BG is committed to providing a supportive, friendly, safe and positive environment free of offensive or abusive behaviour through it's network of members, clubs and staff

Indicators of Abuse

It is important to acknowledge that the majority of children do not find it easy to disclose their concerns and that some groups in society will find it harder than others, specifically children from ethnic minority groups and children with disabilities.

Children from ethnic minority groups have also been found to be at greater risk of abuse because of a failure to respond to abusive practices or neglect. This failure has been attributed to causes such as racial stereotyping, language barriers and cultural, racial or religious misunderstanding or misinterpretation.

It is known that the majority of referrals to the statutory agencies are from adults who are expressing concerns for a child or children identified by them as a result of the child's behaviour or presentation. The referrals made to BG are also predominantly made by concerned adults and only a small proportion result from of a disclosure made to the adult by a child. However, it is critical that clubs treat with the utmost seriousness all reports of observed or identified indicators of possible abuse and respond appropriately.

Abuse is not always easy to identify. There may be many innocent reasons for young people to have bruises. In adolescence, children can be moody and unpredictable in their behaviour. Children can react to external circumstances by a change in behaviour such as bereavement or parental divorce/separation. However some signs may not have an obvious explanation and may indicate that a child may be being abused.

Some indicators of abuse are:

- The child or young person discloses a concern and describes what may be an abusive act.
- Another person raises concern about the well being of a child or young person.
- Unexplained or concerning injuries such as burns, cuts, and bruises situated in areas of the child's body which are not normally prone to injury through for example play activity.
- Physical injury where the explanation given is inconsistent.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour such as a child becoming withdrawn, quiet or aggressive/verbally violent.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness and/or behaving in a sexualised manner.
- Eating disorder i.e. a child is overeating or showing a loss of appetite.
- Excessive weight loss or weight gain for no obvious reason.
- Physical appearance becomes unkempt.
- The child or young person is withdrawn and isolated themselves from the group and seems unable to make friends.
- The child or young person is prevented from socialising with other children.
- The child or young person displays a distrust of adults.
- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go to school, training or sports club.

- A drop in performance at school or in the sport.
- Physical signs such as stomach-aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing, for example, on food, cigarettes or alcohol.
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.
- A high turnover of club members.

This is not an exhaustive list of indicators and alone cannot be seen to be definitive proof a child or young person is being abused.

British Gymnastics does not expect the adults involved in the sport to decide whether a child has been abused but it is everyone's responsibility to act upon their concerns and report any incident immediately.

Abuse

Abuse can and does occur in a wide range of settings, including sport. The psychological effects of abuse can be life-long, especially if the individual has not been able to disclose the abuse or access support. Anyone who has been abused as a young person may find it difficult or impossible to maintain stable, trusting relationships, and may become involved with drugs, and experience mental health problems or self-harm. A child who has been neglected can experience serious impairment in their health and development.

A child may be abused or neglected though:

- Inflicting harm.
- Failing to act to prevent harm.

A child may be abused by:

- A family member.
- By a person within an institutional or community setting.
- By a person known to them or more rarely by a stranger*.
- An adult or adults, or another child or children.

*It is recognised through research that children are more likely to be abused by a member of their immediate or extended family, someone within their community or a person in a position of trust than by a stranger.

The following definitions are taken from Chapter 1 of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and additional gymnastics/sport specific information has been added to each category.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

In Gymnastics an example of physical abuse could include: -

- Provision of performance enhancing drugs or encouragement to take other medication to enhance performance.
- Setting a training regime that exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.
- Inflicting pain on a child that is beyond an acceptable level of discomfort involved in physical preparation and training.
- Forcing a child into a highly restricted and unhealthy diet that may lead to extreme weight loss.
- Physically pushing, poking, or prodding a child

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

- It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Within Gymnastics examples of emotional abuse may include: -

- Continually belittling a child's efforts.
- Placing extreme pressure on a child to perform.
- Shouting, laughing, humiliating a child

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may include:

- activities that involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.
- non-contact activities, such as involving children in viewing, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Within Gymnastics examples of Sexual abuse may include: -

- Inappropriate sexual touching
- Coach to gymnasts sexual relationship
- Taking inappropriate images
- Use of sexual innuendoes direct or indirect
- Displaying sexual behavior in front of or towards children
- Making comments about a child's developing body which causes embarrassment or discomfort

Child sex abusers can come from any occupational, racial or religious background, and can be male or female. They are not always adults - children and young people can also behave in a sexually abusive way. Usually the abuser is a family member or someone known to the child, such as a family friend. Some individuals will target a sport that allows access to children specifically to commit acts of sexual abuse.

Abusers may act alone or as part of an organised group. After the abuse, they will put the child under great pressure not to tell anyone about it. They will go to great lengths to get close to children and win their trust, for example, by choosing employment that brings them into contact with children, or by pretending to be children in Internet chat rooms run for children and young people.

A significant number of sexual abuse cases have been identified within Gymnastics. Coaches and other club officials are in a privileged position where they are able to form trusting relationships with gymnasts. Many cases of sexual abuse result from an abuse of that trust by the adult.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers).
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect in a sports situation might occur if a teacher or coach fails to ensure children are safe or exposes them to unduly cold temperatures at their training venue or not taking action to stop young people from doing things put them at risk of injury.

Within Gymnastics examples of neglect abuse may include: -

- Not providing suitable sustenance during training sessions
- Dirty and dangerous equipment or environment
- Inadequate coaching supervision

Bullying

Bullying and harassment occurs where repeated deliberate actions by one or more people cause hurt to an individual or group and where it is difficult for the bullied person(s) to prevent or deal with this person's actions. The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to young people, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm).

'Kidscape' (www.kidscape.org.uk), a UK charity established specifically to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse, defines bullying as the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person that results in pain and distress to the victim. It splits bullying into the following categories:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic** - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- **Cyber** - All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Bullying can occur between:

- An adult and young person.
- A young person and young person.
- A parent and own child.

It is acknowledged that the competitive nature of sport can result in tensions that may lead to bullying but bullying cannot be condoned in any circumstances.

Examples of bullying with in gymnastics could be:

- A gymnast who intimidates fellow gymnasts inappropriately i.e. abusive text messages, MSN, other social networking sites
- A coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy i.e. shouting, name calling, or ignoring.
- A parent who pushes too hard i.e. shouting at child
- An official who places unfair pressure on a person
- Older coaches intimidating younger coaches under the age of 18 years i.e. Senior coach shouting or intimidating and assistant coach.

Responding to Bullying

Bullying by children or adults on children within a club must never be tolerated. Bullying may take many forms including physical, verbal, or through the written word, and may be conducted in person or through the actions of another person/other people. Cyber bullying is now recognised as a serious concern and must be dealt with in line with the BG Anti Bullying policy.

Strategies to Discourage Bullying

- Create an open environment and provide adequate supervision at all times
- Encourage children to speak out and share any concerns with the person in charge, the Welfare Officer or other responsible adults.
- Take all signs or allegations of possible bullying seriously.

Responding to victims of Bullying

- Anyone becoming aware that a child is being bullied should offer the child reassurance and try to gain the child's trust.
- Explain that someone in authority may need to be informed.
- Keep accurate records of what happened together with names of those involved and any action taken.
- Report suspicions or concerns to the person in charge.

Confronting the Bully(ies)

- Talk to the bully(ies), explain the situation and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their actions.
- Seek an apology from the bully(ies) to the victim.
- Inform the bully's parents.
- Insist that any borrowed items are returned to the victim.
- Impose sanctions or disciplinary action if necessary.
- Report and record all actions taken.
- Provide support for the victim and his/her coach.
- Encourage the bully(ies) to change his/her behaviour.

Supporting bullied children

- Children who have been bullied will often need support from club officer's to deal with the impact of bullying. This may include having a specific person to whom concerns can be raised in specific situation or providing a named senior gymnast as a "buddy" in changing facilities.
- They will need supported external to the club from parents, other relatives and sometimes school teachers.
- The club may consider holding a reconciliation meeting to help address the issues between the bully and the bullied young person.

The club can advised the child or parent to contact Kidscape, a charity that offers support to bullied children as well as day courses to help them deal with bullying and its after effects including how to avoid being bullied in future at www.kidscape.org.uk.

Abuse of Position of Trust

A relationship of trust exists where an adult, by virtue of their role, is in a position of power or influence over a young person. Although an adult engaging in any sexual activity with a young person under the age of sixteen (in Northern Ireland the age of consent is 17) would be committing a criminal offence, in some circumstances, engaging in sexual activity within a relationship of trust is also a criminal offence.

The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 introduced the offence of abuse of a position of trust. The Act set out a series of occupations to which the legislation applied, which was extended in the Sexual Offences Act (2003).

The legislation states that it is a criminal offence for a person in a position of trust to engage in any sexual activity with a person under the age of 18 with whom they have a relationship of trust, irrespective of the whether the young person has ostensibly consented to the relationship.

Proposed amendments to the law have called for the inclusion of coaches and others involved in sports clubs who hold positions of trust but currently it is unlikely that these positions would be covered by the legislation unless the adult was working in one of the settings identified in the legislation.

Irrespective of the current legal position BG believes anyone who engages in sexual activity within a relationship of trust is in serious breach of the BG Policy and codes of ethics/conduct and is likely to be considered unsuitable to work with children in gymnastics.

It is acknowledged that in some situations a shared attraction may develop between two people within a relationship of trust. In such circumstances, it is essential that the individual who holds the position of trust behaves in an open manner, makes the Club Welfare Officer aware of the situation, and resigns from this position of trust if the parties involved wish the relationship to develop beyond the existing professional one. This will ensure that the previous power differential is not a factor in any future relationship. It is strongly advised that the young person is given an opportunity for reflection before any sexual relationship develops. It is the responsibility of the adult to ensure that his or her conduct is fully in line the BG Policy.

Poor Practice

Poor Practice can be split into a number of groupings. These include: -

- Practices that may be on the fringe of abuse and/or if repeated again and again, would amount to abuse. Most of the examples are linked to emotional abuse.

Examples include:

- Name-calling
- Excessive monitoring of weight
- Constant criticism of a child
- Exerting excessive pressure
- Forcing a child to do something against their will
- Use of inappropriate language
- Harassment.

- Breaches of BG Safeguarding policy and procedures:

Examples include:

- No welfare officer within a club
- Inadequate safeguarding arrangements
- Providing inadequate supervision and/or care
- Failure to respond appropriately to concerns
- Expelling anyone from the club who raises a concern
- Excluding parents from observing or asking questions about training
- Inappropriate use of photographic equipment or materials.

- Breaches of recognised best practice in coaching:
 - Providing coaching or running a session without another responsible adult present
 - Exceeding level of competence and/or qualification
 - Employing practices that are inappropriate for the stage of psychological and physical development of the individual
 - Excessive training or competition
 - Inappropriate/excessive supporting or stretching.

- Practices that may be carried out with the best intentions but that fall into a category of behaviours that are used by people who sexually abuse children to 'groom' their victim:

Examples include:

 - Offering to give a child a lift home alone
 - Giving a child gifts
 - Having unnecessary physical contact with young people e.g. excessive handling/supporting, cuddling, kissing, 'friendly' taps etc
 - Socialising/having friendships with young people outside training.

- Practices that are known to be significant risk factors in cases of abuse and can never to be condoned:
 - Taking children to your home or other secluded place unaccompanied by others.
 - Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
 - Sharing a room with a child.
 - Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
 - Making sexually suggestive remarks.
 - Reducing a child to tears as a form of control.
 - Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
 - Allowing allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
 - Carrying out personal care for a child that the child can do unaided
 - Departing from the premises without first supervising the safe dispersal of the children.
 - Abusing a privileged position of power or trust.
 - Resorting to bullying tactics, or verbal abuse.
 - Causing a participant to lose self-esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual.
 - Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from other adults.

It is essential that everyone challenges poor practice, even where there is a belief that the motives of an individual are well meaning. Failure to challenge poor practice can lead to an environment where abuse is more likely to remain unnoticed.

BG accepts that on occasion there may be unplanned situations where the unexpected does occur, which leads to a responsible person being alone with a child. In addition, situations arise where a young person may:

- become distressed
- be accidentally hurt by someone else
- misunderstand/misinterpret something that has been said or done
- appear to become sexually aroused

In these situations, the individual involved must report the incident immediately to the welfare officer or a senior colleague and compile a brief written report of the event. The parent should also be informed of any significant incident.

For information on how to respond to allegations please visit the [Responding to Allegations of Abuse Policy and Procedures](#).

Communication Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Communication

Communication

All clubs should have a communication policy that covers the use of communication devices and the manner in which coaches can communicate with young people.

The following key points must be included:

- Mobile phones should be turned off in the gym except in the case where a phone is used as a club contact number or for emergencies.
- It is unacceptable for adult members to communicate with gymnasts under the age of 18 years by:
 - text message
 - through internet chat rooms/social networking sites
 - e-mail
- All communication by the above methods should be through the parent
- Subject to parental consent, coaches can communicate with young people over the age of sixteen years but a copy of all correspondence must be sent to either the welfare officer or a senior official.
- Coaches should limit communications to training related issues

However, if it necessary to make contact with 16 and 17 year old coaches via email or text then this must be done in mass. Communication as part of a club communication involving several adults and several children including the club welfare officer is acceptable as it ceases to be personal.

1 to 1 communication between coach and a minor is unacceptable.

As technology develops, the internet and its range of services can be accessed through various devices including mobile phones, computers and game consoles. Although the internet has many positive uses, it provides the key method for the distribution of images of child abuse. In addition, networking sites and chatrooms have increasingly been used by people for the purpose of 'grooming' children and young people for abuse and by children as a means of bullying.

In the event of a gymnast showing a coach a text message, image or email that is considered to be inappropriate for a child to have, the coach must inform the appropriate welfare officer.

All staff, volunteers, parents and members should always behave responsibly and respectfully when online or texting.

- They should not post or discuss unfavourable comments about coaches, gymnasts, any helper or volunteer, parent or club/s
- Coaches should not make contact or hold discussions with gymnasts via social networking sites or texting.

For further information please see the CPSU guidance on Social Networking and Texting:

http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/cpsu/Resources/Briefings/text_and_email_messaging_wdf66628.pdf

Confidentiality Policy

Contained within this section is:

Confidentiality Policy

Introduction

British Gymnastics (BG) recognises that a guarantee that members' personal information is kept safe and secure is vital to ensure trust and confidence in the organisation.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- establish a clear and agreed understanding of what confidentiality means within BG
- encourage uniformity in practice
- ensure that BG members volunteers and external agencies working with BG are aware of the standards they can expect

There are some situations where information that is confidential may be shared without consent. These circumstances are sets out in BG Information sharing to safeguard children policy.

This policy applies to all BG members and continues to apply after their service or involvement with BG has come to an end.

Responsibilities

The Board has the overall and final responsibility for ensuring that BG meets its legal responsibilities regarding confidentiality in relation to the Data Protection Act 1998, Human Rights legislation and the common law duty of confidentiality. Board Members must also maintain confidentiality as a requirement of the Company Act 1989

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Confidentiality Policy is put into practice. In particular the Chief Executive will ensure that:

- Line Managers and BG Officials are aware of their responsibilities to their staff and volunteers
- Arrangements are in place to monitor and implement this policy
- Breaches of the policy are dealt with proportional to the implications of the breach

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 BG is required to register with the Information Commissioner. The Act regulates the handling of all personal data held on an individual. While the majority of BG affiliated organisations will be exempt from registration if the data they hold is purely to service their membership, everyone must comply with the eight data protection principals* set out in the Act.

General Principles

- Information belongs to the person or agency entrusting it to a member of staff, a member or volunteer of British Gymnastics.
- Information provided by an individual or organization should be treated as confidential unless it has been expressly confirmed otherwise.
- Once received by British Gymnastics, information may not be used for any purpose other than that for which it was given; nor may it be passed on to any person or agency outside British Gymnastics without the express permission of the data subject.

Operational Practice

- BG keeps extensive records, using paper files and computers. Where necessary, personal details of BG Staff and members are recorded in these systems.
- Every BG member or employee has a right of access to any personal information that BG holds on them in a 'relevant filing system'*** and to have changed any information that is inaccurate. Confidential information that has been provided by a third party may be removed from a file prior to its examination.
- BG will maintain an appropriate level of security, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will adequately protect information about individuals that is held in these systems. Paper files will be kept in a locked area and computer-based files will be password protected.
- The use of information for reports, monitoring and funding applications will avoid any specific detail about members that might lead to their identification unless they have given their prior consent.
- Consent must be obtained from the relevant individuals prior to any personal information being publicised either in print or on a website. The accuracy of the information must also be confirmed.
- BG will seek permission from the relevant member, volunteer, employee or organisation before any information that is held by BG is passed on to a third party where that information specifically identifies them or might lead to their identification. In the case of employees, this does not include their professional contact details.

Staff or Membership Suspensions

Where a BG member or member of staff is temporarily suspended, the CEO has overall responsibility for determining who should be informed. The suspension and the reasons behind the decision will be treated as a confidential matter and will not be disclosed unless there is a justifiable reason. When deciding whether or not to disclose information, it is vital to consider if a proposed disclosure is a proportionate response to protect the welfare of children or other members. The amount of confidential information disclosed and to whom should be no more than is strictly necessary to ensure the welfare of BG members and young people.

Sharing information within British Gymnastics

It is sometimes desirable to share information with other BG staff or officials to allow them to fulfill their role. Information given to staff members or officials acting on behalf of BG will only be given on a 'need to know' basis. It should be absolutely clear to all attending meetings or taking on a role on behalf of BG that they must comply with the rules of confidentiality and ensure confidential matters are not disclosed.

BG Committee members include individuals from various backgrounds, some of whom are there in a formal capacity on behalf of other agencies which have statutory duties, e.g. members of the Case Referral Management Group. Such representatives should normally regard information that they learn in their capacity as members of a BG Committee as confidential, however, if, as a result of their membership of the Committee, they become aware of information that they feel needs to be shared, the individual should bring this to the attention of the relevant Committee so that the statutory or other implications can be formally acknowledged.

Subject access requests

The Data Protection Act 1998 provides all data subjects with the right to request access to their personal file. BG holds membership files and other records for young people under the age of eighteen. As a general rule a person with parental responsibility will have the right to apply for access to information held on file or in a membership record relating to their child if the young person is under the age of sixteen. Where a child is considered capable of making their own decisions, their consent will be sought before a person with parental responsibility will be given access to their file or record. Where an individual is over the age of 16, subject access requests must come direct from the individual unless it can be demonstrated that the data subject has insufficient level of understanding to make their own decisions.

Electronic Information

Each user is responsible for securing (or limiting access to) documents and folders, which can be accessed via the BG network. On no account should confidential work be stored in shared folders. All BG Computers that contain sensitive or confidential data are password protected. Users should not disclose passwords or security details to others except when required to do so by a manager.

Email Addresses

Personal email addresses should be treated in the same manner as private telephone numbers and should only be given out with the explicit consent from the individual.

BG staff should use standard signatures, which refer to the confidentiality policy when posting email externally.

*Data Protection Act 1998 - Eight Principles

1. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless –
 - at least one of the conditions in Schedule 2 is met; and
 - in the case of sensitive personal data, at least one of the conditions in Schedule 3 is also met.
2. Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.
3. Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
4. Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.
6. Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under this Act.
7. Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
8. Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area, unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection of the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

*** To fall under the Data Protection Act 1998, personal data held manually must be organised into a 'relevant filing system'. Manual files would only fall within the scope of the Act if the filing system is sufficiently sophisticated to provide the same or similar speed of accessibility as computerised files.

Contact list

Club information sheet

Club Welfare Officer

Name:
Tel:

Regional Welfare Officer

Name:
Tel:

Local Authority Services

Children Social Care Services
Tel:

Out Of Hours Contact Number

Tel:

Police Child Abuse Investigation Team/Unit

Tel:

British Gymnastics

0845 129 7 129
ethics@british-gymnastics.org

Child protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)

0116 234 7278
cpsu@nspcc.org.uk

NSPCC UK

0808 800 5000
help@nspcc.org.uk

NSPCC

The NSPCC National Centre
020 7825 2500

Help for children & young people

ChildLine
0800 1111

Help for adults

Help and Advice
0808 800 5000

DAS

Commercial Advise (for BG registered clubs)
0117 933 0617

Counselling Helpline

0117 934 2121

NI Childline

PO Box 111
Belfast BT1 7DZ
028 90 327773

Kidscape

020 730 3300

Sports Coach UK

114 Cardigan Road
Headingley
Leeds LS6 3BJ
0113 274 4802

Coaching Northern Ireland

Queens (check)
Botanic Gardens
Belfast
BT9 5EX

Child Protection in Sport Unit (NSPCC) England Office

3 Gilmour Close
Beaumont Leys
Leicester L4 1EZ
0116 234 7278

Northern Ireland CPSU

Block 1
Jennymount Court
North Derby Street
Belfast BT15 3HN
02890 351135

Scotland Children First

c/o Learning & Teaching Scotland
64 Victoria Crescent Road
Glasgow
G12 9JN
0141 342 4870

Wales CPSU

NSPCC Cymru/Wales,
Capital Tower,
Greyfriars Road,
Cardiff
CF10 3AG
029 20 267000

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Vacant

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Duty of Care Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Duty of Care

Duty of care

Clubs have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of gymnasts, coaches, volunteers, officials and visitors. This responsibility applies to all clubs, regardless of their size or structure. There is a legal responsibility to ensure that participants are protected against harm or danger whilst taking part in gymnastics or related activities. This is legally termed the 'Duty of Care'. This becomes particularly relevant when dealing with children.

When working with children, an adult who carries out a supervisory role would take on certain responsibilities while the child was in their care. This may include:

- Holding a responsibility for care and well-being during training
- Safe dispersal after training
- Providing first aid
- Providing/consenting to emergency medical treatment
- Chaperoning
- Team Managing

The legal terminology for this relationship is that the person would be acting 'in loco-parentis'. The literal definition is 'for the parents'. In BG terms we refer to this as 'in place of a parent' and acting as a reasonable trained adult.

The expected standard for behaviour is based on reasonableness. The Duty of Care starts from the time a child arrives at a club or event, until the child is returned to their parent.

In order to fulfil the 'Duty of Care', gymnastics activity providers must make sure that the following areas are properly covered:

- Safeguarding and welfare
- Safe environment including safe apparatus and equipment
- Safe development of the individual through appropriate physical and psychological preparation and progressive skill development
- Provision of suitable first aid support and emergency procedures
- Exercising reasonable care at all times.

Those with an overall responsibility for running a club or providing gymnastics activity must ensure that policies and procedures are in place and implemented to ensure that the 'Duty of Care' is met. However, BG Policy, training courses and resource materials are designed to provide the prudent club, welfare officer, coach, judge, official and parent with a sufficient basis of knowledge and guidance to enable them to make informed judgements in respect of safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of young people in their care.

The guidance in this section will assist gymnastics providers to ensure the approach to safeguarding and the promotion of welfare fulfils the 'duty of care' and meets reasonable expectations in relation to the standards required by organisations that provide services for young people. Any reports of failure to comply with the guidance in this section will be investigated as breach of Policy.

Good Practice and Poor Practice

Policy and Guidance

Contained within this section is:

Good practice for coaches and officials
Practice never to be condoned
Good Practice for Clubs
Guidance for parents

Good Practice for Coaches and Club Officials

All participants have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. The promotion of good practice will reduce the possibility of abusive situations occurring. A good caring coach will continually reflect upon their own coaching style, physiology and practices to ensure the safety and well-being of the participant at all times. Although this policy and Guidelines are written with coaches in mind they are applicable to all adults with access to children through gymnastics. Failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action.

The following are examples of good practice:

- Always be publicly open when working with children. Ensure that a coach and an individual child or vulnerable adult can always be seen.
- Always ensure there is at least one other responsible adult present at all times during training sessions.
- Care should be taken when providing manual support (spotting). Recognised techniques for spotting should be used.
- Treat all participants with respect and dignity
- Always place the safety and the welfare of the participants as the highest priority
- Behave in an exemplary manner and provide a role model for excellent behaviour within the club and at all BG recognised events/competitions
- Keep up to date with your knowledge and technical skills
- Do not exceed the level of your qualifications
- Respect the needs and wishes of all participants.
- Recognise the stage of psychological and physical development of the individual and avoid excessive training or competition
- Motive the participants through positive feedback and constructive criticism
- Create a safe and enjoyable situation
- Maintain a written report of any accident, incident or near miss regardless of the injury together with any subsequent treatment or action
- Ensure all member of BG adhere to the codes of ethics and code of conduct and anti doping policy
- Do not take a child in a car alone except in unforeseen circumstances (i.e. hospital)

Practice never to be condoned

You should never:-

- Take children to your home or other secluded place where they will be alone with you
- Engage in rough physical or sexual provocative games
- Share a room with a child
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour
- Engage in any form of sexual related relationship with a child
- Make sexually suggestive remarks to a child or vulnerable adult – even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Encourage other children to bully other children verbally, racially or physically
- Allow allegations made by a child go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature that they can do for themselves, unless you have been instructed to do so by the parents
- Depart from the premises until you have supervised the safe dispersal of all the children
- Abuse your privileged position of power or trust with children or adults
- Resort to bullying tactics, or verbal abuse (i.e. Shouting, screaming, physically poke or make fun of)
- Cause a participant to lose self esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual
- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Allow children to form an inappropriate relationship with a coach
- Text, or use any social networking sites to engage in conversation with gymnasts. Always communicate with parents. See communication policy
- Coaches must not provide intimate care e.g. toileting, assisting with changing

Good Practice for Clubs

It is essential that child welfare and safety is paramount for all club activities, not only to provide the best possible protection for children in gymnastics, but also to avoid allegations of poor practice and to ensure the safety of staff and participants. Failure to follow guidelines could place young people, coaches and the club in a vulnerable situation. Further guidance can be found under 'Running a Safe Club'.

Clubs must:-

- Provide a designated person (Welfare Officer) for dealing with safeguarding within the club. (See [Recruiting a Welfare Officer](#))
- Provide an open door policy where parents can observe their child if they wish to
- Adopt the British Gymnastics Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy as part of their registration to the organisation
- Promote the policy to all club members and parents to show the club commitment to a safe environment
- Promote an environment where all legitimate concerns can be raised without fear of victimisation or reprisal (See [Whistle Blowing](#))
- Establish procedures through which complaints or concerns can be voiced and dealt with confidentially
- Ensure that all staff, coaches, volunteers and helpers who have regular contact with children or vulnerable adults are Criminal Record Bureau checked through British Gymnastics
- Keep written records of any poor practice or child protection related incident and accidents and any action taken
- Provide provision for regular training for all coaches, assistance and officials including access to the British Gymnastics Safeguarding and Protecting Children Awareness training
- Ensuring that there are at least two responsible adults present at all training sessions
- That coaches, staff, helpers or volunteers are not placed in a position by the club that will place them in breach of the BG policies and procedures, rules and regulations
- Ensure that good practice is in place for all trips away from the normal training venue. (See [Overnight Stays policy](#))
- Ensure that equal opportunities and equity policies are adhered to, and that discrimination is prohibited at all levels
- Ensure careful screening of coaches, helper, volunteers or officials according to the safe recruitment guidelines
- Adopt the British Gymnastics policy on photography
- Keep parents fully informed of their child's development and any changes to the child's normal training routine.

Guidance for parents

It is important that parents are able to feel confident that their child/children will be protected from harm while attending a gymnastics club. The following information will allow parents to make informed decisions about whether a club has taken an appropriate response to safeguarding young people in its care. Parents should be encouraged to talk to their children about training and ensure that each child feels able, and knows how, to voice concerns if the child is unhappy about any situations that may arise. You can also download the Child Protection leaflet for parents from the BG website.

Parents should check that:

- The club has a published safeguarding and protecting children policy
- The club has an anti-bullying policy.
- The club has codes of conduct for all members including coaches, staff and volunteers, parents and gymnasts.
- There is a designated person (Welfare Officer) in place with a responsibility for safeguarding
- The club encourages members and their parents to raise concerns without fear of victimisation or reprisal.
- There are procedures in place for dealing with complaints and disciplinary issues.
- The club has procedures in place for safe recruitment including the use of CRB disclosures.
- All coaches have BG Coaching qualifications and only coach to the level of their qualification
- There are always at least two responsible adults present during training sessions. (NB The second adult could be a parent helper or club official)
- Coaches must not provide intimate care e.g. toileting, assisting with changing
- All staff and volunteers have attended BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Awareness module or equivalent.
- All staff and volunteers have a BG Criminal Records Disclosure
- The club has a transport policy
- The club has a changing-room policy
- Parents are not discouraged from watching or becoming involved.
- The club has an Equality policy

Hosting Gymnasts Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Hosting Gymnasts

Hosting Gymnasts

British Gymnastics is unable to regulate or insure against the hosting of gymnasts in any situation other than within establishments licensed for the provision of overnight accommodation. Clubs who wish to host gymnasts under the age of 18 years with families or accommodate gymnasts within gymnasium facilities, school halls etc should seek advice from the local Children's Social Care Services and may need to seek additional insurance cover as British Gymnastics insurance may not provide cover in these circumstances.

Hosting with families

If the club does not have appropriate procedures in place to ensure families are suitably vetted, hosting should not be considered as an option. Clubs that are prepared to carry out vetting procedures should undertake appropriate risk assessment prior to hosting taking place and they must consider the following: -

- Seek parental consent
- Ensure the host family has knowledge of any medical or dietary needs of their guests
- Ensure children are hosted in pairs that are appropriately matched
- Host families should be clear about the arrangements for transporting the children
- Children staying with host families should have easy access to a telephone and to their coach and welfare officer
- Parents should be made aware that children may not be as fully supervised as they are in the gym BG has developed a sample form contained in appendices of the policy, which should be completed by any family wishing to host a gymnast in their home.

Hosting in unlicensed establishments e.g. gymnasiums or schools

It is recognised that groups attending large gymnastics festivals are often accommodated within 'dormitories' in schools or gymnastics centres. This arrangement may not be ideal but may be the only available option. The following guidance should be considered: -

- Ensure groups are sharing with other groups they know.
- Ensure there are separate sleeping and washing areas for males and females, staff and gymnasts. It would also be appropriate to allocate rooms in age groups where possible.
- Adults should not share the dormitory with young people but should be accommodated in a nearby room.
- Ensure that there are waking night staff to conduct regular patrols of the accommodation and prevent unauthorised entry.
- Ensure accommodation is safe and secure (fire exits, emergency procedures etc).
- Ensure Welfare Manager/Event Organiser visits the accommodation prior to the event to ensure it is satisfactory and address any concerns.

Information Sharing Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Information sharing to safeguard children

BG information sharing to safeguard children

Introduction

Information relating to safeguarding concerns is often highly sensitive and needs to be kept confidential. However, where the welfare, rights and liberties of children or the child* disclosing the information may be seriously at risk it may be necessary to breach confidentiality.

Confidential information should be shared if the public interest in safeguarding the welfare of a child or children overrides the need for confidentiality. In addition, there may be situations where disclosure is required under a court order or other legal obligation, regardless of whether consent is obtained.

The Government Strategy “Every Child Matters; Change for Children” identifies the importance of information sharing in two respects:

1. Enabling early intervention to help children, young people and families who need additional services to achieve positive outcomes, thus reducing inequalities between disadvantaged children and others; and
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

This document outlines the principles that BG will apply when considering whether information should be shared and sets out the relevant circumstances where confidential information may be shared without consent. The BG policy has been informed by the HM Government document Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers (date) and the NSPCC CPSU Protocol for Information Sharing.

Core Principles

When making a decision whether or not to share information, the welfare of the child/children is the paramount consideration. The following points outline the British Gymnastics approach for sharing information relating to child protection concerns.

- BG will share information where there is a reasonable belief that it is necessary to share in order to protect or safeguard a child/children
- BG will explain openly and honestly, or at least notify, at the outset what information will or could be shared, and why, and seek agreement – except where doing so puts the child or others at risk of significant harm
- Consent to share information will usually be sought
Consent to share information will usually be sought from the individual to whom the information relates unless:
 - This may put children or other parties at risk of harm
 - Refusal to consent is unreasonable or not in the public interest
 - Consent cannot be obtained
 - BG is advised by a statutory agency not to do so, or there is a Court order which so directs
- If consent is refused or there are good reasons not to seek consent, consideration will be given as to whether there is a sufficient public interest for the information to be shared (principles of openness, consultation and inclusion)
- BG will respect the wishes of children or families who do not consent to share confidential information unless it is judged that there is sufficient reason to override that lack of consent
- BG will share no more information than is necessary for the specific purposes of sharing that relevant information (principle of proportionality)
- In order to ensure there is transparency in the application of this policy, BG will ensure that people to whom this policy applies are aware of the content and ensuing implications
- BG will indicate when sharing information which aspects of the disclosure is factual (to the best of our knowledge) and which is an expression of professional opinion (principle of certainty of facts)
- BG will ensure that the way that information is shared is appropriate to the level of urgency but in the event that information is shared by phone, it will be supported by a written report
- Information that is shared will be accurate, up to date, necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, shared only with those with a need to see it and shared securely
- Records will always be kept of the decision to share, or not to share, information and the reasons for this decision
- Where information is shared during the course of an investigation, the outcome will be shared with those to whom the original information was sent

Type of Information that will be shared

- Information relating to safeguarding/welfare/child protection concerns which meet the threshold for referral to external safeguarding agencies (Police or Social Services) will be shared in all cases
- In respect of CRB information which raises safeguarding concerns, BG will disclose on a need to know basis the personal details of any individual that the BG Case Referral Management groups determined unsuitable to work with children
- Information indicating safeguarding/child protection concerns but which is not acted on by statutory agencies (for example, where prosecution is not possible, or has been unsuccessful; where a referral is 'bounced back' by Social Services or the Police as not meeting their threshold, but the CRMG believes that concerns remain; or where risks are identified from information arising as a result of recruitment or other internal processes
- Information relating to poor practice cases (for example, breach of codes of conduct/ethics) involving a perceived risk to children, but not meeting the threshold for referral to external safeguarding agencies, and:
 - Where BG has either suspended or excluded the individual, or
 - Has put in place special arrangements or monitoring to ensure children's welfare as a result of its disciplinary process

Abuse concerns meeting the threshold for police or Social Services action should be managed by those agencies. In circumstances where BG believes that a concerning individual may be operating with children in another organisation(s), BG will seek the advice of the statutory agencies when consideration is being given to sharing information with the other organisation(s).

**The Children Act (1989) defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.*

Involving Children and Young People Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Involving Children and Young People

Involving Children and Young People

The British Government agreed, in 1991 to undertake the obligations set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the British Government in 1991. One of the four core principles is the need to show respect for the views of the child. Article 12 of the convention states that children have a right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and be taken seriously.

The Government is therefore committed to giving children and young people a real say and real choices about the government policies and services that affect them.

All BG clubs should take a similar approach and ensure that young people have an opportunity to be consulted and, where appropriate, be involved in decisions that relate to their involvement in the sport as well as within the specific area of safeguarding policy and procedures.

Key principles when involving young people

- The extent that a child can be involved in decision making will depend on their age and level of maturity and understanding.
- Children and young people's involvement and opinions must be acknowledged and appreciated.
- Children and young people should be treated honestly. Their expectations need to be managed and boundaries that may limit their involvement explained.
- Children and young people should be provided with timely feedback about how their involvement has shaped or influenced a policy or approach.
- All children and young people should be given the opportunity to be involved irrespective of race, religion, culture, disability, age, ethnic origin, language or the area in which they live.
- Children should always be provided with age appropriate information to help them understand.
- Information for young people should be clear and accessible and in appropriate language and style of communication.
- Children should be supported to enable them to make a positive and effective contribution e.g. by the welfare officer.

Some ideas on involving young people include:

- Establishing a young person's forum to seek the views of children in the club.
- Identifying a young person's representative to communicate young persons' views in formal settings such as Club Committee Meetings.
- Involving young people in helping develop literature, posters and website information on child safeguarding issues.
- Carrying out questionnaire based surveys to seek views and comments from young people.
- Holding meetings with young people when considering changes to policies and gather their views.

Late Collection of Children

Contained within this section is:

Late Collection of Children

Late Collection of Children

The following information provides guidance for clubs on how to respond where a parent, for whatever reason, does not arrive at the required time to collect their child.

All parents must be advised that in the event that they are delayed for any reason, they must:

- Contact the club at the earliest opportunity
- Provide clear guidance on what they wish the club to do e.g. consent for another parent to transport their child home.

The club must:

- Maintain a list of parent contact details and emergency numbers
- Never leave a child or young person alone unless she/he is over 16 and then only with parent's permission
- Carry out appropriate assessments of situations as they arise, acknowledging that some young people aged 16 and over can go home alone if their parent is delayed

The club officers must not

- Take the child home or to another location.
- Ask the child to wait in a vehicle or the club with them alone.
- Send the child home with another person without permission.

If the parent is considered by the club as being unduly late, the Club officers should:

1. Attempt to contact the parent
2. Attempt to contact the emergency contact person nominated.
3. If there is no reply from the emergency contact, ask the child if there is another family member who may be contacted.
4. Wait with the young person(s) at the club with at least one other official/coach/ teacher/volunteers or parents.
5. Respond to any instructions received from the parent
6. If no-one can be reached, contact the local police or Children's Social Care Services to enquire about the best course of action.

Persistent Failure to Collect a Child/Young Person on Time

Parents, who persistently fail to collect a child on time or have not arrived after a reasonable period of time, and have given no prior notice or informed the club they are delayed, may be failing to provide adequate care for their child.

If the parent makes no effort to contact the club or provide reasonable explanation for the delays, the club Welfare Officer and another club officer should arrange to meet with the parent to discuss the matter.

If there is no change the club Welfare Officer should either contact the children's team at the local Children's Social Care Services or seek advice from the BG Head of Membership or BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer.

If a parent arrives to collect a child and there is concern that the parent's ability to take appropriate care of the child may be impaired (e.g. the parent is considered to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs to the extent that she/he is unfit to drive, and/or take care of the child) the club should seek advice from the police or Children's Social Care Service immediately.

Missing Children Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

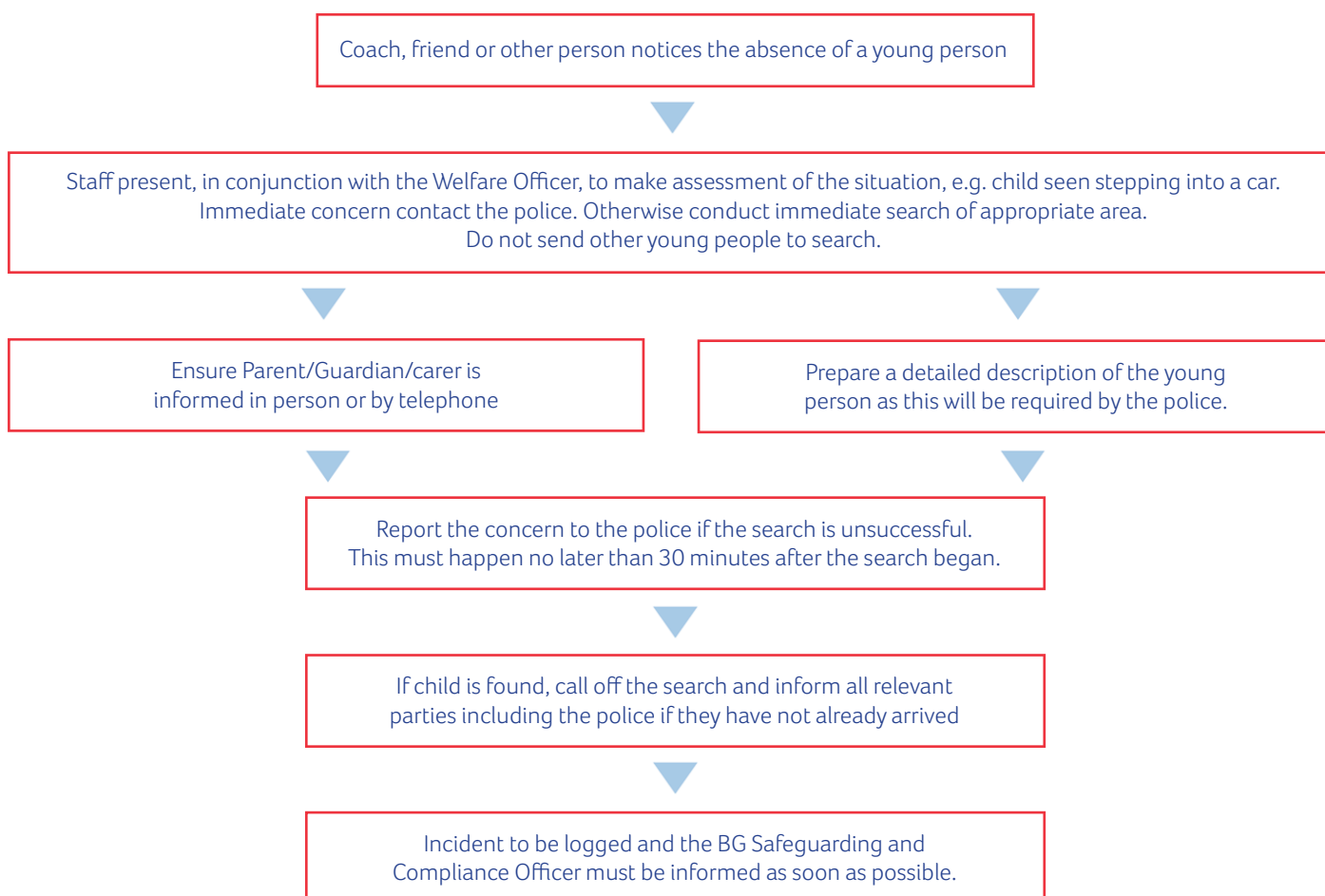
Missing Children

Missing Children

In the rare event that a child goes missing from a club, the following guidelines have been devised to outline the actions that should be taken. At the point that a child has been identified as missing the club should:

- Ensure that other children in the group are looked after appropriately while a search for the child concerned is conducted.
- Inform the child's parents if they are present, or nominate an appropriate person to telephone them and advise them of the concern. Reassure them that everything is being done to locate the child.
- Organise all available responsible adults by areas to be searched. It is best to take a short time to organise the search properly so that all places are searched fully.
- Search the area in which the child has gone missing including changing rooms, toilets, public and private areas and the club grounds.
- Request all those searching report back to a nominated adult at a specific point.
- Make a note of the circumstances in which the child has gone missing and where he/she was last seen
- Prepare a detailed physical description of the child, including:
 - Approximate height
 - Build
 - Hair and eye colour
 - Clothing he/she was wearing, as this will be required by the police
- Report the concern to the police if the search is unsuccessful. This must happen no later than 30 minutes after the young person's disappearance is noted, even if the search is incomplete.
- Follow police guidance if further action is recommended and maintain close contact with the police
- Ensure that you inform all adults involved including the parents, searchers and police if at any stage the child is located
- Refer the concern ASAP to the BG Child Safeguarding Manager.

If a Gymnast or young volunteer is suspected of being missing, the flow chart below must be followed:



Overnight Stays Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Overnight Stays

Accommodation

Areas of Responsibility for Welfare Officers at Events or Trips (Including Competitions)

Overnight Stays

BG requires that when a club takes a gymnast(s) under the age of 18 years on a journey involving an overnight stay, the club must ensure that there is a designated trained person responsible for child protection on the trip. To adhere to the CPSU child protection standards this person must not be related to or in a relationship with the coach attending the trip.

The training for the designated person should be the BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Awareness Course or a BG approved equivalent.

To enable you to have adequate insurance cover when taking gymnasts abroad, BG is obliged to approve your arrangements. Please complete the forms relating to overseas travel which can be found on the BG website under Events & Travel/Downloads/Overseas travel application

Please note that the BG Insurance does not cover Travel or Emergency Medical Expenses, we recommend that you either take out Travel Insurance with ourselves available at the following website www.britishgymnasticstravelinsurance.co.uk or provide details of an alternative insurer.

When an event is local, it is often the case that clubs arrange for everyone to meet at the event venue. However, where an event is further away, the best option is often for the club to co-ordinate transport arrangements. It is good practice for a club to ensure the following steps are taken in advance of any trip :

- Check on driving licence, car insurance and MOT (if the car is over three years old)
- Ensure there are seatbelts for each passenger and booster seats as required
- Check driving experience (additional training may be required for anyone driving a mini-bus – contact Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for further details)
- Additional check on driver (see policies for recruitment of staff/volunteers)
- Organise central pick-up and drop-off points (to avoid the driver being alone with a gymnast)
- Obtain consent from parents to allow their children to be transported to an event
- Plan the route and breaks (if necessary)
- Obtain contact numbers for parents

At non-residential events the designated person need not always be on site but must be contactable and ready to act if required. Everyone should be made aware of the designated person's name and contact details if they are not at the event. Contact details must be included in the event programmes.

Where events involve an over-night stay, it is vital to have a designated trained person who is not involved in the delivery of the training. (NB: Please note this is only applicable if the club is responsible for the provision of overnight accommodation). This person's role will depend on the scale of the event, but in addition to the responsibility for responding to concerns, tasks could include supervision and co-ordination of accommodation, holding pre-event welfare briefings and daily de-briefs and monitoring compliance with codes of conduct.

Ensure that when taking mixed gender teams away on trips, at least one male and one female of staff accompany the gymnasts.

In non-residential events, the role of the Welfare Officer could be undertaken by an existing member of staff or volunteer but it is vital that the person identified is able to take a child-centred approach and has the confidence of young people taking part in the event. It is important to have contingency plans in place before departing on any trip. It may be helpful to consider a 'worst case scenario' and to have procedures, and all the necessary information, in place to deal with any problem that might arise. At the least, the following issues need to be addressed to ensure a stress free trip: -

- **Risk Assessments:** The Team Manager/Group Leader will need to ensure an ongoing process of risk assessment. (See BG Health & Safety Policy for guidance)
- **Supervision:** BG recommends a minimum of 1:10 adult to child ratio as a minimum level for supervision on trips. This ratio may need to be increased if the group is made up of primary school aged children, or people with disabilities, or the trip is of a nature where more supervision may be required- i.e. trips abroad. If the group is mixed sex there should be at least one male and one female supervisor.

- **Medical issues/first aid:** A list of emergency contact numbers, medical information on each child attending the event and a first aid box should be taken on any trip.
- **Club insurance:** Clubs must arrange adequate travel insurance.
- **Overnight stays:** When large groups are travelling it is advisable to ensure accommodation is booked well in advance. This can help to ensure that groups are kept together in a hotel. It is not good practice for anyone over the age of eighteen to share a room with anyone under the age of sixteen. Room allocation should, if possible, be planned prior to the trip.
- **Facility providers/Tour Operators:** To help ensure that any arrangements made with facility providers or tour operators are formalised, BG recommends the use of a Service Provision checklist.
- **Consent forms:** It is essential for parents to complete a consent form for a trip. This is especially important when the event involves an overnight stay.

Communication with parents: Parents need to be fully informed of all details in relation to the trip. As a minimum, parents should be informed of:

- Transport arrangements
- Key timings – Pick up, Departure and Return
- Destination and contact details
- Room allocation
- Code of conduct
- Contact details for trip staff
- Trip requirements – pocket money, kit etc

This is not a full list of factors that should be considered, but it should assist with planning for a trip. The checklist in appendices of this document will also support clubs when planning a trip.

Accommodation

Where accommodation is required for overnight stays gymnasts must be suitable accommodated according to their age and gender.

- It is unsuitable for 18-year-old gymnasts to share a room with any other gymnasts under the age of 16 years.
- Coaches, helpers, volunteers are not permitted to share a room with any gymnasts regardless of the situation.
- It is advisable that the coaches should arrange their accommodation so that they are at least on the same floor as the gymnasts and if possible arrange for them to be in the room next door to the gymnasts.
- Gymnasts should be supplied with an emergency contact number for them to call in the night should they need to.
- Parents may be accommodated with only their own children.

Areas of responsibility for Welfare Officers at Events (including Competitions) or Trips

Role of the welfare officer at events

- Ensuring that parents and children are aware of the role and responsibilities
- Reporting any incidents in line with BG reporting procedures (Welfare Officers should have access to all emergency contact numbers including BG)
- Taking a child-focused approach and responding to the needs of children during the event
- Working in partnership with other staff to resolve any welfare related issues that need to be addressed at the event
- Assisting the event organiser with the implementation of procedures for photography and the use of video cameras at the event and managing any issues that arise out of these policies

Further roles applicable to residential events

- Supervision and co-ordination of accommodation at the event
- Leading the supervising of the gymnasts during non-training periods

Ensuring all participants fully understand their responsibilities in relation to the code of conduct

Photography and the use of Imagery

Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Photography and Use of Imagery
Photography at Gymnastic Events
Use of video as an aid to coaching

Photography and use of Imagery

General Principles concerning the use of Photographs or Recorded Images

Implicit within the British Gymnastics policies and procedures for the protection of Children is the commitment to ensure that all publications and media represent participants appropriately and with due respect. It is not the intention of British Gymnastics to prevent parents from taking pictures of their children, gymnasts of their friends or enthusiasts of the sport of gymnastics but rather to ensure that photographic practices are carefully managed and effective prevention measures in place to deter anyone with undesirable intentions from taking and publishing inappropriate images.

All BG registered organisations must comply with the following guidelines:

- A photograph, video clip or other image of a gymnast should not be published whether in print or electronically (e.g. on a website) without written consent from the gymnast concerned (or in the case of a child from their parent or guardian), and personal information of the individual, other than their name and their club, should not accompany the image. (Particular provisions apply in connection to photography at public events such as competitions and displays below).
- While some editing of images is acceptable, images taken of gymnasts should not be modified, merged or manipulated in a way, which might cause embarrassment or distress to the subject or cause the final image to be inappropriate.
- Care must be taken to ensure that images of children who are under a court order are not recorded or published without permission.
- Simultaneous “live” streaming of images onto a website is forbidden. Only pre-recorded and edited material should be made available after any inappropriate images have been edited or deleted.
- Any instance of the use or publication of inappropriate images of gymnasts should be reported to British Gymnastics who may then inform the appropriate authorities.
- Clubs are recommended to introduce a consent form, ideally as part of the process applied when a gymnast joins the club, concerning the taking of images for training purposes.

British Gymnastics recognises that there is a potential for abuse of any image placed on the Internet or within other forms of media. Although the exploitation of such images may be rare, British Gymnastics has a responsibility to provide guidance on how images of young people should be used to reduce the risk of potential ‘grooming’.

Those creating or administering websites should carefully monitor their content to eliminate the use of inappropriate images or improper text.

When determining whether it is appropriate to publish a photograph on a website or another form of media, consideration should be given to both the potential for inappropriate use of an image and the possibility that an individual could make contact with a child by using any personal and club details placed on line.

The following steps can be taken to reduce the risk from the publication of imagery:

- Do not use any personal details if it is possible from the image to ascertain a specific location or there are any details on your site about the training venue.
- If it is not possible to ascertain any training or competitive location, consider using a first name only next to an image.
- The dress of a child should be considered when using the photo:
 - i) If it is a posed shot for example taken during a medal presentation, try to ensure that the child is fully clothed in a tracksuit or similar attire.
 - ii) If it is an action shot, try to use profile imagery and avoid full-length shots. Alternatively, use digital software to blur the child’s facial features.
- Do not use images that can appear staged and potentially provocative.
- Avoid using images that appear to focus unnecessarily directly on the groin area in movements where legs are in a split position.
- Always use a parental consent form to request the use of a child’s image for publication. The parent should be encouraged to discuss the matter with their child before signing a consent form.

British Gymnastics should be informed of any inappropriate use of imagery on Gymnastics websites or any other form of media, which is not in keeping with this guidance. Anyone discovering a child's image that appears to be being used illegally on any website, should report the matter to the police.

Photography at Gymnastics Events

British Gymnastics does not wish to discourage the use of video or photographic equipment at events for appropriate use, but will take all reasonable precautions to protect members against the possible inappropriate use of films or photographic images. British Gymnastics has therefore developed Photography Regulations (which are published on the BG website), which require those organising gymnastic events to regulate the taking of photographs and apply, as a minimum, the BG Conditions for Photography at Gymnastic Events.

Training sessions within Clubs or at other gymnastic venues are not normally public events at which participants would reasonably expect to be photographed. It is the responsibility of the senior coach present in a gym or other venue to regulate the taking of photos in this environment and photos should not be taken without the senior coach's permission. Coaches giving permission should apply, with any necessary adaptations, the same principles underlying the conditions applicable to photography in other circumstances. In training situations/events where it is possible to control the individuals who are photographed or appear in material that is intended for publication, informed consent should be sought ideally prior to the event and must be obtained prior to publication.

If the event organiser/welfare officer (or authorised representative of the event organiser/welfare officer) suspects inappropriate photography or filming, the officer/organiser should exercise her/his powers under the Conditions to request the person to leave the venue and to surrender any film or delete any images relating to the event. Any person present at an event who has any concerns about any images being taken by any person should bring them to the attention of the competition organiser or other designated person.

Additional provisions and accreditation procedures are in force regulating the taking of photographs for commercial use or for publication.

Use of videos as an aid to coaching

The use of video equipment can be a valuable aid to coaching. The guidelines below should be implemented to safeguard against inappropriate practice.

- Ensure that the performers and their parent/carer are aware of the purpose of the filming as a coaching aid and consent is obtained.
- Ensure that the person designated for participants' welfare and one other responsible and approved adult is present to ensure that performers are protected against inappropriate filming.

Care should be taken to securely store the video materials to avoid inappropriate usage.

Recruiting a Welfare Officer Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Recruiting a Welfare Officer

Welfare Officers

Responsibilities

Although the responsibility for safeguarding falls on everyone, a critical element in safeguarding is the designation of an individual who is responsible for safeguarding and promoting welfare of young people within the club. All BG clubs and gymnastics events are required to have a welfare officer to be responsible for:

- Responding to child protection and poor practice concerns
- Providing support and advice in the implementation of procedures that safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Assisting the club to more be child-focused in its activities e.g. involving children in decision making processes.

In order to avoid any potential conflicts of interest, the role must not be taken on by a key member of the coaching team or member of her/his immediate family, however an individual who has a more limited involvement in coaching can take on the role in the event that there is no other acceptable alternative.

The ideal candidate may be a parent or other volunteer with professional experience in child protection and/or safeguarding e.g. police officer, social worker, teacher, nursery nurse etc. As it can often be very difficult to find a suitable candidate for the role, the following information provides some suggestions on how this might be addressed and how the organisation can assist with the role.

Raising awareness of the role

It is important that everyone connected with the club or organisation is aware of the need to appoint a welfare officer. Some of the methods that have proved successful include:

- Writing to anyone who may be interested in the position
- Circulating a profile of the role in the club newsletter
- Advertising on the club notice board or website
- 'Head hunting' - making direct approaches to individuals who have the appropriate experience
- Holding an open evening for parents and inviting the regional welfare officer or a welfare officer from another club to talk about the position
- Arranging a safeguarding and protecting children awareness module as an introduction for potential volunteers.

It is important that prospective candidates are provided with full details of what the role entails and how they will be supported in the position (sample job/task descriptions and person specifications for the different levels/types of welfare officer are contained in the appendices). It is also useful to provide potential candidates with relevant information about the club/squad e.g. policy for volunteers, codes of conduct etc.

What support structures should be in place?

Before finalising the appointment of a welfare officer, the club should ensure that the safe recruitment procedures have been fully applied.

The organisation must ensure that the welfare officer is fully empowered to fulfil the role and has the full support from the relevant committee/management/owners to make any appropriate changes to procedures and practices.

How can the Welfare Officer ensure they are visible and known to club members?

The welfare officer does not need to attend every training session or competition but it is critical that everyone understands the role and the responsibilities it entails. It is important that the welfare officer is fully involved in the club's activities and children and parents are fully aware of how to raise concerns. The following are suggestions that may help clubs to ensure that everyone knows the welfare officer and understands her/his role

- Put a poster on the club notice board with the welfare officer's name and contact details. This might include a photograph and a list of times when the welfare officer will be present at the club.
- Make sure that all club paperwork includes the welfare officer's contact details
- Ensure the welfare officer details are included in new member information packs
- Introduce the welfare officer at club events
- Allow the welfare officer to hold an introduction evening

Allow the welfare officer to engage with young people in the club. This may include developing/revising codes of conduct, electing a young persons' representative to represent young people's views, involve young people in decision making etc.

Responding to Allegations of Abuse Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section are:

Child Protection and Safeguarding Concerns
Responding to Disclosure of Abuse
Reporting the Concern
Confidentiality and Information Sharing
Allegations of Historical Abuse
A Quick Guide to procedures if Abuse is suspected

Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns

In addition to ensuring all BG members are fully aware of the importance of safeguarding, it is essential that anyone who comes into contact with young people as part of their role in the sport understands what action should be taken in response to concerns, disclosures and allegations against others involved in the sport.

It is not the role of BG or anyone in the sport to conduct enquiries into possible child abuse concerns. The following procedures outline the responses that should be taken in the event of an allegation or suspicions of abuse or significant harm. This section also provides guidance sharing relevant information with Children's Social Care Services/Social Services and/or police and other relevant organisations without delay and within agreed protocols.

Child Protection concerns fall into two categories,

- Gymnastics related
- External to the sport e.g. at home

The concern may relate to a current situation or past events and may be about allegations or disclosures of abuse or poor practice by an individual or relating to perceived failure to safeguard by a BG registered organisation.

Concerns may arise from:

- A disclosure from a child or young person
- Direct or reported observations of possible abuse, neglect, suspicious behaviour or poor practice
- Significant or multiple changes in the child or young person's behaviour, appearance, attitude or relationship
- Reports from external agencies or individuals

Everyone has a responsibility to respond to these concerns whether they relate to a child's home/family or community situation or involve incidents within the club/gymnastics community.

It is important to note that some children or young people are unable to recognise or share concerns and often rely on adults with whom they are in contact to be alert to the possibility that they may be experiencing harm in some area of their lives.

British Gymnastics' primary responsibility is to ensure that concerns relating to possible abuse together with any relevant information are passed on to Children's Social Care Services and/or the Police without delay. It is vital that individuals within a club are aware of what action is required and ensure any concerns are referred to the appropriate welfare officer as shown below:

- **BG Lead Officer** – The BG Lead Officer (Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer) must be informed of all abuse concerns.
- **Home Country Lead Officer** – The HCLO should be informed of any concern that occurred at within the relevant home country.
- **Regional Welfare Officer** – The RWO should be informed of any concern that occurred at Regional level. The RWO should also be a source of advice and support for their network of CWO.
- **Club Welfare Officer** – The CWO should usually be the first point of call for any concerns that relate to a member of his or her club.
- **Squad/Event Welfare Officer** – There should always be a welfare officer assigned to a squad or event. Although they may not be present, they should be 'on-call' at the time of the squad/event and be contacted in the event of any concern relating to the specific squad or event.

Contact details of Regional, Home Country and BG Officers can be found on the BG website.

Responding to disclosure of abuse

If a child indicates that he/she is being abused, or information is received which gives rise to concern that the child may be being abused, the person receiving the information should:

- Stay calm and ensure that the child is safe and feels safe.
- Listen carefully to what is said, allowing the child to continue at his/her own pace.
- Explain that it is likely the information will have to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets.
- Keep questions to a minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in revealing the information.
- Show and tell the child that what he/she says is being taken seriously and recognise any difficulties inherent in interpreting what the child says.
- Tell the child what will be done next, and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible. The following information should be recorded:
 - Dates and times
 - Any names mentioned
 - To whom the information was given
 - Information that fact, hearsay or opinion should be noted as such
 - Ensure the record is signed and dated

If the child indicates that he/she does not wish others to be informed about the allegations, carefully and tactfully explain the reasons why it may be in the interests of everybody if the matter is referred to the appropriate person or department (i.e. Children's Social Care Services/Social Services).

The person to whom the disclosure is made is presented with a great responsibility and it is advisable, if there is any uncertainty, to seek advice on how to deal with the issue, from Children's Social Care Services, NSPCC or from the BG Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer.

Actions to avoid

- Dismissing the concern
- Panicking
- Allowing shock or distaste to show
- Probing for more information than is offered
- Making promises that cannot be kept, such as agreeing not to tell someone else
- Speculating or make assumptions
- Approaching the person who is the subject of an allegation or suspicion (this may put a child or young person at further risk and/or jeopardise a criminal investigation).
- Conducting a personal investigation of the case.
- Making negative comments about the accused person.
- Irrespective of whether the person receiving the information personally believes what has been said, they must always report the disclosure. Untrue disclosures, even when the source is anonymous, are very rare.

Reporting the concern

In the event that a child or children may be at risk of significant harm, the concern must be reported to Children's Social Care Services or the Police without delay. The welfare officer is responsible for making this referral but in the event that he or she is unavailable, a senior person at the club should be advised and the matter referred directly to the Children's Social Care Services/Social Service and/or the Police

and the Welfare Officer informed of the action taken. British Gymnastics should also be informed at the earliest opportunity and can also make the referral on their behalf. The person advising BG may be required to also speak to the Statutory agents to clarify any details and may be required as part of their investigation.

If the concern relates to the welfare officer, a senior person at the club should be informed and the matter should be referred to Children's Social Care Services/Social Services and/or the Police and BG should be notified without delay.

Whoever makes the referral must ensure that the contact details of the person to whom the referral was made are provided to BG or the relevant Home Country, together with the details of the referral without delay.

In the event that there is any uncertainty as to whether a referral is appropriate, BG Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer, the NSPCC 24-hour helpline or Children's Social Care Services/Social Services will be able to offer advice on what action should be taken.

If there is any suspicion that a child has been abused by someone in the sport, the BG Case Referral Management Group will, following consultation with the statutory agencies consider whether it is necessary to place the individual under suspension pending further Children's Social Care Services/Social Services or Police enquiries. The Chief Executive Officer will have the overall authority to suspend membership from BG. British Gymnastics MUST be kept fully informed of any concerns as it is essential that an early decision is made about whether to suspend any member to avoid placing young people at risk.

Children's Social Care Services/Social Services

When a referral is made to Children's Social Care Services/Social Services they have a legal responsibility to make enquiries where a child or young person may be at risk of significant harm. This may involve gathering information from others who know the child or talking to the young person and their family. Enquiries may be carried out jointly with the police when a criminal offence is suspected. If a child is at immediate risk and action needs to be taken urgently, contact the Police by dialling 999. If concerns are identified out of hours, the police and Children's Social Care Services/Social Services provide an out-of-hours service.

Confidentiality and Information sharing

Sharing information is vital to ensure that young people's needs are met and critical in ensuring children are protected from significant harm. However, there is often uncertainty about the circumstances in which information can be lawfully shared. Consent should normally be sought from the subject/s of the information in order for it to be shared, but it may be necessary for information to be shared with the Welfare Officer, Children's Social Care Services/Social Services, the Police and BG without consent if there is reason to believe that seeking consent could:

- Place the child or others at increased risk of significant harm, or
- Place an adult at risk of serious harm, or
- Undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime (i.e. any crime which causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a child or serious harm to an adult) including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

Following initial enquiries, it may be deemed necessary to share some information with others, particularly those who have contact with the subject of the allegations. Information must only be passed to those who require access to these details in the course of their safeguarding duties. A record must be maintained of all those to whom information is disclosed, and the details of the information provided. Case information must only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Further guidance on confidentiality and information sharing can be found within the appendices.

All BG registered organisations and individual members must ensure that in dealing with information relating to safeguarding concerns, there are no unacceptable breaches of confidentiality. In addition, there is a responsibility to ensure that parents, gymnasts and their families understand the need to avoid unnecessary discussion of safeguarding concerns. Not only can such a breach be highly damaging to the young person and others involved but may also prejudice a police investigation.

Case information should:

- (Where the call is incoming) only be given out over the telephone where there is absolute certainty of the identity of the person making the call or the identity of the caller is confirmed by returning the call through a switchboard number;
- (Where the call is outgoing) only be given out over the telephone and connected through a switchboard, and there is absolute certainty of the identity of the person receiving the call;
- Be backed-up in writing if any significant advice/case details is given over the phone;
- Be securely stored in a locked cabinet in a lockable room and not unnecessarily taken out of the building; and
- Be marked 'private and confidential' and sent by recorded delivery if sent by post.

Sharing concerns with parents

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents where there are concerns about their children. Therefore, in most circumstances it would be important to talk to parents to clarify any initial concerns. For example if a young person seemed withdrawn, there may be a reasonable explanation. The child may have experienced an upset in the family, such as a parental separation/divorce or bereavement.

In cases where a child or children may be at risk of significant harm, the Welfare Officer or person making the referral should, at the same time seek advice on what information should be provided to the parent and the child from Children's Social Care Services/Social Services or the Police.

Records and Information

Any information passed to the Children's Social Care Services/Social Services or the Police must be as accurate and helpful as possible and, ideally, should be accompanied by a detailed record providing:

- Personal details of the child concerned including age or date of birth, full name, gender, race, ethnic origin and address.
- Details of Parent/carer and an indication of what, if any, information has been shared.
- The nature of the allegation.
- Full details of the person about whom the concern/allegation is made including full name, date of birth, address, relationship the child concerned and/or position held in the club, if any.
- Description of any visible injuries or bruising.
- Detailed description of the child's account of how the injuries or bruising occurred.
- Any times and dates or other relevant information.
- A clear distinction between what is fact, hearsay or opinion.

Reporting the matter to police or Children's Social Care Services/Social Services should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. Wherever possible, referrals made by telephone, should be followed up with a copy of the incident report form within 48 hours this form is within the Sample Forms section. The Welfare Officer should record on the incident form, the name and designation of the Children's Social Care Services/Social Services member of staff to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call.

A copy of the incident report form including all case information should also be sent to British Gymnastics Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer and the appropriate Home Country governing body Lead Child Protection Officer.

Concerns within the Sport

Allegations involving BG members or employees are sensitive and difficult issues to manage. It is crucial that everyone involved in gymnastics takes seriously any allegations made against a coach, helper, official or anyone else working with young people and responds appropriately. The Welfare Officer must be notified immediately of any circumstances that cause concern or raise suspicions. If the welfare officer is unclear about what action to take, advice should be sought from BG Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer, the NSPCC or from Children's Social Care Services/Social Services. In the event that the allegations could amount to abuse and/or a child or children are at risk of significant harm, the matter should be reported to Children's Social Care Services/Social Services and/or the Police in line with the procedures above.

If, following the receipt of a disclosure, an allegation or an observation of behaviour that caused concern, and where it is agreed that a referral to Children's Social Care Services or the Police is not required the club or organisation should consider the appropriate course of action. In the event that the concern is considered to be an isolated incident of poor practice, then together with the Welfare Officer, a senior person at the club should discuss the matter with the individual of the concern and agree appropriate remedial action in line with BG policy and guidance. In all cases of poor practice, the matter should be reported to BG without delay for the BG CRMG to determine the appropriate course of action. This includes:

- Allegations of poor practice concerning the Welfare Officer
- Poor practice allegations that have been previously addressed by the club but continue to remain a concern.
- Any incidents of poor practice that raise suspicions or concerns about abuse.

In some cases, it has only become apparent that a poor practice concern has been an indicator of abuse after BG has collated information from a variety of sources. It may not be possible to form a view of the significance of an isolated piece of information but it is essential that in the above circumstances information is always reported to BG.

Action to be taken if abuse or poor practice is observed during a training session or event

It is not unknown for an act of abuse and more frequently, poor practice to occur within a training or competition environment. The following information provides instruction on what action should be taken at the point that the act of abuse or poor practice is observed. It may be helpful to note that, based on the experience of case referrals, the most likely types of abuse to be encountered in the gym environment are physical and emotional abuse. An act of possible abuse or poor practice needs to be reported without delay in line with the BG reporting procedures described above.

The individual regarding the concern should be approached immediately by the senior official and another official, ideally the Welfare Officer, (if they are on site) and informed of the concern. If the abuse or poor practice is ongoing, he/she must be instructed to stop immediately and an emergency call made to the police to provide assistance if required. It should be noted, however, that if the matter of concern is poor practice, possibly due to lack of awareness rather than abuse and young people are not at significant risk, a more subtle approach would be appropriate and the Welfare Officer may not need to be involved at this stage. Consideration should be given to informing the individual in a manner that will not undermine his/her position with the young people.

If the concern relates to abuse, the priority is to ensure that the child/children are made safe. The Welfare Officer or another responsible adult must remain with the children until their needs have been fully addressed.

If the child concerned requires immediate medical treatment this should be sought without delay by dialling 999 and informing the police/children social care service/social services that this action is being taken. It is important the medical staff involved are made aware that the issue is potentially one of a child protection nature.

All BG registered clubs must put in place a procedure to deal with complaints over staff and volunteers. Parents and all members should be made aware of the procedures for raising a complaint or concern. Provision should be made in the club rules or constitution to allow complaints and disciplinary procedures to be implemented.

Allegations of historical abuse

It is possible that allegations of abuse may be made some considerable time after the event. Where a historical allegation is made the Welfare Officer should report the matter to the Children's Social Care Services/Social Services and the Police Child Protection Unit and make sure that BG and the relevant Home Country Governing Body are informed without delay. Although the allegation is historical, it is necessary to respond without delay as other children may currently be at risk from the accused person.

A quick guide to procedures if abuse is suspected

This quick guide (overleaf) is designed to provide guidance for BG members on the most appropriate action to be taken if abuse is suspected or repeated or suspicious poor practice or breaches of BG Code of Ethics and Conduct are witnessed. Further guidance can be obtained at any stage, by contacting the BG Head of Membership, Safeguarding and Compliance Officer or NSPCC Helpline (0800 800 5000). All reports should be made on the BG Child Protection Incident Report form contained in the Sample Forms section.

What happens next?

Where a complaint/concern of poor practice or abuse is made there may be three types of investigation:

- Criminal - Conducted by the police
- Child protection - Carried out under section 47 (1) of the Children Act 1989
- BG enquiry – Determined by the BG CRMG (Case Referral Management Group)

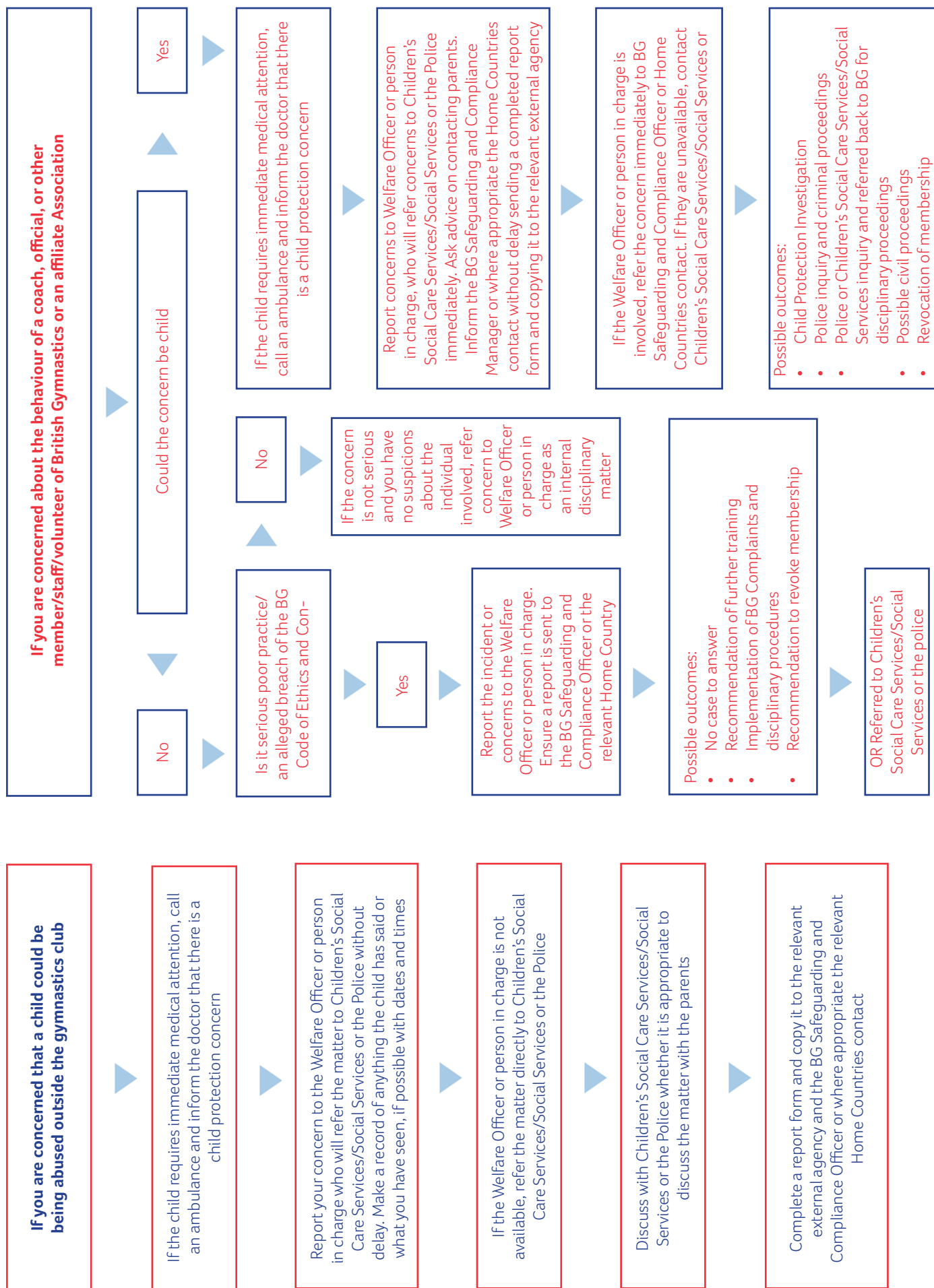
The person that made the allegation, or their family, may also initiate civil proceedings.

Where a statutory agency investigation is ongoing, BG will only act following full consultation with the relevant agencies or at the requested of the statutory agency.

The BG CRMG would consider the outcome of any criminal and/or child protection investigation when determining what action should be taken as stated in 41 of the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

British Gymnastics disciplinary panels will comply with the principles of natural justice. The applicable standard of proof shall be the civil standard, of the balance of probability: whether it was more likely for the allegations to have occurred. British Gymnastics will make a referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority in any instance where a decision is reached to exclude a member from the Governing Body. Throughout these processes the welfare of children will remain paramount and British Gymnastics will endeavour to provide appropriate support to children, parents, coaches and volunteers who are affected

A quick guide to procedures if abuse is suspected



Responding to Media Enquiries Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Responding to Media Enquiries

Responding to Media Enquiries

Child abuse is an area of great interest to the media. When incidents occur it is important to have a strategy to manage any media enquiries. Although British Gymnastics and the Home Countries can deal with media enquiries, it is important for Clubs and Regions to be able to handle initial enquiries in a sensitive and appropriate manner to avoid generating any negative publicity.

If a journalist approaches any BG members, the following guidance should be followed:

- Take a note of the journalist's name and whom they represent (i.e. Newspaper, TV Company etc) and any contact details.
- Take a note of what the journalist is asking you and ask for any clarifications.
- Establish whether the journalist has any deadlines and inform them that the matter will be referred to BG or the appropriate Home Country who will contact them with a response.
- Inform the appropriate Welfare Officer or person in charge who will refer the matter to BG or the appropriate Home Country Lead Officer. An appropriate response will be formulated in consultation with BG Press and Media Officer or appropriate Home Country Officer.
- A copy of the response will be forwarded to the journalist, the club and appropriate region.

The same procedures should be followed for any subsequent enquiries and ensure that BG or the Home Country is kept fully informed of any local press coverage.

Running a Safe Club Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Club Registration
Safeguarding Letter
Codes of Conduct
Provisions of a Safe Environment
Supervision
Provision of Personal Care
Supporting Access For 'Children in Need' To Participate in Gymnastics
Spotting and Manual Support
Flexibility/Stretching Exercises
High Performance Coaching

Club Registration

When gymnasts register with a club it is essential that the club obtain appropriate personal information about them. The type of information that should be collected at the point of registration would include:

- Name and address
- Date of birth
- Parent/Carer information
- Emergency contacts
- Medical details – allergies, existing conditions
- Information on any disability or special needs, including English not being the first language
- Medical consent
- Consent for participation in gymnastics
- Consent to film gymnasts for training purposes
- Equality profile

Clubs should ensure that this information is collected at the earliest opportunity to enable any necessary risk assessments based on medical information and/or disability to be completed prior to participation.

Parental Consent should always be sought prior to participation in 'regular club activity'. In addition, consent should be requested if there is an intention to film gymnasts for training purposes as standard part of club training.

Additional informed consent must also be sought in the following circumstances:

- For participation in other activities beyond regular training e.g. competitions
- For using membership information for other reasons beyond that which was originally collected
- Photography/filming that leads to the publication of images, or use of the images for any purpose other than training (if a blanket consent has already been obtained for this purpose).

Informed consent would require the person providing the consent to have a full understanding of the circumstances for which consent is sought and should be obtained on every occasion.

Safeguarding letter

It is very important that new members and/or their parents/carers are provided with information about the club's approach to safeguarding. It is advisable that all clubs prepare a new member information pack which, in addition to providing information on training times and other club activities, should include a letter to parents highlighting the following policies and where they can be accessed:

- Child safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Anti bullying policy
- Details of what parents/carers should do if they have a concern regarding the welfare of a child
- Communication policy
- Transport policy
- Photography policy
- Equality policy
- Complaints procedure

This letter should include names and contact details of the following key club officials:

- Welfare Officer.
- Chairman/Manager
- Secretary
- Coach

The letter should highlight that BG and the club are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and include the following statement:

In a situation where a child is at risk of significant harm or has been harmed in connection with their involvement in gymnastics, the parent/carer should contact the club Welfare Officer who has the responsibility of referring any concerns of possible abuse to Children's Social Care Services/Social Services and/or the Police and informing British Gymnastics. Alternatively the parent/carer can contact Children's Social Care Services/Social Services and/or the Police direct. It is requested that where a parent/carer has made a direct referral to Children's Social Care Services/Social Services and/or the Police, that the BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer and, if appropriate the Club Welfare Officer is provided with the details of the concern as soon as possible so that any necessary action can be taken to safeguard all children in the sport.

The club should also clearly outline the expectations that it has of its members and their parents/carers. This information may be published in the form of set of club rules and a code of conduct.

Codes of Conduct

Parental responsibilities

Parents play an important role in the success of their child. With the right kind of support and encouragement, young people will progress steadily and enjoy a rewarding experience. It is likely that with the right support at home alongside a positive club environment a child will remain in the sport.

Good communication between the club/coaches and parents is essential to avoid misunderstandings and to ensure co-operation. It is good practice to clearly outline what is expected of parents when their child joins the club.

Other responsibilities

- If parents wish to raise a concern about their children's welfare, they should contact the club Welfare Officer. If they feel they are unable to discuss this concern with the Club Welfare Officer, they should contact the Regional Welfare Officer for advice.
- If parents do have concerns about the coaching that their child is receiving they should arrange to meet with the coach involved. Coaches should always have the best interests of the gymnasts in mind. A disagreement with a coach should never be made known to the child as this could destroy a positive relationship between coach and gymnast.
- If parents remain unhappy about their child's training and wish to move clubs, they should discuss the matter initially with their child and the coach before approaching another club. Parents should remember that although the child may no longer train at the current club, they are likely to come across the coaches and gymnasts at future competitions and events. Therefore it is important that any transfer is conducted with the minimum of upset for the child.
- If parents wish to make a complaint about any matter other than safeguarding or child protection, they should put the complaint in writing and address it to the Club Secretary. For more information, please refer to the Club Complaints Procedure.
- Parents of any gymnast under the age of eighteen years will be informed in writing if their child is subject to any disciplinary action.
- Parents are welcome to observe training if they sit in the designated viewing area but they should not interfere or interrupt the session. It is imperative that coaches have the child's full attention at this time. Any parent who disrupts training may be refused access to the viewing area.
- During competitions parents and family members should adopt a positive and sporting attitude and remain in the spectator area, and not enter the competition arena. They should never dispute results and rulings of judges, coaches and officials or behave in an inappropriate way towards other spectators.
- All families are encouraged to participate in Club related activities.

Example of Parent Code of Conduct

Parents should: -

- Ensure that they and their children abide by club rules.
- Ensure that their children arrive at training and competitions on time and that they arrive on time to take them home. It is the responsibility of the parents to make any necessary transport arrangements to get their children to any training sessions. Parents should not put coaches in a difficult position by requesting that they provide transport for their children although on occasion the Club may make arrangements to transport groups of gymnasts together, subject to parental consent.
- Talk to their children and ensure that they are aware that they have the right to be protected and free from harm. Parents should make sure that their children know that if they feel they are being bullied or are concerned about the way their coach, a club official or another member of the club is treating them, they can talk to their parents or the Club Welfare Officer without fear of getting into trouble.
- Ensure that they and their children are aware of the identity of the Club Welfare Officer.
- Be patient with their children's progress. Gymnasts progress according to their age, ability and stage of maturation. Parents should bear in mind that long-term improvement is the ultimate goal and that later developers often succeed in gymnastics.
- Be a supportive and a stabilising influence through the inevitable ups and downs of training and competition. Parents should encourage their children and provide positive feedback.
- Leave the coaching to the coaches. Parents should not pressure their children, offer coaching advice or try to change or undermine any goals agreed between the coach and gymnast. It is the coaches' role to offer constructive advice relating to the gymnast's performance. It is helpful if parents can offer the support and encouragement necessary to help their children feel good about themselves.
- Help their children to develop good healthy eating habits, especially meals prior to training and competition and ensure each child has sufficient rest.
- Re-enforce high standards of behaviour and dress expected in the gym and at competition and help their children to maintain a positive attitude.
- Stay informed by checking the club newsletter, notice board and any letters distributed at training. If a response or payment is required, this should be made promptly and on time.

Parents are very important and greatly valued in Gymnastics and it is hoped that as many parents as possible will volunteer to help at the Club. Without the support of parent volunteers, the Club and the Governing Body would not function effectively.

Codes of conduct are a vital element in managing challenging behaviour

The NSPCC CPSU has prepared practical advice on dealing with children whose behaviour is challenging.

This guidance, which can be downloaded from the BG website under Ethics and Welfare recognises that a different approach is required where the challenging behaviour is as a result of additional needs or disability.

Provision of a safe environment

Safeguarding is fundamental in the delivery of the sport and the conduct of those involved. Everyone must place the protection of young people as the paramount consideration, and ensure that the environment where the gymnastics activity takes place is one where young people are safe and helps to reduce the risk of young people being abused through their participation within the sport.

Clubs and organisations must address the following environmental factors:

- Providing open training environment
- Ensuring there is a clear policy for use of changing rooms and toilets
- Maintenance of apparatus, equipment and other club property e.g. minibus*
- Provision of first aid facilities*
- Storage of personal and sensitive information

* These areas are covered in detail in the BG Health & Safety Policy.

Open training environment

It is essential that clubs work in partnership with parents/carers and are open about training sessions. Clubs should welcome parents who wish to observe and in the case of new or potential members, encourage them to view a session and remain with their child until the child is happy to be left.

In some facilities there may be logistical problems in providing a suitable area for viewing. Clubs without viewing areas should designate a small area of the gym for viewing. This will need to be carefully managed and there may need to be limits on the number of spectators that can be safely accommodated. Clubs should also ensure that a viewing policy covering acceptable standards of conduct is in place.

An alternative way of providing viewing is to use CCTV technology. The use of CCTV would allow parents to view what is going on inside and if appropriate, outside the building without taking up space in the gym. It is also possible to enable remote access with appropriate security systems in place.

It is not necessary to record images when using CCTV for viewing purposes. Clubs that wish to record CCTV images must contact the Information Commissioner for advice on compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

BG will not support clubs who actively discourage parents from viewing by:

- Obscuring windows
- Refusing reasonable requests to view
- Asking parents to leave without due cause
- Justifying the prohibition of viewing on spurious health and safety grounds.

The provision of an open training environment is much wider than simply providing parents with a viewing area. It involves creating a culture of openness between the club and parents. This will include:

- Regular written and oral communication with parents
- Providing regular feedback on a child's progress
- Opportunities to discuss the child's progress and training regime
- Opportunity to raise concerns and receive feedback on the outcome
- Encouraging parents to become involved in the club
- Inviting parents to attend welfare briefings prior to an away event
- Encouraging parents to attend events or keep in close contact with their child
- Setting up parent forums
- Appointing a parent liaison officer who is responsible for communication, information and encouraging involvement

Changing facilities

All BG clubs must have a policy or rules relating to the use of changing facilities. There can be difficulties where the gymnastics activity is provided within a multi-use sports centre and will have to be subject to the availability and access to facilities, whether groups are mixed gender, and whether the changing facilities are open for public use.

Although clubs should develop a policy that best meets their specific circumstances, the following underlying principles must be adopted:

- Where a club is fully responsible for changing facilities, adults must not be permitted to get changed in these facilities at the same time as children*
- There must be separate changing facilities or times for males and females
- No-one should enter changing rooms whilst these are being used by members of the opposite sex
- Mobile phones must not be used in changing rooms

- Codes of conduct should address behaviour while using changing facilities
- Everyone should be aware that they must report any concerns or incidents without delay.

Parents should only be in the changing room with their children if the children age range of the session is for an age group where parental help is generally required. This is normally around 7 or 8 years old. Additional arrangements may be required if there are young people with disabilities in the group.

Clubs which are unable to provide safe changing room facilities must ensure all members arrive wearing their leotards/shorts under their clothes.

* Where a club has to use a shared changing facility that is accessible by adults, the club should ensure that the changing policy provides guidance for young people on what they should do in the event that they have a concern about an adult who is also making use of the facility.

Where possible, parents should be responsible for their own children in the changing rooms or toilets. If a group of children must be supervised in the changing rooms ensure that adults work in pairs to supervise the children.

Supervision

It is essential that appropriate ratios for supervision are adopted and everyone is clear of their supervisory responsibilities. Ratios should be determined by considering age, the type of activity and where it is taking place. For club training, BG would recommend a minimum ratio of one adult to fifteen gymnasts for low-level floor activity. Where events are external to the regular club training venue a minimum ratio of one adult to 10 gymnasts is required. This ratio should be increased for gymnasts aged under eight years. In addition, there must always be a minimum of two responsible adults present. This ensures there is supervision in the event of an accident or incident that requires one of the adults to leave the group to accompany a child.

Provision of Personal Care

There may on occasion be circumstances where some gymnasts will need help with personal and intimate care such as going to the toilet, changing and washing. In the main this is most likely to arise for pre-school children or some gymnasts with severe learning or physical disabilities this will depend on the maturity and ability of the child.

Pre-school children

Parents of children under three years of age and of children who require assistance to use the toilet must remain with their child. BG would recommend that clubs require parents of children aged 3-4 years remain nearby and contactable in case their child becomes distressed or requires assistance.

Children with disabilities

Some children with disabilities, as a result of their need for practical assistance in daily living, may be more vulnerable to abuse, and the risk may be greater where there are a number of carers. This may increase the likelihood of exposure to abusive behaviour and make it more difficult to set and maintain physical boundaries. It can be difficult, particularly for children with severe learning disabilities to differentiate between different roles if carried out by the same person. This may lead to confusion and additional vulnerability.

Taking account of the above factors, and the safeguarding concerns that can arise from coaches and others putting themselves in a position where they are alone with a child, BG views as unacceptable the routine provision of personal care by coaches. BG requires all intimate care to be carried out by someone other than the coach (except when the coach is also the parent), whose sole role in relation to the young person is to address these care needs.

In order to provide adequate support to gymnasts, British Gymnastics advocates that either a professional carer approved by the gymnast's family or the gymnast's parent or guardian should carry out the role of "carer".

Although it is acknowledged that some disabled children who take part in events that require an overnight stay may require overnight support, BG considers that it is not acceptable for BG coaches or other BG members in responsible positions to share a room with an unrelated gymnast in order to provide overnight support.

British Gymnastics suggests that the parents or guardians together with the coach consider and agree:

- i) Whether to provide a paid or voluntary professional carer to be awake during the night to give overnight support.
- or
- ii) Invite the gymnast's parent or guardian to give the overnight support.

Supporting access for ‘Children in Need’ to participate in Gymnastics

It is the responsibility of every club to consider the needs of children, making reasonable adjustments to help provide for the inclusion of any child who wishes to participate. All BG-registered organisations should support young people and their parents to ensure the necessary support is in place for children with disabilities and other special needs to access gymnastics activity.

Under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, Local Authorities are required to provide services for any child who would be defined as a ‘Child in Need’. This includes disabled children and children with impaired health and development. Although the Local Authority is responsible for ensuring appropriate needs are met, services may be provided by a voluntary organisation acting on behalf of the Local Authority.

BG expects that where a child with a disability requires support from a carer to access gymnastics activity, and the support is not already provided by a professional carer or family member, organisations should look with parents at the child’s needs and if appropriate approach Children’s Social Care Services to request support. In the event that no support is available, the club or service provider should examine whether they can meet the needs of the young person without significantly affecting the organisation’s ability to provide gymnastics activity to others. Not every child will need continual one-to-one support. Additional support may be required just for a temporary period until the child settles into the club, for a transition period (e.g. for the first half hour of the club) or for personal care.

Key points to consider:

- **Consultation and working in partnership**
Consult with families, Children’s Social Care Services/Social Services, Health and other relevant professionals and voluntary groups with the family’s permission to determine a child’s needs and identify support. Start by asking parents and, if appropriate the child about the specific needs and if other professionals should be approached so there is a clear understanding of the support required.
- **Funding**
Additional funding may be required where there is requirement for one-to-one support or a higher ratio of staff to children (depending on needs). Funding sources include: local authorities, community councils, lottery grants, private businesses, voluntary services and charities that provide grants to support children with disabilities. Local authority schemes may be able to help with funding for one-to-one support workers.
- **Facilities**
Are they suitable and accessible? Are there reasonable adjustments that can be addressed?
- **Leaning Needs**
Although BG does not require coaches to hold a BG qualification for coaching people with disabilities, specialist training may be beneficial to help with communication methods, ensuring a positive attitude towards inclusion etc.

Further information is available in the BG DDA Guidance and Disability Participation Policy.

Spotting and Manual Support

Supporting and shaping the gymnast is an essential part of coaching gymnastics in that it helps the gymnast to understand shapes, movement patterns and complex skills, but also reduces the risk of injury due to a fall or error in performance. Detailed guidance on appropriate supporting techniques is provided as part of the BG coach education programme.

The key points on safe spotting and manual support are:

- the coach must ensure that support is only used when necessary and “over-handling” is avoided, however;
- the coach must always be alert to the possibility of performance errors or anxiety, which may increase the risk of injury;
- supporting techniques must not inhibit performance;
- physical contact should not be invasive of sensitive areas of the body i.e. genital areas, buttocks or breasts.

Infrequent non-intentional physical contact can arise out of error on the performer or coach’s part. Such situations should not be ignored and need to be acknowledged through an apology to the gymnast and reported to the Club Welfare Officer or head coach and parents. Any written report should be made of any incident.

It is also good practice to explain and provide some written guidance, perhaps as part of an induction pack, to new members and parents that some physical contact will be required but that only appropriate non-invasive techniques should be used. If a gymnast or parent has any concerns, they should be raised with the club welfare officer. In any circumstance where abuse is suspected, BG reporting procedures should be followed.

Flexibility/Stretching exercises

There is a range of techniques and types of exercise for extending flexibility that involve the application of force. These techniques can also lead to the person applying the force coming into close proximity with the gymnast and having prolonged contact with areas of the gymnast’s body.

Coaches must follow the following guidelines:

- Use slow, progressive and prolonged stretching exercises, within the “discomfort zone”, rather than what might be considered to be excessive force.
- Avoid exercises that place the coaches and gymnasts body in “close proximity” and might be seen as unnecessary by the less-informed parent or observer.
- Be sensitive to how the exercise might be perceived by the parents and children.
- Consider holding a parents’ forum to explain the flexibility training techniques, so that the parent is more aware and therefore less likely to misinterpret the techniques being used.
- Use partner exercises with more experienced gymnasts where possible.

High Performance Coaching

Key factors in safeguarding young people include always ensuring there are at least two responsible adults present during training and avoiding situations where a responsible person is alone with a child. However, a small proportion of young people involved in gymnastics who are training at the high performance levels may find that these principles are in conflict with the practicalities of intensive training.

One-to-one coaching has clear benefits for a small proportion of appropriately prepared and highly experienced gymnasts and is recognised as the best way to achieve excellence. The number of gymnasts who would benefit from training in this manner is small. In addition, due to the fact that this training tends to take place during the school day and outside standard club hours it can be very difficult to ensure there are always two responsible adults present.

Therefore, while it is always desirable that an additional responsible adult is present, in circumstances where it is not possible gymnasts within the national system may train in a one-to-one situation, subject however to prior approval by BG Technical and Performance Director and National Coaching Staff, and in liaison with parents/guardians. The squad and/or club welfare officer must also confirm the gymnast’s readiness to train in this manner and that there are appropriate support mechanisms in place. Requests will only be confirmed on the proviso that there are additional support staff in the building, available to assist in the event of an emergency.

Requests should be made in writing to the Performance and Technical Director and will only be granted if it is believed that it is in the best interest of the gymnast, and the governing body is assured that suitable provision is available to ensure the gymnast’s welfare needs are met.

Safe Recruitment Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Safe Recruitment
Interviewing
ISA Registration and CRB Disclosures
Use of Criminal Records Disclosures and Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy
Monitoring and Appraisal

Safe Recruitment

Safe recruitment requires safeguarding issues to be considered at every stage of the recruitment process. Although the vast majority of coaches and officials/helpers are committed, dedicated people who are motivated to work within the sport for commendable reasons, it is vital that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that any unsuitable people or people who may abuse children are prevented from working with young people.

The following procedures should be adopted and applied consistently to help ensure that gymnastics organisations recruit individuals who share the organisation’s values and approach to safeguarding.

As people who want to abuse children may seek out various avenues to gain access to children. These practices must be followed at all times, even where there is only one applicant for a position.

One-off volunteers

The only current exception to this is in the case of one-off volunteers who will only have contact with children for limited period of time. This may include:

- Parents or other volunteers helping out at a club fundraiser or event
- Young people attending the club for a work experience

Clubs who run a dedicated facility should ensure they operate a sign-in and out system for these volunteers/visitors.

Where one-off volunteering becomes more regular e.g. more than once a month, the recruitment procedures must be fully applied.

Parents

It should be noted that it is inappropriate, and in respect of the use of CRB disclosures would be unlawful, to require recruitment checks in the case of parents whose only role is to care for their own child e.g. a parent of a child with a disability. However, in the event that the individual in question wishes to take on a role within the club that will bring responsibility for other young people, the full recruitment procedures must be applied.

It is essential that the following recruitment and selection procedures are applied without unlawfully discriminating against candidates on grounds of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age, and are fully compliant with data protection law.

The key elements of a robust safe recruitment process will include:

- **Preparing candidate information**

This should include: -

- **Job description** that makes reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- **Person specification** ensuring specific reference is made to suitability to work with children
- **Application form**, which contains appropriate safeguarding sections

- **Obtaining references**

References that specifically address the applicant's suitability to work with children should ideally be taken before interview so that any issues can be addressed at this stage

- **Interview**

In addition to the candidates' suitability for the role, the interview process should investigate the candidate's suitability to work with children.

- **Verifying**

- Applicant's identity
- Right to work in UK
- Qualifications

- **ISA registration & CRB disclosure**

An enhanced CRB disclosure must be completed for anyone who has not completed a CRB disclosure through BG within the last three years.

The Vetting and Barring Scheme will require anyone wishing to work with children (and/or vulnerable adults) to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

From 12 October 2009 additional "regulated activities" will be brought into force under the Vetting and Barring Scheme. This will significantly extend the scope of activities and workplaces covered by barring. It will be an offence for any barred person to work in regulated activities, and for any employer to employ someone he knows to be barred, either paid or voluntary.

More information regarding the Vetting and Barring Scheme can be obtained by going to <http://www.isa-gov.org.uk/default.aspx?page=2>

When recruiting for a position working with young people, safeguarding needs to feature strongly in any advertising. The recruiting organisation should prepare a safeguarding statement that should feature in any publicity about the role. In addition, the organisation should include a statement advising that a CRB disclosure will be required as part of the recruitment process.

Obtaining references

Prior to the interview references should be sought and where appropriate, relevant qualifications or previous experience should be confirmed.

In the event that someone is being interviewed who has indicated she/he has previous qualifications/experience in gymnastics, the recruiting organisations should request, in writing on formal headed paper, confirmation from BG of: -

- BG membership
- Date of last CRB disclosure
- Any BG qualifications/awards
- Any known reason for not employing/appointing the named person.

Seeking references prior to interview is always preferable in order that any concerns can be addressed with the applicant. An applicant who does not agree to their current employer being approached should be advised that in the event they are the preferred candidate for the job, they will be required to address any issues raised by the current employer prior to their appointment being confirmed.

In addition to the current employer, references should also be sought from any previous organisations where the applicant worked in paid or voluntary position with children. It is useful to make use of the BG reference form for positions working with children to ensure the referee covers all the required information.

Interviewing

Where a position involves significant contact with young people a formal interview should be held according to correct procedures and protocol. The purpose of the interview is to carry out an assessment of the qualities of candidates in relation to the requirements of the job and their suitability to work with children. There should always be a face-to-face interview, even if there is only one candidate.

Additional information can be requested at interview to support the details contained in the application form and address/ask questions relating to any information disclosed in the self-declaration of convictions. It is also important to explore any discrepancies between the information on the application form and the information obtained in pre-interview checks.

Where the post involves working with children, it is always preferable that there is a minimum of two interviewers to allow for a full assessment of the candidate's responses. The members of an interview panel must have attended safeguarding awareness training as a minimum and have the authority to make the recruitment decision.

It is important to agree in advance the process for the interview and the questions that will be asked. These should include a number of questions that focus on suitability to work with children. These questions should aim to identify underlying attitudes and may require the interview panel members to be probing in their questioning techniques. Possible ways to obtain this type of information include asking how the applicant how would they behave in an actual situation involving young people, or to question why they believe specific aspects of the safeguarding policy are important.

The interview panel should take the opportunity to address any concerns arising from the information on the application form or as part of a reference. The panel should also confirm the details make in the self-declaration are correct and the willingness to complete a CRB disclosure.

Verification processes

Anyone recruiting people to work with children should adopt a checklist to be applied following the selection process, without satisfactory completion of which a firm employment offer should not be made. The checklist should include:

- Verification of identity
- Confirmation of the right to work in the UK visit www.ukvisas.gov.uk
- Verification of qualifications

To avoid any unnecessary delays, all candidates should be instructed to bring their identity documents to the interview. Candidates must also bring with them any qualification and awards certificates.

Identity checks

It is vital to be sure that the person is who he or she claims to be. As identity verification is required as part of the CRB process, the Welfare Officer or other nominated CRB designated person should conduct the identity verification process using the CRB Identity Verification Form (IVF). Original identity documents must be provided and verification must be conducted in the presence of the applicant to ensure they are the person shown in photographic evidence. The IVF can be found in the Appendices.

ISA Registration & CRB Disclosures

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 has provided the legislative framework for introducing the Vetting and Barring Scheme. Although the Independent Safeguarding Authority has been established and is now taking barring decisions. The ISA scheme will cover England, Wales and Northern Ireland In Scotland the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act.

This Scheme will require anyone working or volunteering with children and/or vulnerable adults in a regulated activity to register, unless they are self employed. For the purpose of gymnastics, regulated activity would cover any activity that involves contact with children or vulnerable adults frequently (once a month or more) and/or intensively (takes place on three or more days in a 30-day period) and/or overnight. This is likely to cover the majority of gymnastics activity. Once registered the individual will be subject to continuous monitoring and updating of their status. In other words, once an individual is registered, any new information that becomes available will be reviewed to determine whether the individual presents a risk to children and/or vulnerable adults.

Enhanced CRB disclosures are also required in line with the BG Use of CRB Disclosures and Recruitment of ex offenders Policy contained in the Appendices (members operating in Scotland or Northern Ireland should complete disclosures through the relevant NGB). The BG Case Referral Management Group (CRMG) is responsible for making the recruitment decision based on the information contained on the disclosure. BG registered organisations must abide by the BG recruitment decisions.

BG requires all members who are in regulated activity to complete an enhanced CRB disclosure through BG every three years. Where an organisation is recruiting a new member of staff or volunteers who is already a member of BG and has a current disclosure, a new BG CRB Disclosure is optional.

If a CRB disclosure is required, or where the successful candidate has not previously completed a BG CRB disclosure, the individual should be provided with the required application at the earliest opportunity. The disclosure should ideally be obtained before an individual commences a role within the club. BG registered clubs will be able to confirm the status of disclosure applications using the BG online membership system.

Although an individual may be permitted to commence aspects of the role that do not involve contact with children (and/or vulnerable adults), the club must ensure the disclosure is approved before an appointment is confirmed. BG will contact the recruiting club without delay in the event that the CRB disclosure contains information of concern.

CRB disclosures for children

BG requires anyone over the age of 14 who is in a position of trust to complete a CRB disclosure. This does not automatically include young people taking the 'Level 0' Course, unless they take on training or a supervisory role within their club.

Use of Criminal Records Disclosures and Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy

1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy outlines British Gymnastics' policy on the recruitment of staff or volunteers with criminal convictions, the use of criminal record disclosures and
The storage and use of information on convictions.
- 1.2 The appropriate bodies for these checks are as follows: -
Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) (England and Wales)
Disclosure Scotland/CRBS (Scotland)
Assist NI (Northern Ireland)
- 1.3 Anyone involved in recruitment must also be familiar with the recruitment procedures contained in the BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy 2009.
- 1.4 The following legislation advises this policy: -
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
Data Protection Act 1998
- 1.5 This policy applies to all members and volunteers. A copy of this policy should be made available to any job applicants at the outset of the recruitment process where a CRB disclosure will be required as part of the recruitment process.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Existing legislation ensures that ex-offenders are not required to disclose to prospective employers, convictions defined as 'spent'. Any applications for posts working with children and/or vulnerable adults or a managerial positions that would give influence over one or more people working in a role with children and/or vulnerable adults is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, in other words, all cautions, reprimands, final warnings and convictions must be declared, even those that are considered 'spent'. Thus, it is British Gymnastics policy to require these job applicants (including voluntary positions) to disclose any 'unspent' criminal convictions as part of their application.
- 2.2 British Gymnastics is commencing a rolling programme of retrospective checks on existing members or volunteers in any positions covered by the above description and will require members or volunteers to consent to disclosure on request. Failure to comply with a request for disclosure could lead to suspension.
- 2.3 British Gymnastics will not discriminate unfairly against applicants with a criminal record. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an applicant from working for British Gymnastics or any affiliate organisation. The nature of a disclosed conviction and its relevance to the post in question, will be considered however any cautions, reprimands, final warnings relating to offences against children are likely to be incompatible with working or volunteering for British Gymnastics. In exceptional circumstances (e.g. age of offender at the time of a conviction), the Case Referral Management Group may offer an individual the alternative of a risk assessment.
- 2.4 Where a conviction has been disclosed in an individual's application or on a Coach education exam application, the Case Referral Management Group will discuss the matter and make a recommendation to the appropriate club/individual involved in the recruitment decision. Failure to reveal information relating to unspent convictions that later shows up on a CRB disclosure could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment/voluntary role or the retention of a coaching qualification.
- 2.5 British Gymnastics uses the CRB disclosure services to obtain information to enable it to assess the suitability of applicants. British Gymnastics complies fully with the CRB code of practice and does not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a CRB disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

2.6 British Gymnastics complies with the CRB code of practice in relation to the secure storage, handling, use, retention & disposal of CRB disclosures and disclosure information and with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.

3 APPOINTMENTS REQUIRING A CRB DISCLOSURE

- 3.1 An appointee will be requested to submit to a criminal records disclosure request only where the assessment of the role identifies a requirement to work with children, vulnerable adults or influence over others in this position. For posts where a criminal records disclosure will be required, the further particulars of the post will contain an indication that a disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position. All subjects of a disclosure request will be made aware of the relevant Code of Practice. Any information revealed in a disclosure that is likely to lead to the withdrawal of a job offer will be discussed with the applicant before the offer is withdrawn.
- 3.2 **Storage & Access:** Information obtained from a disclosure will not be stored on an employee/member's personnel file but will be stored separately in lockable storage with access limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties. The only information stored on a personal file will be the record of the date of issue of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure requested, and the unique reference number of the disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken. This information is necessary for monitoring purposes. A record will be maintained of all those to whom disclosure information has been revealed as it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.
- 3.3 **Usage:** Disclosure information will only be used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent will have been obtained.
- 3.4 **Retention:** Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, disclosure information will not be stored for longer than necessary and will be destroyed within six months.

Disposal: Once the retention period has elapsed, British Gymnastics will ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed.

Monitoring and Appraisal

All staff and volunteers should be given the opportunity to receive feedback, either through a formal appraisal or more informally through mentoring. Although this is good practice for any voluntary or paid position, appraisals are essential for positions that involve significant contact with young people. Appraisals should be offered at regular intervals, initially at the end of a probation period and thereafter at yearly intervals. An appraisal can help to establish learning needs, review targets and consider any concerns.

All BG registered clubs must put in place a procedure to deal with complaints over staff and volunteers. Parents and all members should be made aware of the procedures for raising a complaint or concern. Provision should be made in the club rules or constitution to allow complaints and disciplinary procedures to be implemented.

Safeguarding and Training

'Every Child Matters' identifies that basic skills and knowledge are required by these adults, both paid and voluntary, to meet these identified outcomes. As part of the Children's Workforce Strategy, the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce identifies the following six categories as fundamental requirements for those work with young people:

- Effective communication and engagement with children, young people and families.
- Child and young person development.
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child.
- Supporting transitions.
- Multi-agency working.
- Sharing information

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 (4.15) states that all training in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children should create an ethos which values working collaboratively with others, respects diversity (including culture, race and disability), promotes equality, is child-centred and promotes the participation of children and families in the safeguarding processes.

BG has developed a Safeguarding and Protecting Children Awareness module that was designed to meet the ECM Common Core of Skills and Knowledge.

In addition BG offers a gymnastics specific version of the NSPCC CPSU Time to Listen course for Welfare Officers. BG also provides Heads of Delegation who may take on a lead role for Safeguarding at representative events an adapted version of this course.

It is a requirement that anyone working or volunteering with children should complete a Safeguarding and Protecting Children Awareness training course. It is however mandatory for all Club Welfare Officers to have completed the Safeguarding and Protecting training and a BG specific version of the NSPCC CPSU Time to Listen course.

Club Welfare Officer

Terms of Reference

- Assist the club to put in place policies and implementation plans for safeguarding and promoting welfare of young people.
- Be the first point of contact for club staff and volunteers, young people and parents for any issue concerning safeguarding, poor practice or potential/alleged abuse
- Ensure that all incidents are correctly reported and referred out in accordance with BG guidelines
- Ensure that all relevant club members have the opportunity to access appropriate safeguarding training
- Ensure that BG procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed and all appropriate existing staff or volunteers have up-to-date CRB disclosures
- Maintain local contact details for Children's Social Care Services, the Police and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB)
- Ensure that codes of conduct are in place for club staff and volunteers, young people and parents
- Advise club management on safeguarding issues
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis

Core Skills

- Basic administration and record maintenance
- Child-centred approach
- Communication skills
- Confidence in relation to referring cases externally
- Ability to ensure policy and procedures are effectively implemented

Training Requirements

- BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Awareness Module or equivalent (scUK, LSCB training or recognised training within another NGB)
- NSPCC CPSU Time to Listen training for designated persons for child protection/welfare in sport (Club Level)
- Must also be CRB/ISA checked
- Must submit Welfare Officer details to the Regional Secretary, Regional Welfare Officer and BG Lead Officer
- Must submit resignation in writing when post ends

The above courses are 3-hour training modules that are essential for welfare officers. The additional courses are additional recommended training:

- BG Club Management Awareness Module (includes equality training)
- A Club for All (Equality training)

Regional Welfare Officer

Terms of Reference

- Assist the Region and technical committees to put in place policies and implementation plans for safeguarding and promoting welfare of young people.
- Ensure that technical committees and event organisers are aware of the requirement to have a nominated welfare officer at all Regional events (This person must be contactable at all times throughout the event. An appropriately trained welfare officer must accompany any trips that involve an over-night stay. This role may be taken on by an one of the existing staff/volunteers, providing they have completed the required training).
- Offer advice and support clubs in relation to safeguarding issues
- Ensure that all incidents are correctly reported and referred out in accordance with BG guidelines
- Help ensure adequate provision of BG/Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) safeguarding training courses
- Deliver (following training) or attend Regional based courses for Club level Time to Listen module
- Ensure that BG procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed and all appropriate existing Regional staff or volunteers have up-to-date CRB disclosures
- Maintain local contact details for Children's Social Care Services, the Police and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB)
- Ensure that codes of conduct are in place at Regional events for staff, and volunteers, young people and parents
- Sit on Regional management committee to advise on safeguarding issues
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis

Core Skills

- Basic administration and record maintenance
- Child-centred approach and implementation plan across the Region
- Communication skills
- Confidence in relation to referring cases externally
- Ability to ensure policy and procedures are effectively implemented
- Ability to influence key people and ensure ownership of policy and implementation plans across the Region

Training Requirements

- BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Awareness Module or equivalent (scUK, LSCB training or recognised training within another NGB)
- NSPCC CPSU Time to Listen training for designated persons for child protection/welfare in sport (Regional Level)
- **Optional: -**
- Tutor training to deliver BG CP modules and Child Protection in Sport “Time to Listen” Club Level Module (if appropriate prior knowledge and experience)

The above courses are 3-hour training modules that are essential for welfare officers. The additional courses are additional recommended training:

- BG Club Management Awareness Module (includes equality training)
- A Club for All (Equality training)

National (Home Country) Lead Officer

Terms of Reference

- Take a lead role in ensuring there is a safeguarding policy in place that is mandatory for all staff, members and volunteers and plans in place to drive its implementation.
- Ensure any required Safeguarding Standards are achieved
- Take a lead role in managing, monitoring and reviewing the safeguarding policy and implementation plans
- Ensure that BG members, employees, committees and event organisers are aware of their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding
- Be available to advise and support to clubs and technical committees in relation to safeguarding and welfare issues
- Ensure that all incidents are correctly managed and referred out in accordance with BG (Home Country) guidelines
- Ensure there is a strategy in place for the provision of safeguarding learning opportunities and support its delivery, including the provision of CPD for welfare officers
- Take a lead role in identification, support and monitoring of Welfare Officers
- Ensure that BG (or appropriate Home Country) internal procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers are appropriate and existing National staff and volunteers complete a CRB disclosures and attend safeguarding awareness training at least every three years
- Establish National links with NSPCC CPSU or equivalent and represent the governing body at external safeguarding meetings
- Ensure access to national and local contact details for Children’s Social Care Services, the Police and LSCB
- Ensure that the safeguarding policies and procedures are well published among all staff, members (including gymnasts), volunteers and parents
- Ensure that codes of conduct are in place at National events for staff and volunteers, young people and parents
- Sit on relevant National committees to advise on safeguarding issues
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a ‘need to know’ basis

Core Skills

- Knowledge of key legislation and government guidance on safeguarding and protecting children
- Understanding the roles of external agencies in terms of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people
- Ability to manage systems for administration and record maintenance
- Child-centred approach
- Communication skills
- Confidence in relation to referring cases externally
- Ability to ensure policy and procedures are effectively implemented
- Ability to influence key people and ensure ownership of policy and implementation plan across the governing body

Training Requirements

- BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Awareness Module or equivalent (Home Country, scUK, LSCB training or recognised training within another NGB)
- CPSU Time to Listen training for lead officers or Home Country equivalent
- Appropriate Equality training

British Gymnastics (BG) Child Protection Case Referral Management Group (CRMG)

The BG CRMG has the authority to decide on the direction of cases involving the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The case route will be determined by considering if a case reaches a certain threshold, i.e. would a case be considered potential poor practice or potential abuse.

The BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer will be the first point of contact for all Welfare related cases. On receipt of any concerns, allegations or information that may cause British Gymnastics to reasonably believe an individual may pose a risk to young people, the CRMG will be consulted on the referral route. In some instances, this may be done by telephone.

The CRMG will be made up of the following: -

- Chair of Ethics and Welfare Committee
- BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer
- Director of Coach/Judge Education
- Relevant BG Managers (when appropriate)
- Child Protection Advisors: - Individuals with relevant experience in Child Protection. Experience may involve Social Services or Police background, Specific experience of child protection in sport, Legal expertise in Children's Law

Terms of Reference

1. The members of the CRMG will have experience in dealing with welfare issues.
2. The CRMG will be managed and co-ordinated by the BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer, who will be the first point of contact for any referral.
3. The CRMG will be chaired by the Chair of the Ethics and Welfare Committee
4. The CRMG will operate independently from the CEO and disciplinary panel members to ensure the separation of each of the four stages of the process; referral, suspension, disciplinary and appeals.

Procedures

1. The CRMG will determine the referral route for all cases that deal with the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Consideration will be given to any signed written evidence including any written representation from the accused. (Any preliminary collection of information will be carried out by the BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer)
2. The CEO will sit outside this group and cannot intervene in any decisions unless there has been concern raised about a significant prior relationship, connection or interest between the accused and a member of the group.
3. Where abuse is suspected and any delay in action may compromise the welfare of a child/children, BG is authorised to inform the relevant Children's Social Care Services or Police.
4. Members of the CRMG must meet or be consulted within ten working days of the receipt of any referral where it is unclear if a case should be considered potential poor practice. Although it is not the responsibility of the panel to decide if abuse has taken place, the panel must quickly decide if the case needs to be referred to social services or the police.
5. Any case that has already been referred to Children's Social Care Services or Police will only be considered in relation to whether suspension from BG is required. The CRMG will only reconsider referral of the matter on completion of any investigation or action by Children's Social Care Services or Police. Anyone who is convicted of a child protection related offence or receives a caution in respect of an offence will be deemed to be in breach of the Association Rules.
6. In cases of potential poor practice or where convictions information is received from a CRB disclosure, the group may decide on an appropriate course of action. The matter will be passed back to the BG Case Manager to manage the implementation of the agreed actions. Any actions will be reached after a fair appraisal of the case and will be in proportion with the severity of the incident. Previous allegations of a similar nature will also be considered.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS

- a. Recommendation that no further action taken
- b. A warning and remedial action plan
- c. Referral out/back to Club, Region, Line Manager etc to deal with advice on how to proceed
- d. Further Enquiries/interviews
- e. Referral to CEO for full disciplinary hearing
- f. Recommendation made to CEO to suspend member
- g. Devolvement to independent review panel
- h. Referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

7. Members of the CRMG should declare immediately (to the group) any significant prior relationship, connection or interest which could disqualify them from any discussion on the referral pathway of a case.
8. Any concerns over the independence of a CRMG member on a case-to-case basis should be raised with the CEO. This can be done without fear of victimisation or reprisal. This or any other valid reason can be just cause for the CEO to request the resignation of the member from the group.
9. All group decisions will be communicated to the CEO for information and any necessary further action.
10. An individual has the right to appeal against any course of action determined by the CRMG. This must be done within ten working days of receipt of the letter informing the individual of the decision reached by the group. If a member of the group is unhappy with the final decision taken by the group, the matter should be referred to the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) for an independent determination.
11. The CRMG can choose to call on Legal or other advice where deemed necessary.
12. The CRMG will carry out a case monitoring function.

All case information is regarded as highly confidential and should not be disclosed outside the CRMG except when it is relevant to inform an external agency.

Transporting Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Transporting Gymnasts

Transporting Gymnasts

The following guidance relates to coaches who transport gymnasts to training or events/competitions. Additional guidance is provided for the official provision of transport by a club for away events.

Gymnasts are required to train a large number of hours to achieve high levels of performance therefore great commitment is required not only from the gymnasts but also from their parents. In the past, it has often been the case that well-meaning coaches or officials have provided transport to members of their clubs to assist parents. However, it has been identified that some adults in the sport have used this as an opportunity to get young people alone and abuse has occurred. As a result, BG Safeguarding Policy requires that BG Coaches do not take children alone on car journeys, except in *unforeseen circumstances.

The following are practical suggestions to help alleviate transport problems:

- Make parents aware (preferably when their child joins the club) that it is the coaches' responsibility to coach and not to provide transport for their child
- When a child accepts a place in a squad, the parent should be asked to commit to ensuring the child attends all training sessions and to be responsible for making the necessary transport arrangements
- Encourage parents to share transport with other parents
- Transport gymnasts in groups

It is unacceptable for coaches to transport one child alone and in the case of transporting a group of gymnasts, best practice would require two responsible adults in the car. However, in exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, and subject to prior consent from all relevant parents, a coach could transport a group of gymnasts without another adult present. This is subject to the following conditions:

- The driver must ensure there are central pick-up and drop-off points to ensure they are not alone with a child.
- The driver should also provide parents with full details of any planned breaks in the journey and departure and arrival times.
- Gymnasts must be seated in the back of the car with booster seats if required.
- The Club Welfare Officer should be made aware of the arrangements.

In the case of gymnasts attending National squad training, parents should be encouraged to team up with the parents of another squad member who lives closest to them. On occasion that the parents are unable to provide transport, a coach or official could then transport the gymnasts as a pair.

*Unforeseen would only apply in the event of an accident or where something unexpected has happened and there is no other alternative but to take a child alone in the car and to fail to act would put the child at risk of harm. Where these situations are unavoidable and whenever possible the full consent of either the Welfare Officer, Head coach or Official in the club and/or the child's parents should be obtained.

Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedures

Contained within this section is:

Whistle Blowing

Whistle Blowing

Safeguarding children and young people requires everyone to be committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability. BG supports an environment where people feel free to raise their concerns with the knowledge that all concerns will be taken seriously.

The term 'whistle blowing' is often used in such circumstances to describe the raising of a concern about practices, procedures or conduct of an individual. In gymnastics context a whistleblower may be:

A coach or official

A gymnast

A parent

A member of the public

Concerns should be raised without delay to either the Club Welfare Officer or the BG Lead Officer or BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer. The earlier concerns are reported, the easier it will be to take action.

Anyone reporting a concern should provide as much information and detail as possible. This could include:

- Names of the people involved
- Other witnesses
- Dates of events
- Any other relevant documentation

BG understands that whistleblowers are often very reluctant to report concerns. Thus, BG recognises that whistleblowers may wish to raise concerns in confidence. In these circumstances, the identity of the whistleblower will be kept confidential. Any subsequent reason why disclosure may be required will be discussed in detail with the whistleblower before any action is taken.

It must be recognised that concerns that are reported anonymously are frequently very difficult to investigate. The decision whether to investigate an anonymous allegation will be made by the CRMG based on the seriousness of the concerns and the credibility of the referral and the likelihood of identifying others who can confirm the allegations. Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.

All concerns raised under this procedure will be treated seriously and a decision made about whether or not an investigation is appropriate. Depending upon the nature of the matter it may be referred the police. In these circumstances, the whistleblower may be asked to provide a written statement and give evidence to the police and/or at a BG hearing. BG will provide support to the whistleblower during this process.

BG will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect anyone who has raised a concern in good faith. Anyone who is found to have victimised or harassed a whistleblower will face disciplinary action. Anyone who raises concerns known to be untrue may also be subject to disciplinary action.

Sample forms

Self Declaration Form

You have a right of access to any information held on you and additional rights under the Data Protection Act 1998

PART A

Title..... First Names(s)..... Surname.....

Previous names by which you may have been known.....

Address.....

.....

Post Code..... Tel. No.....

Email.....

Date of Birth..... Sex: Male/Female.....

Club (Please complete if appropriate).....

Please give details of the positions you currently or wish to fulfil or relevant job title.....

.....

.....

.....

Start date.....

Please give details of any other clubs you are or have been a member of and give details of the positions you held.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

PART B

1) Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offences, received cautions, final warnings or reprimands? YES/NO*

If YES, please supply details of any criminal convictions

.....

.....

NOTE: You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions) order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Amendment) Order 1986 you should declare all convictions including 'spent' convictions, cautions, reprimands and written warnings

2) Are you a person known to any Children's Social Care/Social Services department as being an actual or potential risk to children under investigation for a Child Protection related incident? YES/NO*

If YES, please supply details.....

.....

.....

.....

3) Have you had a disciplinary sanction (from a sports or other organisation's governing body) relating to child abuse? YES/NO*

If YES, please supply details.....
.....
.....

I certify that all information in this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and realise that false information or omissions may lead to termination of my services.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE BRITISH GYMNASTICS' CHILD PROTECTION POLICY. I HEREBY CONSENT TO A CRB DISCLOSURE

Signed..... Date.....

Print Name.....

PART C

TO BE COMPLETED BY CLUB OR OTHER DESIGNATED OFFICIAL

I confirm that I have seen identification documents (please refer to Identity Verification form for details of acceptable identification documents) for the above person, and I confirm to the best of my ability that these are accurate.

Please provide details of documents:

.....
.....

Signature of club/designated official.....

Position.....

Application Form

This form is to be completed by employees and volunteers in sport

Confidential

Position applied for.....

Surname and title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss).....

First Name(s).....

Any first name, surname or maiden name previously known by.....

Date of Birth..... Place of Birth

National Insurance Number.....

Present address.....

.....

Postcode..... Telephone Number(s)

Email address.....

Former address (if moved within the previous three years)

.....

.....

Current occupation..... Name of organisation

Role..... Address.....

Start Date.....

Previous occupations.....

Name of organisation.....

Start Date.....

Finish Date.....

Relevant experience.....

Previous experience of working with young children in a voluntary or professional capacity.....

.....

Qualifications.....

Academic/School.....

.....

.....

Vocational/Interests.....

.....

.....

Sporting qualifications and experience.....

.....

Reason for applying.....
.....
.....
.....

Name and address of two people who know you well (and are not related to you) who have first-hand experience of you working with children and that we can contact for a reference, or who have provided you with a reference testimonial:

With your approval we shall also contact your current employer (where appropriate) for a reference

I am a member of British Gymnastics (please delete where appropriate)

YES/NO **FULL/ASSOCIATE**

I agree to abide by any Code of Ethics and Conduct, which the organisation has in force

Signed..... Date.....

Print Name.....

NB: Failure to disclose this information may result in exclusion from the club or organisation

Reference Form

Confidential

(Name)..... has expressed an interest in becoming a coach/official/team manager/helper (please circle as appropriate) and has given your name as a referee. The post involves substantial access to children and we are anxious to know if there are any concerns about this individual having a post that allows significant access to children.

If you are happy to complete the reference, all the information contained on the form will remain absolutely confidential, and will only be shared with the applicant's immediate supervisor should they be offered the above position. We would appreciate you being extremely candid and honest in your evaluation of this person.

1. How long have you known this person?
2. In what capacity?
3. What attributes does this person have that would make them a suitable volunteer?
4. How would you describe their personality?
5. Please rate this person on the following (please tick one box for each)

	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Dealing with children					
Maturity					
Patience					
Self Motivation					
Can motivate others					
Commitment					
Energy					
Reliability					
Trustworthiness					

This post involves substantial access to children. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children or young people.

YES/NO

If you have answered Yes we will contact you in confidence.

Name.....

Organisation.....

Contact Numbers.....

Signed..... Date.....

British Gymnastics Child Protection Incident Form

This form should be used by Club Welfare Officers to record the details of any concerns raised. A copy should be sent to the Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer at British Gymnastics. If there is more than one alleged victim a separate form should be completed. All efforts must be made to keep the information confidential. The information should only be shared with those that need to know if it is in the best interest of the child or vulnerable adult. Please note that where a concern is immediate please make initial contact by telephone and return the completed form as soon as possible. The form should be completed for all levels of concern, even where no immediate action may be necessary.

DETAILS OF PERSON COMPLETING THE FORM

Name.....

Club Name.....

Position (*Welfare Officer, Coach, Club Official, Volunteer, Parent, Gymnast etc*).....

Address.....

.....

Postcode..... Contact number.....

Name/details of person who raised concern (*if different from above*).....

DETAILS OF PERSON CONCERN IS ATTRIBUTED TO

Name.....

Club Name.....

Position.....

Relationship to alleged victim.....

DETAILS OF ALLEGED VICTIM

Name.....

Club..... Discipline.....

Date of Birth..... Age at time of incident(s).....

Address of parent/carer.....

.....

Postcode..... Contact number.....

Any identified special needs or disability.....

DETAILS OF INCIDENT

Date(s) or period (*if over a drawn out period*) of incident.....

Description of the incident/s (please include as much details as possible. If a child talked to you, write down the exact details of the conversation, remember not to lead the child. Please include any other information including location, number of incidences, any witness details etc, please continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary).....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Any actions taken?.....
.....
.....

Please indicate if you are in contact with any other bodies concerning this incident and include a contact name, address and telephone number

Social Services.....
.....

Police.....
.....

Other.....
.....

Any other additional information.....
.....

Signed..... Date.....

Glossary

The glossary provides the meanings, of the words and phrases that are used in the document. In recent years there have been many changes in the terminology used in the field of safeguarding. The following information should also help to clarify how the current terminology and titles relate to past policy documents and training material. In addition, a brief outline has been provided on the (relevant aspects of) key pieces of legislation and guidance that relate to safeguarding.

Gymnastics

A generic term that includes all British Gymnastics recognised activities

Disciplines

Cheerleading, General (includes Team Gym, Gymnastics and Movement for People with Disabilities & Pre-school), Men's Artistic, Rhythmic, Acrobatic Gymnastics, Aerobic Gymnastics, Trampolining, Women's Artistic).

Club

The term is used to describe any situation where a group of people come together with common aims or interests. In the context of gymnastics, this would include a BG registered club, a squad a competition and an event.

Member

Describes a person participating in Gymnastics such as Staff, Official, and Volunteer etc. This policy applies either directly or indirectly to all individuals who participate in the sport of Gymnastics regardless of their role.

Carer

A Carer is someone who has the responsibility for providing or arranging care for someone else who, because of long term illness or disability or age, is not able to care for him or herself.

Child

A child is anyone who has not yet reached her/his 18th birthday.

Throughout this document the term 'Children' means 'children and young people' and covers all persons under the age of 18.

Child in Need

Under Section 17 [10] of the Children Act 1989, a child is a Child in Need if:

- He/she is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him/her of services by a local authority;
- His/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him/her of such services; or
- He/she is a Disabled Child.

Child Protection

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare and refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

Children's Social Care Services

This is the new name for the Social Services. However many counties do not name their teams in this way. A common alternative name for the teams that perform the same function is "Children, Schools and Families".

Confidential information

This is information that is not normally in the public domain or readily available from another source and should be subject to a duty of confidence. A duty of confidence arises when one person provides information to another in circumstances where it is reasonable to expect that the information will be held in confidence.

Consent

This is where agreement is freely given for an action. Informed consent is where the person giving the consent fully understands what is involved and its likely consequences. Consent can be explicit or implicit. Explicit consent can be expressed either orally or in writing, although written consent is preferable since it reduces the scope for subsequent dispute. Implicit consent is where consent is implied e.g. participation in a major public event where the participant or their parent is aware that there will be TV cameras, would imply consent to be filmed.

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)

The CRB provides a disclosure service for employers and voluntary organizations in England and Wales. The Service is accessed through Registered Bodies or Umbrella Body. BG acts as an umbrella body for registered organizations in England and Wales. Access NI provides a function similar for employers and voluntary organisations in Northern Ireland. Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS) provides free Disclosures for volunteers in the voluntary sector.

Disabled

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) defines a person as having a disability 'if he has a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

Learning Disability

The Children Act 2004 defines learning disability as: 'a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind which induces significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning'. A learning disability is a lifelong disability that is often present from birth.

Local Safeguarding Children Boards

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) are strategic bodies which have responsibilities under the Children Act 2004 to help ensure that children are safeguarded properly by the "key agencies" involved with children working effectively together. They put the former area child protection committees (ACPC) on a statutory footing. The Local Safeguarding Boards can assist clubs through:

- Offering recognised child safeguarding courses for clubs at low or no cost.
- Producing the local inter agency guidance and child protection procedures.
- Provide local resources to clubs through "Local Safeguarding through Sport" subgroups. These groups may also be active in providing child safeguarding conferences for local sporting organisations.

The core membership of a LSCB is set out in the Children Act 2004, and includes local authorities, health bodies, the police and others. The objective of LSCB is to coordinate and ensure the effectiveness of their member agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Every county council has a LSBC. LSCB managers are listed on the "Every Child Matters" website.

Loco parentis

In loco parentis (from Latin meaning 'in place of a parent') refers to a person who has been given explicit permission to assume parental responsibility for a child by his or her parents or legal guardian. In BG terms we refer to this as 'in place of a parent' and acting as a reasonable trained adult.

Need to know

In the context of sharing confidential information, disclosing details only to those people who have to be informed. The factors that need to be considered when determining whether to disclose information are the reason for the sharing information, the level of detail that needs to be disclosed, to whom the information should be shared and whether disclosing the information is a proportionate response to the need to protect a child from harm.

Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)

The CPSU is part of the NSPCC and is responsible for supporting sport to safeguard children. The CPSU covers England, Northern Ireland and Wales. Children First is the equivalent organisation in Scotland.

Parent

The parent refers to the person who holds parental responsibility or the person given the responsibility for the day to day care of the child (e.g. child-minder, foster carer) by either a parent or an official body.

Parental responsibility

The Children Act 1989 defines parental responsibility as all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which, by law, a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property.

Police Child Abuse Investigation Team/Unit

Formerly known as the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team, the above title is not generic and may vary according to the police body. The role of the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team is to investigate alleged crimes against children by family members, by other children and by those in a position of trust over them, for example, sports coaches and teachers.

Proportionality

Proportionality is a key factor in deciding whether or not to share confidential information without consent. The principle of proportionality implies that the means should not exceed the ends. In other words, the information you wish, or have been asked, to share, a balanced response to the need to safeguard a person, or to prevent or detect a serious crime.

Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

Significant Harm

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of 'significant harm' as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of a child. Section 47 of the Act places a duty on the local authority to make enquiries when it has 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Sometimes, significant harm can be indicated by a single traumatic event (for example, a violent assault, suffocation, shaking or poisoning). However, significant harm is more commonly attributed to an accumulation of significant events that damage a child's physical or psychological development. Harm is defined in section 31 of the Act as 'ill-treatment or the impairment of health and development'.

Special Need

The Government's Department for Education and Skills defines children with Special Educational Needs as having 'learning difficulties or disabilities which make it harder for them to learn or access education than most other children of the same age.' A child with special needs may need extra or different help at school or home because of physical difficulties, problems with thinking and understanding, emotional and behavioural issues or a combination of these.

Young People

A term used to describe anyone who is under the age of eighteen. 'Children and young people' is often used, as many teenagers under the age of eighteen would prefer not to be referred to as a child.

Legislation

Children Acts 1989 (C41)

The Act provides a definition of a child and enshrines in law that the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration. The Act aims to ensure that the welfare and developmental needs of children are met. It sets out when enquiries should be made where there is cause to suspect a child is in need of protection and introduced the philosophy that children are generally best looked after within their family. In addition, the Act outlines when assessments should be made to ensure 'children in need' have access to appropriate services.

Children Acts 2004

The Act provided the legal framework for the reform of children's services in England and Wales, following the recommendations set out in Every Child Matters; Change for Children Strategy. This included the appointment of a Children's Commissioner, the introduction of Local Safeguarding Children Boards and the creation of databases holding information on all children and young people to professionals in working together and sharing information to safeguard children. Part 3 of the Act applies specifically to Wales.

Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

This legislation came into force in 1996 and is similar in impact and principle to the UK Children Act 1989, on which it is based.

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000

Schedule four of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 lists the offences that would automatically bar the offender from working with children. These include various kinds of violence and sexual offences.

Data Protection Act 1998

The Data Protection Act relates to personal data in a manual or computerised form that is easily accessible. The Act sets out the requirements for the processing of this information, which includes obtaining, recording, storing and disclosing.

Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporates into domestic law the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Police Act 1997

Part V of the Police Act set out the measures required to obtain information about prospective employees or volunteers from the CRB (England and Wales), Disclosure Scotland and Access NI (Northern Ireland).

Protection of Children Act 1999

The Protection of Children Act 1999 (PoCA) makes it an offence for any organisation to offer employment involving regular contact with children to anyone who has been convicted of certain specified offences, or is included on lists of people considered unsuitable for such work held by the Department for Education and Skills (List 99) and the Department of Health (PoCA List). It is also an offence for people convicted of such offences to apply for work with children. These lists, together with the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (PoVA) list will be replaced by the Vetting and Barring Scheme.

Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003

The Act provides for the maintenance of a list of persons deemed unsuitable to work with children known as the Disqualified from Working with Children List. It requires organisations, including voluntary organisations, to make a referral if an individual has been permanently removed from a childcare position on the grounds that they harmed a child or placed a child at risk of harm. There is also provision for organisations to make a referral where an individual has resigned, retired or accepted redundancy before the allegations of harm or risk of harm to a child have come to light.

Access to the list is available only through the disclosure process and forms part of safe recruitment practice when filling a childcare position. It is an offence for an organisation to knowingly appoint a worker (paid or unpaid) who is fully listed into a childcare position and anyone who is listed commits a criminal offence if they work with children or apply to do so. Organisations have a duty to refer someone who has harmed a child or placed a child at risk of harm, and is dismissed, resigns or is moved away from contact with children as a consequence. Organisations also have a duty to remove fully listed people from childcare positions.

Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007

This Act relates to a new Scottish Vetting and Barring Scheme that builds on some of the existing provisions contained in the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003. The Act provides for two lists to be established: one for those who are unsuitable to work with children and young people younger than 18 and another for those unsuitable to work with “protected adults”. Anyone who wants to work with children will be required to register with the scheme. Unless an individual is automatically barred due to a relevant offence against a child, barring decisions will be taken by a new central barring unit.

Rehabilitation of Offender Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 enables some criminal convictions to become ‘spent’. It helps people with minor convictions, where after a defined period will no longer have to disclose these convictions. Positions working with children are one of a number of exemptions to the Act and people with ‘spent’ convictions would be expected to disclose this information.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 was passed as a result of the Richard Inquiry arising from the Soham murders in 2002. The Act provides the framework to set up the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the Vetting and Barring Scheme. The main purpose is to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007

As only part of the provisions in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 extend to Northern Ireland, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 replicates the remaining parts of the scheme in order to provide a seamless vetting and barring scheme.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention sets out the rights of all children and was adopted into international law in 1989. Further details see www.unicef.org

Government Guidance

Caring for the Young and Vulnerable; Home Office (1999)

This document provides guidance for organizations working with children or vulnerable adults on good practice to protect against sexual activity within a relationship of trust.

Co-operating to safeguard Children 2003(NI)

Every Child Matters

Change for Children. www.everychildmatters.gov.uk. Information Sharing - www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00340/

Protecting Children – A Shared Responsibility Scottish Office, 1998

The main national reference for safeguarding, it provides guidance on how agencies should work together to protect children and young people, covers the roles and responsibilities of all professionals who come into contact with young people through their work and describes the child protection process.

Staying Safe Action Plan

www.dcsf.gov.uk

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused HM Government 2006

This document outlines the processes to be followed when there are concerns about a child’s welfare, including their safety, and provides clear expectations for everyone working with or coming into contact with children and their parents/carers. www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

Working Together to Safeguard Children; HM Government 2006: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This document is the key reference for safeguarding in England and replaces the 1999 guidance. It provides guidance on how agencies should work together to protect children, covers the roles and responsibilities of all professionals who come into contact with children through their work and describes the child protection process. www.everychildmatters.gov.uk.

Safeguarding Children – Working Together under the Children Act 2004; Welsh Assembly Government, 2007

Welsh Assembly Government issued guidance intended to provide assistance for specified bodies to review existing policies, procedures and practices. For current guidance on safeguarding, legislation and resources in Wales: <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/?lang=en>

Notes

British Gymnastics

More than a sport

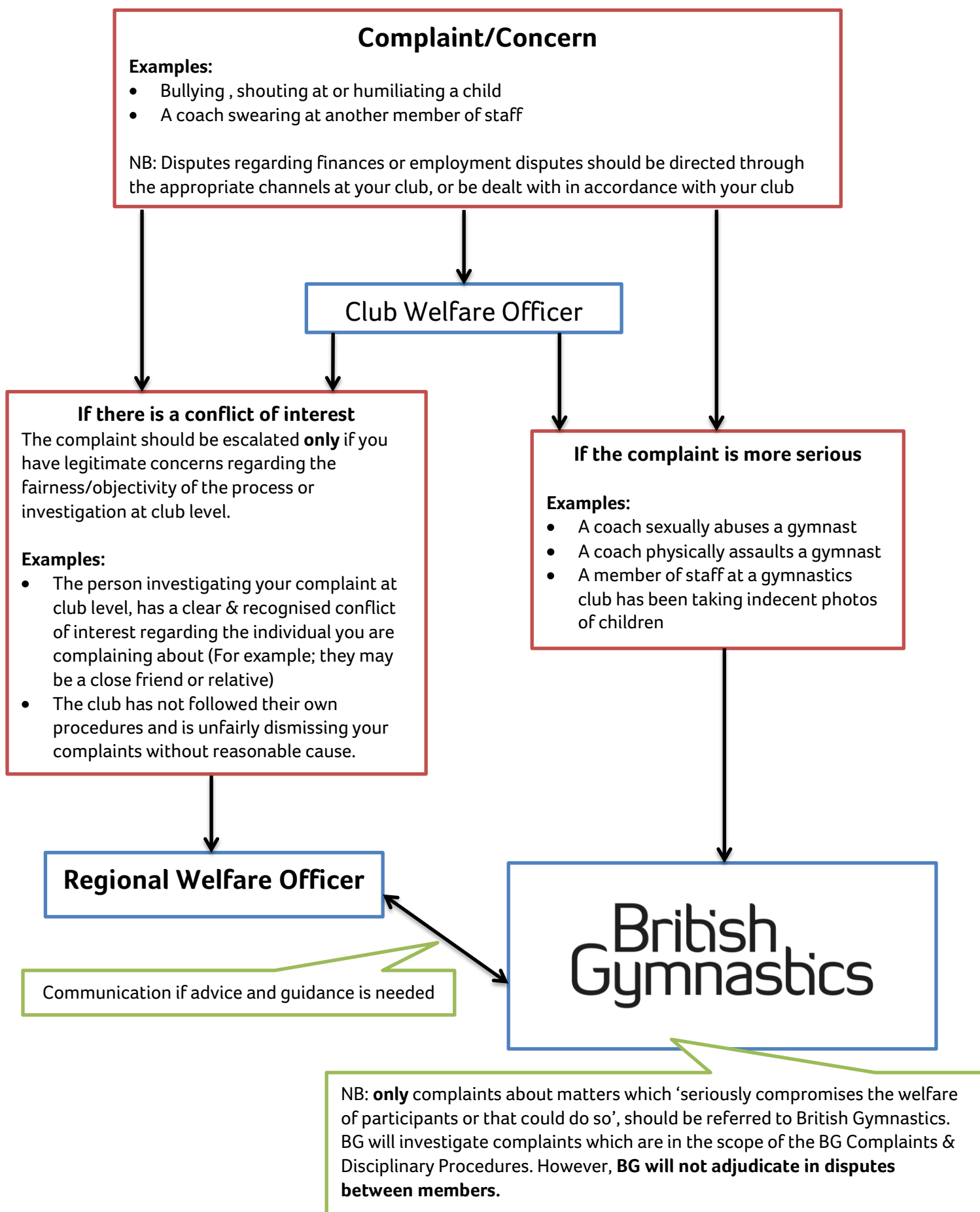




BG Pathway to Reporting Complaints

Pathway for Reporting Serious Complaints/Concerns

This flowchart is intended to clarify the pathway for complaints relating to serious breaches of the BG Standards of Conduct by members. NB: Whilst this pathway may concern matters which occur in BG affiliated clubs; it does not apply to complaints about BG programmes (such as National Performance Squad Activity), events, services or decisions (“acts of BG”).





Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy



Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

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About Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy

Contained within this section is:

General Principles

Requirement for a Vulnerable Adults Policy

British Gymnastics is committed to...

General Principles

“Everyone who participates in British Gymnastics is entitled to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment”. All members of British Gymnastics must follow the policies defined in this document. BG is committed to helping everyone in BG to accept their responsibility to safeguard Vulnerable Adults from harm and abuse.

This document sets out the procedures you need to follow to protect Vulnerable Adults and what you need to do if you have any concerns. This policy applies to all coaches, volunteers, helpers, gymnasts, parents/carers and Staff involved in BG, whether or not they are BG members. All these people have a Duty of Care to safeguard the welfare of Vulnerable Adults and prevent their abuse.

Requirement for a Vulnerable Adults Policy

In line with the considerations of the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) and the Vulnerable Groups Act (2006), to promote equal opportunities and provide a clearer framework for those with physical, mental health and learning disabilities.

Vulnerable people are at heightened risk of abuse and discrimination because of their susceptibility and many experience this in all walks of life. Practice has shown that vulnerable people who are victims of abuse in the sports setting can be reluctant to report their experiences for fear of losing a positive and important part of their lives. Therefore it is essential that BG, as a national governing body, and its associated clubs and staff, are aware of the indicators of abuse and can recognise and act appropriately to protect potential victims.

Abuse can occur in many situations, including the home, workplace, day centre, at the shops, on the bus, in educational institutions and of course in a gymnastics club. For the majority of Vulnerable Adults, gymnastics is a positive and rewarding experience, however, there is a growing recognition that sport generally provides easy access to vulnerable people for those who wish to perpetrate abusive behaviour. Therefore, BG is aware of the need to protect Vulnerable Adults from those individuals who may seek to harm them in the gymnastics environment.

The primary difference in addressing adult and child abuse relates to the adult’s right to self-determination. Adults may choose not to act at all to protect themselves and only in extreme circumstances will the law intervene.

This is not the case for Children because they are minors under the Children Act (1980) and this legislation can be used effectively to ensure protection from abuse once it has been recognised. In cases of suspected adult abuse it is important to recognise that assertive persuasion to encourage the individual to report or take action against an abuser or abusive situation may have negative outcomes for the Vulnerable Adult and could be detrimental to their well-being by causing them further harm. Therefore, protection of Vulnerable Adults from abuse is a more complex process than child protection and requires policy and procedures that reflect this. Policy users need to develop an understanding that protecting Vulnerable Adults necessitates a more supportive and advisory approach in response to reporting abuse, than in child protection situations where the legal framework is clear and definitive and requires stipulated responses. In serious situations the child can be removed from the abusive environment, for Vulnerable Adults it is not always possible or appropriate to achieve this level of safety.

The following policy document draws from and includes relevant legislation and government guidance such as the “Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)” and the “No Secrets guidance (2000)” regarding vulnerable people.

British Gymnastics is committed to...

Making the welfare of Vulnerable Adults paramount, even where the rights and needs of the other adults that work with them are overridden in order to provide the necessary protection to these individuals, Enabling everyone, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, first language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual orientation to participate equitably in the sport and to have fun in a safe environment. Taking all reasonable steps to protect Vulnerable Adults from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and have respect for their human rights, wishes and feelings. Taking all suspicions and allegations of abuse or poor practice seriously and responding swiftly and appropriately to them in accordance with current procedures (Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures). Ensuring that all BG members working with Vulnerable Adults are competent and appropriate for the responsibility given to them and have been provided with relevant awareness training regarding the potential difficulties Vulnerable Adults can face and how to manage them. Requiring all registered clubs, members and volunteers to accept responsibility for the welfare of the Vulnerable Adults in their care in accordance with all BG’s policies and procedures, and that they incorporate these into their constitutions and rules, being mindful and ensuring that all registered clubs, members and volunteers are mindful of the differences between policies and procedures regarding vulnerable adults and those of children, and particularly that each vulnerable adult has the right to self determination in all but the most extreme matters. Where appropriate, working in partnership with parents/carers to support the Vulnerable Adults and, where practicable, cooperating with the wishes of the Vulnerable Adult and their carers.

Abuse and Anti Bullying Policy

Contained within this section is:

Objectives of this policy
Degree of Abuse
Responding to Bullying
Strategies to Discourage Bullying
Responding to victims of Bullying
Confronting the Bully(ies)
Supporting the Bullied

Objectives of this policy

- All Gymnastics staff, volunteers, members, and parents/carers should have an understanding of what abuse is.
- All Gymnastics staff, volunteers and members should know what the clubs policy is on any form of abuse, and follow it when abuse is reported.
- All members including vulnerable adults and their parents/carers should know what the club policy is on abuse and what they need to do should abuse arise.
- As a club you take bullying seriously. Vulnerable adults and their parents/carers should be assured that they would be supported when abuse is reported.
- Any form of abuse will not be tolerated

BG is committed to providing a supportive, friendly, safe and positive environment free of offensive or abusive behaviour through its network of members, clubs and staff.

Adults with disabilities are particularly vulnerable and at greater risk of all forms of abuse. The presence of multiple disabilities increases the risk of both abuse and neglect. Some of the common factors that can lead to increased vulnerability include social isolation, communication and learning difficulties, lack of understanding of boundaries, need for assistance with personal care and more likely target for bullying and abuse. Adults with disabilities have the same rights to protection as any other adult and clubs working with these adults need to be especially alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse and have strategies in place to ensure all vulnerable adults are able to raise concerns.

Abuse is not always easy to identify.

Some indicators of abuse are:

- The adult discloses a concern and describes what may be an abusive act.
- Another person raises concern about the well being of an adult.
- Unexplained or concerning injuries such as burns, cuts, and bruises and particularly when situated in areas of the adults body which are not normally prone to injury.
- Physical injury where the explanation given is inconsistent.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour such as an adult becoming withdrawn, quiet or aggressive/verbally violent.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness and/or behaving in a sexualised manner.
- Excessive weight loss or weight gain for no obvious reason.
- Physical appearance becomes unkempt.
- The adult is withdrawn and isolated themselves from the group and seems unable to make friends.

This is not an exhaustive list of indicators and alone cannot be seen to be definitive proof an adult is being abused.

British Gymnastics does not expect the adults involved in the sport to decide whether a vulnerable adult has been abused but it is everyone's responsibility to act upon their concerns and report any incident immediately.

Degree of Abuse

In response to the "No Secrets" Government guidance, the Law Commission states that the severity and extent of abuse should be evaluated based on the level of harm brought about by ill treatment (not only physical ill treatment) *"that leads to an impairment of, or avoidable deterioration in physical or mental health and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development"*.

the vulnerability of the victim
the nature and extent of the abuse
the length of time the abuse has been occurring
the impact on the individual
the risk of repeated or increasingly serious acts involving this or other Vulnerable Adults

The government guidance “No Secrets” provides the following as classifications of abuse:

- **Physical abuse**, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **Sexual abuse**, including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting;
- **Psychological abuse**, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks;
- **Neglect and acts of omission**, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Financial or material abuse**, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;
- **Discriminatory abuse**, including racist, sexist, that based on a person’s disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- **Bullying**. Bullying and harassment occurs where repeated deliberate actions by one or more people cause hurt to an individual or group and where it is difficult for the bullied person(s) to prevent or deal with this person’s actions. The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm).

In more extreme cases signs of bullying include the following:

- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night, has nightmares or demonstrates any other form of unusual behaviour during the evenings
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other individuals
- stops eating
- self harms
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Responding to Bullying

Bullying by children or adults on vulnerable adults within a club must never be tolerated. Bullying may take many forms including physical, verbal, or through the written word, and may be conducted in person or through the actions of another person/other people.

Strategies to Discourage Bullying

- Create an open environment and provide adequate supervision at all times
- Encourage vulnerable adults to speak out and share any concerns with the person in charge, the Welfare Officer or other responsible adults.
- Take all signs or allegations of possible bullying seriously.

Responding to victims of Bullying

- Anyone becoming aware that a vulnerable adult is being bullied should offer the adult reassurance and try to gain their trust.
- Explain that someone in authority may need to be informed.
- Keep accurate records of what happened together with names of those involved and any action taken.
- Report suspicions or concerns to the person in charge.

Confronting the Bully(ies)

- Talk to the bully(ies), explain the situation and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their actions.
- Seek an apology from the bully(ies) to the victim.
- Inform the bully’s parents.
- Insist that any borrowed items are returned to the victim.
- Impose sanctions or disciplinary action if necessary.
- Report and record all actions taken.
- Provide support for the victim and his/her coach.
- Encourage the bully(ies) to change his/her behaviour.

Supporting the Bullied

- Vulnerable adults who have been bullied will often need support from club officer’s to deal with the impact of bullying. This may include having a specific person to whom concerns can be raised.
- They will need to be supported external to the club from parents/carers, or other relatives.
- The club may consider holding a reconciliation meeting to help address the issues between the bully and the bullied person.

Abuse of Position of Trust

Contained within this section is:

Poor Practice

BG believes anyone in a position of trust who engages in sexual activity within a relationship of trust is in serious breach of the BG Policy and is likely to be considered unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults in gymnastics.

Poor Practice

Poor Practice can be split into a number of groupings. These include: -

- [Practices that may be on the fringe of abuse and/or if repeated again and again, would amount to abuse.](#)
[Most of the examples are linked to emotional abuse.](#)
Examples include:
 - Name-calling
 - Constant criticism of a vulnerable adult
 - Exerting excessive pressure
 - Forcing a vulnerable adult to do something against their will
 - Use of inappropriate language
 - Harassment.
- [Breaches of BG Vulnerable Adults Policy](#)
Examples include:
 - No welfare officer within a club
 - Inadequate safeguarding arrangements
 - Providing inadequate supervision and/or care
 - Failure to respond appropriately to concerns
 - Expelling anyone from the club who raises a concern?
 - Excluding parents/carers from observing or asking questions about training
 - Inappropriate use of photographic equipment or materials.
- [Breaches of recognised best practice in coaching](#)
 - Providing coaching or running a session without another responsible adult present
 - Exceeding level of competence and/or qualification
 - Employing practices that are inappropriate for the stage of psychological and physical development of the individual
 - Excessive training or competition
 - Inappropriate/excessive supporting or stretching.
- [Practices that may be carried out with the best intentions but that fall into a category of behaviours that are used by people who sexually abuse vulnerable adults to 'groom' their victim](#)
Examples include:
 - Offering to give a vulnerable adult a lift home alone
 - Giving a vulnerable adult gifts
 - Having unnecessary physical contact with a vulnerable adult e.g. excessive handling/supporting, cuddling, kissing, 'friendly' taps etc
 - Socialising/having friendships with vulnerable adults outside training.
- [Practices that are known to be significant risk factors in cases of abuse and can never to be condoned:](#)
 - Taking vulnerable adults to your home or other place unaccompanied by others.
 - Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
 - Sharing a room with a vulnerable adult.
 - Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
 - Making sexually suggestive remarks.
 - Reducing a vulnerable adult to tears as a form of control.
 - Using or allowing vulnerable adults to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
 - Allowing allegations made by a vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
 - Carrying out personal care for a vulnerable adult that they can do unaided
 - Departing from the premises without first supervising the safe dispersal of the vulnerable adults.
 - Abusing a privileged position of power or trust.
 - Resorting to bullying tactics, or verbal abuse.
 - Causing a participant to lose self-esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual.
 - Spending excessive amounts of time alone with a vulnerable adult away from other adults.

It is essential that everyone challenges poor practice, even where there is a belief that the motives of an individual are well meaning. Failure to challenge poor practice can lead to an environment where abuse is more likely to remain unnoticed.

BG accepts that on occasion there may be unplanned situations where the unexpected does occur, which leads to a responsible person being alone with a vulnerable adult. In addition, situations arise where a vulnerable adult may:

- become distressed
- be accidentally hurt by someone else
- misunderstand/misinterpret something that has been said or done
- appear to become sexually aroused

In these situations, the individual involved must report the incident immediately to the welfare officer or a senior colleague and compile a brief written report of the event. The parent/carer should also be informed of any significant incident with the consent of the vulnerable adult if they have capacity.

Club Trip Checklist

The following checklist is a quick guide to check health, safety and welfare procedures when organising a club trip.

CHECKLIST

	YES	NO	DATE
1. Have you identified the roles required and responsibilities for trip staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
2. Have you followed recruitment procedures as outlined in the BG Safeguarding policy including Criminal Record Bureau checks on all staff over the age of 14 years who are in a regulated activity in contact with children and/or vulnerable adults as part of their role on the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
3. Have all trip staff completed Safeguarding and Protection training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
4. Do you have a sufficient ratio of trip staff as per 'Overnight stay' and are they of the appropriate gender?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
5. Have you a designated (Child) Protection Welfare Officer for the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
6. Has the designated Welfare Officer attended relevant Safeguarding training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
7. Have you circulated responsibilities and contact details for all staff to parents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
8. Have you addressed any specific special needs of the participants? e.g. Diet, Medication, Disability related, Religious etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
9. Have you completed a risk assessment for the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
10. Have you completed a detailed itinerary and circulated it to participants and their parents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
11. Has a Service Provision Checklist been completed (if required)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
12. Do you have Codes of Conduct for Staff and participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
13. Have you ensured that all coaches are suitably trained, updated and qualified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
14. Have you made arrangements for overnight accommodation and considered room allocation and layout?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
15. Have you made arrangements for transport?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>

	YES	NO	DATE
16. Do you have adequate First Aid provision?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
17. Do you have a process for recording accidents and incidents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
18. Are all trip staff and participants members of British Gymnastics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
19. Have you considered any additional insurance needs for the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
20. Do you have a procedure in place in the event of a participant going missing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
21. Do you have all necessary directions and maps?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
22. Have you ensured that all new members have completed registration and consent forms?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>

Communication

All clubs should have a communication policy that covers the use of communication devices and the manner in which coaches can communicate with vulnerable adults.

The following key points must be included:

- Mobile phones should be turned off in the gym except in the case where a phone is used as a club contact number or for emergencies.
- It is unacceptable for adult members to communicate with vulnerable adults by:
 - text message
 - through internet chat rooms/social networking sites
 - e-mail
- All communication by the above methods should be through the parent/carer
- Subject to parental/carer consent, coaches can communicate with vulnerable adults over the age of sixteen years but a copy of all correspondence must be sent to either the welfare officer or a senior official.
- Coaches should limit communications to training related issues

However, if it necessary to make contact with 16 and 17 year old coaches via email or text then this must be done in mass.

Communication as part of a club communication involving several adults and several children including the club welfare officer is acceptable as it ceases to be personal.

1 to 1 communication between coach and a vulnerable adult is unacceptable.

As technology develops, the internet and its range of services can be accessed through various devices including mobile phones, computers and game consoles. Although the internet has many positive uses, it provides the key method for the distribution of images of abuse. In addition, networking sites and chatrooms have increasingly been used by people for the purpose of 'grooming' vulnerable adults for abuse and by others as a means of bullying. In the event of a gymnast showing a coach a text message, image or email that is considered to be inappropriate for a the vulnerable adult to have, the coach must inform the appropriate welfare officer.

All staff, volunteers, parents and members should always behave responsibly and respectfully when online or texting.

- They should not post or discuss unfavorable comments about coaches, gymnasts, any helper or volunteer, parent or club/s
- Coaches should not make contact or hold discussions with gymnasts via social networking sites or texting.

Confidentiality Policy

Contained within this section is:

Introduction
Responsibilities
General Principles
Operational Practice
Staff or Membership Suspensions
Sharing information within British Gymnastics
Subject access requests
Electronic Information
Email Addresses
*Data Protection Act 1998 - Eight Principles

Introduction

British Gymnastics (BG) recognises that a guarantee that members' personal information is kept safe and secure is vital to ensure trust and confidence in the organisation.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- establish a clear and agreed understanding of what confidentiality means within BG
- encourage uniformity in practice
- ensure that BG members volunteers and external agencies working with BG are aware of the standards they can expect

There are some situations where confidential information may be shared without consent. These circumstances are set out in BG Information sharing to safeguard vulnerable adults policy.

This policy applies to all BG members and continues to apply after their service or involvement with BG has come to an end.

Responsibilities

- The Board has the overall and final responsibility for ensuring that BG meets its legal responsibilities regarding confidentiality in relation to the Data Protection Act 1998, Human Rights legislation and the common law duty of confidentiality. Board Members must also maintain confidentiality as a requirement of the Company Act 1989
- The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Confidentiality Policy is put into practice. In particular the Chief Executive will ensure that:
- Line Managers and BG Officials are aware of their responsibilities to their staff and volunteers
- Arrangements are in place to monitor and implement this policy
- Breaches of the policy are dealt with proportional to the implications of the breach

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 BG is required to register with the Information Commissioner. The Act regulates the handling of all personal data held on an individual. While the majority of BG affiliated organisations will be exempt from registration if the data they hold is purely to service their membership, everyone must comply with the eight data protection principals* set out in the Act.

General Principles

- Information belongs to the person or agency entrusting it to a member of staff, a member or volunteer of British Gymnastics.
- Information provided by an individual or organisation should be treated as confidential unless it has been expressly stated otherwise.
- Once received by British Gymnastics, information may not be used for any purpose other than that for which it was given; nor may it be passed on to any person or agency outside British Gymnastics without the express permission of the data subject. Except when required for legal reasons?

Operational Practice

- BG keeps extensive records, using paper files and computers. Where necessary, personal details of BG Staff and members are recorded in these systems.
- Every BG member or employee has a right of access to any personal information that BG holds on them in a 'relevant filing system'*** and to have changed any information that is inaccurate. ??Confidential information that has been provided by a third party may be removed from a file prior to its examination.

- BG will maintain an appropriate level of security, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will adequately protect information about individuals that is held in these systems. Paper files will be kept in a locked area and computer-based files will be password protected.
- The use of information for reports, monitoring and funding applications will avoid any specific detail about members that might lead to their identification unless they have given their prior consent.
- Consent must be obtained from the relevant individuals prior to any personal information being publicised either in print or on a website. The accuracy of the information must also be confirmed.
- BG will seek permission from the relevant member, volunteer, employee or organisation before any information that is held by BG is passed on to a third party where that information specifically identifies them or might lead to their identification. In the case of employees, this does not include their professional contact details.

Staff or Membership Suspensions

Where a BG member or member of staff is temporarily suspended, the CEO has overall responsibility for determining who should be informed. The suspension and the reasons behind the decision will be treated as a confidential matter and will not be disclosed unless there is a justifiable reason. When deciding whether or not to disclose information, it is vital to consider if a proposed disclosure is a proportionate response to protect the welfare of children or other members. The amount of confidential information disclosed and to whom should be no more than is strictly necessary to ensure the welfare of BG members and young people.

Sharing Information within British Gymnastics

It is sometimes desirable to share information with other BG staff or officials to allow them to fulfill their role. Information given to staff members or officials acting on behalf of BG will only be given on a 'need to know' basis. It should be absolutely clear to all attending meetings or taking on a role on behalf of BG that they must comply with the rules of confidentiality and ensure confidential matters are not disclosed.

BG Committee members include individuals from various backgrounds, some of whom are there in a formal capacity on behalf of other agencies which have statutory duties, e.g. members of the Case Referral Management Group. Such representatives should normally regard information that they learn in their capacity as members of a BG Committee as confidential, however, if, as a result of their membership of the Committee, they become aware of information that they feel needs to be shared, the individual should bring this to the attention of the relevant Committee so that the statutory or other implications can be formally acknowledged.

Subject access requests

The Data Protection Act 1998 provides all data subjects with the right to request access to their personal file. BG holds membership files and other records for young people under the age of eighteen. As a general rule a person with parental responsibility will have the right to apply for access to information held on file or in a membership record relating to their child if the young person is under the age of sixteen. Where a child is considered capable of making their own decisions, their consent will be sought before a person with parental responsibility will be given access to their file or record. Where an individual is over the age of 16, subject access requests must come direct from the individual unless it can be demonstrated that the data subject lacks capacity to make their own decisions.

Electronic Information

Each user is responsible for securing (or limiting access to) documents and folders, which can be accessed via the BG network. On no account should confidential work be stored in shared folders. All BG Computers that contain sensitive or confidential data are password protected. Users should not disclose passwords or security details to others except when required to do so by a manager.

Email Addresses

Personal email addresses should be treated in the same manner as private telephone numbers and should only be given out with the explicit consent from the individual.

BG staff should use standard signatures, which refer to the confidentiality policy when posting email externally.

* Data Protection Act 1998 - Eight Principles

1. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless –
 - at least one of the conditions in Schedule 2 is met; and
 - in the case of sensitive personal data, at least one of the conditions in Schedule 3 is also met.

2. Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.
3. Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
4. Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.
6. Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under this Act.
7. Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
8. Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area, unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection of the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

*** To fall under the Data Protection Act 1998, personal data held manually must be organised into a 'relevant filing system'. Manual files would only fall within the scope of the Act if the filing system is sufficiently sophisticated to provide the same or similar speed of accessibility as computerised files.

Contact Information

Club information sheet

Club Welfare Officer

Name:

Tel:

Regional Welfare Officer

Name:

Tel:

Local Authority Services

Adult Social Care Services

Tel:

Out Of Hours Contact Number

Tel:

Police Abuse Investigation Team/Unit

Tel:

British Gymnastics

0845 129 7 129

ethics@british-gymnastics.org

Ann Craft

The Ann Craft Trust

Centre for Social Work

University of Nottingham

University Park

Nottingham

NG7 2RD

0115 9515400

www.anncrafttrust.org

Careline

08451 228622

www.carelineuk.org

Disability Information Service

www.diss.org.uk

Mencap

0808 808 1111

www.mencap.org.uk

Mental Health Foundation

www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Mind

0845 766 0163

www.mind.org.uk

Help for adults

Help and Advice

0808 800 5000

DAS

Commercial Advice (for BG registered clubs)

0117 933 0617

Counselling Helpline

0117 934 2121

Regional Welfare Officers

UK Lead Officer (inc England)

Heidi Saxon - 0845 1297129

heidi.saxon@british-gymnastics.org

Scotland Lead Officer

Lorna Whyte - 01786 466232

lorna@scottishgym.org

Northern Ireland Lead Officer

Miriam McAtackney - 0845 129 7 129 ext 2347

Ethics@british-gymnastics.org

Wales Lead Officer

Cerri Dando

Cerri.dando@welshgymnastics.org

North

Enid Harrison - 01642 457168

north@baga.co.uk

Lynda Kouache - 07882 856434

lynda.kouache@btinternet.com

North West

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pctc@uwclub.net

Justine Carroll - 07817 710782

justinecarroll@hotmail.com

Yorkshire

Helen Monks - 07811 382153

helendmonks@homecall.co.uk

West Midlands

Hollie Styles - 07946 850097

hollie_styles@hotmail.com

East Midlands

Veronica West

vwest@gotadsl.co.uk

East

Karly Good - 07711 903611

karlygood@hotmail.co.uk

Verity Adams - 07762 529271

verityadams@hotmail.co.uk

East County Welfare Officers

Tyree Robinson (Norfolk) - 07968 444885

tyetyre@yahoo.com

Angela Smith (Bedfordshire) - 07922

034441

a.smith55@hotmail.co.uk

Debbie Fountain (Essex) - 07708 743047

debfontain48@hotmail.com

Teresa O'Neill (Hertfordshire) - 07780

706264

teresakett@hotmail.co.uk

Tina Stagg (Suffolk) - 07970 772713

tina.stagg@sky.com

Andrew Aistrup (Cambridgeshire) - 07805

208693

andrew.aistrup@cangaroos.org or aaistrup@yahoo.co.uk

South West

Chris O'Hagan - 07739 512208

christine.ohagan@british-gymnastics.org

South

Val Brown Val Brown - 0118 926 3868

VFBrown07@googlemail.com

South East

Mike Gervaux - 07905 019357

mgevaux1@suttonlea.org

London

Lorna Goddard - 07504 420629

welfare@londongym.org.uk

Duty of Care

Clubs have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of gymnasts, coaches, volunteers, officials and visitors. This responsibility applies to all clubs, regardless of their size or structure. There is a legal responsibility to ensure that participants are protected against harm or danger whilst taking part in gymnastics or related activities. This is legally termed the 'Duty of Care'.

When working with vulnerable adults, an adult who carries out a supervisory role would take on certain responsibilities while the adult was in their care. This may include:

- Holding a responsibility for care and well-being during training
- Safe dispersal after training
- Providing first aid
- Chaperoning
- Team Managing

The expected standard for behaviour is based on reasonableness. The Duty of Care starts from the time a vulnerable adult arrives at a club or event, until the vulnerable adult is returned to their parent/carer.

In order to fulfil the 'Duty of Care', gymnastics activity providers must make sure that the following areas are properly covered:

- Safeguarding and welfare
- Safe environment including safe apparatus and equipment
- Safe development of the individual through appropriate physical and psychological preparation and progressive skill development
- Provision of suitable first aid support and emergency procedures
- Exercising reasonable care at all times.

Those with an overall responsibility for running a club or providing gymnastics activity must ensure that policies and procedures are in place and implemented to ensure that the 'Duty of Care' is met. However, BG Policy, training courses and resource materials are designed to provide the prudent club, welfare officer, coach, judge, official and parent with a sufficient basis of knowledge and guidance to enable them to make informed judgements in respect of safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of vulnerable adults in their care.

The guidance in this section will assist gymnastics providers to ensure the approach to safeguarding and the promotion of welfare fulfils the 'duty of care' and meets reasonable expectations in relation to the standards required by organisations that provide services for vulnerable adults. Any reports of failure to comply with the guidance in this section will be investigated as breach of Policy.

Good Practice and Poor Practice for Clubs and Coaches

Contained within this section is:

Good Practice for Coaches and Club Officials

Good Practice for Clubs

Good Practice for Coaches and Club Officials

All participants have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. The promotion of good practice will reduce the possibility of abusive situations occurring. A good caring coach will continually reflect upon their own coaching style, physiology and practices to ensure the safety and well-being of the participant at all times. Although this policy and Guidelines are written with coaches in mind they are applicable to all adults with access to vulnerable adults through gymnastics. Failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action.

The following are examples of good practice:

- Always be publicly open when working with vulnerable adults. Ensure that a coach and an individual vulnerable adult can always be seen.
- Always ensure there is at least one other responsible adult present at all times during training sessions.
- Care should be taken when providing manual support (spotting). Recognised techniques for spotting should be used.
- Treat all participants with respect and dignity
- Always place the safety and the welfare of the participants as the highest priority
- Behave in an exemplary manner and provide a role model for excellent behaviour within the club and at all BG recognised events/competitions
- Keep up to date with your knowledge and technical skills
- Do not exceed the level of your qualifications
- Respect the needs and wishes of all participants.
- Motivate the participants through positive feedback and constructive criticism
- Create a safe and enjoyable situation
- Maintain a written report of any accident, incident or near miss regardless of the injury together with any subsequent treatment or action
- Ensure all members of BG adhere to the codes of ethics and code of conduct and anti doping policy
- Do not take a vulnerable adult in a car alone except in unforeseen circumstances (i.e. hospital)

PRACTICE NEVER TO BE CONDONED

You should never:-

- Take a vulnerable adult to your home or other place where they will be alone with you
- Engage in rough physical or sexual provocative games
- Share a room with a vulnerable adult
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour
- Engage in any form of sexual related relationship with a vulnerable adult
- Make sexually suggestive remarks to a vulnerable adult – even in fun
- Reduce a vulnerable adult to tears as a form of control
- Encourage children or vulnerable adults to bully vulnerable adults verbally, racially or physically
- Allow allegations made by a vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature that they can do for themselves, unless you have been instructed to do so by the parents/carer and then only with the consent of the vulnerable adult. An adult, with capacity, should make their own decisions.
- Depart from the premises until you have supervised the safe dispersal of all the vulnerable adults
- Abuse your privileged position of power or trust with vulnerable adults
- Resort to bullying tactics, or verbal abuse (i.e. Shouting, screaming, physically poke or make fun of)
- Cause a participant to lose self esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual
- Allow vulnerable adults to form an inappropriate relationship with a coach
- Text, or use any social networking sites to engage in conversation with gymnasts. Always communicate with the person themselves and parents/carers if appropriate. See communication policy
- Coaches must not provide intimate care e.g. toileting, assisting with changing

Good Practice for Clubs

It is essential that the welfare and safety of vulnerable adults is paramount for all club activities, not only to provide the best possible protection for vulnerable adults in gymnastics, but also to avoid allegations of poor practice and to ensure the safety of staff and participants. Failure to follow guidelines could place vulnerable adults, coaches and the club in a vulnerable situation. Further guidance can be found under 'Running a Safe Club'.

Clubs must:-

- Provide a designated person (welfare Officer) for dealing with safeguarding within the club. (See Recruiting a Welfare Officer)
- Provide an open door policy where parents can observe the vulnerable adult if the adult so wishes
- Adopt the British Gymnastics Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy as part of their registration to the organisation
- Promote the policy to all club members and parents/carers to show the club commitment to a safe environment
- Promote an environment where all legitimate concerns can be raised without fear of victimisation or reprisal (See Whistle Blowing)
- Establish procedures through which complaints or concerns can be voiced and dealt with confidentially
- Ensure that all staff, coaches, volunteers and helpers who have regular contact with children or vulnerable adults are Criminal Record Bureau checked through British Gymnastics
- Keep written records of any poor practice or child/adult protection related incidents and accidents and any action taken
- Provide provision for regular training for all coaches, assistants and officials in Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (Sports Coach UK Coaching Disabled Performers, How to Coach Disabled People in Sport, Equity in your Coaching)
- Ensuring that there are at least two responsible adults present at all training sessions
- That coaches, staff, helpers or volunteers are not placed in a position by the club that will place them in breach of the BG policies and procedures, rules and regulations
- Ensure that good practice is in place for all trips away from the normal training venue. (See Overnight Stays policy)
- Ensure that equal opportunities and equity policies are adhered to, and that discrimination is prohibited at all levels
- Ensure careful screening of coaches, helper, volunteers or officials according to the safe recruitment guidelines
- Adopt the British Gymnastics policy on photography

Keep parents/carers fully informed, as appropriate and with the consent of the vulnerable adult of the vulnerable adults development and any changes to the normal training routine.

Guidance for Parents/Carers

It is important that parents/carers are able to feel confident that vulnerable adults will be protected from harm while attending a gymnastics club. The following information will allow parents/carers to make informed decisions about whether a club has taken an appropriate response to safeguarding vulnerable adults in its care. Parents/Carers should be encouraged to talk to the vulnerable adult about training.

Parents should check that:

- The club has a published safeguarding and protecting vulnerable adults policy
- The club has an anti-bullying policy.
- The club has codes of conduct for all members including coaches, staff and volunteers, parents and gymnasts.
- There is a designated person (Welfare Officer) in place with a responsibility for safeguarding
- The club encourages members and their parent/carers to raise concerns without fear of victimisation or reprisal.
- There are procedures in place for dealing with complaints and disciplinary issues.
- The club has procedures in place for safe recruitment including the use of CRB disclosures.
- All coaches have BG Coaching qualifications and only coach to the level of their qualification
- There are always at least two responsible adults present during training sessions. (NB The second adult could be a parent helper or club official)
- Coaches must not provide intimate care e.g. toileting, assisting with changing
- All staff and volunteers have attended relevant training
- All staff and volunteers have a BG Criminal Records Disclosure
- The club has a transport policy
- The club has a changing-room policy
- Parents/carers are not discouraged from watching or becoming involved.
- The club has an Equality policy.

When working with vulnerable adults, over the age of eighteen, then their wishes etc need to be taken into account and their consent sought for any decisions that affect them, not the parents/carer. Parents/carers should be included when appropriate and if the person lacks capacity.

Information Sharing

Contained within this section is:

Introduction
Core Principles
Type of Information that will be shared

Introduction

Information relating to safeguarding concerns is often highly sensitive and needs to be kept confidential. However, where the welfare, rights and liberties of a vulnerable adult may be at risk by not disclosing the information it may be necessary to breach confidentiality. Confidential information should be shared if the public interest in safeguarding the welfare of a vulnerable adult overrides the need for confidentiality.

Core Principles

When making a decision whether or not to share information, the welfare of the vulnerable adult is the paramount consideration. The following points outline the British Gymnastics approach for sharing information relating to vulnerable adult protection concerns.

- BG will share information where there is a reasonable belief that it is necessary to share in order to protect or safeguard a vulnerable adult
- BG will explain openly and honestly, or at least notify, at the outset what information will or could be shared, and why, and seek agreement – except where doing so puts the vulnerable adult or others at risk of significant harm
- Consent to share information will usually be sought from the individual to whom the information relates unless:
 - Non consent may put the vulnerable adult or other parties at risk of harm
 - Refusal to consent is unreasonable or not in the public interest
 - Consent cannot be obtained
 - BG is advised by a statutory agency not to do so.
- If consent is refused or there are good reasons not to seek consent, consideration will be given as to whether there is a sufficient public interest for the information to be shared (principles of openness, consultation and inclusion)
- BG will respect the wishes of vulnerable adults (families) who do not consent to share confidential information unless it is judged that there is sufficient reason to override that lack of consent
- BG will share no more information than is necessary for the specific purposes of safeguarding the vulnerable adult (principle of proportionality)
- In order to ensure there is transparency in the application of this policy, BG will ensure that people to whom this policy applies are aware of the content and ensuing implications
- BG will indicate when sharing information which aspects of the disclosure is factual (to the best of our knowledge) and which is an expression of professional opinion.
- BG will ensure that the way that information is shared is appropriate to the level of urgency but in the event that information is shared by phone, it will be supported by a written report
- Information that is shared will be accurate, up to date, necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, shared only with those with a need to see it and shared securely
- Records will always be kept of the decision to share, or not to share, information and the reasons for this decision
- Where information is shared during the course of an investigation, the outcome will be shared with those to whom the original information was sent

Type of Information that will be shared

- Information relating to safeguarding/welfare concerns which meet the threshold for referral to external safeguarding agencies (Police or Adult Social Care Services) will be shared in all cases
- In respect of CRB information which raises safeguarding concerns, BG will disclose on a need to know basis the personal details of any individual that the BG Case Referral Management groups determined unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults
- Information indicating safeguarding concerns but which is not acted on by statutory agencies (for example, where prosecution is not possible, or has been unsuccessful; where a referral is 'bounced back' by Adult Social Care Services or the Police as not meeting their threshold, but the CRMG believes that concerns remain; or where risks are identified from information arising as a result of recruitment or other internal processes
- Information relating to poor practice cases (for example, breach of codes of conduct/ethics) involving a perceived risk to vulnerable adults, but not meeting the threshold for referral to external agencies, and:
 - Where BG has either suspended or excluded the individual, or
 - Has put in place special arrangements or monitoring to ensure vulnerable adults welfare as a result of its disciplinary process

Abuse concerns meeting the threshold for police or Adult Social Care Services action should be managed by those agencies. In circumstances where BG believes that a concerning individual may be operating with vulnerable adults in another organisation(s), BG will seek the advice of the statutory agencies when consideration is being given to sharing information with the other organisation(s).

Involving Vulnerable Adults

Each Vulnerable Adult is a unique individual with varying degrees of need and ability. Some people will have a combination of physical and learning disability, others may have one or the other; some may have mental health needs and a combination of other complex disabilities such as Epilepsy, Diabetes, Down's Syndrome, visual or hearing impairment. The appropriateness of involving parents/carers in any gymnastics and welfare related decision making will depend on the individual needs and circumstances of the Vulnerable Adult and, most of all, upon their wishes. Often Vulnerable Adults feel strongly that they want to maintain independence and make decisions for themselves; such views should be encouraged and supported wherever possible. Ideally, good practice suggests a partnership model of working involving the coach, or club welfare officer, the vulnerable adult and their parent/carer. In these circumstances it is important that the Vulnerable Adult is at the centre of the decision making process.

The provisions in the Mental Capacity Act (2005) should be considered in relation to Vulnerable Adults and decision-making. Those without the capacity to make decisions under this legislation will be more dependent on their parent/carer or responsible adult in the decision making process.

The act provides that:

a person is unable to make a decision for them self if they are unable -

- (a) to understand the information relevant to the decision,
- (b) to retain that information,
- (c) to use or weigh that information as part of the process of making the decision, or
- (d) to communicate their decision (whether by talking, using sign language or any other means).

(2) A person is not to be regarded as unable to understand the information relevant to a decision if they are able to understand an explanation of it given to them in a way that is appropriate to their circumstances (using appropriate language for the individual, visual aids or any other means).

(3) The fact that a person is able to retain the information relevant to a decision for a short period only does not prevent them from being regarded as able to make the decision.

(4) The information relevant to a decision includes information about the reasonably foreseeable consequences of-

- (a) deciding one way or another, or
- (b) failing to make the decision."

British Gymnastics encourages the individual's development of independence, confidence and self-esteem on a personal level and in their gymnastics activities. Hence it is important that everyone in BG is aware of the need to balance the involvement of parents/carers and the needs and wishes of individual participants in cases where Vulnerable Adults are concerned.

Some ideas on involving vulnerable adults:

- Establishing a forum to seek the views of vulnerable adults within the club.
- Identifying a representative to communicate the views of vulnerable adults in formal settings such as Club Committee Meetings.
- Involving vulnerable adults in helping develop literature, posters and website information on safeguarding issues.
- Carrying out questionnaire based surveys to seek views and comments from vulnerable adults.
- Holding meetings with the vulnerable adult when considering changes to policies and gather their views.

Late Collection of Vulnerable Adults

Contained within this section is:

Late Collection of Adults

Persistent failure to collect a vulnerable adult on time

Late Collection of Adults

The following information provides guidance for clubs on how to respond where a parent/carer, for whatever reason, does not arrive at the required time to collect the vulnerable adult.

All parents/carers must be advised that in the event that they are delayed for any reason, they must:

- Contact the club at the earliest opportunity
- Provide clear guidance on what they wish the club to do e.g. consent for another parent/carer to transport the vulnerable adult home.

The club must:

- Maintain a list of parent/carer contact details and emergency numbers
- Carry out appropriate assessments of situations as they arise.

The club officers must not

- Take the vulnerable adult home or to another location.
- Ask the vulnerable adult to wait in a vehicle or the club with them alone.
- Send the vulnerable adult home with another person without permission.

If the parent/carer is considered by the club as being unduly late, the Club officers should:

1. Attempt to contact the parent/carer
2. Attempt to contact the emergency contact person nominated.
3. If there is no reply from the emergency contact, ask the adult if there is another family member who may be contacted.
4. Wait with the vulnerable adult(s) at the club with at least one other official/coach/ teacher/volunteers or parents.
5. Respond to any instructions received from the parent/carer
6. If no-one can be reached, contact the local police or Adult Social Care Services/Social Services to enquire about the best course of action.

Persistent failure to collect a vulnerable adult on time

Parents/Carers, who persistently fail to collect a vulnerable adult on time or have not arrived after a reasonable period of time, and have given no prior notice or informed the club they are delayed, may be failing to provide adequate care for the vulnerable adult.

If the parent/carer makes no effort to contact the club or provide reasonable explanation for the delays, the club Welfare Officer and another club officer should arrange to meet with the parent/carer to discuss the matter.

If there is no change the club Welfare Officer should either contact the adult's team at the local Adults Social Care Services/Social Services or seek advice from the BG Head of Membership or BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer.

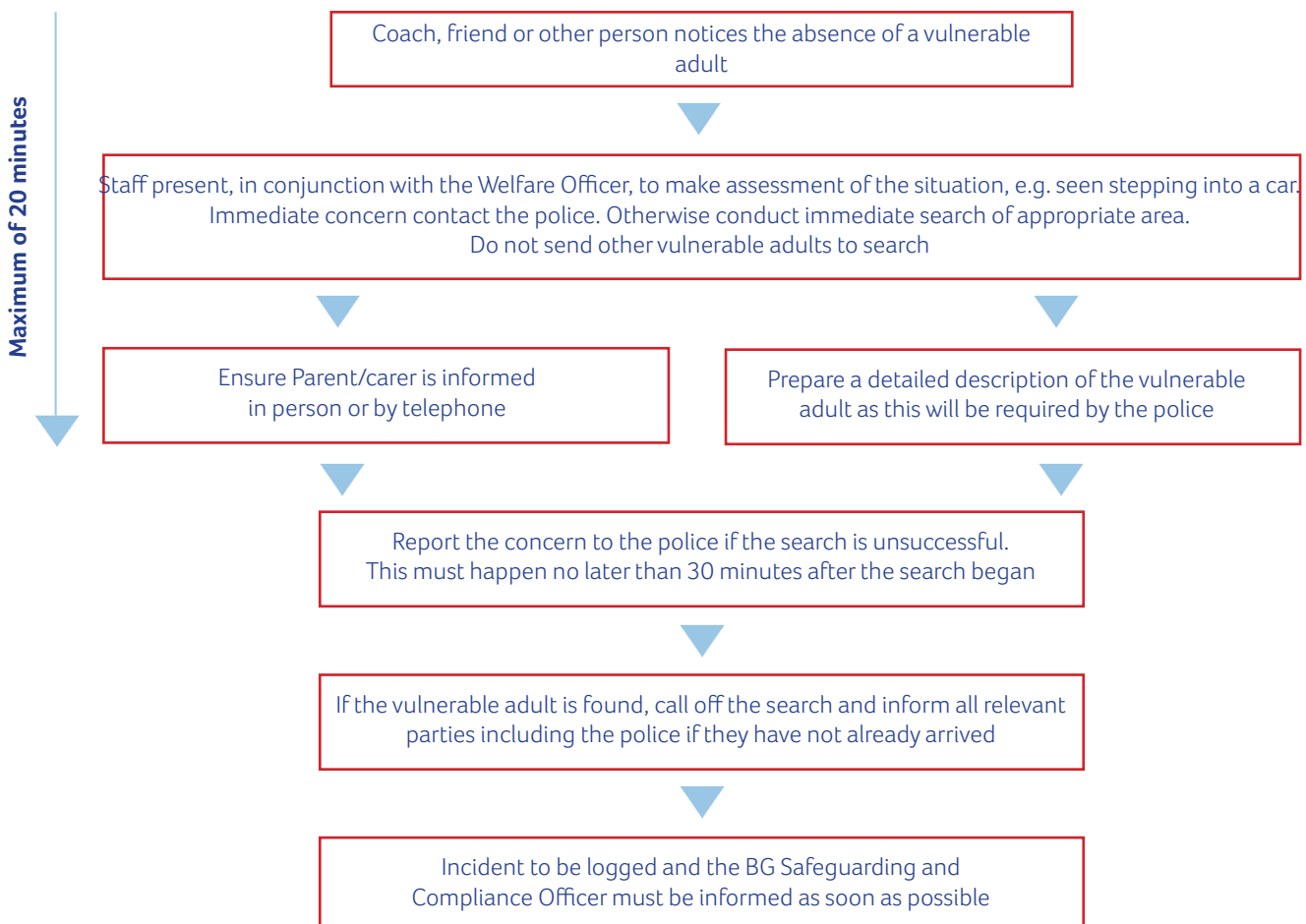
If a parent/carer arrives to collect a vulnerable adult and there is concern that the parent's/carer's ability to take appropriate care of the adult may be impaired (e.g. the parent/carer is considered to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs to the extent that she/he is unfit to drive, and/or take care of the vulnerable adult) the club should seek advice from the police or Adults Social Care Service immediately.

Missing Vulnerable Adults

In the rare event that a vulnerable adult goes missing from a club, the following guidelines have been devised to outline the actions that should be taken. At the point that a vulnerable adult has been identified as missing the club should:

- Ensure that other vulnerable adults in the group are looked after appropriately while a search for the adult concerned is conducted.
- Inform the parents/carer if they are present, or nominate an appropriate person to telephone them and advise them of the concern. Reassure them that everything is being done to locate the adult.
- Organise all available responsible adults by areas to be searched. It is best to take a short time to organise the search properly so that all places are searched fully.
- Search the area in which the vulnerable adult gone missing including changing rooms, toilets, public and private areas and the club grounds.
- Request all those searching report back to a nominated adult at a specific point.
- Make a note of the circumstances in which the vulnerable adult has gone missing and where he/she was last seen
- Prepare a detailed physical description of the vulnerable adult, including:
 - Approximate height
 - Build
 - Hair and eye colour
 - Clothing he/she was wearing, as this will be required by the police
- Report the concern to the police if the search is unsuccessful. This must happen no later than 30 minutes after the person's disappearance is noted, even if the search is incomplete.
- Follow police guidance if further action is recommended and maintain close contact with the police
- Ensure that you inform all adults involved including the parents/carers, searchers and police if at any stage the vulnerable adult is located
- Refer the concern ASAP to the BG Child Safeguarding Manager.

If a vulnerable adult is suspected of being missing, the flow chart below must be followed.



Overnight Stays

Contained within this section is:

Overnight Stays

Accommodation

Areas of Responsibility for Welfare Officers at Events

Overnight Stays

BG requires that when a club takes a gymnast(s) under the age of 18 years or vulnerable adults on a journey involving an overnight stay, the club must ensure that there is a designated trained person responsible for safeguarding on the trip. This person must not be related to or in a relationship with the coach attending the trip.

The training for the designated person involving vulnerable adults should be one of the following Sports Coach UK courses Coaching Disabled Performers, How to Coach Disabled People in Sport, Equity in your Coaching.

To enable you to have adequate insurance cover when taking gymnasts abroad, BG is obliged to approve your arrangements. Please complete the forms relating to overseas travel which can be found on the BG website under Events & Travel/Downloads/ Overseas travel application

Please note that the BG Insurance does not cover Travel or Emergency Medical Expenses, we recommend that you either take out Travel Insurance with ourselves available at the following website www.britishgymnasticstravelinsurance.co.uk or provide details of an alternative insurer.

When an event is local, it is often the case that clubs arrange for everyone to meet at the event venue. However, where an event is further away, the best option is often for the club to co-ordinate transport arrangements. It is good practice for a club to ensure the following steps are taken in advance of any trip :

- Check on driving licence, car insurance and MOT (if the car is over three years old)
- Ensure there are seatbelts for each passenger and booster seats as required
- Check driving experience (additional training may be required for anyone driving a mini-bus – contact Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for further details)
- Additional check on driver (see policies for recruitment of staff/volunteers)
- Organise central pick-up and drop-off points (to avoid the driver being alone with a gymnast)
- Obtain consent from parents/carers to allow the vulnerable adult to be transported to an event
- Plan the route and breaks (if necessary)
- Obtain contact numbers for parents/carers

At non-residential events the designated person need not always be on site but must be contactable and ready to act if required. Everyone should be made aware of the designated person's name and contact details if they are not at the event. Contact details must be included in the event programmes.

Where events involve an over-night stay, it is vital to have a designated trained person who is not involved in the delivery of the training. (NB: Please note this is only applicable if the club is responsible for the provision of overnight accommodation). This person's role will depend on the scale of the event, but in addition to the responsibility for responding to concerns, tasks could include supervision and co-ordination of accommodation, holding pre-event welfare briefings and daily de-briefs and monitoring compliance with codes of conduct.

Ensure that when taking mixed gender teams away on trips, at least one male and one female of staff accompany the gymnasts.

In non-residential events, the role of the designated person could be undertaken by an existing member of staff or volunteer but it is vital that the person identified is able to take a child-centred approach and has the confidence of young people taking part in the event.

It is important to have contingency plans in place before departing on any trip. It may be helpful to consider a 'worst case scenario' and to have procedures, and all the necessary information, in place to deal with any problem that might arise. At the least, the following issues need to be addressed to ensure a stress free trip: -

- **Risk Assessments:** The Team Manager/Group Leader will need to ensure an ongoing process of risk assessment. (See BG Health & Safety Policy for guidance)
- **Supervision:** BG recommends a minimum of 1:10 adult as a minimum level for supervision on trips. This ratio may need to be increased depending on the level of disabilities, or the trip is of a nature where more supervision may be required- i.e. trips abroad. If the group is mixed sex there should be at least one male and one female supervisor.

- **Medical issues/first aid:** A list of emergency contact numbers, medical information on each vulnerable adult attending the event and a first aid box should be taken on any trip.
- **Club Insurance:** Clubs must arrange adequate travel insurance.
- **Overnight stays:** When large groups are travelling it is advisable to ensure accommodation is booked well in advance. This can help to ensure that groups are kept together in a hotel. Room allocation should, if possible, be planned prior to the trip.
- **Facility providers/Tour Operators:** To help ensure that any arrangements made with facility providers or tour operators are formalised, BG recommends the use of a Service Provision checklist.
- **Consent forms:** It is essential for parents/carers to complete a consent form for a trip. This is especially important when the event involves an overnight stay.

Communication with parents/carers: Parents/Carers need to be fully informed of all details in relation to the trip.

As a minimum, parents/carers should be informed of:

- Transport arrangements
- Key timings – Pick up, Departure and Return
- Destination and contact details
- Room allocation
- Code of conduct
- Contact details for trip staff
- Trip requirements – pocket money, kit etc

This is not a full list of factors that should be considered, but it should assist with planning for a trip. The checklist in appendices of this document will also support clubs when planning a trip.

Accommodation

Where accommodation is required for overnight stays gymnasts must be suitable accommodated according to their age and gender.

- Coaches, helpers, volunteers are not permitted to share a room with any gymnasts regardless of the situation.
- It is advisable that the coaches should arrange their accommodation so that they are at least on the same floor as the gymnasts and if possible arrange for them to be in the room next door to the gymnasts.
- Gymnasts should be supplied with an emergency contact number for them to call in the night should they need to.
- Parents/carers may be accommodated with only their own children / individuals they are responsible for as a carer.

Areas of Responsibility for Welfare Officers at Events (including Competitions) or Trips

Role of the welfare officer at events

- Ensuring that parents/carers and vulnerable adults are aware of the role and responsibilities
- Reporting any incidents in line with BG reporting procedures (Welfare Officers should have access to all emergency contact numbers including BG)
- Taking a focused approach and responding to the needs of vulnerable adults during the event
- Working in partnership with other staff to resolve any welfare related issues that need to be addressed at the event
- Assisting the event organiser with the implementation of procedures for photography and the use of video cameras at the event and managing any issues that arise out of these policies

Further roles applicable to residential events

- Supervision and co-ordination of accommodation at the event
- Leading the supervising of the gymnasts during non-training periods

Ensuring all participants fully understand their responsibilities in relation to the code of conduct

Photography and the use of Imagery

Contained within this section is:

General Principles concerning the use of Photographs or Recorded Images
Photography at Gymnastics Events
Use of Videos as an aid to coaching

General Principles concerning the use of Photographs or Recorded Images

Implicit within the British Gymnastics policies and procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults is the commitment to ensure that all publications and media represent participants appropriately and with due respect. It is not the intention of British Gymnastics to prevent parents/carers from taking pictures of the sport of gymnastics but rather to ensure that photographic practices are carefully managed and effective prevention measures in place to deter anyone with undesirable intentions from taking and publishing inappropriate images.

All BG registered organisations must comply with the following guidelines:

- A photograph, video clip or other image of a gymnast should not be published whether in print or electronically (e.g. on a website) without written consent from the gymnast concerned (or in the case of a vulnerable adult unable to give their consent. This must be obtained from their parent/carer), and personal information of the individual, other than their name and their club, should not accompany the image. (Particular provisions apply in connection to photography at public events such as competitions and displays below).
- While some editing of images is acceptable, images taken of gymnasts should not be modified, merged or manipulated in a way, which might cause embarrassment or distress to the subject or cause the final image to be inappropriate.
- Simultaneous “live” streaming of images onto a website is forbidden. Only pre-recorded and edited material should be made available after any inappropriate images have been edited or deleted.
- Any instance of the use or publication of inappropriate images of gymnasts should be reported to British Gymnastics who may then inform the appropriate authorities.
- Clubs are recommended to introduce a consent form, ideally as part of the process applied when a gymnast joins the club, concerning the taking of images for training purposes.

British Gymnastics recognises that there is a potential for abuse of any image placed on the Internet or within other forms of media. Although the exploitation of such images may be rare, British Gymnastics has a responsibility to provide guidance on how images of vulnerable adults should be used to reduce any risk.

Those creating or administering websites should carefully monitor their content to eliminate the use of inappropriate images or improper text.

When determining whether it is appropriate to publish a photograph on a website or another form of media, consideration should be given to both the potential for inappropriate use of an image and the possibility that an individual could make contact with a vulnerable adult by using any personal and club details placed on line.

The following steps can be taken to reduce the risk from the publication of imagery:

- Do not use any personal details if it is possible from the image to ascertain a specific location or there are any details on your site about the training venue.
- If it is not possible to ascertain any training or competitive location, consider using a first name only next to an image.
- The dress of a vulnerable adult should be considered when using the photo:
 - i) If it is a posed shot for example taken during a medal presentation, try to ensure that the vulnerable adult is fully clothed in a tracksuit or similar attire.
 - ii) If it is an action shot, try to use profile imagery and avoid full-length shots. Alternatively, use digital software to blur the facial features.
- Do not use images that can appear staged and potentially provocative.
- Avoid using images that appear to focus unnecessarily directly on the groin area in movements where legs are in a split position.
- Always use a consent form to request the use of a vulnerable adult’s image for publication. The parent/carer should be encouraged to discuss the matter with the vulnerable adult before signing a consent form.

British Gymnastics should be informed of any inappropriate use of imagery on Gymnastics websites or any other form of media, which is not in keeping with this guidance. Anyone discovering a vulnerable adults image that appears to be being used illegally on any website, should report the matter to the police.

Photography at Gymnastics Events

British Gymnastics does not wish to discourage the use of video or photographic equipment at events for appropriate use, but will take all reasonable precautions to protect members against the possible inappropriate use of films or photographic images. British Gymnastics has therefore developed Photography Regulations (which are published on the BG website), which require those organising gymnastic events to regulate the taking of photographs and apply, as a minimum, the BG Conditions for Photography at Gymnastic Events.

Training sessions within Clubs or at other gymnastic venues are not normally public events at which participants would reasonably expect to be photographed. It is the responsibility of the senior coach present in a gym or other venue to regulate the taking of photos in this environment and photos should not be taken without the senior coach's permission. Coaches giving permission should apply, with any necessary adaptations, the same principles underlying the conditions applicable to photography in other circumstances. In training situations/events where it is possible to control the individuals who are photographed or appear in material that is intended for publication, informed consent should be sought ideally prior to the event and must be obtained prior to publication.

If the event organiser/welfare officer (or authorised representative of the event organiser/welfare officer) suspects inappropriate photography or filming, the officer/organiser should exercise her/his powers under the Conditions to request the person to leave the venue and to surrender any film or delete any images relating to the event. Any person present at an event who has any concerns about any images being taken by any person should bring them to the attention of the competition organiser or other designated person.

Additional provisions and accreditation procedures are in force regulating the taking of photographs for commercial use or for publication.

Use of Videos as an aid to coaching

The use of video equipment can be a valuable aid to coaching. The guidelines below should be implemented to safeguard against inappropriate practice.

- Ensure that the performers and their parent/carer are aware of the purpose of the filming as a coaching aid and consent is obtained.
- Ensure that the person designated for participants' welfare and one other responsible and approved adult is present to ensure that performers are protected against inappropriate filming.

Care should be taken to securely store the video materials to avoid inappropriate usage.

Recruiting a Welfare Officer

Contained within this section is:

Welfare Officers - Responsibilities

Raising awareness of the role

What support structures should be in place?

How can the Welfare Officer ensure they are visible and known to club members?

Welfare Officers - Responsibilities

Although the responsibility for safeguarding falls on everyone, a critical element in safeguarding is the designation of an individual who is responsible for safeguarding and promoting welfare of vulnerable adults within the club. All BG clubs and gymnastics events are required to have a welfare officer to be responsible for:

- Responding to poor practice concerns
- Providing support and advice in the implementation of procedures that safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults
- Assisting the club to more be focused in its activities e.g. involving vulnerable adults in decision making processes.

In order to avoid any potential conflicts of interest, the role must not be taken on by a key member of the coaching team or member of her/his immediate family, however an individual who has a more limited involvement in coaching can take on the role in the event that there is no other acceptable alternative.

The ideal candidate may be a parent/carer or other volunteer with professional experience in safeguarding e.g. police officer, social worker, teacher etc. As it can often be very difficult to find a suitable candidate for the role, the following information provides some suggestions on how this might be addressed and how the organisation can assist with the role.

Raising awareness of the role

It is important that everyone connected with the club or organisation is aware of the need to appoint a welfare officer.

Some of the methods that have proved successful include:

- Writing to anyone who may be interested in the position
- Circulating a profile of the role in the club newsletter
- Advertising on the club notice board or website
- 'Head hunting' - making direct approaches to individuals who have the appropriate experience
- Holding an open evening for parents/carers and inviting the regional welfare officer or a welfare officer from another club to talk about the position

It is important that prospective candidates are provided with full details of what the role entails and how they will be supported in the position (sample job/task descriptions and person specifications for the different levels/types of welfare officer are contained in the appendices). It is also useful to provide potential candidates with relevant information about the club/squad e.g. policy for volunteers, codes of conduct etc.

What support structures should be in place?

Before finalising the appointment of a welfare officer, the club should ensure that the safe recruitment procedures have been fully applied.

The organisation must ensure that the welfare officer is fully empowered to fulfil the role and has the full support from the relevant committee/management/owners to make any appropriate changes to procedures and practices.

How can the Welfare Officer ensure they are visible and known to club members?

The welfare officer does not need to attend every training session or competition but it is critical that everyone understands the role and the responsibilities it entails. It is important that the welfare officer is fully involved in the club's activities and vulnerable adults and parents/carers are fully aware of how to raise concerns. The following are suggestions may help clubs to ensure that everyone knows the welfare officer and understands her/his role

- Put a poster on the club notice board with the welfare officer's name and contact details. This might include a photograph and a list of times when the welfare officer will be present at the club.
- Make sure that all club paperwork includes the welfare officer's contact details
- Ensure the welfare officer details are included in new member information packs
- Introduce the welfare officer at club events
- Allow the welfare officer to hold an introduction evening

Allow the welfare officer to engage with vulnerable adults in the club. This may include developing/revising codes of conduct, electing a representative to represent views, involve vulnerable adults in decision making etc.

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

Contained within this section is:

Safeguarding Concerns
Responding to disclosure of abuse
Reporting the concern
Confidentiality and Information Sharing
Allegations of Historical Abuse
A quick guide to procedures if abuse is suspected

Safeguarding Concerns

In addition to ensuring all BG members are fully aware of the importance of safeguarding, it is essential that anyone who comes into contact with vulnerable adults as part of their role in the sport understands what action should be taken in response to concerns, disclosures and allegations against others involved in the sport.

It is not the role of BG or anyone in the sport to conduct enquiries into possible abuse concerns. The following procedures outline the responses that should be taken in the event of an allegation or suspicions of abuse or significant harm. This section also provides guidance sharing relevant information with Adult Social Care Services and/or police and other relevant organisations without delay and within agreed protocols.

Concerns fall into two categories,

- Gymnastics related
- External to the sport e.g. at home

The concern may relate to a current situation or past events and may be about allegations or disclosures of abuse or poor practice by an individual or relating to perceived failure to safeguard by a BG registered organisation.

Concerns may arise from:

- A disclosure from a vulnerable adult
- Direct or reported observations of possible abuse, neglect, suspicious behaviour or poor practice
- Significant or multiple changes in the vulnerable adult's behaviour, appearance, attitude or relationship
- Reports from external agencies or individuals

Everyone has a responsibility to respond to these concerns whether they relate to a vulnerable adults home/family or community situation or involve incidents within the club/gymnastics community.

It is important to note that some vulnerable adults are unable to recognise or share concerns and often rely on other adults with whom they are in contact with to be alert to the possibility that they may be experiencing harm in some area of their lives.

British Gymnastics' primary responsibility is to ensure that concerns relating to possible abuse together with any relevant information are passed on to Adult Social Care Services and/or the Police without delay. It is vital that individuals within a club are aware of what action is required and ensure any concerns are referred to the appropriate welfare officer as shown below:

- **BG Lead Officer** – The BG Lead Officer (Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer) must be informed of all abuse concerns.
- **Home Country Lead Officer** – The HCLO should be informed of any concern that occurred at within the relevant home country.
- **Regional Welfare Officer** – The RWO should be informed of any concern that occurred at Regional level. The RWO should also be a source of advice and support for their network of CWO.
- **Club Welfare Officer** – The CWO should usually be the first point of call for any concerns that relate to a member of his or her club.
- **Squad/Event Welfare Officer** – There should always be a welfare officer assigned to a squad or event. Although they may not be present, they should be 'on-call' at the time of the squad/event and be contacted in the event of any concern relating to the specific squad or event.

Contact details of Regional, Home Country and BG Officers can be found on the BG website.

Responding to disclosure of abuse

If a vulnerable adult indicates that he/she is being abused, or information is received which gives rise to concern that the adult may be being abused, the person receiving the information should:

- Stay calm and ensure that the vulnerable adult is safe and feels safe.
- Listen carefully to what is said, allowing the vulnerable adult to continue at his/her own pace.
- Explain that it is likely the information will have to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets.
- Keep questions to a minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Reassure the vulnerable adult that they have done the right thing in revealing the information.
- Show and tell the vulnerable adult that what he/she says is being taken seriously and recognise any difficulties inherent in interpreting what the adult says.
- Tell the vulnerable adult what will be done next, and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record in writing what was said using the vulnerable adult's own words as soon as possible. The following information should be recorded:
 - Dates and times
 - Any names mentioned
 - To whom the information was given
 - Information that fact, hearsay or opinion should be notes as such
 - Ensure the record is signed and dated make a record

If the vulnerable adult indicates that he/she does not wish others to be informed about the allegations, carefully and tactfully explain the reasons why it may be in the interests of everybody if the matter is referred to the appropriate person or department (i.e. Adult Social Care Services).

The person to whom the disclosure is made is presented with a great responsibility and it is advisable, if there is any uncertainty, to seek advice on how to deal with the issue, from Adult Social Care Services, or from the BG Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer.

Actions to avoid

- Dismissing the concern
- Panicking
- Allowing shock or distaste to show
- Probing for more information than is offered
- Making promises that cannot be kept, such as agreeing not to tell someone else
- Speculating or make assumptions
- Approaching the person who is the subject of an allegation or suspicion (this may put a vulnerable adult at further risk and/or jeopardise a criminal investigation).
- Conducting a personal investigation of the case.
- Making negative comments about the accused person.
- Irrespective of whether the person receiving the information personally believes what has been said, they must always report the disclosure. Untrue disclosures, even when the source is anonymous, are very rare.

Reporting the concern

In the event that a vulnerable adult may be at risk of significant harm, the concern must be reported to Adult Social Care Services or the Police without delay. The welfare officer is responsible for making this referral but in the event that he or she is unavailable, a senior person at the club should be advised and the matter referred directly to the Adult Social Care Services and/or the Police and the Welfare Officer informed of the action taken. British Gymnastics should also be informed at the earliest opportunity and can also make the referral on their behalf. The person advising BG may be required to also speak to the Statutory agents to clarified any details and may be required as part of their investigation.

If the concern relates to the welfare officer, a senior person at the club should be informed and the matter should be referred to Adult Social Care Services and/or the Police and BG should be notified without delay.

Whoever makes the referral must ensure that the contact details of the person to whom the referral was made are provided to BG or the relevant Home Country, together with the details of the referral without delay.

In the event that there is any uncertainty as to whether a referral is appropriate, BG Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer or Adult Social Care Services will be able to offer advice on what action should be taken.

If there is any suspicion that a vulnerable adult has been abused by someone in the sport, the BG Case Referral Management Group will, following consultation with the statutory agencies consider whether it is necessary to place the individual under suspension pending further Adult Social Care Services or Police enquiries. The Chief Executive Officer will have the overall authority to suspend membership from BG. British Gymnastics MUST be kept fully informed of any concerns as it is essential that an early decision is made about whether to suspend any member to avoid placing young people at risk.

Adult Social Care Services

When a referral is made to Adult Social Care Services they have a legal responsibility to make enquiries where a vulnerable adult may be at risk of significant harm. This may involve gathering information from others who know the vulnerable adult or talking to the vulnerable adult and their family. Enquiries may be carried out jointly with the police when a criminal offence is suspected. If a vulnerable adult is at immediate risk and action needs to be taken urgently, contact the Police by dialling 999. If concerns are identified out of hours, the police and Adult Social Care Services provide an out-of-hours service.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Sharing information is vital to ensure that vulnerable adult's needs are met and critical in ensuring vulnerable adults are protected from significant harm. However, there is often uncertainty about the circumstances in which information can be lawfully shared. Consent should normally be sought from the subject/s of the information in order for it to be shared, but it may be necessary for information to be shared with the Welfare Officer, Adult Social Care Services the Police and BG without consent if there is reason to believe that seeking consent could:

Place the vulnerable adult or others at increased risk of significant harm, or Place an adult at risk of serious harm, or Undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime (i.e. any crime which causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a vulnerable adult) including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

Following initial enquiries, it may be deemed necessary to share some information with others, particularly those who have contact with the subject of the allegations. Information must only be passed to those who require access to these details in the course of their safeguarding duties. A record must be maintained of all those to whom information is disclosed, and the details of the information provided. Case information must only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Further guidance on confidentiality and information sharing can be found within the this policy

All BG registered organisations and individual members must ensure that in dealing with information relating to safeguarding concerns, there are no unacceptable breaches of confidentiality. In addition, there is a responsibility to ensure that parents/carers, gymnasts and their families understand the need to avoid unnecessary discussion of safeguarding concerns. Not only can such a breach be highly damaging to the vulnerable adult and others involved but may also prejudice a police investigation.

Case information should:

- (Where the call is incoming) only be given out over the telephone where there is absolute certainty of the identity of the person making the call or the identity of the caller is confirmed by returning the call through a switchboard number;
- (Where the call is outgoing) only be given out over the telephone and connected through a switchboard, and there is absolute certainty of the identity of the person receiving the call;
- Be backed-up in writing if any significant advice/case details is given over the phone;
- Be securely stored in a locked cabinet in a lockable room and not unnecessarily taken out of the building; and
- Be marked 'private and confidential' and sent by recorded delivery if sent by post.

Sharing Concerns with Parents/Carers

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents/carers where there are concerns about the vulnerable adult. Therefore, in most circumstances it would be important to talk to parents/carers to clarify any initial concerns. For example if a vulnerable adult seems withdrawn, there may be a reasonable explanation. The vulnerable adult may have experienced an upset in the family, such as a parental separation/divorce or bereavement.

In cases where a vulnerable adult may be at risk of significant harm, the Welfare Officer or person making the referral should, at the same time seek advice on what information should be provided to the parent/carer and the vulnerable adult from Adult Social Care Services or the Police.

Records and Information

Any information passed to the Adult Social Care Services or the Police must be as accurate and helpful as possible and, ideally, should be accompanied by a detailed record providing:

- Personal details of the vulnerable adult concerned including age or date of birth, full name, gender, race, ethnic origin and address.
- Details of parent/carer and an indication of what, if any, information has been shared.
- The nature of the allegation.
- Full details of the person about whom the concern/allegation is made including full name, date of birth, address, relationship the vulnerable adult concerned and/or position held in the club, if any.

- Description of any visible injuries or bruising.
- Detailed description of the vulnerable adult's account of how the injuries or bruising occurred.
- Any times and dates or other relevant information.
- A clear distinction between what is fact, hearsay or opinion.

Reporting the matter to police or Adult Social Care Services should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. Wherever possible, referrals made by telephone, should be followed up with a copy of the incident report form within 48 hours this form is within the Sample Forms section. The Welfare Officer should record on the incident form, the name and designation of the Adult Social Care Services member of staff to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call.

A copy of the incident report form including all case information should also be sent to British Gymnastics Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer and the appropriate Home Country governing body Lead Officer.

Concerns within the Sport

Allegations involving BG members or employees are sensitive and difficult issues to manage. It is crucial that everyone involved in gymnastics takes seriously any allegations made against a coach, helper, official or anyone else working with vulnerable adults and responds appropriately. The Welfare Officer must be notified immediately of any circumstances that cause concern or raise suspicions. If the welfare officer is unclear about what action to take, advice should be sought from BG Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer or from Adult Social Care Services. In the event that the allegations could amount to abuse and/or a vulnerable adult is at risk of significant harm, the matter should be reported to Adult Social Care Services and/or the Police in line with the procedures above.

If, following the receipt of a disclosure, an allegation or an observation of behaviour that caused concern, and where it is agreed that a referral to Adult Social Care Services or the Police is not required the club or organisation should consider the appropriate course of action. In the event that the concern is considered to be an isolated incident of poor practice, then together with the Welfare Officer, a senior person at the club should discuss the matter with the individual of the concern and agree appropriate remedial action in line with BG policy and guidance. In all cases of poor practice, the matter should be reported to BG without delay for the BG CRMG to determine the appropriate course of action. This includes:

- Allegations of poor practice concerning the Welfare Officer
- Poor practice allegations that have been previously addressed by the club but continue to remain a concern.
- Any incidents of poor practice that raise suspicions or concerns about abuse.

In some cases, it has only become apparent that a poor practice concern has been an indicator of abuse after BG has collated information from a variety of sources. It may not be possible to form a view of the significance of an isolated piece of information but it is essential that in the above circumstances information is always reported to BG.

Action to be taken if abuse or poor practice is observed during a training session or event

It is not unknown for an act of abuse and more frequently, poor practice to occur within a training or competition environment. The following information provides instruction on what action should be taken at the point that the act of abuse or poor practice is observed. It may be helpful to note that, based on the experience of case referrals, the most likely types of abuse to be encountered in the gym environment are physical and emotional abuse. An act of possible abuse or poor practice needs to be reported without delay in line with the BG reporting procedures described above.

The individual regarding the concern should be approached immediately by the senior official and another official, ideally the Welfare Officer, (if they are on site) and informed of the concern. If the abuse or poor practice is ongoing, he/she must be instructed to stop immediately and an emergency call made to the police to provide assistance if required. It should be noted, however, that if the matter of concern is poor practice, possibly due to lack of awareness rather than abuse and the vulnerable adult is not at significant risk, a more subtle approach would be appropriate and the Welfare Officer may not need to be involved at this stage. Consideration should be given to informing the individual in a manner that will not undermine his/her position.

If the concern relates to abuse, the priority is to ensure that the vulnerable adult is made safe. The Welfare Officer or another responsible adult must remain with the vulnerable adult until their needs have been fully addressed.

If the vulnerable adult concerned requires immediate medical treatment this should be sought without delay by dialling 999 and informing the police/Adult Social Care Service that that this action is being taken. It is important the medical staff involved are made aware that the issue is potentially one of a vulnerable adult protection nature.

All BG registered clubs must put in place a procedure to deal with complaints over staff and volunteers. Parents/Carers and all members should be made aware of the procedures for raising a complaint or concern. Provision should be made in the club rules or constitution to allow complaints and disciplinary procedures to be implemented.

Allegations of Historical Abuse

It is possible that allegations of abuse may be made some considerable time after the event. Where a historical allegation is made the Welfare Officer should report the matter to the Adult Social Care Services and the Police and make sure that BG and the relevant Home Country Governing Body are informed without delay. Although the allegation is historical, it is necessary to respond without delay as other vulnerable adults may currently be at risk from the accused person.

A quick guide to procedures if abuse is suspected

This quick guide (opposite) is designed to provide guidance for BG members on the most appropriate action to be taken if abuse is suspected or repeated or suspicious poor practice or breaches of BG Code of Ethics and Conduct are witnessed. Further guidance can be obtained at any stage, by contacting the BG Head of Membership, Safeguarding and Compliance Officer. All reports should be made on the BG Incident Report form contained in the Sample Forms section.

What happens next?

Where a complaint/concern of poor practice or abuse is made there may be three types of investigation:

- Criminal - Conducted by the police
- BG enquiry – Determined by the BG CRMG (Case Referral Management Group)

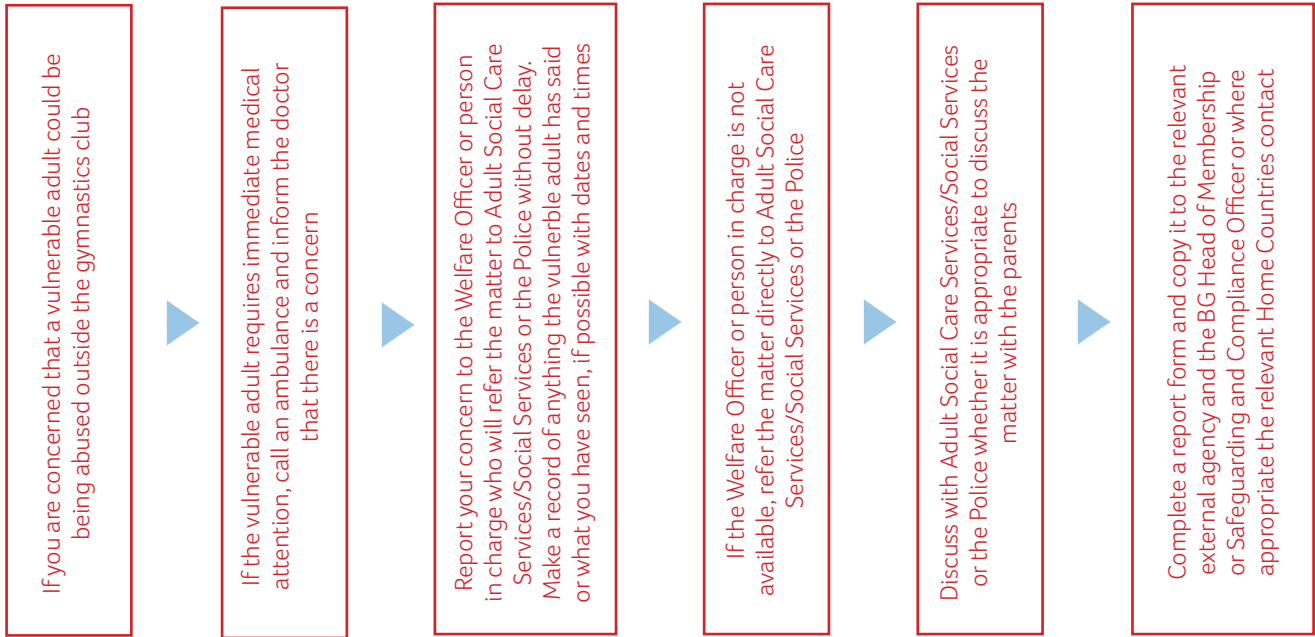
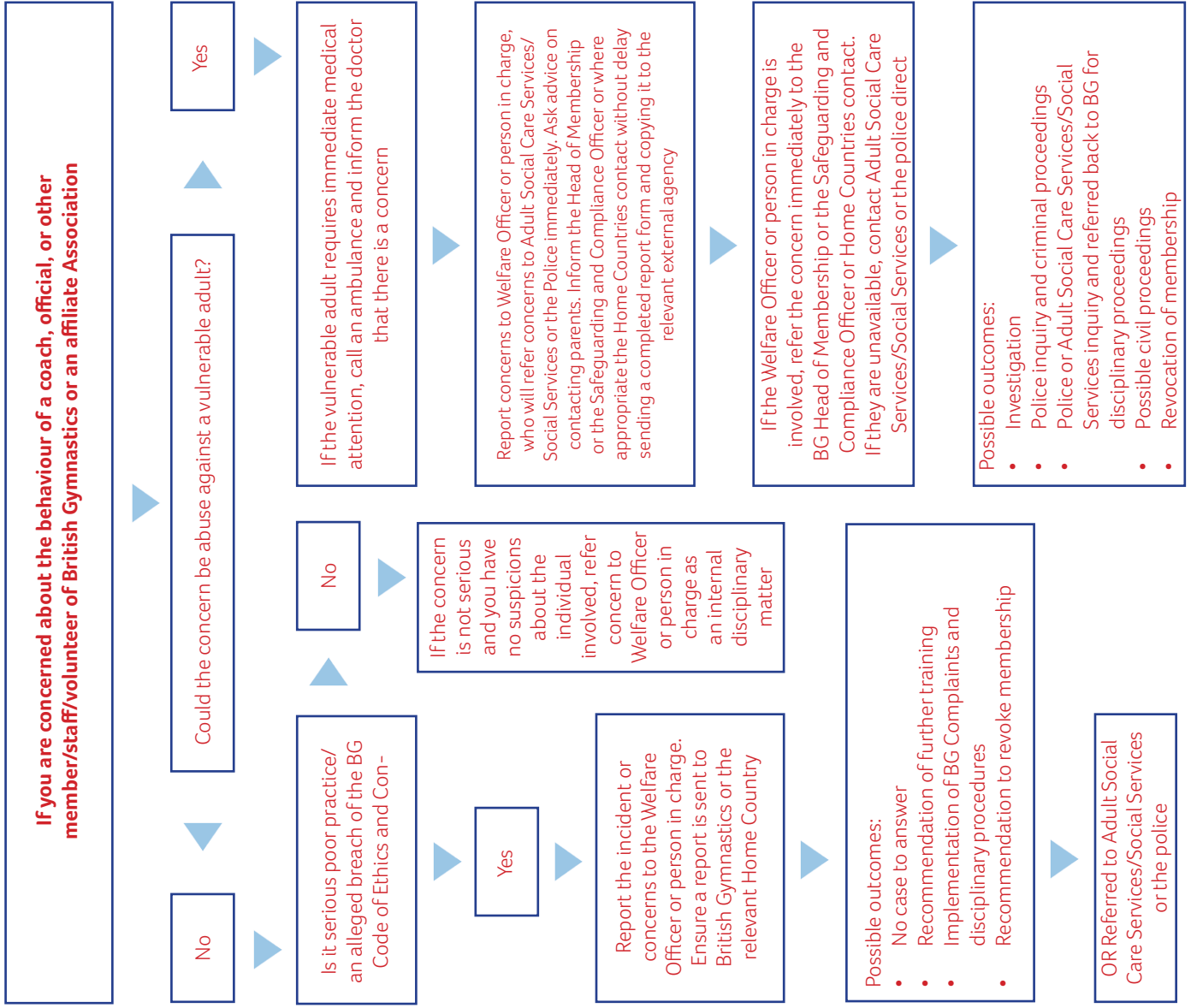
The person that made the allegation, or their family, may also initiate civil proceedings.

Where a statutory agency investigation is ongoing, BG will only act following full consultation with the relevant agencies or at the requested of the statutory agency.

The BG CRMG would consider the outcome of any criminal and/or investigation when determining what action should be taken as stated in 41 of the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

British Gymnastics disciplinary panels will comply with the principles of natural justice. The applicable standard of proof shall be the civil standard, of the balance of probability: whether it was more likely for the allegations to have occurred. British Gymnastics will make a referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority in any instance where a decision is reached to exclude a member from the Governing Body. Throughout these processes the welfare of vulnerable adult will remain paramount and British Gymnastics will endeavour to provide appropriate support to the vulnerable adult, parents/carers, coaches and volunteers who are affected

A quick guide to procedures if abuse is suspected



Responding to Media Enquiries

Abuse is an area of great interest to the media. When incidents occur it is important to have a strategy to manage any media enquiries. Although British Gymnastics and the Home Countries can deal with media enquiries, it is important for Clubs and Regions to be able to handle initial enquiries in a sensitive and appropriate manner to avoid generating any negative publicity.

If a journalist approaches any BG members, the following guidance should be followed:

- Take a note of the journalist's name and whom they represent (i.e. Newspaper, TV Company etc) and any contact details.
- Take a note of what the journalist is asking you and ask for any clarifications.
- Establish whether the journalist has any deadlines and inform them that the matter will be referred to BG or the appropriate Home Country who will contact them with a response.
- Inform the appropriate Welfare Officer or person in charge who will refer the matter to BG or the appropriate Home Country Lead Officer. An appropriate response will be formulated in consultation with BG Press and Media Officer or appropriate Home Country Officer.
- A copy of the response will be forwarded to the journalist, the club and appropriate region.

The same procedures should be followed for any subsequent enquiries and ensure that BG or the Home Country is kept fully informed of any local press coverage.

Running a Safe Club

Contained within this section is:

Club Registration
Safeguarding Letter
Codes of Conduct
Provision of a Safe Environment
Supervision
Provision of Personal Care
Spotting and Manual Support
Flexibility/Stretching Exercises

Club Registration

When gymnasts register with a club it is essential that the club obtain appropriate personal information about them. The type of information that should be collected at the point of registration would include:

Name and address
Date of birth
Parent/Carer information
Emergency contacts
Medical details – allergies, existing conditions
Information on any disability or special needs, including English not being the first language
Medical consent
Consent for participation in gymnastics
Consent to film gymnasts for training purposes
Equality profile

Clubs should ensure that this information is collected at the earliest opportunity to enable any necessary risk assessments based on medical information and/or disability to be completed prior to participation.

Consent should always be sought prior to participation in 'regular club activity'. In addition, consent should be requested if there is an intention to film gymnasts for training purposes as standard part of club training.

Additional informed consent must also be sought in the following circumstances:

For participation in other activities beyond regular training e.g. competitions
For using membership information for other reasons beyond that which was originally collected
Photography/filming that leads to the publication of images, or use of the images for any purpose other than training (if a blanket consent has already been obtained for this purpose).

Informed consent would require the person providing the consent to have a full understanding of the circumstances for which consent is sought and should be obtained on every occasion.

Safeguarding Letter

It is very important that new members and/or their parents/carers are provided with information about the club's approach to welfare of vulnerable adults. It is advisable that all clubs prepare a new member information pack which, in addition to providing information on training times and other club activities, should include a letter to parents/carers highlighting the following policies and where they can be accessed:

Vulnerable Adults policy and procedures.
Anti bullying policy
Details of what parents/carers should do if they have a concern regarding welfare
Communication policy
Transport policy
Photography policy
Equality policy
Complaints procedure

This letter should include names and contact details of the following key club officials:

Welfare Officer.
Chairman/Manager
Secretary
Coach

The letter should highlight that BG and the club are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults include the following statement:

In a situation where a vulnerable adult is at risk of significant harm or has been harmed in connection with their involvement in gymnastics, the parent/carer should contact the club Welfare Officer who has the responsibility of referring any concerns of possible abuse to Adult Social Care Services and/or the Police and informing British Gymnastics. Alternatively the parent/carer can contact Adult Social Care Services and/or the Police direct. It is requested that where a parent/carer has made a direct referral to Adult Social Care Services and/or the Police, that the BG Head of Membership or the BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer and, if appropriate the Club Welfare Officer is provided with the details of the concern as soon as possible so that any necessary action can be taken to safeguard all vulnerable adults in the sport.

The club should also clearly outline the expectations that it has of its members and their parents/carers. This information may be published in the form of set of club rules and a code of conduct.

Codes of Conduct

Parental/Carers responsibilities

Parents/Carers play an important role in the success of the vulnerable adult. With the right kind of support and encouragement, vulnerable adults will progress steadily and enjoy a rewarding experience. It is likely that with the right support at home alongside a positive club environment a vulnerable adult will remain in the sport.

Good communication between the club/coaches and parents/carers is essential to avoid misunderstandings and to ensure co-operation. It is good practice to clearly outline what is expected of parents/carers when the vulnerable adult joins the club.

Other responsibilities:

If parents/carers wish to raise a concern about the vulnerable adults welfare, they should contact the club Welfare Officer. If they feel they are unable to discuss this concern with the Club Welfare Officer, they should contact the Regional Welfare Officer for advice.

If parents/carers do have concerns about the coaching that the vulnerable adult is receiving they should arrange to meet with the coach involved. Coaches should always have the best interests of the gymnasts in mind. A disagreement with a coach should never be made known to the vulnerable adult as this could destroy a positive relationship between coach and gymnast.

If parents/carers remain unhappy about the vulnerable adults training and wish to move clubs, they should discuss the matter initially with the vulnerable adult and the coach before approaching another club. Parents/Carers should remember that although the vulnerable adult may no longer train at the current club, they are likely to come across the coaches and gymnasts at future competitions and events. Therefore it is important that any transfer is conducted with the minimum of upset for the vulnerable adult.

If parents/carers wish to make a complaint about any matter other than the welfare of a vulnerable adult, they should put the complaint in writing and address it to the Club Secretary. For more information, please refer to the Club Complaints Procedure.

Parents/Carers are welcome to observe training if they sit in the designated viewing area but they should not interfere or interrupt the session. It is imperative that coaches have the vulnerable adults full attention at this time. Any parent/carer who disrupts training may be refused access to the viewing area.

During competitions parents/carers and family members should adopt a positive and sporting attitude and remain in the spectator area, and not enter the competition arena. They should never dispute results and rulings of judges, coaches and officials or behave in an inappropriate way towards other spectators.

All families are encouraged to participate in Club related activities.

Example of Parent/Carer Code of Conduct

Parents/Carers should: -

Ensure that they and the vulnerable adult abide by club rules.

Ensure that the vulnerable adult arrives at training and competitions on time and that they arrive on time to take them home. It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to make any necessary transport arrangements to get the vulnerable adult to any training sessions.

Parents/Carers should not put coaches in a difficult position by requesting that they provide transport for the vulnerable adult although on occasion the Club may make arrangements to transport groups of gymnasts together, subject to parent/carer consent.

Talk to the vulnerable adult and ensure that they are aware that they have the right to be protected and free from harm. Parents/Carers should make sure that the vulnerable adult knows that if they feel they are being bullied or are concerned about the way their coach, a club official or another member of the club is treating them, they can talk to their parents/carers or the Club Welfare Officer without fear of getting into trouble.

Ensure that they and the vulnerable adults are aware of the identity of the Club Welfare Officer.

Be patient with the vulnerable adults progress. Gymnasts progress according to their age, ability and stage of maturation. Parents/Carers should bear in mind that long-term improvement is the ultimate goal and that later developers often succeed in gymnastics.

Be a supportive and a stabilising influence through the inevitable ups and downs of training and competition. Parents/Carers should encourage the vulnerable adult and provide positive feedback.

Leave the coaching to the coaches. Parents/Carers should not pressure the vulnerable adult, offer coaching advice or try to change or undermine any goals agreed between the coach and gymnast. It is the coaches' role to offer constructive advice relating to the gymnast's performance. It is helpful if parents/carers can offer the support and encouragement necessary to help the vulnerable adult feel good about themselves.

Help the vulnerable adult to develop good healthy eating habits, especially meals prior to training and competition and ensure the adult has sufficient rest.

Re-enforce high standards of behaviour and dress expected in the gym and at competition and help the vulnerable adult to maintain a positive attitude.

Stay informed by checking the club newsletter, notice board and any letters distributed at training. If a response or payment is required, this should be made promptly and on time.

Parents/Carers are very important and greatly valued in Gymnastics and it is hoped that as many parents/carers as possible will volunteer to help at the Club. Without the support of parent/carer volunteers, the Club and the Governing Body would not function effectively.

Provision of a Safe Environment

Safeguarding is fundamental in the delivery of the sport and the conduct of those involved. Everyone must place the protection of vulnerable adults as the paramount consideration, and ensure that the environment where the gymnastics activity takes place is one where vulnerable adults are safe and helps to reduce the risk of vulnerable adults being abused through their participation within the sport.

Clubs and organisations must address the following environmental factors:

Providing open training environment

Ensuring there is a clear policy for use of changing rooms and toilets

Maintenance of apparatus, equipment and other club property e.g. minibus*

Provision of first aid facilities*

Storage of personal and sensitive information

* These areas are covered in detail in the BG Health & Safety Policy.

Open training environment

It is essential that clubs work in partnership with parents/carers and are open about training sessions. Clubs should welcome parents/carers who wish to observe and in the case of new or potential members, encourage them to view a session and remain with the vulnerable adult until they are happy to be left.

In some facilities there may be logistical problems in providing a suitable area for viewing. Clubs without viewing areas should designate a small area of the gym for viewing. This will need to be carefully managed and there may need to be limits on the number of spectators that can be safely accommodated. Clubs should also ensure that a viewing policy covering acceptable standards of conduct is in place.

An alternative way of providing viewing is to use CCTV technology. The use of CCTV would allow parents/carers to view what is going on inside and if appropriate, outside the building without taking up space in the gym. It is also possible to enable remote access with appropriate security systems in place.

It is not necessary to record images when using CCTV for viewing purposes. Clubs that wish to record CCTV images must contact the Information Commissioner for advice on compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

BG will not support clubs who actively discourage parents/carers from viewing by:

- Obscuring windows
- Refusing reasonable requests to view
- Asking parents/carers to leave without due cause
- Justifying the prohibition of viewing on spurious health and safety grounds.

The provision of an open training environment is much wider than simply providing parents/carers with a viewing area. It involves creating a culture of openness between the club and parents/carers. This will include:

- Regular written and oral communication with parents/carers
- Providing regular feedback on the vulnerable adults progress
- Opportunities to discuss the vulnerable adults progress and training regime
- Opportunity to raise concerns and receive feedback on the outcome
- Encouraging parents/carers to become involved in the club
- Inviting parents/carers to attend welfare briefings prior to an away event
- Encouraging parents/carers to attend events or keep in close contact with the vulnerable adult
- Setting up parent/carer forums
- Appointing a parent/carer liaison officer who is responsible for communication, information and encouraging involvement

Changing facilities

All BG clubs must have a policy or rules relating to the use of changing facilities. There can be difficulties where the gymnastics activity is provided within a multi-use sports centre and will have to be subject to the availability and access to facilities, whether groups are mixed gender, and whether the changing facilities are open for public use.

Although clubs should develop a policy that best meets their specific circumstances, the following underlying principles must be adopted:

Where a club is fully responsible for changing facilities, Vulnerable adults must not be permitted to get changed in these facilities at the same time as children*

- There must be separate changing facilities or times for males and females
- No-one should enter changing rooms whilst these are being used by members of the opposite sex
- Mobile phones must not be used in changing rooms
- Codes of conduct should address behaviour while using changing facilities
- Everyone should be aware that they must report any concerns or incidents without delay.

If the vulnerable adult needs assistance with toileting, a parent/carer must attend. In an emergency two adults of the same sex as the individual, should assist and best efforts made to retain the dignity for the individual.

Clubs, which are unable to provide safe changing room facilities, must ensure all members arrive wearing their leotards/shorts under their clothes.

* Where a club has to use a shared changing facility that is accessible by adults, the club should ensure that the changing policy provides guidance for vulnerable adult on what they should do in the event that they have a concern about another adult who is also making use of the facility.

Supervision

It is essential that appropriate ratios for supervision are adopted and everyone is clear of their supervisory responsibilities. When working with vulnerable adults, a competent assessment of the risk to the individual and other participants must be made when determining the ratio of gymnasts to coach. Depending on the nature of a disability, one-to-one supervision may be necessary. For further information please refer to the BG guidance on the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Provision of Personal Care

There may on occasions be circumstances where some gymnasts will need help with personal and intimate care such as going to the toilet, changing and washing. In the main this is most likely to arise for some gymnasts with severe learning or physical disabilities.

Spotting and Manual Support

Supporting and shaping the gymnast is an essential part of coaching gymnastics in that it helps the gymnast to understand shapes, movement patterns and complex skills, but also reduces the risk of injury due to a fall or error in performance. Detailed guidance on appropriate supporting techniques is provided as part of the BG coach education programme.

The key points on safe spotting and manual support are:

- the coach must ensure that support is only used when necessary and “over-handling” is avoided, however;
- the coach must always be alert to the possibility of performance errors or anxiety, which may increase the risk of injury;
- supporting techniques must not inhibit performance;
- physical contact should not be invasive of sensitive areas of the body i.e. genital areas, buttocks or breasts.

Infrequent non-intentional physical contact can arise out of error on the performer or coach's part. Such situations should not be ignored and need to be acknowledged through an apology to the gymnast and reported to the Club Welfare Officer or head coach and parents/carers. A written report should be made of any incident.

It is also good practice to explain and provide some written guidance, perhaps as part of an induction pack, to new members and parents/carers that some physical contact will be required but that only appropriate non-invasive techniques should be used. If a gymnast or parent/carer has any concerns, they should be raised with the club welfare officer. In any circumstance where abuse is suspected, BG reporting procedures should be followed.

Flexibility/Stretching Exercises

There is a range of techniques and types of exercise for extending flexibility that involve the application of force. These techniques can also lead to the person applying the force coming into close proximity with the gymnast and having prolonged contact with areas of the gymnast's body.

Coaches must follow the following guidelines:

Use slow, progressive and prolonged stretching exercises, within the “discomfort zone”, rather than what might be considered to be excessive force.

Avoid exercises that place the coaches and gymnasts body in “close proximity” and might be seen as unnecessary by the less-informed parent/carer or observer.

Be sensitive to how the exercise might be perceived by the parents/carers and others.

Consider holding a parents/carers forum to explain the flexibility training techniques, so that the parent/carer is more aware and therefore less likely to misinterpret the techniques being used.

Use partner exercises with more experienced gymnasts where possible.

Individuals may have a limiting range of movement / low or high muscle tone. Seek advice from the individual/parent/carer when planning this part of the session.

Safe Recruitment

Contained within this section is:

Safe Recruitment
Interviewing
ISA Registration and CRB Disclosures
Use of Criminal Records Disclosures and Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy
Monitoring and Appraisal

Safe Recruitment

Safe recruitment requires safeguarding issues to be considered at every stage of the recruitment process. Although the vast majority of coaches and officials/helpers are committed, dedicated people who are motivated to work within the sport for commendable reasons, it is vital that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that any unsuitable people or people who may abuse vulnerable adults are prevented from working with vulnerable adults.

The following procedures should be adopted and applied consistently to help ensure that gymnastics organisations recruit individuals who share the organisation's values and approach to safeguarding.

As people who want to abuse vulnerable adults may seek out various avenues to gain access. These practices must be followed at all times, even where there is only one applicant for a position.

One-off volunteers

The only current exception to this is in the case of one-off volunteers who will only have contact with vulnerable adults for limited period of time. This may include:

- Parents/Carers or other volunteers helping out at a club fundraiser or event
- Young people attending the club for a work experience

Clubs who run a dedicated facility should ensure they operate a sign-in and out system for these volunteers/visitors.

Where one-off volunteering becomes more regular e.g. more than once a month, the recruitment procedures must be fully applied.

Parents/Carers

It should be noted that it is inappropriate, and in respect of the use of CRB disclosures would be unlawful, to require recruitment checks in the case of parents/carers whose only role is to care for their own e.g. a parent/carer of a vulnerable adult. However, in the event that the individual in question wishes to take on a role within the club that will bring responsibility for other vulnerable adults, the full recruitment procedures must be applied.

It is essential that the following recruitment and selection procedures are applied without unlawfully discriminating against candidates on grounds of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age, and are fully compliant with data protection law.

The key elements of a robust safe recruitment process will include:

Preparing candidate information

This should include: -

Job description that makes reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults

Person specification ensuring specific reference is made to suitability to work vulnerable adults

Application form, which contains appropriate safeguarding sections

Obtaining references

References that specifically address the applicant's suitability to work with vulnerable adults should ideally be taken before interview so that any issues can be addressed at this stage

Interview

In addition to the candidates' suitability for the role, the interview process should investigate the candidate's suitability to work with vulnerable adults.

Verifying

Applicant's identity
Right to work in UK
Qualifications

ISA registration & CRB disclosure

An enhanced CRB disclosure must be completed for anyone who has not completed a CRB disclosure through BG within the last three years.

The Vetting and Barring Scheme will require anyone wishing to work with children (and/or vulnerable adults) to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

When recruiting for a position working with vulnerable adults, safeguarding needs to feature strongly in any advertising. The recruiting organisation should prepare a safeguarding statement that should feature in any publicity about the role. In addition, the organisation should include a statement advising that a CRB disclosure will be required as part of the recruitment process.

Obtaining references

Prior to the interview references should be sought and where appropriate, relevant qualifications or previous experience should be confirmed.

In the event that someone is being interviewed who has indicated she/he has previous qualifications/experience in gymnastics, the recruiting organisations should request, in writing on formal headed paper, confirmation from BG of: -

BG membership
Date of last CRB disclosure
Any BG qualifications/awards
Any known reason for not employing/appointing the named person.

Seeking references prior to interview is always preferable in order that any concerns can be addressed with the applicant. An applicant who does not agree to their current employer being approached should be advised that in the event they are the preferred candidate for the job, they will be required to address any issues raised by the current employer prior to their appointment being confirmed.

In addition to the current employer, references should also be sought from any previous organisations where the applicant worked in paid or voluntary position with vulnerable adults. It is useful to make use of the BG reference form for positions working with vulnerable adults to ensure the referee covers all the required information.

Interviewing

Where a position involves significant contact with vulnerable adults a formal interview should be held according to correct procedures and protocol. The purpose of the interview is to carry out an assessment of the qualities of candidates in relation to the requirements of the job and their suitability to work with vulnerable adults. There should always be a face-to-face interview, even if there is only one candidate.

Additional information can be requested at interview to support the details contained in the application form and address/ask questions relating to any information disclosed in the self-declaration of convictions. It is also important to explore any discrepancies between the information on the application form and the information obtained in pre-interview checks.

Where the post involves working with vulnerable adults, it is always preferable that there is a minimum of two interviewers to allow for a full assessment of the candidate's responses.

It is important to agree in advance the process for the interview and the questions that will be asked. These should include a number of questions that focus on suitability to work with vulnerable adults. These questions should aim to identify underlying attitudes and may require the interview panel members to be probing in their questioning techniques. Possible ways to obtain this type of information include asking how the applicant would they behave in an actual situation involving vulnerable adults.

The interview panel should take the opportunity to address any concerns arising from the information on the application form or as part of a reference. The panel should also confirm the details made in the self-declaration are correct and the willingness to complete a CRB disclosure.

Verification processes

Anyone recruiting people to work with vulnerable adults should adopt a checklist to be applied following the selection process, without satisfactory completion of which a firm employment offer should not be made. The checklist should include:

Verification of identity

Confirmation of the right to work in the UK visit www.ukvisas.gov.uk

Verification of qualifications

To avoid any unnecessary delays, all candidates should be instructed to bring their identity documents to the interview. Candidates must also bring with them any qualification and awards certificates.

Identity checks

It is vital to be sure that the person is who he or she claims to be. As identity verification is required as part of the CRB process, the Welfare Officer or other nominated CRB designated person should conduct the identity verification process using the CRB Identity Verification Form (IVF). Original identity documents must be provided and verification must be conducted in the presence of the applicant to ensure they are the person shown in photographic evidence.

ISA Registration and CRB Disclosures

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 has provided the legislative framework for introducing the Vetting and Barring Scheme. Although the Independent Safeguarding Authority has been established and is now taking barring decisions.

This Scheme will require anyone working or volunteering with children and/or vulnerable adults in a regulated activity to register. For the purpose of gymnastics, regulated activity would cover any activity that involves contact with children or vulnerable adults frequently (once a month or more) and/or intensively (takes place on three or more days in a 30-day period) and/or overnight. This is likely to cover the majority of gymnastics activity. Once registered the individual will be subject to continuous monitoring and updating of their status. In other words, once an individual is registered, any new information that becomes available will be reviewed to determine whether the individual presents a risk to children and/or vulnerable adults.

Enhanced CRB disclosures are also required in line with the BG Use of CRB Disclosures and Recruitment of ex offenders Policy contained (members operating in Scotland or Northern Ireland should complete disclosures through the relevant NGB). The BG Case Referral Management Group (CRMG) is responsible for making the recruitment decision based on the information contained on the disclosure. BG registered organisations must abide by the BG recruitment decisions.

BG requires all members who are in regulated positions to complete an enhanced CRB disclosure through BG every three years. Where an organisation is recruiting a new member of staff or volunteers who is already a member of BG and has a current disclosure, a new BG CRB Disclosure is optional.

If a CRB disclosure is required, or where the successful candidate has not previously completed a BG CRB disclosure, the individual should be provided with the required application at the earliest opportunity. The disclosure should ideally be obtained before an individual commences a role within the club. BG registered clubs will be able to confirm the status of disclosure applications using the BG online membership system.

Although an individual may be permitted to commence aspects of the role that do not involve contact with vulnerable adults (and/or children), the club must ensure the disclosure is approved before an appointment is confirmed. BG will contact the recruiting club without delay in the event that the CRB disclosure contains information of concern.

Use of Criminal Records Disclosures and Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy

1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This policy outlines British Gymnastics' policy on the recruitment of staff or volunteers with criminal convictions, the use of criminal record disclosures and the storage and use of information on convictions.

1.2 The appropriate bodies for these checks are as follows: -

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) (England and Wales)

Disclosure Scotland/CRBS (Scotland)

Assist NI (Northern Ireland)

Anyone involved in recruitment must also be familiar with the recruitment procedures contained in the BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy 2009.

The following legislation advises this policy: -
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
Data Protection Act 1998

- 1.5 This policy applies to all members and volunteers. A copy of this policy should be made available to any job applicants at the outset of the recruitment process where a CRB disclosure will be required as part of the recruitment process.

2 INTRODUCTION

Existing legislation ensures that ex-offenders are not required to disclose to prospective employers, convictions defined as 'spent'. Any applications for posts working with children and/or vulnerable adults or a managerial positions that would give influence over one or more people working in a role with children and/or vulnerable adults is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, in other words, all cautions, reprimands, final warnings and convictions must be declared, even those that are considered 'spent'. Thus, it is British Gymnastics policy to require these job applicants (including voluntary positions) to disclose any 'unspent' criminal convictions as part of their application.

British Gymnastics are commencing a rolling programme of retrospective checks on existing members or volunteers in any positions covered by the above description and will require members or volunteers to consent to disclosure on request. Failure to comply with a request for disclosure could lead to suspension.

British Gymnastics will not discriminate unfairly against applicants with a criminal record. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an applicant from working for British Gymnastics or any affiliate organisation. The nature of a disclosed conviction and its relevance to the post in question, will be considered however any cautions, reprimands, final warnings relating to offences against vulnerable adults are likely to be incompatible with working or volunteering for British Gymnastics. In exceptional circumstances (e.g. age of offender at the time of a conviction), the Case Referral Management Group may offer an individual the alternative of a risk assessment.

Where a conviction has been disclosed in an individual's application or on a Coach education exam application, the Case Referral Management Group will discuss the matter and make a recommendation to the appropriate club/individual involved in the recruitment decision. Failure to reveal information relating to unspent convictions that later shows up on a CRB disclosure could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment/voluntary role or the retention of a coaching qualification.

British Gymnastics uses the CRB disclosure services to obtain information to enable it to assess the suitability of applicants. British Gymnastics complies fully with the CRB code of practice and does not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a CRB disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

British Gymnastics complies with the CRB code in relation to the secure storage, handling, use, retention & disposal of CRB disclosures and disclosure information and with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.

3 APPOINTMENTS REQUIRING A CRB DISCLOSURE

An appointee will be requested to submit to a criminal records disclosure request only where the assessment of the role identifies a requirement to work with children, vulnerable adults or influence over others in this position. For posts where a criminal records disclosure will be required, the further particulars of the post will contain an indication that a disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position. All subjects of a disclosure request will be made aware of the relevant Code of Practice. Any information revealed in a disclosure that is likely to lead to the withdrawal of a job offer will be discussed with the applicant before the offer is withdrawn.

Storage & Access: Information obtained from a disclosure will not be stored on an employee/member's personnel file but will be stored separately in lockable storage with access limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties. The only information stored on a personal file will be the record of the date of issue of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure requested, and the unique reference number of the disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken. This information is necessary for monitoring purposes. A record will be maintained of all those to whom disclosure information has been revealed as it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

- 3.3 Usage: Disclosure information will only be used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent will have been obtained.
- 3.4 Retention: Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, disclosure information will not be stored for longer than necessary and will be destroyed within six months.

Disposal: Once the retention period has elapsed, British Gymnastics will ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed.

Monitoring and Appraisal

All staff and volunteers should be given the opportunity to receive feedback, either through a formal appraisal or more informally through mentoring. Although this is good practice for any voluntary or paid position, appraisals are essential for positions that involve significant contact with vulnerable adults. Appraisals should be offered at regular intervals, initially at the end of a probation period and thereafter at yearly intervals. An appraisal can help to establish learning needs, review targets and consider any concerns.

All BG registered clubs must put in place a procedure to deal with complaints over staff and volunteers. Parents/Carers and all members should be made aware of the procedures for raising a complaint or concern. Provision should be made in the club rules or constitution to allow complaints and disciplinary procedures to be implemented.

Terms of Reference

Contained within this section is:

Club Welfare Officer
Regional Welfare Officer
National (Home Country) Lead Officer
British Gymnastics (BG) Child Protection Case Referral Management Group (CRMG)

Club Welfare Officer

Terms of Reference

Assist the club to put in place policies and implementation plans for safeguarding and promoting welfare of young people/vulnerable adults.

Be the first point of contact for club staff and volunteers, young people/vulnerable adults and parents/carers for any issue concerning safeguarding, poor practice or potential/alleged abuse

Ensure that all incidents are correctly reported and referred out in accordance with BG guidelines

Ensure that all relevant club members have the opportunity to access appropriate safeguarding training

Ensure that BG procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed and all appropriate existing staff or volunteers have up-to-date CRB disclosures

Maintain local contact details for Adult Social Care Services/Social Services, the Police.

Ensure that codes of conduct are in place for club staff and volunteers, vulnerable adults and parents/carers

Advise club management on safeguarding issues

Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis

Core Skills

Basic administration and record maintenance

Communication skills

Confidence in relation to referring cases externally

Ability to ensure policy and procedures are effectively implemented

Training Requirements

Sports Coach UK Coaching Disabled Performers

How to Coach Disabled People in Sport

Equity in your Coaching

BG Club Management Awareness Module (includes equality training)

A Club for All (Equality training)

Regional Welfare Officer

Terms of Reference

Assist the Region and technical committees to put in place policies and implementation plans for safeguarding and promoting welfare of vulnerable adults.

Ensure that technical committees and event organisers are aware of the requirement to have a nominated welfare officer at all Regional events (This person must be contactable at all times throughout the event. An appropriately trained welfare officer must accompany any trips that involve an over-night stay. This role may be taken on by one of the existing staff/volunteers, providing they have completed the required training).

Offer advice and support clubs in relation to safeguarding issues
Ensure that all incidents are correctly reported and referred out in accordance with BG guidelines
Ensure that BG procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed and all appropriate existing Regional staff or volunteers have up-to-date CRB disclosures
Maintain local contact details for Children's Social Care Services/Adult Social Care/ Social Services, the Police.
Ensure that codes of conduct are in place at Regional events for staff, and volunteers, vulnerable adults and parents/carers
Sit on Regional management committee to advise on safeguarding issues
Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis

Core Skills

Basic administration and record maintenance
Communication skills
Confidence in relation to referring cases externally
Ability to ensure policy and procedures are effectively implemented
Ability to influence key people and ensure ownership of policy and implementation plans across the Region

Training Requirements

Sports Coach UK Coaching Disabled Performers
How to Coach Disabled People in Sport
Equity in your Coaching
BG Club Management Awareness Module (includes equality training)
A Club for All (Equality training)

National (Home Country) Lead Officer

Terms of Reference

Take a lead role in ensuring there is a safeguarding policy in place that is mandatory for all staff, members and volunteers and plans in place to drive its implementation.
Ensure any required Safeguarding Standards/ Equality Standards are achieved
Take a lead role in managing, monitoring and reviewing the safeguarding policy/vulnerable adults policy and implementation plans
Ensure that BG members, employees, committees and event organisers are aware of their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding
Be available to advise and support to clubs and technical committees in relation to safeguarding and welfare issues
Ensure that all incidents are correctly managed and referred out in accordance with BG (Home Country) guidelines
Ensure there is a strategy in place for the provision of safeguarding learning opportunities and support its delivery, including the provision of CPD for welfare officers
Take a lead role in identification, support and monitoring of Welfare Officers
Ensure that BG (or appropriate Home Country) internal procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers are appropriate and existing
National staff and volunteers complete a CRB disclosures and attend safeguarding awareness training at least every three years
Ensure access to national and local contact details for Adult Social Care/Children's Social Care Services/Social Services, the Police.
Ensure that the safeguarding policies and procedures are well published among all staff, members (including gymnasts), volunteers and parents/carers
Ensure that codes of conduct are in place at National events for staff and volunteers, vulnerable adults and parents/carers
Sit on relevant National committees to advise on safeguarding issues
Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis

Core Skills

Knowledge of key legislation and government guidance on safeguarding and vulnerable adults
Understanding the roles of external agencies in terms of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults
Ability to manage systems for administration and record maintenance
Communication skills
Confidence in relation to referring cases externally
Ability to ensure policy and procedures are effectively implemented
Ability to influence key people and ensure ownership or policy and implementation plan across the governing body

Training Requirements

Appropriate Equality training

British Gymnastics (BG) Child Protection Case Referral Management Group (CRMG)

The BG CRMG has the authority to decide on the direction of cases involving the welfare of children, and vulnerable adults. The case route will be determined by considering if a case reaches a certain threshold, i.e. would a case be considered potential poor practice or potential abuse.

The BG Case Manager will be the first point of contact for all Welfare related cases. On receipt of any concerns, allegations or information that may cause British Gymnastics to reasonably believe an individual may pose a risk to a vulnerable adult, the CRMG will be consulted on the referral route. In some instances, this may be done by telephone.

The CRMG will be made up of the following: -

Chair of Ethics and Welfare Committee
BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer
Director of Coach/Judge Education
Relevant BG Managers (when appropriate)
Child Protection Advisors: - Individuals with relevant experience in Child Protection. Experience may involve Social Services or Police background, Specific experience of child protection/vulnerable adults in sport, Legal expertise in Children's Law

Terms of Reference

The members of the CRMG will have experience in dealing with welfare issues.

The CRMG will be managed and co-ordinated by the BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer, who will be the first point of contact for any referral.

The CRMG will be chaired by the Chair of the Ethics and Welfare Committee

The CRMG will operate independently from the CEO and disciplinary panel members to ensure the separation of each of the four stages of the process; referral, suspension, disciplinary and appeals.

Procedures

The CRMG will determine the referral route for all cases that deal with the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Consideration will be given to any signed written evidence including any written representation from the accused. (Any preliminary collection of information will be carried out by the BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer)

The CEO will sit outside this group and cannot intervene in any decisions unless there has been concern raised about a significant prior relationship, connection or interest between the accused and a member of the group.

Where abuse is suspected and any delay in action may compromise the welfare of a vulnerable adult/s, BG is authorised to inform the relevant Adult Social Care Services/Social Services or Police.

Members of the CRMG must meet or be consulted within ten working days of the receipt of any referral where it is unclear if a case should be considered potential poor practice. Although it is not the responsibility of the panel to decide if abuse has taken place, the panel must quickly decide if the case needs to be referred to Adult Social Care Services/Social Services or the police.

Any case that has already been referred to Adult Social Care Services/Social Services or Police will only be considered in relation to whether suspension from BG is required. The CRMG will only reconsider referral of the matter on completion of any investigation or action by Adult Social Care Services/Social Services or Police. Anyone who is convicted of an offence against a vulnerable adult or receives a caution in respect of an offence will be deemed to be in breach of the Association Rules.

In cases of potential poor practice or where convictions information is received from a CRB disclosure, the group may decide on an appropriate course of action. The matter will be passed back to the BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer to manage the implementation of the agreed actions. Any actions will be reached after a fair appraisal of the case and will be in proportion with the severity of the incident. Previous allegations of a similar nature will also be considered.

Possible Actions

Recommendation that no further action taken
A warning and remedial action plan
Referral out/back to Club, Region, Line Manager etc to deal with advice on how to proceed
Further Enquiries/interviews
Referral to CEO for full disciplinary hearing

Recommendation made to CEO to suspend member
Devolvement to independent review panel

Members of the CRMG should declare immediately (to the group) any significant prior relationship, connection or interest which could disqualify them from any discussion on the referral pathway of a case.

Any concerns over the independence of a CRMG member on a case-to-case basis should be raised with the CEO. This can be done without fear of victimisation or reprisal. This or any other valid reason can be just cause for the CEO to request the resignation of the member from the group.

All group decisions will be communicated to the CEO for information and any necessary further action.

An individual has the right to appeal against any course of action determined by the CRMG. This must be done within ten working days of receipt of the letter informing the individual of the decision reached by the group.

The CRMG can choose to call on Legal or other advice where deemed necessary.

The CRMG will carry out a case monitoring function.

All case information is regarded as highly confidential and should not be disclosed outside the CRMG except when it is relevant to inform an external agency.

Transporting Gymnasts

The following guidance relates to coaches who transport gymnasts to training or events/competitions. Additional guidance is provided for the official provision of transport by a club for away events.

Gymnasts are required to train a large number of hours to achieve high levels of performance therefore great commitment is required not only from the gymnasts but also from their parents/carers. In the past, it has often been the case that well-meaning coaches or officials have provided transport to members of their clubs to assist parents/carers. However, it has been identified that some adults in the sport have used this as an opportunity to get vulnerable adults alone and abuse has occurred. As a result, BG Vulnerable Adults Policy requires that BG Coaches do not take vulnerable adults alone on car journeys, except in *unforeseen circumstances.

The following are practical suggestions to help alleviate transport problems: -

- Make parents/carers aware (preferably when the vulnerable adult joins the club) that it is the coaches' responsibility to coach and not to provide transport for the vulnerable adult
- Encourage parents/carers to share transport with other parents/carers
- Transport gymnasts in groups

It is unacceptable for coaches to transport one vulnerable adult alone and in the case of transporting a group of gymnasts, best practice would require two responsible adults in the car. However, in exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, and subject to prior consent from all relevant parents/carers, a coach could transport a group of gymnasts without another adult present. This is subject to the following conditions:

- The driver must ensure there are central pick-up and drop-off points to ensure they are not alone with a vulnerable adult.
- The driver should also provide parents/carers with full details of any planned breaks in the journey and departure and arrival times.
- Gymnasts must be seated in the back of the car.
- The Club Welfare Officer should be made aware of the arrangements.

In the case of gymnasts attending National squad training, parents/carers should be encouraged to team up with the parents of another squad member who lives closest to them. On occasion that the parents are unable to provide transport, a coach or official could then transport the gymnasts as a pair.

*Unforeseen would only apply in the event of an accident or where something unexpected has happened and there is no other alternative but to take a vulnerable adult in the car and to fail to act would put the vulnerable adult at risk of harm. Where these situations are unavoidable and whenever possible the full consent of either the Welfare Officer, Head coach or Official in the club and/or the vulnerable adults parents/carers should be obtained.

Whistle Blowing

Safeguarding children and young people requires everyone to be committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability. BG supports an environment where people feel free to raise their concerns with the knowledge that all concerns will be taken seriously.

The term 'whistle blowing' is often used in such circumstances to describe the raising of a concern about practices, procedures or conduct of an individual. In gymnastics context a whistleblower may be:

- A coach or official
- A gymnast
- A parent
- A member of the public

Concerns should be raised without delay to either the Club Welfare Officer or the BG Lead Officer or BG Case Manager. The earlier concerns are reported, the easier it will be to take action.

Anyone reporting a concern should provide as much information and detail as possible. This could include: -

- Names of the people involved
- Other witnesses
- Dates of events
- Any other relevant documentation

BG understands that whistleblowers are often very reluctant to report concerns. Thus, BG recognises that whistleblowers may wish to raise concerns in confidence. In these circumstances, the identity of the whistleblower will be kept confidential. Any subsequent reason why disclosure may be required will be discussed in detail with the whistleblower before any action is taken.

It must be recognised that concerns that are reported anonymously are frequently very difficult to investigate. The decision whether to investigate an anonymous allegation will be made by the CRMG based on the seriousness of the concerns and the credibility of the referral and the likelihood of identifying others who can confirm the allegations. Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.

All concerns raised under this procedure will be treated seriously and a decision made about whether or not an investigation is appropriate. Depending upon the nature of the matter it may be referred to the police. In these circumstances, the whistleblower may be asked to provide a written statement and give evidence to the police and/or at a BG hearing. BG will provide support to the whistleblower during this process.

BG will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect anyone who has raised a concern in good faith. Anyone who is found to have victimised or harassed a whistleblower will face disciplinary action. Anyone who raises concerns known to be untrue may also be subject to disciplinary action.

Sample forms

Self Declaration Form

You have a right of access to any information held on you and additional rights under the Data Protection Act 1998

PART A

Title..... First Names(s)..... Surname.....

Previous names by which you may have been known.....

Address.....

.....

Post Code..... Tel. No.....

Email.....

Date of Birth..... Sex: Male/Female.....

Club (Please complete if appropriate).....

Please give details of the positions you currently or wish to fulfil or relevant job title.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Start date.....

Please give details of any other clubs you are or have been a member of and give details of the positions you held.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

PART B

1) Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offences, received cautions, final warnings or reprimands?

YES/NO*

If YES, please supply details of any criminal convictions.....

.....

.....

NOTE: You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions) order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Amendment) Order 1986 you should declare all convictions including 'spent' convictions, cautions, reprimands and written warnings

2) Are you a person known to any Adult Social Care/Children's Social Care department as being an actual or potential risk to children/vulnerable adults under investigation for a Child Protection/Vulnerable adult related incident? YES/NO*

If YES, please supply details.....

.....

.....

3) Have you had a disciplinary sanction (from a sports or other organisation's governing body) relating to child abuse? YES/NO*

If YES, please supply details.....
.....
.....

I certify that all information in this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and realise that false information or omissions may lead to termination of my services.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE BRITISH GYMNASTICS' CHILD PROTECTION POLICY/VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY. I HEREBY CONSENT TO A CRB DISCLOSURE

Signed..... Date.....

Print Name.....

PART C

TO BE COMPLETED BY CLUB OR OTHER DESIGNATED OFFICIAL

I confirm that I have seen identification documents (please refer to Identity Verification form for details of acceptable identification documents) for the above person, and I confirm to the best of my ability that these are accurate.

Please provide details of documents:

.....
.....

Signature of club/designated official.....

Position.....

Application Form

This form is to be completed by employees and volunteers in sport

Confidential

Position applied for.....

Surname and title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss).....

First Name(s).....

Any first name, surname or maiden name previously known by.....

Date of Birth..... Place of Birth.....

National Insurance Number.....

Present address.....

.....

.....

Postcode..... Telephone Number(s).....

Email address.....

Former address (if moved within the previous three years)

.....

.....

Current occupation..... Name of organisation.....

Role..... Address.....

Start Date.....

Previous occupations.....

Name of organisation.....

Start Date.....

Finish Date.....

Relevant experience.....

Previous experience of working with vulnerable adults in a voluntary or professional capacity

.....

Qualifications.....

Academic/School.....

.....

.....

Vocational/Interests.....

.....

.....

Sporting qualifications and experience.....

.....

Reason for applying.....
.....
.....
.....

Name and address of two people who know you well (and are not related to you) who have first-hand experience of you working with vulnerable adults and that we can contact for a reference, or who have provided you with a reference testimonial:

With your approval we shall also contact your current employer (where appropriate) for a reference

I am a member of British Gymnastics (please delete where appropriate)

YES/NO

FULL/ASSOCIATE

I agree to abide by any Code of Ethics and Conduct, which the organisation has in force

Signed..... Date.....

Print Name.....

NB: Failure to disclose this information may result in exclusion from the club or organisation

Reference Form

Confidential

(Name).....has expressed an interest in becoming a coach/official/team manager/helper (please circle as appropriate) and has given your name as a referee. The post involves substantial access to children/vulnerable adults and we are anxious to know if there are any concerns about this individual having a post that allows significant access to children/vulnerable adults.

If you are happy to complete this reference, all the information contained on the form will remain absolutely confidential, and will only be shared with the applicant's immediate supervisor should they be offered the above position. We would appreciate you being extremely candid and honest in your evaluation of this person.

1. How long have you known this person?
2. In what capacity?
3. What attributes does this person have that would make them a suitable volunteer?
4. How would you describe their personality?
5. Please rate this person on the following (please tick one box for each)

	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Dealing with children/vulnerable adults					
Maturity					
Patience					
Self Motivation					
Can motivate others					
Commitment					
Energy					
Reliability					
Trustworthiness					

This post involves substantial access to children/vulnerable adults. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children/vulnerable adults, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children or vulnerable adults.

YES/NO

If you have answered Yes we will contact you in confidence.

Name..... Organisation.....

Contact Numbers.....

Signed..... Date.....

British Gymnastics Vulnerable Adults Incident Form

This form should be used by Club Welfare Officers to record the details of any concerns raised. A copy should be sent to the Head of Membership or Safeguarding and Compliance Officer at British Gymnastics. If there is more than one alleged victim a separate form should be completed. All efforts must be made to keep the information confidential. The information should only be shared with those that need to know if it is in the best interest of the child or vulnerable adult. Please note that where a concern is immediate please make initial contact by telephone and return the completed form as soon as possible. The form should be completed for all levels of concern, even where no immediate action may be necessary.

DETAILS OF PERSON COMPLETING THE FORM

Name.....

Club Name.....

Position (*Welfare Officer, Coach, Club Official, Volunteer, Parent, Gymnast etc*).....

Address.....

.....

Postcode..... Contact number.....

Name/details of person who raised concern (*if different from above*).....

DETAILS OF PERSON CONCERN IS ATTRIBUTED TO

Name.....

Club Name.....

Position.....

Relationship to alleged victim.....

DETAILS OF ALLEGED VICTIM

Name.....

Club..... Discipline.....

Date of Birth..... Age at time of incident(s).....

Address of parent/carer.....

Postcode..... Contact number.....

Any identified special needs or disability.....

Ethnic background

DETAILS OF INCIDENT

Date(s) or period (*if over a drawn out period*) of incident.....

Description of the incident/s (please include as much details as possible. If a vulnerable adult talked to you, write down the exact details of the conversation, remember not to lead the vulnerable adult. Please include any other information including location, number of incidences, any witness details etc, please continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary).....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Any actions taken?.....

.....
.....

Please indicate if you are in contact with any other bodies concerning this incident and include a contact name, address and telephone number

Adult Social Care.....

.....

Police.....

.....

Other.....

.....

Any other additional information.....

.....

Signed..... Date.....

Glossary

The glossary provides the meanings, of the words and phrases that are used in the document. In recent years there have been many changes in the terminology used. The following information should also help to clarify how the current terminology and titles relate to past policy documents and training material. In addition, a brief outline has been provided on the (relevant aspects of) key pieces of legislation and guidance that relate to safeguarding.

Gymnastics

A generic term that includes all British Gymnastics recognised activities

Disciplines

Cheerleading, General (includes Team Gym, Gymnastics and Movement for People with Disabilities & Pre-school), Men's Artistic, Rhythmic, Acrobatic Gymnastics, Aerobic Gymnastics, Trampoline, Women's Artistic).

Club

The term is used to describe any situation where a group of people come together with common aims or interests. In the context of gymnastics, this would include a BG registered club, a squad a competition and an event.

Member

Describes a person participating in Gymnastics such as Staff, Official, and Volunteer etc. This policy applies either directly or indirectly to all individuals who participate in the sport of Gymnastics regardless of their role.

Parent/Carer

A Parent/Carer is someone who has the responsibility for providing or arranging care for someone else who, because of long term illness or disability or age, is not able to care for him or herself.

Adult Social Care Services

This is the new name for the Social Services. However many counties do not name their teams in this way.

Confidential information

This is information that is not normally in the public domain or readily available from another source and should be subject to a duty of confidence. A duty of confidence arises when one person provides information to another in circumstances where it is reasonable to expect that the information will be held in confidence.

Consent

This is where agreement is freely given for an action. Informed consent is where the person giving the consent fully understands what is involved and its likely consequences. Consent can be explicit or implicit. Explicit consent can be expressed either orally or in writing, although written consent is preferable since it reduces the scope for subsequent dispute. Implicit consent is where consent is implied e.g. participation in a major public event where the participant or their parent is aware that there will be TV cameras, would imply consent to be filmed.

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)

The CRB provides a disclosure service for employers and voluntary organizations in England and Wales. The Service is accessed through Registered Bodies or Umbrella Body. BG acts as an umbrella body for registered organizations in England and Wales. Access NI provides a function similar for employers and voluntary organisations in Northern Ireland. Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS) provides free Disclosures for volunteers in the voluntary sector.

Disabled

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) defines a person as having a disability 'if he has a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

Learning Disability

The Children Act 2004 defines learning disability as: 'a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind which induces significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning'. A learning disability is a lifelong disability that is often present from birth.

Loco parentis

In loco parentis (from Latin meaning 'in place of a parent') refers to a person who has been given explicit permission to assume parental responsibility for a child or vulnerable adult by his or her parents/carers or legal guardian. In BG terms we refer to this as 'in place of a parent' and acting as a reasonable trained adult.

Need to know

In the context of sharing confidential information, disclosing details only to those people who have to be informed. The factors that need to be considered when determining whether to disclose information are the reason for the sharing information, the level of detail that needs to be disclosed, to whom the information should be shared and whether disclosing the information is a proportionate response to the need to protect a vulnerable adult from harm.

Proportionality

Proportionality is a key factor in deciding whether or not to share confidential information without consent. The principle of proportionality implies that the means should not exceed the ends. In other words, the information you wish, or have been asked, to share, a balanced response to the need to safeguard a person, or to prevent or detect a serious crime.

Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Vulnerable Adults

The process of protecting vulnerable adults from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables vulnerable adults to have optimum life chances.

Legislation

Data Protection Act 1998

The Data Protection Act relates to personal data in a manual or computerised form that is easily accessible. The Act sets out the requirements for the processing of this information, which includes obtaining, recording, storing and disclosing.

Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporates into domestic law the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Police Act 1997

Part V of the Police Act set out the measures required to obtain information about prospective employees or volunteers from the CRB (England and Wales), Disclosure Scotland and Access NI (Northern Ireland).

Rehabilitation of Offender Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 enables some criminal convictions to become 'spent'. It helps people with minor convictions, where after a defined period will no longer have to disclose these convictions. Positions working with children are one of a number of exemptions to the Act and people with 'spent' convictions would be expected to disclose this information.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 was passed as a result of the Bichard Inquiry arising from the Soham murders in 2002. The Act provides the framework to set up the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the Vetting and Barring Scheme. The main purpose is to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults.

Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007

This Act relates to a new Scottish Vetting and Barring Scheme that builds on some of the existing provisions contained in the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003. The Act provides for two lists to be established: one for those who are unsuitable to work with children and young people younger than 18 and another for those unsuitable to work with "protected adults". Anyone who wants to work with children will be required to register with the scheme. Unless an individual is automatically barred due to a relevant offence against a child, barring decisions will be taken by a new central barring unit.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007

As only part of the provisions in the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#) extend to Northern Ireland, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 replicates the remaining parts of the scheme in order to provide a seamless vetting and barring scheme.

Mental Capacity Act (2005)

New provision relating to persons who lack capacity, a person is unable to make a decision for himself if he is unable -

(a) to understand the information relevant to the decision,

(b) to retain that information,

(c) to use or weigh that information as part of the process of making the decision, or

(d) to communicate his decision (whether by talking, using sign language or any other means).

(2) A person is not to be regarded as unable to understand the information relevant to a decision if he is able to understand an explanation of it given to him in a way that is appropriate to his circumstances (using simple language, visual aids or any other means).

(3) The fact that a person is able to retain the information relevant to a decision for a short period only does not prevent him from being regarded as able to make the decision.

(4) The information relevant to a decision includes information about the reasonably foreseeable consequences of -

(a) deciding one way or another, or

(b) failing to make the decision.

No Secrets 2000 and Sexual Offences Act 2003

All relevant Acts and Home Office guidance documents can be obtained from www.dfes.gov.uk

British
Gymnastics
More than a sport



Good Practice Guidelines on the use of Social Networking Sites



Good Practice Guidelines on the use of Social Networking Sites by British Gymnastics Clubs and Club Members

Good Practice Guidelines on the use of Social Networking Sites by BG Clubs and Club Members

Background

There has been a growing awareness in sport of the increasing communication by adults and young people on the rapidly developing social networking sites and how this media has become a feature of social communication. There are both positive and negative aspects to using social networking sites that BG clubs and members should be aware of. It is important to acknowledge that if used properly, social media can be a very effective tool. However, British Gymnastics has identified a number of issues that have led to both disciplinary and safeguarding concerns which stem from the improper or inappropriate use of such sites by its members.

Introduction

BG recognise that the use of social networking sites such as My Space, Bebo, Facebook and Twitter is a rapidly growing phenomenon and is increasingly being used as a communication tool of choice by young people and more recently by adults. Facebook is the largest such site whose “mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected”.

These sites permit users to chat online, post pictures, and write ‘blogs’ etc, through the creation of an online profile, that can either be publicly available to all or restricted to an approved circle of electronic friends.

Sites such as You Tube and Google provide a platform for uploading and viewing video clips, which with the latest cameras and mobile phones becomes ever easier and can be almost instantaneous. In addition to these sites, Twitter is a social networking and micro blogging service that enables users to send and read other user messages called tweets. Tweets are like online text messages of up to a maximum of 140 characters displayed on the author’s profile page. Tweets are publicly visible by default however the sender can restrict message delivery to their friends list only.

Social networking can be a great tool to promote yourself or your club if used in the correct way. For example, British Gymnastics uses Facebook to link to web stories, provide videos and photos to its members and promote events and activities with the click of a button, instantly reaching over 45,000 people. The BG twitter account adds another dimension as it allows access to a larger audience, promoting the sport through various channels and connections.

Whilst these technologies provide exciting opportunities, they are accompanied by dangers and negative consequences if abused by users.

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a recommendation of best practice to all BG club members and parents on the use of social networking sites as they relate to that individual’s role in the BG club. It is important to understand however that if used correctly, social networking can be a fun, safe and productive activity.

Note: Throughout this guidance a young person/children is anyone under the age of 18.

Guidance for Coaches, Judges, helpers/volunteers and other officers in a position of trust and responsibility in respect of children in a BG club

1. BG members in a position of trust and/or responsibility (as defined in the BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy) should not be in contact with young people through social networking sites if they hold such a position in respect of that individual young person.

2. Should a young person in your club request to become a named friend on your Social Networking Page or request that you become a named friend on the young person's Social Networking Page you should decline if any of the below apply:

- You are in a position of responsibility in respect of that child.
- You hold a position of trust and responsibility in the club.
- Your contact with the child is through a BG club **and** the parent/guardian of the child does not give their consent to such contact.

3. Social networking sites should never be used as a medium by which to abuse or criticise BG, BG members or BG clubs and to do so would be in breach of BG Standards of Conduct.

4. The publishing of a photograph or video footage on a social networking site is governed by the same requirements as any other media – see the BG Photography Policy in the Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy.

Guidance to coaches who have children that they coach in the club.

The issue has been raised that parents are becoming members of social networking sites that their children sign up to for security reasons in order to ensure the wellbeing of their own child by being able to view their child's site. This will give the parent access via their child's site to all children listed as friends of their child. It would not be appropriate for BG to prevent a parent who is also a coach in his/her child's club from using this form of protection for their child's online activities.

Therefore in such cases the coach can:

- Have gymnasts in the club on the site he / she is accessing providing the BG under 18 year old club members on the site are listed as friends of his / her child;

However, in this case the following also applies:

- The coach concerned should not have direct contact with gymnasts other than their own child through the social networking site;
- The coach should not accept such gymnasts as friends on his / her home site; and
- The coach should inform the Club Welfare Officer of this arrangement.

Coaches/Judges/Club officials who are under 18.

BG recognise that social networking sites can be a useful tool for judges, coaches and officials within BG clubs to share information with other judges, coaches or officials. If, however, the judge, coach or official is under the age of 18 while they may be a colleague, the requirements of 1 and 2 above must be adhered to.

However, for young people aged 16 or 17 it is the view of BG, that to restrict the ability to share professional information with them from other coaches, judges or officials may be detrimental in their professional development in their role in BG.

Therefore in such cases if the parent of a young person in a position of responsibility aged 16/17 and the young person themselves requests to have contact with an adult club officer or coach for the purposes of sharing professional information relevant to their role the club should:

Gain written consent of the parent/guardian and young person to have such contact naming the individual adult and social networking site concerned;

- The named adult must sign an agreement to keep the contact with the young person to the discussion of matters relevant to the young person's professional role in the club;
- All such communications should be shared with an identified 3rd person (e.g. the young person's parent/guardian or club welfare officer); and
- If the young person or the adult is found to breach the above agreement, action must be taken by the club to address the concern and/or the breach referred to BG or the statutory agencies if appropriate.

Guidance to BG members under the age of 18

1. Do not ask your coach, judge, helper/volunteer or club official to be your social networking site friend – they will refuse as that would breach good practice and the BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy.

2. Use the internet positively and do not place yourself at risk. Have a look at www.ceop.gov.uk for some useful tips.

3. Consider who you are inviting to be your friend and follow the good advice of the social networking sites to ensure you are talking to the person you believe you are talking to.

4. Always remember that anything you say including photos, pictures and video clips posted on your site may be shared with people other than those for whom it was intended.

5. Never post or send any photographs, videos or make comments that may be:

- Hurtful, untrue and upsetting and you may regret sharing later on; or
- Used by other people in a way you did not intend or want.

6. Do not put pictures of other club members on the site within the club setting as you may breach the BG Photography Policy. If you do wish to upload such a picture you must get advice and consent of your parent, the other young person and their parent and a club officer before even considering uploading such a photo. This will not prevent you having pictures of your gymnastics friends on your site taken outside of the sporting arena but it is good advice to always ensure they and their parents are happy with any picture you have of them on your site.

7. Always be aware that social networking sites are a method of communication like letter writing and the spoken word. They are bound by the same laws and rules. Such technology is instant and this allows you as the user to react in the 'heat of the moment', where in the past you would have been required to write a letter which would have taken time and allowed for you to think again before sending. So never place a comment on the internet that you would not put in writing or say to the individual concerned as to do so may not only breach BG Policy but also the law.

Guidance to parents of BG members under the age of 18

As children grow up, parents and carers have to teach them a variety of things to ensure that they are equipped to face the challenges of the modern world. We have to teach them how to cross the road safely, how to deal with strangers and how to engage with other children and adults appropriately in a variety of different settings, including the home, school and in the world at large.

When our children go out to play we want to know where they are going. We satisfy ourselves that they know how to get there without any mishaps or being exposed to any real dangers en route, that they will be safe when they get there and that they will be with responsible people throughout. Typically, when our children come home we ask them if everything was OK. We take a very close interest.

Using the internet safely requires similar skills, which is why it is important that parents and carers find out more about the internet for themselves.

In the overwhelming majority of cases, the benefits of the internet easily outweigh any drawbacks. To keep it that way, parents and children need to know that there are places on the internet which promote racial hatred, contain violent images or pornographic material all of which adults, as well as children, may find distressing. Regrettably it is also true that certain sites will attract a number of adults with a highly inappropriate interest in children.

Beyond these dangers, other websites have the potential to harm impressionable young people through the presentation of extremist views. Sites may be very disrespectful of other people's religious beliefs or cultural backgrounds or seek to distort history. Sites may also promote anorexia or self-harming, for example, in ways which might attract the attention of a particular child who could, at that moment, be going through a vulnerable or difficult phase in their life. There are other more insidious threats around too. Without the experience to distinguish between genuine and misleading messages, children may be fooled by scams of various kinds.

There are however, a few simple steps which parents can take to help their children use the internet safely.

Some simple ways to keep children safe online

- Get to know your child's online habits. Children are inquisitive. They will look to explore the internet as much as they do the real world. Knowing the sites they go to, the people they meet there and what they do will help to keep children safe.
- Stay alert to any sudden changes in mood or appearance, or to any major change in habits or to increased secretiveness. These are often tell-tale signs that something is not right.
- Keep lines of communication open - tell your child they can always talk to you or another trusted adult, such as a teacher, if they do end up in some sort of trouble on the internet. Make children aware that there are things on the internet which may distress them.
- Spend some time surfing the internet yourself. The more that you know about the internet, the better able you are, in turn, to help your child navigate around it without coming to any harm.
- Install internet filtering software showing a Child Safety Online Kitemark on your computer. Filtering products with a Kitemark have been independently tested to provide a simple and effective means of support to parents, helping to ensure that a child's online experience is a safe one. The Kitemark scheme is sponsored by the [Home Office](#) and [Ofcom](#).

There have also been occasions where parents of BG members have used social networking sites to criticise or verbally abuse gymnastics clubs, its officers, officials, coaches, judges, and gymnasts in an inappropriate and unacceptable manner. This has in some cases led the person who is the subject of the verbal abuse to take action through statutory agencies or statutory legislation to address the comments made. BG members found to be abusing or working outside of these good practice guidelines, may be subject to disciplinary action or investigation by BG as outlined in the BG Complaints & Disciplinary Procedures.

Social networking services, social media and sport: Guidelines for safeguarding children and young people

The CPSU Briefing Document “Social networking services, social media and sport: Guidelines for safeguarding children and young people” gives more in depth guidance on social networking sites. It can be accessed via the Child Protection in Sport Unit website at: www.cpsu.org.uk

What to do if you have concerns

As a user of a social networking site, whether you are a child or an adult, you may at some time have a concern about what you are seeing or being told about by another user. Concerns may range from negative or abusive comments, and cyber bullying to suspected grooming for sexual abuse. BG has drawn up a list below of agencies that you can contact, anonymously if you wish, where you can raise such concerns.

- www.thinkuknow.co.uk: the main UK Government website with advice for parents on how to keep children safe online
- www.ceop.police.uk: the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) is the Government body dedicated to eradicating abuse of children. Concerns about inappropriate contacts between a child and an adult, including online, can be reported directly to CEOP. Reporting can be accessed by pressing the CEOP button on the BG website’s CEOP page.
- www.iwf.org.uk: the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) works to remove illegal material from the internet. If you have found any material you believe to be illegal e.g. child sex abuse images, other obscene material or material which incites racial hatred, you can report it to the IWF.
- A number of specialist websites contain general advice that may be of help to parents. These include www.nspcc.org.uk, www.nch.org.uk, www.barnardos.org.uk, and www.beatbullying.org.
- Other sites can offer parents support on broader issues. These include www.parentlineplus.org.uk
- BG through the Ethics and Welfare Department on 0845 129 7 129 ext 2347

- Childline 0800 1111 or www.Childline.org.uk is another NSPCC support service. Using this website, children can talk confidentially to NSPCC advisors online about any issues or problems they may be experiencing, using an application similar to Instant Messenger (IM).

- Stop It Now freephone 0808 1000 900 or www.stopitnow.org.uk

- The Local Police or Children’s Services – their number appears in the phone book.



Managing Challenging Behaviour

Managing Challenging Behaviour

Staff/volunteers who deliver sports activities to children may, on occasions, be required to deal with a child's challenging behaviour.

These guidelines aim to promote good practice and to encourage a proactive response to supporting children to manage their own behaviour. They suggest some strategies and sanctions which can be used and also identify unacceptable sanctions or interventions which must *never* be used by staff or volunteers.

The guidelines will also include the views and suggestions of children.

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.
- All those involved in activities (including children, coaches/volunteers and parents/carers) should be provided with clear guidelines about required standards of conduct, and the organisation/club's process for responding to behaviour that is deemed unacceptable.
- Children must never be subject to any form of treatment that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading.
- Some children exhibit challenging behaviour as a result of specific circumstances, eg a medical or psychological condition, and coaches may therefore require specific or additional guidance. These and any other specific needs the child may have should be discussed with parents/carers and the child in planning for the activity, to ensure that an appropriate approach is agreed and, where necessary, additional support provided e.g. from external agencies, Children's Social Care services etc
- Sport can make a significant contribution to improving the life experience and outcomes for all children and young people¹. Every child should be supported to participate and, only in exceptional circumstances where the safety of a child or of other children cannot be maintained, should a child be excluded from club activities.

Planning Activities

Good coaching practice requires planning sessions around the group as a whole but also involves taking into consideration the needs of each individual athlete within that group. As part of session planning, coaches should consider whether any members of the group have presented in the past or are likely to present any difficulties in relation to the tasks involved, the other participants or the environment.

Where staff/volunteers identify potential risks, strategies to manage those risks should be agreed in advance of the session, event or activity. The planning should also identify the appropriate number of adults required to safely manage and support the session including being able to adequately respond to any challenging behaviour and to safeguard other members of the group and the staff/ volunteers involved.

When children are identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require additional supervision, specialist expertise or support, this should be discussed with parents/carers and where appropriate young people. The club should seek to work in partnership with parents/carers, and where necessary external agencies, to ensure that a child or young person can be supported to participate safely.

¹ Go to www.evrychildmatters.gov.uk for more information about the government's strategy for achieving improved outcomes for all children



Agreeing Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviours

Staff, volunteers, children, young people and parents/carers should be involved in developing an agreed statement of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour (code of conduct) and the range of sanctions which may be applied in response to unacceptable behaviour. This can be done at the start of the season, in advance of a trip away from home or as part of a welcome session at a residential camp.

Issues of behaviour and control should regularly be discussed with staff, volunteers, parents and children in the context of rights and responsibilities. When children are specifically asked, as a group, to draw up a code of conduct that will govern their participation in club activities, experience indicates that they tend to arrive at a very sensible and working set of 'rules' with greater 'buy-in' from participants than those simply imposed by adults within the club. If and when such a code is compiled, every member of the group can be asked to sign it, as can new members as they join.

Managing Challenging Behaviour

In responding to challenging behaviour the response should always be proportionate to the actions, be imposed as soon as is practicable and be fully explained to the child and their parents/carers. In dealing with children who display negative or challenging behaviours, staff and volunteers might consider the following options:

- Time out - from the activity, group or individual work.
- Reparation - the act or process of making amends.
- Restitution - the act of giving something back.
- Behavioural reinforcement - rewards for good behaviour, consequences for negative behaviour.
- De-escalation of the situation - talking through with the child.
- Increased supervision by staff/volunteers.
- Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements for their future or continued participation.
- Sanctions or consequences e.g. missing an outing.
- Seeking additional/specialist support through working in partnership with other agencies to ensure a child's needs are met appropriately e.g. referral for support to Children's Social Care, discussion with the child's key worker if they have one, speaking to the child's school about management strategies (all require parental consent unless the child is felt to be 'at risk' or 'in need of protection').
- Temporary or permanent exclusion

The following should never be permitted as a means of managing a child's behaviour:

- Physical punishment or the threat of such.
- Refusal to speak to or interact with the child.
- Being deprived of food, water, access to changing facilities or toilets or other essential facilities.
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

Staff and volunteers should review the needs of any child for whom sanctions are frequently necessary. This review should involve the child, parents/carers and in some cases others involved in supporting or providing services for the child and his/her family, to ensure an informed decision is made about the child's future or continued participation. As a last resort, if a child continues to present a high level of risk or danger to him or herself, or others, he or she may have to be suspended or barred from the group or club activities.



Physical Intervention

The use of physical intervention should always be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent a child injuring themselves or others, or causing serious damage to property. All forms of physical intervention should form part of a broader approach to the management of challenging behaviour.

Physical contact to prevent something happening should always be the result of conscious decision-making and not a reaction. Before physically intervening, the member of staff or volunteer should ask themselves, 'Is this the only option in order to manage the situation and ensure safety?' It is good practice to ensure that if you have to physically intervene in a situation with a child/young person, it is in the least restrictive way necessary to prevent them from getting hurt, and used only after all other strategies have been exhausted. Studies have shown that, where this is the case, children and young people understand and accept the reasons for the intervention.

The following must always be considered:

- Contact should be avoided with buttocks, genitals and breasts. Staff/volunteers should never behave in a way which could be interpreted as sexual.
- Any form of physical intervention should achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern.
- Staff/ volunteers should consider the circumstances, the risks associated with employing physical intervention compared with the risks of not employing physical intervention.
- The scale and nature of physical intervention must always be proportionate to the behaviour of the young person and the nature of harm/ damage they might cause.
- All forms of physical intervention should employ only a reasonable amount of force -ie the minimum force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property - applied for the shortest period of time.
- Staff/volunteers should never employ physical interventions which are deemed to present an unreasonable risk to children or staff/volunteers.
- Staff/volunteers shall never use physical intervention as a form of punishment.
- Physical intervention should NOT involve inflicting pain
- Where children are identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require physical intervention this should be discussed with parents/carers and where necessary the club will seek advice from or to work in partnership with external agencies (e.g. Children's Social Care) to ensure that a child or young person can be supported to participate safely. This may include asking for the provision of a suitably trained support worker/volunteer or accessing staff/volunteer training in physical intervention.

Any physical intervention used should be recorded as soon as possible after the incident by the staff/volunteers involved using the Incident Report Form and passed to the Club Welfare/Child Protection Officer as soon as possible.

Views of the child

It is clear from the accounts of children and young people that physical intervention provokes strong feelings. Children may be left physically or emotionally hurt. Even a child who hasn't directly been involved in the situation may be fearful that it will happen to them in future or have been upset by seeing what has happened to others.



A timely debrief for staff/volunteers, the child and parents should always take place following an incident where physical intervention has been used. This should include ensuring that the physical and emotional well-being of those involved has been addressed and ongoing support offered where necessary. Staff/volunteers, children and parents should be given an opportunity to talk about what happened in a calm and safe environment.

There should also be a discussion with the child and parents about the child's needs and continued safe participation in the group or activity.

It is important that staff and volunteers are made aware of and understand the organisation/club's guidance about managing challenging behaviour to ensure that they are aware of ways in which they may need to intervene and are clear about the practice guidance in this area.

A policy for managing challenging behaviour

In conclusion, all organisations that have a duty of care to children and young people should develop and implement a policy and procedures on managing challenging behaviour or consider incorporating this into their child protection policy. It should clearly set out the following:

- The standard of conduct expected from staff/volunteers and participants.
- How the organisation will respond to unacceptable behaviours.
- How your organisation will respond to 'high risk' behaviours'. This will give children and young people a clear message about when staff may need to get involved to stop a particular form of behaviour, and describe options to avoid confrontation through for example, time out.
- The circumstances in which children will be restrained. A decision to restrain a child should be firmly based on the safety of the child and must **NEVER** be made as a punishment or to get children to comply with instructions.
- The guidance, information or any support and/or training available to staff/volunteers, particularly where they are supporting a child with recognised challenging behaviour to access club activities.
- The circumstances where external agencies will be contacted for support or in response to concerns e.g. – Children's Social Care services, the Police.
- What will happen after an incident? Your organisation must have in place arrangements to check on the physical and emotional wellbeing of the child and staff, guidance on recording, who should be informed and a system for recording and monitoring.

This briefing has been developed from "Creating a Safe Environment in Sport, Scottish Governing Bodies Child Protection Guidelines" (sportscotland/ Children 1st)

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(Sept 2008)





British Gymnastics Policy on Body Piercing and Adornments

British Gymnastics Policy on Body Piercing and Adornments

British Gymnastics believes that jewellery and adornments worn in body piercing are inappropriate for safe practice in gymnastics and trampolining. This policy applies to all participants and coaches in training and in events at home and abroad.

Participants

A person participating with body adornments or jewellery **MUST** inform the coach and also remove the relevant items to reduce the risk of injury to the participant, the coach and others.

Coaches

Whilst a coach is carrying out a spotting or gymnast supporting role; all jewellery must be removed. However if the coach is evaluating performance or giving instruction only; (by this we mean coaching whilst not in direct physical contact with the gymnast or gymnastic equipment), jewellery may be worn.

Exceptions to the above policy may be applicable in special circumstances which are outlined below:

Jewellery that cannot be removed:-

It is acknowledged that in some circumstances, it may be impossible to remove a ring and/or dermal piercings. Should this be the case; the ring must be sufficiently covered with protective tape; and the piercings covered sufficiently in order to eliminate any risk. (For the avoidance of doubt; any jewellery which can be removed, should be removed. This includes any jewellery in new piercings)

Religious and Medical jewellery:-

With regards to the wearing of jewellery; sensitivity to religious beliefs and medical requirements/reasons should be afforded, but safety is paramount and any jewellery that is considered by the coach to be a safety hazard, should be changed or participation may be prohibited. Any concessions on religious or medical jewellery must be within the bounds of reasonable safety. The element of risk should be explained to the coach/participant (parent or guardian) and every attempt to control the risk should be adopted. Examples include the following:

Diabetes Bracelet can be worn; but whilst participation is taking place a sweatband or similar must cover the item in order to eliminate any risk. The coach in charge must also be advised that a participant is wearing the bracelet for medical emergency reasons.

Sikh Kara - Bracelet worn in the Sikh religion; can be worn, but whilst participation is taking place a sweatband or similar must cover the item; in order to eliminate any risk.

Religious Necklaces – Examples are; the Crucifix necklace for Christians or the Mangalsutra necklace as a symbol of marriage for Hindu women. On safety grounds, no participant should be permitted to participate whilst wearing necklaces, be they religious or other.

NB: if a sweatband is used to cover up an item of jewellery when doing vigorous activity, the sweatband should be taped in place to minimise the risk of the sweatband slipping and exposing the item of jewellery.

In all instances above; it is the responsibility of the coach in charge of the session to ensure a sufficient risk assessment has been carried out. If the coach identifies a significant risk to the participant, coach or others, which cannot be controlled satisfactorily, then within the bounds of reasonable safety, the coach MUST prohibit participation. Legitimate health and safety concerns which contra-indicate participation, will supersede any other considerations, be they religious, medical or other.

Failure to conform will prohibit the individual's participation on the grounds of reasonable safety and may render the individual's insurance invalid should an accident result directly from non-compliance.



Health, Safety and Welfare Policy



**British
Gymnastics**
More than a sport

Health, Safety & Welfare Policy

January 2012

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Terminology

The term Gymnastics is used as a generic term and includes all British Gymnastics recognised disciplines (Acrobatics, Aerobics, General (Gymnastics for All), TeamGym, Gymnastics and Movement for People with Disabilities, Pre-school, Men's Artistic, Rhythmic, Trampoline & DMT, Tumbling and Women's Artistic.) And gymnastics activities (Freestyle and cheerleading)

The term "safe", as used in this document, means a situation where so far as is reasonably practicable, all reasonable steps have been taken to understand the nature of the risks involved and to ensure suitable steps have been taken to control the risks and keep them to a minimum.

The equivalent of Children Social Services in Scotland is the Social Work Department and in Wales Social Services Department.

On occasions different legislation or policy may apply in the home countries. The terms used by BG in this policy must be read in conjunction with such legislation or policy and due account taken thereof.

INTRODUCTION

British Gymnastics (BG) regards the health, safety and welfare of all members to be of paramount importance, which should not be compromised. To this end, it is BG policy to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that procedures are in place to maintain a safe and healthy environment not only for our members but also for other persons who may be affected by the activities of BG and/or our affiliated clubs and organisations.

The Health, Safety and Welfare Policy is an essential document for all individuals who are involved in running a gymnastics club and supersedes any previous Health, Safety and Welfare Policies. The document provides clubs with the appropriate guidance to address health, safety and welfare issues in order to minimise risks involved in the sport. There are clearly inherent risks in gymnastics activities, due to the complex nature of the sport, however, these risks can be controlled and minimised by adherence to best practice.

The Policy sets out good practice principles that if followed, will help reduce the risks of running a gymnastics club or organisation and most importantly reduce the risks associated with participation. In addition, following these principles will contribute to BG's aim of reducing the number of claims made against the BG insurance policy, which covers all affiliated members and organisations.

Insurance

In today's culture of blame and litigation, it is essential that clubs and coaches hold appropriate levels of insurance cover. Membership of British Gymnastics incorporates a comprehensive insurance cover and all registered members and clubs are provided with cover that pays legal costs and damages in respect of claims against the insured while involved in BG recognised activities in BG recognised environments. Please refer to the 'Insurance Centre' at www.british-gymnastics.org for detailed information relating to recognised activities and environments.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Coaches working in any facility that is not a recognised environment are **not** covered by BG insurance. Coaches working in non-recognised environments must seek alternative insurance cover.

Responsibilities

It is important to recognise that this Health, Safety and Welfare policy does not remove the responsibility for clubs, officials and coaches to have and implement appropriate policies and procedures, relating to the activities they provide. However, the application of some safety measures will depend on whether your club owns, leases or hires the facility and whether the club has any employees.

Hired Facilities

There are many different types of clubs with a variety of management structures using facilities that range from hired local authority centres and schools, to privately owned centres. There are some clubs that have paid employees and others that are run entirely by volunteers. As a club, you are responsible for the health and safety of your members and those who access the services provided by the club.

If you hire a gym from a Local Authority (LA), you will be subject to the Local Authorities Health and Safety policy. The LA will have their own Health and Safety procedures in place which will cover the facility, emergency procedures, risk assessments and so on. All coaches and officials will need to acquaint themselves

with these procedures and arrangements. The club should confirm that the above procedures and risk assessments have been undertaken by the Local Authority.

If you hire a facility from another voluntary organisation, for example another sports club, they may not have well developed procedures for Health and Safety. Your club would therefore need to introduce their own procedures.

Owned Or Leased Facilities

If your club owns or leases a facility, you must take reasonable steps to ensure the facility and equipment are safe.

Affiliated Organisations With Employees

If an organisation is a source of work for someone (i.e. an individual makes their living as a gym coach) or if the organisation has employees, it will be subject to the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the associated health and safety legislation. The relevant Local Authority Leisure Department or equivalent health and safety provider or the Health and Safety Executive can advise on these matters. The club must ensure that all emergency procedures and safety policies are in place, which may include procedures above and beyond those outlined in this policy.

An organisation with five or more employees has further duties to comply with in relation to Health and Safety legislation. These include the recording of all significant findings of risk assessments and arrangements for health and safety measures, as well as drawing up a health and safety policy and ensuring all employees are well aware of all procedures.

1.0 POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to make it easier for everyone involved in the sport to comply with the law and manage health, safety and welfare in your businesses.

1.1 BG ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

BG strives to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of everyone involved in the sport. We endeavour to promote the highest standards in all areas and have outlined below some of our key mission statements that impact on the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy. These include: -

- Developing a UK wide vision, strategic plans and policies in partnership with key stakeholders.
- Ensuring that quality is consistent through development, monitoring and enforcement of rules at UK level.
- Developing and regulating coaching/coach education and judging/judge education programmes and training for other officials and volunteers within the sport.
- Providing information and technical expertise.
- Disseminating best practice and benchmarking across the UK.
- Developing and monitoring policies and principles for Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults, Equality, Health and Safety, and Codes of Conducts.
- Delivery of High Performance programmes and UK elite programmes
- Providing cost effective services that would not be economical at a Regional or Home Country level in consultation with Home Countries.
- UK wide information systems and central database management.
- Creation of UK-wide programmes for club development.

In achieving these mission statements, BG and each of the Gymnastics Governing Bodies in the UK, agrees to the following key underlying core values governing gymnastics activity:

- Putting members first.
- Investing in and maximising the potential of members, staff and volunteers.
- Applying the principles of equality.
- Recognising and discharging all duties of care including Health, Safety and Welfare.
- Embracing the principles of Continuous Improvement.
- Embracing the principles of Best Value. (Challenge, Consult, Compare, Compete)
- Applying the principles of a drug free sport.
- Applying the principles of Long Term Athlete Development. (LTAD)

The above describes what BG considers to be accepted good practice and values, which gymnastic providers should adopt at all times.

1.2 GUIDANCE & LEGISLATION

The policy and procedures reflect best practice guidance and legislation. The following are the main pieces of legislation that are core to all procedures within the Health, Safety and Welfare policy: -

The Children Act 1989 & 2004 (England and Wales only)
The Children (NI) Order 1995 (Northern Ireland)
The Children (Scotland) Act 1995
The Vulnerable Persons Act 2006
All relevant legislation for recruitment and selection of volunteers
All relevant anti-discrimination legislation
Human Rights Act 1998
The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
The Data Protection Act 1994 & 1998
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (and its subordinate legislation)
The Management of Health and Safety at work Regulations 1999
Equality Act 2010

Visit the Health and Safety Executive website www.hse.gov.uk for further information relating to Health and Safety Law and useful guidance.

OTHER RELEVANT BG POLICY AND GUIDANCE

The following documents should be read and followed in conjunction with the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy.

Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy
Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy
Equality Policy
Standards of Conduct
Codes of Conduct
Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures
Membership Regulations
Registered Clubs Regulations
Photography Regulations
Financial Regulations
Anti-Doping Policy

Further guidance can be found within other BG publications, such as Coaching Manuals and Club Management Resources. Members who are also members of other affiliated Home Countries and Regions should also refer to the Articles of Association and Rules of these Organisations.

1.3 ACTIONS TAKEN BY BG

- BG has established an Ethics and Welfare Management Group . The Management Group is responsible for advising the Board and recommending Policies on issues of Health, Safety & Welfare, Safeguarding and Protecting Children/Vulnerable Adults, Ethics, Sports Equity and Equality, Anti-Doping, GymMark and any related areas within British Gymnastics. The Management Group is also responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of all policies within its remit.
- BG has an Lead Child Protection Officer and Safeguarding and Compliance Officer who support the work of the Ethics and Welfare Management Group.

- BG has a designated Health and Safety Adviser who provides information and advice, carries out inspections and helps in ensuring that we meet our legal duties.
- BG has established GymMark, a Gymnastics club accreditation scheme that assists clubs to comply with the requirements of the British Gymnastics' Policies and Procedures and helps to facilitate the provision of a safe, effective and child-friendly gymnastics environment.
- BG has a complaints and disciplinary procedure, which is followed in the event of serious breaches of BG Policy and Procedures.
- BG maintains confidential records of all complaints, concerns and sanctions against clubs and members in line with data protection legislation.
- BG has reviewed the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy, initially implemented in 2001, and is committed to ensure that the reviewed policy is widely available.
- Health, Safety and Welfare issues are included within BG education programmes.
- Best Practice is extensively promoted, and coaches/officials/clubs and affiliated organisations are encouraged to adopt the British Gymnastics Policy for Health, Safety and Welfare.
- BG has introduced a Club Management Module that includes relevant information on the implementation of the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy.

1.4 MONITORING PROCEDURES

The Health, Safety and Welfare policy and procedures will be annually monitored and a full policy review will take place tri-annually. The following situations may also evoke a review of the policy: -

- As a result of any changes in legislation or guidance.
- As a result of any changes in governance of the sport.
- As a result of any changes in the nature or size of British Gymnastics.
- Following a procedural review as a result of a significant case.

1.5 ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS AND MEMBERS

Although affiliated organisations may have policies and procedures in place, it is essential that these policies, as a minimum, comply with the standards adopted by British Gymnastics.

The right to take part in gymnastics activities in a safe environment, and stay free from harm, applies to everyone and all members must take reasonable steps to ensure they are fully aware and compliant with the relevant aspects of the policy.

All affiliated organisations must: -

- Adopt and implement the BG policy guidelines or ensure existing policies are compliant with BG policy and UK legislation.
- Determine the responsibilities of the organisation in respect of any facilities and employees.
- Plan the work of the organisation to minimise all risks in respect of Health, Safety and Welfare.
- Ensure the responsibilities for Health, Safety and Welfare are designated to individuals with the necessary skills and experience.

- Ensure there are adequate training opportunities for staff, coaches, officials and other volunteers.
- Ensure reporting procedures are followed for any accidents or incidents and inform BG of any serious allegations or concerns of poor practice.

All members must: -

- Take reasonable care of their own health, safety and welfare and that of others who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions.
- Co-operate with BG, your Home Country or Regional affiliated organisation and your club on issues relating to health, safety and welfare.
- Ensure reporting procedures are followed for any accidents or incidents and inform BG of any serious allegations or concerns of poor practice.

2.0 FOUNDATION OF GOOD PRACTICE

There are inherent risks in the sport of gymnastics but the majority can be controlled and kept to a minimum through the adoption and implementation of accepted best coaching practices. Unnecessary risks should be removed by ensuring that safe practices are followed and that a safe environment is provided at all times.

2.1 SAFETY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN GYMNASTICS

Everyone in coaching owes a duty of care to those being coached. A general duty of care is owed to the participants to exercise reasonable care for their safety both in training and competition.

The criteria for creating a safe environment includes:

- The health and safety of each participant is paramount. This includes ensuring so far as is reasonably practicable that the place in which the gymnastics activity, training or coaching takes place, and the equipment and facilities used, are safe.
- The coach must have the competence and experience for the role he or she is performing.
- The coach must be fully qualified to do that which he or she is undertaking.
- The coach must carry out his or her coaching duties with reasonable skill and care and in a reasonable, prudent and professional manner in accordance with the British Gymnastics Standards of Conduct, Codes of Conduct and sports coach UK (scUK) codes of Ethics and Conduct.
- Meticulous physical and mental preparation of the participant appropriate to the level of participation.
- Suitable, well maintained apparatus and adequate facilities in an appropriately safe environment.
- Best coaching practices are employed at all times.

2.2 THE PRUDENT AND CARING COACH

The prudent and caring coach will ensure that the following principles are implemented and continually upheld:

- A safe environment is provided at all times.
- Clear and adequate instructions are given prior to commencing an activity.
- Coaching methods and procedures are continually assessed for the safety of both performer and coach.
- Only competent and suitably trained and qualified persons supervise or coach an activity.
- The clothing and special equipment (e.g. hand-guards) to be worn by the participants must be suitable, not loose fitting, and in good order.
- The health status of each participant should be known before commencing a training session or competition. If a coach knows of any health reason, medical condition or injury which might affect a participant's ability to train or compete, or which might adversely affect his or her health if he or she were to train or compete, appropriate medical advice should be obtained before the participant undertakes any training activity or competes. If a medical advisor advises that the participant should not train or compete, the participant should not do so until a medical advisor has advised that the participant may do so.

- Medical advice should be sought in case of injury and only persons who are qualified should administer first aid.
- An accurate record of injuries and actions should be maintained and kept up to date.
- Medical approval should be sought following a debilitating injury before permitting a participant to recommence training or competition.
- Coaches must be immediately accessible and never leave the premises while a session is in progress.
- Always ensure that a minimum of two responsible adults are present during training sessions. One of the adults must be an appropriately qualified coach, the second adult must not be one of the participating gymnasts.

2.3 COACHING QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

Gymnastic activities involve an inherent risk and in the desire to protect the participants and ensure their safety and well being, British Gymnastics requires the following criteria to be implemented:

- The minimum qualification for a coach wishing to operate independently is a BG Coach/Level 2 qualification in the disciplines being offered. To be responsible for running a club, they must also complete the BG Club Management module within one year.
- Qualified Assistant Coaches may work under the direct supervision of a qualified British Gymnastics Coach (or higher) but must not operate unsupervised.
- Coaches and Teachers should only work in the sports specific areas in which they are qualified and only to the level to which they are qualified.
- It is a BG requirement that the coach designing and directing the programme holds a minimum of Coach/ Level 2 qualification in the specific disciplines being offered.
- For coaching at higher levels of performance, the coach must hold a level of qualification appropriate to the level of performance to be undertaken in that particular discipline of the sport.
- British Gymnastics has a duty to ensure that coaches are safe to undertake the coaching of participants within their knowledge and competency according to current best practice.
- British Gymnastics will require all coaches and judges to complete a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure. Although a criminal record may not prevent an individual from holding a BG qualification.
- In a competition or other BG event, the coach must possess a current qualification according to the following criteria and a BG CRB disclosure:
 - i) A coach who holds a Coach level qualification may be present in the event arena and be responsible for activities to the level of their qualification.
 - ii) At other levels, the coach must hold a level of qualification appropriate to the level of performance of the participant in the particular discipline.
 - iii) A less qualified coach may assist a more highly qualified coach but only in those areas and to the level to which they are qualified.

2.4 GYMNAST TO COACH/TEACHER RATIOS:

There are a number of diverse factors to consider when making recommendations with regard to the ratio of participants to coach/teacher in Gymnastics and Trampolining activities.

These factors might include: the age and stage of development of the participants, the level and type of activity, the experience of the participants and coach and the type of facility and equipment available.

However, the coach in charge must always make an assessment (i.e. a risk assessment) of each situation and must determine a ratio of participants to coach/es that is reasonable, safe and effective.

Please note that there should **always** be at least two responsible adults in the gymnasium.

To ensure that a safe and effective coaching/teaching situation is maintained, British Gymnastics recommends the following reasonable ratio of participants to coach/teacher:

Award Scheme Coach

Award Scheme Coaches (ASC) will all be current bronze or silver club members of a BG club or registered BG Leisure Centre Scheme. They will be at least 14 years old at the start of the course.

ASC Coaching is the first rung on the ladder of a coaching career. They can work with a maximum of 8 gymnasts at any one time under the direct supervision of a minimum Level 2 or above coach. Using the Proficiency Award Scheme, the ASC will help with the teaching of the skills content of the scheme by way of demonstration and instruction. The ASC will also understand how the Proficiency Scheme works, and how to assess the children in their group.

Pre-School Classes

For independent child classes, a ratio of eight participants to one coach is recommended. This can be increased proportionally to the number of qualified assistant coaches, i.e. 8 per additional directly supervised assistant coach.

For classes where the parent, guardian or carer is participating with the child, a maximum ratio of 20 children to one coach is recommended.

Gymnastics Classes

Suitably qualified British Gymnastics coaches or teachers must supervise all gymnastics activities. Coaches must be qualified to the level of performance of the participants in the specific discipline of the sport.

The recommended maximum number of participants to one apparatus/station is 8 participants.

Where more than one apparatus/station is to be supervised, the coach in charge must carefully assess the following:

- a) The age, stage of development, experience, varying ability and number and discipline of the participants.
- b) The coaches' own qualifications and experience.

- c) Their ability to observe, advise, support and respond to the needs of everyone in the gymnastics area.
- d) The level and type of activity and suitability of the apparatus arrangements.

Normally, one coach would not be expected to supervise more than 16 gymnasts, without other suitably qualified coaches being in attendance. However, where a directly supervised and qualified Assistant Coach is used, in addition to the supervising coach, each additional Assistant Coach may supervise a maximum of 8 participants (i.e. qualified lead coach = 16 gymnasts plus 8 gymnasts with AC = 24 in total).

Trampoline to Coach Ratios

All trampolining activities must be supervised by suitably qualified British Gymnastics coaches or teachers. It is incumbent upon the coach in charge to ensure that trained spotters of suitable size and age are provided at each side where the end decks are not present .

The recommended maximum number of participants to one trampoline is 8 participants.

Where more than one trampoline is to be supervised, the coach in charge must carefully assess the following:

- The age, stage of development, experience, varying ability and number and discipline of the participants.
- The coaches' own qualifications and experience.
- Their ability to observe, advise, support and respond to the difficulties of anyone in the trampoline area.

Normally, one coach would not be expected to supervise more than 16 recreational trampolinists, without other suitably qualified coaches being in attendance.

The coach in charge must also ensure that the person/s sliding in the "push in mat", if not a qualified coach, is trained, experienced, of sufficient maturity and familiar with the performer.

Coaching Disabled People

When working with disabled people, a competent assessment of the risk to the individual and other participants must be made when determining the ratio of gymnasts to coach. Depending on the nature of the disability, one-to-one supervision may be necessary. For further information on disability issues please refer to section 2.6 within this policy, the Equality Act 2010 at www.legislation.gov.uk and the BG Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults policy.

General Comment

When groups are warming up, cooling down or working on low risk activities on a floor area, the ratio may be increased within the bounds of safety.

2.5 AGE AND LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION

i. It is impossible to account for every conceivable situation in gymnastics since there are many variables to consider, including the chronological age of the gymnast, physical and psychological characteristics, gender, ability, number of hours trained and the aspirations of the gymnast.

British Gymnastics considers the following general guidelines appropriate to the safe participation and long-term development of gymnasts;

- Gymnasts should only participate at a level at which is safe for them to do so
- Sound planning and preparation will assist in the longer-term development of the gymnast
- Appropriate physical preparation should be part of the gymnasts training programme
- An appropriate work ethic and attitude should be developed. This will help the gymnast to foster a positive attitude to training and participation
- The gymnasts training programme (number of days/hours) should be sensitive to the needs of the gymnast outside the gym environment, e.g. socialising
- The coach should stay within the boundaries of their qualification

British Gymnastics has a model of Long Term Athlete Development. For a copy of the British Gymnastics Long Term Athlete Development model, visit the British Gymnastics website click on "Technical" then "Downloads".

This model has been designed to provide guidelines for the safe and appropriate/effective development of gymnasts, with particular reference to gymnasts following a competitive pathway. Although our model assigns broad age bands and an indication of training load, these are purely for illustrative purposes only. The stages through which a gymnast moves as they develop will depend on the discipline, the age at which the gymnast enters the pathway, their physical, cognitive and emotional maturity and whether they wish to follow a competitive or recreational pathway. Furthermore the time spent within any particular stage will depend on the nature of the discipline and of course, the gymnasts themselves.

Guidance is given as to the recommended number of competitions per year, according to the age and stage of development. The volume is only appropriate if gymnasts are adequately prepared, free from injury (including micro trauma) and competent at performing their routines. It is critical to ensure that gymnasts have an appropriate balance of training and skill development, competition and recovery. The yearly competition programme must be planned appropriately to allow this to happen.

ii. Children under eight years of age

Where gymnasts under the age of eight years are involved in activities of a duration of two or more hours, the provider may be required to register with the Local Authority Social Services. Although the legislation that regulates the care of children under eight years is not normally applied to sport, British Gymnastics recommends that clubs with classes for children within this age group should notify the Local Authority of their existence to avoid any uncertainty on the issue.

British Gymnastics recommends that sessions for children under the age of eight years do not exceed two hours and classes for pre-school children should not be longer than 45 minutes.

iii. Age and Competition

Competition is an integral part of gymnastics and the performance-orientated gymnast must gain experience in competition over a period of time. However, to protect the young gymnast, it is British Gymnastics policy that for an event that leads to a national or UK final, the gymnast must attain the minimum age of nine years in the calendar year in which the event is held.

It is recognised that gymnasts may wish to enter events when they are below the age of nine years. British Gymnastics therefore recommends the following;

Age	Competition environment
5 years old in the year of competition and under 6	Within the club, school and leisure centre only
6 years old in the year of competition and under 7	Up to county and County Sports Partnership level
7 years old in the year of competition and under 8	Up to regional and home country level
8 years old in the year of competition and under 9	Up to BG/UK wide national level

The world governing body for gymnastics, the Federation Internationale de Gymnastique (F.I.G.) has age related rules governing the performance of a gymnast at international events.

These can be viewed at

<http://figdocs.lx2.sportcentric.com/external/serve.php?document=2414>

iv. Use of Under 14 yrs. children as volunteers

Clubs using children (under 14) as volunteers should check with their Local Authority Byelaws – as some Local Authorities have strict rules regarding the use of children under 14.

2.6 COACHING DISABLED PARTICIPANTS

British Gymnastics welcomes the participation of disabled people.

Inclusion

British Gymnastics expects coaches to include disabled people within the existing classes they provide. Coaches are also expected to plan ahead in order to meet the needs of disabled people in gymnastics activity where it is possible and appropriate to do so. A risk assessment should always be made prior to the commencement of any gymnastics activity.

Coaches are reminded that they do not need to hold any additional qualifications in order to include a disabled gymnast in an existing class. Guidance on coaching disabled participants is included in all British Gymnastics Common Core Resource Packs.

The Equality Act 2010 states that a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal Obligations Towards Disabled People

British Gymnastics reminds coaches that in terms of the Equality Act 2010, they are considered to be service providers (anyone who provides goods, facilities or services to the public whether these services are paid for or free). This means that coaches are legally required to comply with the duties placed on them by the Act as follows:

- Avoid treating any disabled person less favourably than other members of the public.
- Make reasonable changes to practice, policies and procedures in order to make it easier for disabled people to use the services provided.
- Take reasonable steps to remove, alter or provide alternative means of avoiding physical features of premises that make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use services provided.

British Gymnastics understands that reasonable changes and adjustments would include minor works such as improving lighting, helpful colour schemes and accessible signage. British Gymnastics also recognises that service providers may be able to justify not carrying out major changes and adjustments (such as installation or modification of automatic entrance doors, ramps, wheelchair lifts or accessible toilet facilities) if it would incur unreasonable levels of expenditure, service disruption or impracticality to make the change.

Grounds for Refusing to Include

British Gymnastics expects disabled people to be included within existing classes where it is appropriate to do so. However it accepts that there are some circumstances that may constitute reasonable grounds for refusing:

- Presence of health issues that contra-indicate participation on medical grounds. In this instance, disabled persons may need to provide evidence from a medical professional to verify that it is appropriate for the individual to participate in a particular activity.
- Identification of an unacceptable level of risk being posed to the health, safety or well-being of:
 - either the disabled person
 - or others they are likely to come in contact with if included within existing classes.

- Recognition of the necessity to irrevocably change programme(s) provided in existing classes in order to accommodate the disabled person within them.

In the event that a coach refuses to accept a person with a disability into existing classes, British Gymnastics will only support that coach if they do so on reasonable grounds that can be shown to be supported by evidence.

Classes Specifically for Disabled People

There are currently no classes specifically for disabled people. However, British Gymnastics will support a coach who provides a class for a disabled person if they can be supported by evidence. This may include a coach who provides a class for a disabled person within an existing class.

Medical Considerations

A gymnast may present with a medical condition which may or may not be connected with their disability. If a gymnast has a medical condition where participation in gymnastics is in question, they must seek medical advice through their GP prior to participation, to ensure that the activity will not have a detrimental effect on their health or well-being.

The following are examples of medical conditions where expert advice is to be sought prior to participation in gymnastics:

- Pregnancy
- Detaching Retina
- Confirmed Atlanto Axial Instability *See information below
- Rodded back
- Brittle bones

This list is by no means exhaustive. There are also other medical conditions that may contra-indicate participation and coaches are advised to seek expert medical advice if participation is in question, before attempting to devise a training programme.

*Atlanto-Axial Instability

What is Atlanto-Axial Instability?

In people with Down's syndrome, the ligaments which normally hold the joints stable can be very slack. This can lead to an unusually wide range of movement at some joints – much greater than in the general population. As well as affecting the ordinary limb joints, this can affect one of the joints in the neck; the atlanto-axial joint. The joint is the highest joint in the spinal column and it lies just at the base of the skull. There is movement at this joint whenever you nod or shake your head.

In some people with Down's Syndrome, in addition to a slack ligament, the actual bones of the atlanto-axial joint may be poorly developed. These differences could make the joint more unstable and more likely to dislocate than in people without Down's Syndrome. (This instability is known as atlanto-axial instability)

Due to the changes within the joint, some people with Down's Syndrome who have confirmed atlanto-axial instability may be at a greater risk of whip lash type injuries (from activities such as trampolining), which could lead to paralysis. They may also be at a greater risk of serious injury arising as a result of chronic pressure on the neck. (Gymnastic activities such as headstands or backward rolls could cause this type of pressure on the neck)

What do I need to do as a coach?

In order to safeguard the participation of gymnasts with Down's Syndrome, British Gymnastics has adopted an atlanto-axial instability screening policy for all gymnasts with Down's Syndrome. **As a coach, YOU MUST ensure that all gymnasts with Down's Syndrome are medically screened prior to participating in any gymnastic activity.**

British Gymnastics Screening Policy

British Gymnastics has a policy of screening all participants with Down's Syndrome prior to them taking part in gymnastic activities. The aim of the screening is to provide access to gymnastics and trampolining for everyone who can benefit from involvement in this sport and who are at no greater risk than other gymnasts.

Screening must be undertaken by a qualified medical practitioner. Those who are eligible to undertake the necessary tests include General Practitioners; Orthopaedic or Paediatric Consultants; School Medical Officers/Doctors; Chartered Physiotherapists.

Once screened, if the participant does not have atlanto-axial instability, then they will be approved to participate in gymnastics. However, if a participant is confirmed as having atlanto-axial instability, the British Gymnastics Chief Medical Officer will stipulate the level of gymnastic activity that is permitted for the participant (permitted activity will be determined on a case-by-case basis and could include; total exclusion from all gymnastics activity or allowing the individual to participate in a limited number of disciplines and/or skills within gymnastics).

More information can be found within the British Gymnastics Atlanto Axial Information Pack.

Advice regarding Dwarfism for British Gymnastics

The Dwarf Sports Association advises that people with Achondroplasia or another genetic skeletal dysplasia (forms of dwarfism), should not participate in trampolining. It is also advised that this population should not perform gymnastics skills which involve repeated jumping or rebounding. People with Achondroplasia and some other forms of dwarfism have an exaggerated lumbar lordosis (curvature of the lower back) and spinal stenosis*; these two factors increase the jarring forces through the spine on impact.

Because of the stenosis present throughout the spine and the likelihood of a malformed foramen magnum**, people with dwarfism should also not attempt gymnastic skills where there is the potential to put pressure on, or cause impact to the head or neck.

* Spinal stenosis is narrowing of the spinal column that causes pressure on the spinal cord.

* Malformed Foramen Magnum- This is the hole in the skull where the spinal cord enters the head. It is normally spherical, but if it is malformed, it is misshapen. Hyper-extension or pressure on the cervical vertebrae in this case (which may result from weight bearing on the head), presents a potential risk of compressing the spinal cord, causing serious injury.

Recommendations:

- Coaches and dwarf participants should be aware of the risks associated with participation in gymnastics for dwarfs.

- It is advised that dwarfs should not participate in high impact and rebounding disciplines: TRA, DMT, & TUM
- Where other disciplines are concerned, BG advises that rebounding, jumping and impact activity should be avoided to minimise the risk of injury. Hyper-extension of the spine, pressure on the neck and weight bearing on the head should also be avoided to minimise the risk of injury.
- Examples of activities regarded as non-suitable for the above reasons are:
 - Forward and backward rolls
 - Headstands
 - Flicks and handsprings
 - Bridges
 - Jumping / rebounding / somersaults
- Examples of skills with reduced risk for this population are:
 - Log rolls
 - Foot balancing
 - Running / locomotion (without jumping)
 - Dancing – (without impact/jumps)
 - Elements such as Cartwheels (if the participant has long enough and strong enough arms to support the bodyweight without the head coming in contact with the floor.)

2.7 PERSONAL CLOTHING: DRESS

The Code of Dress for gymnastics activities is designed to safeguard the participants and coaches. The following points should be adhered to during training and events:

- Ensure that the gymnasts and coaches wear appropriate clothing, which does not impede the freedom of movement required by the activity and is not too loose as to constitute a hazard.
- The wearing of clothing with buckles or clasps are dangerous and are prohibited.
- Raised adornments on gymnastics clothing are dangerous and are prohibited.
- Long hair may become a hazard and it should be tied back to avoid accidents.
- Participants should work in bare feet or gymnastics slippers.
- Do not permit the wearing of socks without gymnastics footwear on polished or slippery surfaces.
- When participating on a trampoline, ensure that socks or suitable gymnastics footwear (not training shoes) are worn.
- Long fingernails present a risk to the gymnast and coach. The coach is responsible for ensuring the length of fingernails is compatible with the activity.
- Coaches and gymnasts should be aware of the risks associated with wearing spectacles and minimise the risks by wearing flexible frames, an elastic sports band or contact lenses to ensure safety.

NB: The Code of Dress for participants at a BG Competition will be that stated by the FIG in the sport specific code. Any concessions or variance from this code will be published in the sport specific competition handbook.

Coaches at events:

Coaches who are active in the event arena should dress smartly according to the following: -

- Tracksuits, polo shirts or sweatshirts with long trousers, socks and training shoes or gym slippers,

OR

- Where coaches are not physically active in the event arena, they should dress smartly according to the traditions of the particular discipline.

Sensitivity to religious beliefs should be afforded with regard to the dress code but safety is paramount and any clothing that is considered by the coach to be a safety hazard should be changed or participation may be prohibited. Any concessions on dress must be within the bounds of reasonable safety. The element of risk should be explained to the coach/participant (parent or guardian) and every attempt to control the risk should be adopted.

A clothing Modification form must be submitted to the competition organiser with the entry. The request will receive full consideration and club and entrant will be informed of the outcome within 10 working days of receipt of the request. In the event the request is declined, the entry fee will be refunded in full, providing that this form was submitted prior to the closing date.

2.8 BODY PIERCING AND ADORNMENTS

Please see the British Gymnastics Policy on Body Piercing and Adornments under Ethics and Welfare Downloads on the BG website.

2.9 DISCIPLINE

A good standard of behaviour and code of conduct within the gymnasium will greatly reduce the risk of injury and enhance concentration and the work ethic. The standards should be applied equally to all participants. The full standards of conduct can be found on the BG website.

3.0 SAFETY

3.1 SAFETY IN COACHING

It is essential that appropriate precautions are taken during activities to ensure that optimal levels of safety are maintained at all times. Particular consideration must be given to the following:

Preparation of the Gymnast

The physical and psychological preparation of the participant is of prime importance to facilitate the safe learning of skills or movements. Appropriate strength, flexibility and body awareness together with psychological factors must be developed prior to teaching a skill.

Progressive Learning

The use of carefully selected progressive sub-skills, which relate to the complete skill, is recommended good practice and time for consolidation in performance should be allocated.

Competent Spotting/Supporting

"Supporting" and "Spotting" are integral with the safe learning of gymnastic skills and involve the techniques of observation and handling, to ensure the safe performance of the skill. Recommended safe practices as taught on BG coaching courses should be used. Coaches must be continually alert to the risks encountered where an inferior performance occurs and be ready to provide emergency support.

Suitable Apparatus

Carefully erect and check the suitability of the apparatus for height, width and stability. Ensure that a safe and appropriate landing surface is provided at all times in accordance with the level of activity and the ability and experience of the participant. Frequently conduct a risk assessment of the environment to ensure that it remains safe.

Safe Landings

Correct landing techniques and methods of falling safely should be effectively taught and encouraged at all times.

Fast Track and Air Track

Please see the safety guidance which can be downloaded under Coaching, Downloads on the BG website.

Flexibility/Stretching Exercises

British Gymnastics has received a number of enquiries from concerned parents, regarding the techniques and types of exercise that BG promotes as correct practice. Concerns have been expressed about the coaches using their full body weight or excessive force during flexibility training. There are also concerns about the close proximity of the coach's body and hands to sensitive areas on the gymnast's body. Therefore BG has issued the Flexibility Training for Gymnasts document which can be downloaded from the Ethics and Welfare downloads section on the BG website.

Use of Weight Training in Gymnastics

British Gymnastics does not recommend the use of Olympic weight lifting "free weight" type training programmes or exercises with gymnasts, until the post pubertal stage of development.

British Gymnastics recommends that all physical preparation should be progressive and where possible, use the gymnast's own body mass as the resistance. This is particularly relevant in early childhood and periods of adolescent growth. Single weight discs, ankle, wrist and waist belts can be used to increase the resistance but this will depend upon the age and stage of maturation of the gymnasts.

The use of free weights (bar and weight discs) may be introduced with suitably prepared gymnasts once they have reached the post puberty stage of development. Appropriate types of weight training exercise are incorporated into the BG Coaching qualification courses where this is relevant to the particular discipline.

BG coaches are therefore qualified to deploy these exercises within the training programme.

Overuse and Growth Related Injuries

Due to the complex nature of the sport and the need for frequent, repetitive practice of skills or movements, participants in gymnastics are susceptible to overuse injuries. This is particularly relevant during the pubescent growth spurt periods. Coaches must be conscious of the need for meticulous physical preparation, a varied programme, use of appropriate techniques and a suitable environment to reduce the risk of overuse related injuries. Coaches must be continually vigilant in observing the growth pattern of young participants and sensitive to signs of soreness or pain particularly in growth plate areas. Advice should be sought from a qualified physiotherapist or medical practitioner.

Excessively repetitive exercises, poor facilities or bad technique may lead to "overuse injuries". Coaches must take the necessary precautions to reduce the possibility of this type of injury by varying the programme, ensuring correct techniques are taught, adequate fitness is developed and suitable apparatus is used. The coach must take into consideration the age, stage of maturation and psychological and emotional state of the performer with regard to the demands of the training programme.

Fatigue

The principle of "overloading" by gradually increasing the physical demands of training is an accepted process for improving fitness, but a coach must be conscious of the onset of fatigue during training as this may have a deleterious effect on performance and may increase the risk of injury.

Personal Training Kit

It is recommended that coaches frequently inspect gymnasts' personal equipment. It is particularly important to check that the handguards do not show signs of deterioration, such as stretching or wear.

3.2 RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is a process that identifies potential hazards in an activity, assesses the level of risk and then puts in place safe practices to control that risk. In other words, recognising anything that could realistically cause harm and taking all reasonable steps to reduce the likelihood of harm occurring.

While Health and Safety legislation places a requirement on all employers and self-employed people to carry out the relevant risk assessments, BG holds that it is good practice for all clubs to complete risk assessments and keep a record of any findings and remedial action. If a club becomes involved in any civil liability action, it will help

to have these records available. Anyone who carries out a risk assessment for gymnastics must have a comprehensive knowledge of the type of activity and coaching processes that occur, in addition to an understanding of health and safety matters. Thus it is essential that gymnastics clubs do not rely solely on a risk assessment carried out by a Local Authority or other facility operator, but also ensure that those with the relevant gymnastics knowledge are engaged in this process.

For Gymnastics coaches this process of identifying the potential hazards, judging the level of risk and putting in safe practices to control the risk is one they are routinely familiar with in the coaching process and takes place throughout training without the necessity to make a written record.

Risk assessments can be carried out in a wide variety of circumstances or particular tasks: for example lifting a heavy piece of equipment, checking a facility, performing a gymnastics skill, wearing a piece of clothing, running an event or even implementation of the club rules and procedures. Further information regarding risk assessment can be found in the BG Club Toolkit on the BG website and the BG Facility and Apparatus Health and Safety checklists within this document.

The Health and Safety Executive has produced a five-step guide to risk assessment and have many other publications that will provide extra support in these areas. The five steps are as follows –

- i) Identify the hazards. (Ignore the trivial and concentrate on significant hazards that could cause serious harm).
- ii) Decide who might be harmed and how. (Gymnasts, coaches, visitors etc).
- iii) Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more needs to be done. (Aim to make all risks small and if necessary prioritise actions based on level of risk).
- iv) Record your findings and implement them, ensure these are communicated to all relevant people.
- v) Review your assessment and revise if necessary (particularly if you have new equipment or a new facility, are running an event or going on a trip).

When thinking about your risk assessment, remember:

- A **hazard** is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working at height, an open drawer etc.
- The **risk** is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

These assessments should be of the individual locations at which gymnastic activities are undertaken and should be kept as written records. They are important as they allow clubs and coaches to show that they have thought about the wider risks associated with their activities.

It is the responsibility of managers and coaches to ensure that a safe environment is provided at all times. It is therefore necessary to ensure that checks are carried out to ensure the safety of the following:

- **The Facility**
The owner and user of a facility must regularly check, record, and take appropriate action regarding the condition of: the building, heating, lighting, ventilation, floor plates, and ceiling and wall fixings.
- **Gymnastics Equipment**
Examine all apparatus for defects or damage and ensure that it is correctly erected and stored, on every occasion. Apparatus must be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. BG recommends that an approved agent carries a full annual equipment inspection and an appointed safety officer or coach undertakes regular inspections.
- **Manual Handling**
Staff and volunteers are often required from time to time to move items of equipment etc. Consideration needs to be given to the weight, size and bulk of equipment and the hazards associated with moving each piece of equipment and how to carry it out safely. Training should be provided when it is deemed necessary.
- **First Aid and Emergency Facilities**
Adequate First Aid facilities must be available and the emergency procedures extensively publicised to all users. Users must familiarise themselves with the particular emergency procedures and first aid facilities at each centre they attend.

The following are a selection of specific examples that may also be relevant to gymnastics clubs and where the health and safety legislation relating to the work place requires that consideration must be given: –

- Exposure to dust (potential hazard from chalk and pit foam)
- Tripping over poorly stored equipment
- Uneven surfaces (matting etc)

It may be the case that a risk assessment identifies that the only way to have reasonable control is to wear some form of protective equipment. In gymnastics we do this in many situations, for example – hand guards, applying tape to hands, padding. A risk assessment may also identify certain activities that should only be carried out by people who have received appropriate training.

Clubs who offer additional activities such as parties for non-members should be extremely vigilant when carrying out risk assessments.

Further information relating to risk assessments can be found on the HSE website (www.hse.gov.uk)

3.3 GUIDELINES FOR GYMNASTICS APPARATUS

There are many different types and designs of gymnastics apparatus and training aids. Some apparatus may be permanently fixed and other pieces of equipment may require frequent assembly, dismantling or transportation and storage. It is impossible to produce an exhaustive statement to cover the safe use of all gymnastics apparatus and the many differing situations in which it may be used. However the following recommendations will provide a guideline to cover a comprehensive range of gymnastic situations.

Assembly of Apparatus

Apparatus should be assembled or erected according to the manufacturer's instructions and the handling of apparatus should be supervised at all times by a qualified coach. Adequate instruction must be provided to all personnel handling equipment.

- Where permanent fixtures such as floor plates or wall or roof attachments are used to support apparatus, these should be installed by qualified and experienced personnel.
- Particular attention should be made to ensure that there is a complete length of screw thread on all tensioning or adjusting devices and this should be maintained at all times.
- The apparatus must be adjusted in height and width to suit the needs of the participants but care should be taken to ensure that all adjusting devices are secured after use.

Provision of Matting and Padding

The World Governing Body for gymnastics stipulates requirements for matting at international gymnastics events. British Gymnastics applies these regulations to all national events but there are also an infinite number of other events and training situations to consider.

The coach must be diligent in providing a safe environment and the selection of matting should be made on the basis of functional suitability and safety, with particular reference to the following factors:

- The age, ability, degree of experience and level of physical preparedness of the participants.
- The type of activity planned and the inherent risks associated with the activity.
- The nature of the apparatus and type of movement to be attempted. Consideration should be given to the height of the apparatus, the degree of momentum that the gymnast may generate and the point at which the gymnast may be at greatest risk.
- Matting of sufficient area, thickness, resilience and shock absorbency must be provided.
- Additional matting or a safety-landing module (safety mat) should be placed upon the base matting particularly when the participants are inexperienced in the particular activity.
- Matting should be non-slip; in good condition and free of damage. Coaches and gymnasts must be vigilant in ensuring that gaps do not appear due to the separation or slipping of matting.
- Matting or padding should also be provided around parts of the apparatus against which the gymnast may collide in the event of an erroneous attempt at an activity particularly, during the early learning stages.

Landing Pits

Foam filled pits need to conform to the regulations for fire retardance, should be regularly cleaned and frequently decompressed. The padding covering the edges of the pit must be in good condition and of suitable depth and resilience.

Suspended pits need to be regularly checked for wear and tear to the covering and top foam layer as well as the absorbency mechanism used to suspend the pit.

Dismantling and Storing Equipment

Gymnastics apparatus should be dismantled according to the manufacturer's guidelines and should be directly supervised by a qualified person. When moving apparatus ensure that the pathway is free from obstructions and that recognised safe handling techniques are employed. Ensure that equipment is securely stored and that wooden equipment and matting is not exposed to moisture or close to heating devices. Moisture or heat may cause warping or separation of the wooden laminations.

Rebound equipment such as trampettes and trampolines must be secured when not in use, to prevent access by unqualified or unauthorised persons.

3.4 GYMNASTICS APPARATUS INSPECTION GUIDELINES

Constant vigilance is required by the facility provider, coach and club management to ensure that the apparatus is in good order and a log of regular inspections and action taken should be maintained. Any damage to equipment should be recorded and reported immediately to the facility provider and taken out of service until the damage has been repaired. Coaches should also frequently check the location of gymnastics apparatus to ensure that sufficient space and height is maintained around the apparatus.

The Provision of Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 may apply where access to and use of the equipment is under a commercial arrangement.

Do the Regulations apply to me?

If you are an employer or self-employed person and you provide equipment for use at work, or if you have control of the use of equipment, then the Regulations will apply to you.

As a minimum, suitably qualified personnel should carry out a full annual inspection/repair service. The inspection sheet should be signed and dated and held on record as proof that the equipment inspection has taken place. In addition, interim safety inspection checks should be made at a frequency of one-month intervals by a qualified coach or the facility provider.

Where facility providers take responsibility for inspection and repair of the facility and apparatus, coaches should seek confirmation that this has been carried out.

3.5 TRAMPOLINING CODE OF PRACTICE

The British Gymnastics (BG) Code of Practice illustrates what BG recommends as Best Coaching Practice when using a trampoline; for full information please refer to the BG Trampoline Gymnastics Code of Practice under the Trampoline Downloads section on the BG website.

3.6 FIRST AID AND EMERGENCY PROVISION

There are minimum standards in relation to first aid provision that exist for an organisation with employees. It is the responsibility of the employer to fulfil the first

aid standards but all gymnastics clubs should ensure that there is adequate provision for first aid at their facility.

Clubs whose risk assessments indicate that there is a potential for injury, should ensure these minimum standards are in place at all times. All clubs should aim to follow these good practice guidelines.

The Provision

- The facility must include a telephone, together with clear instructions on how to dial out for emergency services.
- A list of relevant numbers, including the nearest hospital Casualty Department should be readily available.
- A First Aid Kit containing the materials recommended by the appropriate authorities should be readily available.
- A suitably fully qualified first aid person or appointed person to be present when any gymnastics activities are being performed. (BG recommends that all coaches attend a recognised first aid course. Contact the Health and Safety Executive for full details of recognised providers).
- A notice to identify where the first aid box is kept, names of identified first aiders and where they can be found.
- A register must be maintained of all participants, together with a contact number for their next of kin, parent or guardian and any medical conditions. (NB: Although this information should be securely stored to comply with data protection legislation, it MUST be easily accessible in the event of an accident).

The Health and Safety Executive recommend the following minimum contents for a first aid box -

- HSE leaflet 'Basic Advice on First Aid at work' (single copies available free of charge)
- 20 individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings (assorted sizes)
- 2 sterile eye pads
- 4 individually wrapped triangular bandages
- 6 safety pins
- 6 medium sized (approximately 12cm square) individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings
- 2 large sized (approximately 18cm square) individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings
- Disposable gloves

First aid boxes should not contain any tablets or medicines.

Please note that the above is a suggested list and other similar items would be acceptable. In addition, clubs may need to keep other items that are specific to the needs of gymnastics.

Whenever gymnastic activities are taking place it is imperative that the following emergency procedures and provisions are accessible and fully understood by all participants:

First Aid Procedures and Serious Injuries

Coaches should have pre-planned arrangements that can be put into operation in the event of a serious injury.

The best advice is to allow only a person qualified in first aid to carry out emergency First Aid and then seek the help of qualified medical personnel. However, the

following minimum procedure should be adopted in the event of any accident that occurs.

- i) Stop the class and direct other members of the class not immediately involved in the accident away from the injured person, and contact a suitably qualified person and/or the emergency services.
- ii) Inform the management of the facility and contact the parents, guardian or immediate family of the injured person.
- iii) Stay with the injured person until the emergency services arrive.
- iv) Ensure a responsible adult accompanies the injured person to the treatment centre.
- v) Complete an appropriate Accident Report form.

It is also good practice to retain contact with the injured person, to remain informed and follow up action or treatment, but the club or coach must not admit any liability as this may prejudice the club and coach's position in the event of a claim.

Reporting Accidents

In the event of an accident, no matter how minor it may appear at the time, it is vital to make a record of the accident and/or complete an accident report form. Should there be any legal action the accident report form will supply important details about the incident and may lead to an individual being vindicated of any blame.

An accident report form should contain the following information –

- Details of the person who had the accident
- Full details of the incident – date, time, location, what happened
- Indication of injury (drawing if necessary)
- Any first aid or other actions taken and by whom
- Witnesses

In addition it is helpful to add further details concerning treatment, diagnosis of injury and recovery time. If action needs to be taken to prevent a similar incident this should also be added.

Accident reporting books that comply with health and safety legislation are available direct from the Health and Safety Executive. <http://books.hse.gov.uk>

British Gymnastics must be notified as a matter of urgency in the event of any accidents that result in a visit to hospital. Failure to supply this information may result in the insurance company refusing to settle a claim.

Clubs who employ people must also comply with the RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995) on 0845 300 9923 and report all legally reportable accidents and dangerous occurrences to the relevant enforcing authority.

The Law

The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 require employers to provide suitable first-aid equipment, facilities and personnel to enable immediate assistance to be given to employees if they are injured or become ill at work. Regulation 3(2) states that in order to provide first aid to injured or ill employees;

a person shall not be suitable unless he has undergone -

- 1. such training and has such qualifications as the Health and Safety Executive may approve for the time being in respect of that case or class of case, and**
- 2. such additional training, if any, as may be appropriate in the circumstances of that case'**

Detailed information can be found in [First aid at work. The Health and Safety \(First-Aid\) Regulations 1981.](#)

Training courses

If you have identified that first-aiders are needed in your workplace, they must have a valid certificate of competence in First Aid at Work (FAW) or emergency first aid at work (EFAW). EFAW training enables a first-aider to give emergency first aid to someone who is injured or becomes ill while at work. FAW training includes EFAW and also equips the first-aider to apply first aid to a range of specific injuries and illnesses. The findings of the first-aid training needs assessment can help you decide whether your first-aiders should be trained in FAW or EFAW.

Please visit www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid/approved-training.htm

3.7 FIRE SAFETY AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS SAFETY ISSUES

All clubs and affiliated organisations must be constantly vigilant towards fire. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO), which applies in England and Wales came into effect in October 2006. Similar legislation is or is coming in to effect in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The Order applies to virtually all premises and covers nearly every type of building, structure and open space and replaces most of the previous fire safety legislation with one simple order. It means that any person who has some level of control in premises must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and make sure people can safely escape if there is a fire.

For gymnastic clubs this means that those responsible for running clubs need to be satisfied about two things:

- i. That the fire safety risk assessments required under the RRFSO have been carried out and suitably reflect fire safety risks for the club and its members and coaches
- ii. That everyone in the club who might be affected is aware of the fire precautions that need to be observed.

Those who run clubs will also need to be satisfied that the above matters have been addressed in relation to any public events (e.g. annual gym displays) organised.

Clubs who rent out space in a facility controlled by another agency may not have legal duties under the legislation, however as the person responsible for running the club must be clear who has control over the premises and be clear in his/her mind that this agency will be/is responsible for ALL fire safety issues. In the event that this is the situation, the responsibility of the club is to ensure all members safely exit the facility should the of a fire alarm sound.

The Communities and Local Government (CLG) is responsible for RRFSO and has produced a considerable amount of guidance materials to help those who undertake the necessary fire safety risk assessments.

The guidance material can be accessed via the CLG website www.communities.gov.uk/fire/firesafety/firesafetylaw

While the Local Fire Authority can provide advice it cannot carry out the risk assessment for your club.

Additional health and safety issues

The following are some additional areas that clubs and organisations with employees need to consider under the Health and Safety legislation. Affiliated Organisations with employees should seek additional advice to ensure appropriate policy and procedures are in place. Clubs without employees should also recognise and ensure that steps are taken to ensure safety in these areas.

Work at Height

Clubs that employ staff will need to meet the requirements of the Work at Height Regulations 2005, where coaches are using working platforms when they provide support to gymnasts. Such working platforms will need to meet the requirements of the regulations. Further information can be obtained via the Health and Safety Executive website (www.hse.gov.uk) and leaflet INDG401 The Work at Height Regulations – A brief guide.

4.0 GYMNASTS' WELFARE

Participation in gymnastics activities can provide opportunities to experience and develop many desirable qualities. Such experiences might include enjoyment, personal achievement, self-esteem and self-confidence, teamwork social skills and leadership qualities. These qualities will be enhanced if those working with the participants have as their priority, the welfare and safety of the participants.

We have a moral and legal responsibility to protect young people and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse.

British Gymnastics is committed to providing information and training opportunities to ensure that those working with children and vulnerable adults adopt best practice to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the participants.

The full BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy is available as a stand-alone document and this policy permeates all BG activities. All coaches, officials, affiliated bodies, clubs and members should be familiar with and comply with the contents of this policy.

4.1 CLUB REGISTRATION AND CONSENT FORMS

When gymnasts register with a club it is essential that the club collects appropriate personal information about them. The type of information that should be collected on registration would include:

- Name and address
- Date of birth
- Ethnic origin
- Parent/Guardian/Carer information
- Emergency contacts
- Medical details – allergies, existing conditions, disability
- Consent for participation in gymnastics
- Photography consent

Clubs should ensure that this information is collected at the first session that the child attends to ensure that any necessary risk assessments based on medical information can be completed prior to participation.

Parental/Guardian Consent should always be sought prior to participation in regular club activity and it is good practice to also request consent to take photographs/video for training purposes. Additional consent must also be sought in other circumstances, including: -

- When a child is taking part in other activities beyond regular training
- When membership information is used for other reasons beyond those stated when it was originally collected
- Publication of images

4.2 DATA PROTECTION

Any information a club holds on members will be subject to the Data Protection Act 1998. The Act applies to anyone holding information about individuals in electronic

form and sometimes in hard copy. There are eight principles relating to data protection that must be followed. The principles state that data must be:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for specified purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate and kept up to date
- Not kept for longer than is necessary
- Processed in line with the rights of the individual
- Kept secure
- Not transferred outside the European Economic area unless there is adequate protection for the data

Any data controller MUST comply with these principles. Individuals may seek damages through the courts against an organisation that fails to comply with the principles of data protection.

A further requirement of the Act is that most data processors are required to make notification to the Information Commissioner. There are some exemptions to the requirement to notify. One of the exemptions relates to clubs that are 'Not-for-profit' organisations who process data purely for the purposes of establishing or maintaining membership. This exempt purpose is intended for small clubs and voluntary organisations.

IMPORTANT NOTE: It is the responsibility of all BG registered clubs and organisations to verify with the Information Commissioner whether or not they are required to notify. Please note that failure to register when you are not exempt is a criminal offence punishable by a fine.

4.3 EVENTS AND TRIPS

Overnight Stays

Legislation requires that when a club takes a gymnast(s) under the age of 18 years on a journey involving an overnight stay, the club must ensure that there is a designated trained person responsible for child protection on the trip. To adhere to the CPSU child protection standards this person must not be related to or in a relationship with the coach attending the trip. The training for the designated person is attendance at a BG approved Safeguarding training course. Permission must be obtained from BG where there is an overnight stay at least 4 weeks prior to the trip. Please visit the BG website Events and Travel and Downloads to complete the relevant forms. Please note that additional insurance is required for trips abroad. For more detailed information regarding overnight stays please refer to page 28 of the BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy.

Transport

When an event is local, it is often the case that clubs arrange for everyone to meet at the event venue. However, where an event is further away, the best option is often for the club to co-ordinate transport arrangements. It is good practice for a club to ensure the following steps are taken in advance of any trip –

- Checks on driving licence, car insurance and MOT (if the car is over three years old)
- Ensure there are seatbelts for each passenger

- Check driving experience (additional training may be required for anyone driving a mini-bus – contact Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for further details)
- Additional checks on driver (see policies for recruitment of staff/volunteers)
- Organising central pick-up and drop-off points (to avoid the driver being alone with a gymnast)
- Consent from parents to allow their child to be transported to an event
- If disabled participants are being transported, the transport used should be appropriate and accessible for their needs.
- Planning the route and breaks (if necessary)
- Contact number for parents

Where groups are small, the most feasible option is often to travel in a private car. Although this is not recommended it may be the only practical way of getting to an event. As part of BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy, adults must not be alone with a gymnast under the age of 18 years in a car. In the event of an emergency or in completely unforeseen circumstances, parental consent should be sought, the gymnast should always travel in the back of the car and the Club Manager or executive committee member should be informed of the circumstances. In order to protect all young people in Gymnastics, this should only happen when there is no other alternative and must not be a regular, approved practice. Failure to comply with this guidance will be considered as a serious breach of the BG Health, Safety and Welfare and Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policies.

It is recommended that BG registered clubs who wish to use volunteers to drive groups of gymnasts, keep a register of volunteer drivers and keep a record of checks carried out. If an accident resulted in injury to a BG member, they would be covered under the BG personal accident insurance policy if travelling directly to or from a BG activity or event.

Other things to consider

Prior to any trip it is important to consider what would happen in all possible scenarios. Consider the worst case and make sure that you have procedures in place to deal with any problem and all the necessary information prior to departure. To help ensure a stress free trip, take time to consider the following: -

- Risk Assessments: The Team Manager/Group Leader will need to ensure an ongoing process of risk assessment. (See section 3.11)
- Supervision: BG recommends a minimum of 1:10 adult to child ratio as a minimum level for supervision on trips. This ratio may need to be increased if the group is made up of primary school aged children, or disabled people, or the trip is of a nature where more supervision may be required- i.e. trips abroad. If the group is mixed sex there should be at least one male and one female supervisor.
- First Aid: A first aid box should be taken on any trip along with a list of emergency contact numbers.
- Overnight stays: When large groups are travelling it is advisable to ensure accommodation is booked well in advance. This can help to ensure that groups are kept together in a hotel. It is not permitted for anyone over the age of eighteen to share a room (or changing facilities) with anyone under the age of sixteen. Members of staff such as coaches, judges, adult helpers/volunteers should not share with gymnasts. This is only acceptable if the member of staff is the parent or registered carer of the gymnast. Room allocation should, if possible, be planned prior to the trip.

- Facility providers/Tour Operators: To help ensure that any arrangements made with facility providers or tour operators are formalised, BG recommends the use of a Service Provision checklist or agreement.
- Costs: When a trip is being planned it is essential to consider the full cost of the trip. As well as individual cost of travel, food and accommodation and other extras, the club should consider how volunteers are funded and if staff will be paid to go on the trip. It is good practice to advise a recommended amount for spending money.
- Consent forms: It is essential for parents to complete a consent form for a trip. This is especially important when the event involves an overnight stay.
- Communication with parents: Parents need to be fully informed of all details in relation to the trip. This list is not exhaustive but parents should be informed of:
 - i) Transport arrangements
 - ii) Key timings – Pick up, Departure and Return
 - iii) Destination and contact details
 - iv) Room allocation
 - v) Code of conduct
 - vi) Contact details for trip staff
 - vii) Trip requirements – pocket money, kit etc

This is not a full list of factors that should be considered, but it should assist with planning for a trip.

4.4 HOSTING GYMNASTS

British Gymnastics is unable to regulate or insure against the hosting of gymnasts in any situation other than within establishments licensed for the provision of overnight accommodation.

Clubs who wish to host gymnasts under the age of 18 years with families or accommodate gymnasts within gymnasium facilities, school halls etc. should seek advice from the local Social Services and may need to seek additional insurance cover as British Gymnastics insurance will not provide cover in these circumstances.

Hosting with families

If the club does not have appropriate procedures in place to ensure families are suitably vetted, hosting should not be considered as an option. Clubs that are able to carry out vetting procedures should undertake appropriate risk assessment prior to hosting taking place and they must consider the following:-

- Seek parental consent
- Ensure the host family has knowledge of any medical or dietary needs of their guests
- Ensure the host family is made aware of any special needs or requirements for gymnasts, and that it is the coaches' responsibility to ensure that the host family agrees to provide adequately to meet the needs of the gymnast/s.
- Ensure children are hosted in pairs that are appropriately matched
- Host families should be clear about the arrangements for transporting the children
- Children staying with host families should have easy access to a telephone and to their coach and welfare officer
- Parents/guardians should be made aware that children may not be as fully supervised as they are in the gym

BG has developed a sample form contained in section 8 of the policy, which should be completed by any family wishing to host a gymnast in their home.

Hosting in unlicensed establishments e.g. gymnasiums or schools

It is recognised that groups attending large gymnastics festivals are often accommodated within 'dormitories' in schools or gymnastics centres. This situation is not ideal but may be the only available option. The following guidance should be considered:-

- Ensure groups are sharing with other groups they know
- Ensure there are separate sleeping and washing areas for males and females and staff and gymnasts. It would also be appropriate to allocate rooms in age groups where possible
- Adults should not share the dormitory with young people but should be accommodated in a nearby room
- Ensure that there are waking night staff to regularly patrol the accommodation and prevent unauthorised entry
- Ensure accommodation is safe and secure (fire exits, emergency procedures etc.)
- Ensure Welfare Manager/Event Organiser visits the accommodation prior to the event to ensure it is satisfactory and address any concerns

5.0 GYMNASTICS & HEALTH

British Gymnastics advocates that a coach should encourage a healthy lifestyle and must ensure that the health status and fitness to participate is known before permitting participation to commence.

5.1 HEALTH AND FITNESS

The coach should check on the health and fitness status of each participant before commencing the training session and must make a risk assessment on the degree to which the gymnasts can safely participate. If the gymnast has been absent or unable to participate through a debilitating injury or illness, the coach is advised to seek evidence from an appropriate medical person to confirm that the gymnast is well enough to recommence training.

The health and fitness of the gymnast must always be the primary concern of the coach and the gymnast should not be persuaded to participate if it is not safe to do so.

5.2 NUTRITION

Coaches should encourage a balanced healthy diet that includes the appropriate quantities of carbohydrate, fat, proteins, vitamins, minerals and fluids to ensure the replenishment of energy resources and efficient functioning of the body. Ideally a gymnast should not carry excessive body mass since this may lead to under performance, ineffective technique and increased risk of injury due to excess loading on the body structure.

The body weight of children and adolescents can fluctuate considerably due to growth related activity. Consequently the practice of weighing gymnasts to monitor fat gain is not reliable, since the total body weight is not an indication of the percentage of body fat.

In the case of post pubescent gymnasts, monitoring weight before breakfast and before and after training can provide comparative measurements on weight and indicate the loss of body weight (usually fluid) as a result of training. However where it can be evidenced that a weight loss would be in the interest of the gymnast, this should be achieved through careful dietary planning. The advice of a dietician, nutritionist or appropriate medical professional should be sought to ensure that an appropriate diet and monitoring procedures are followed. Tact and diplomacy must always prevail when monitoring weight. The use of such phrases as "you are fat" or "you need to lose weight" etc are inappropriate and can be emotionally abusive and lead to long-term psychological damage. Coaches must be extremely vigilant for symptoms that may be an indication of a dietary related illness such as Anorexia or Bulimia Nervosa. In these circumstances, it is imperative that medical/professional advice is sought. In the case of gymnasts under 18 years of age, the matter must be brought to the attention of the parents or guardians.

It is advised that gymnasts should boost their energy stores through the intake of carbohydrates and non-gaseous fluids at least 1 1/2 hours before commencing training or competing. It is a requirement that fluids should be taken in small quantities during training and the energy stores should be replenished within the first two hours following exercise. Carbohydrate fluids and foods with a high glycaemic

index should be ingested immediately following completion of training, for best energy restoration results.

5.3 PREVENTING INFECTIOUS DISEASES – BLOOD AND OTHER BODILY FLUIDS

These guidelines should be followed whenever a Gymnast, Coach or other Person involved in training and competition, has a bleeding injury or open wound that may put others at risk of contamination with blood or other bodily fluids.

- i) Any individual who sustains a blood injury must seek treatment immediately. It is the responsibility of the Gymnast concerned and/or their Coach to ensure that all bleeding injuries and open wounds are dealt with appropriately in accordance with the following guidelines.
- ii) For all minor bleeding injuries, the individual should stop the activity that they are involved in and attempt to stop the bleeding. A fresh sterile dressing should be applied to the wound before continuing with training or competition.
- iii) All recent cuts or blisters should be covered.
- iv) If the bleeding cannot be stopped, the individual should seek medical attention and should not continue with training or competition until advised otherwise.
- v) Any individual treating an injury should wear disposable gloves, which should be disposed of as clinical waste after use (see below). Wherever possible, the injured individual should apply pressure to a bleeding wound with his/her own hands. If applying a dressing, wash your hands both before and after application.
- vi) If the casualty's blood comes into contact with your mouth, eyes or broken skin use clean cold water to wash the affected area and take medical advice.
- vii) In cases where blood or other bodily fluids are clearly visible on clothing, the individual should replace clothing before continuing with any further gymnastics activity.
- viii) The contaminated clothing should be stored in a plastic bag and should be washed according to the guidelines on the label as early as possible after contamination. Washing is enough to remove the contaminated substance even if the stain remains.
- iv) Where contamination of equipment or very minor contamination of clothing has occurred, the area should be treated with a decontamination solution made up of one part household bleach to ten parts water. Solutions that are more than one day old should be disposed of. Diluted bleach that has passed its expiry date should not be used.
- x) Clinical Waste -
 - Wipe up spillage with heavy-duty paper and discard into a bag for incineration, including any soiled dressings or gloves.
 - The contaminated area should be thoroughly soaked with the decontamination solution and left for two minutes.
 - The area should then be rinsed with hot water and general-purpose detergent.
 - A 0.5% solution of bleach is not considered to be hazardous, however care must be taken to ensure that the solution does not come into contact with the eyes, mouth or wounds, and should not be left on the skin for prolonged periods of time.
- xi) For spills of lower risk bodily fluids, e.g. urine and vomit, hot water and general-purpose detergent is sufficient.

- xii) Any individuals who are likely to have to deal with injuries should ideally be immunised against Hepatitis B.

Infectious diseases

Please visit the www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases for the latest up to date information regarding all infectious diseases.

5.4 ANTI-DOPING

British Gymnastics has an anti-doping policy updated in 2011 which complies with the World Anti Doping Association (WADA) Code. A copy of the policy can be downloaded from the BG website under Technical Downloads.

5.5 SMOKING

For the whole of the UK the Government have implemented a No Smoking ban in public and workplaces.

England - [Smoking ban in England](#) and [Health Act 2006](#)

Scotland - [Smoking, Health and Social Care \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)

Wales - [Health Act 2006](#)

Northern Ireland - The Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006

Summary of the ban

- Display specific signage in a prominent position at each entrance. Premises signage must contain the wording "No smoking. It is against the law to smoke in these premises."
- Secondary 'employee only' entrances require a smoking prohibition symbol of at least 70mm Dia.
- Entrances to smoke-free premises within other smoke-free premises require a smoking prohibition symbol of at least 70mm Dia.
- All public transport plus business vehicles need to display a no smoking symbol.

If these regulations are contravened, fixed penalties apply.

For additional information please visit www.nosmokinglaw.co.uk

5.6 SUBSTANCE ABUSE

BG is committed to promoting the well-being and safety of all members and volunteers. Similarly, all members and volunteers should recognise that they have a duty of care towards themselves, their gymnasts and colleagues and to anyone else that their day-to-day work brings them in contact with. One key factor that can affect productivity, health, safety and welfare is the use of drugs or alcohol.

Any member or volunteer who is aware of having a drug or alcohol problem should, in the interest of themselves, their family and their job or role, discuss the matter in confidence with their Club Chairman, Manager or with their own doctor. They could also seek help from one of the independent treatment and advice services in their area.

Drugs including alcohol and medicines can affect the brain and body in a number of ways. They can alter the way a person thinks, perceives and feels, which can lead to impaired judgement and concentration. Such substance abuse can also bring about the neglect of general health and well-being. This may adversely influence performance at work, even when the abuse takes place outside the workplace.

Definition

British Gymnastics defines "substance abuse" as referring to:

- The use of illegal drugs
- The use of prescribed drugs and over the counter drugs where side effects can affect performance
- The use of alcohol where its effects carry on into the working day
- The use of other substances such as solvents that can have a negative effect on the mind or body

Aims

The aim is to avoid or reduce potential damage caused by substance abuse to:

- The physical and mental health of members and volunteers
- The safety of members and volunteers as well as that of others
- The efficiency and effectiveness of members and volunteers
- The reputation and public perception of British Gymnastics

British Gymnastics aims to ensure all issues of substance abuse problems are dealt with in a confidential and constructive manner.

British Gymnastics recognises that substance abuse is a serious issue within society. There is no reason to suspect that substance abuse is significant amongst members or volunteers, but British Gymnastics is committed to promoting policies that represent good personal practice and contribute to the health, safety and welfare of members and volunteers, and their general well-being.

British Gymnastics' guidelines on substance abuse are as follows: -

- BG members or volunteers must not use any substance while taking part in gymnastics activity
- No member or volunteer may use any substance (before or after working/volunteering hours) to the extent that while participating in gymnastics: -
 - i) It impairs their performance and/or
 - ii) It potentially or actually puts their or others health and safety at risk
- The possession, sharing and dealing in some drugs is illegal. Therefore the possession or dealing in illegal drugs on British Gymnastics' or an affiliated organisation's premises will be regarded as gross misconduct and may lead to the suspension of membership and possible criminal prosecution.
- Members who are identified as having safety-critical jobs may be liable for disciplinary action for gross misconduct if they are found to be impaired while taking part in gymnastics through any substance abuse.

Legal Position

Clubs who employ staff have a wide range of duties under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (and associated legislation) to assess and manage risks to the health and safety of their employees. Employees are also required to take reasonable care of themselves and others who could be affected by what they do at work.

The primary legislation for controlling illicit drugs is the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Roles and responsibilities of members

- Not to use illegal drugs
- Not to use legal drugs or substances including alcohol in such a way that might affect their performance or safety of others while taking part in gymnastics
- Not to drink alcohol or be affected by alcohol while participating in gymnastics
- Encourage colleagues to seek help if they have problems
- Avoid covering up for or colluding with colleagues who are using substances
- Seek help promptly if experiencing problems and commit to maintaining the required level of attendance and performance at work
- Co-operate with any investigations and support offered
- Be aware of and comply with this policy

Roles and responsibilities of Affiliated Organisations

- To implement BG guidance
- To ensure that they and any employees, member and volunteers understand the policy and their responsibilities
- To monitor changes in behaviour, performance and attendance and intervene early if there are signs of problems
- To act fairly and consistently, with understanding and compassion
- To support the employee, member or volunteer to achieve the necessary levels of attendance and performance
- To refer employees, members or volunteers for assistance where appropriate
- To identify and, where reasonably practicable, change aspects of the work that may contribute to substance abuse problems
- To set a good example

Practical guidance

The key indicators of alcohol abuse are:

- Smelling of alcohol during working hours or whilst conducting British Gymnastics activities
- Complaints and remarks (often joking, initially) by colleagues
- Increasing levels of sickness and absenteeism (especially short term)
- Decline in standards of dress or appearance
- Falling performance especially in the afternoons or after a work break
- Any abnormal behaviour which could include: obscene language, sexual harassment etc
- Incidence of minor accidents – falling down stairs, minor cuts etc
- Evidence of fighting or trouble with the police

These indicators are for general guidance only and the presence of some or indeed all of them are not exclusive to alcohol use problems. Other illnesses such as Alzheimer's, diabetes, thyrotoxicosis, epilepsy, depression, a cerebral tumour and other disorders may mimic those problems.

The key indicators of drug abuse include:

- Sudden mood changes
- Unusual irritability or aggression
- A tendency to become confused
- Abnormal fluctuations in concentration and energy
- Impaired job performance
- Poor timekeeping
- Increased short term sickness absence
- A deterioration in relationships with colleagues

- Dishonesty or theft (arising from the need to maintain an expensive habit)

NB: All the signs shown above may be caused by other factors, such as stress, and should be regarded only as indications that a member or volunteer may be using drugs.

Above all, Managers should avoid an overcritical attitude to what in the first instance should be regarded as a health problem. On the other hand the initial steps in applying the policy should be managerial rather than medical since it is the impact of the disorder on the workplace that is likely to be the first indicator of a problem.

Procedure

In the event of an allegation, complaint or suspicion of substance abuse (which may include smelling of alcohol in an inappropriate situation) it is important to establish whether it is purely a management/disciplinary issue or whether there are health problems that need to be addressed. To establish this, follow the format set out in the disciplinary or capability procedure as appropriate, taking note of the following points: -

- Interview the member in private about their performance, the allegation or complaint without making it obvious to other colleagues. Consider including that an employee representative can be requested to be present for support. Ensure that an accurate record of the meeting is made and kept safely, including what was said and agreed.
- Do not interview someone who has obviously been drinking heavily recently, is actually drunk or under the influence of drugs or solvents. Send them home – making the necessary arrangements for them to do so safely. Ensure that they do not drive or operate machinery. Arrange to interview them promptly on the next working day.
- Draw attention to the incidents causing concern, ask for explanations to establish facts and make notes. Avoid making accusations.
- Draw the employees', members' or volunteers' attention to the Substance Abuse Policy statement and ask whether they agree to comply with it.
- Ask the employee, member or volunteer whether they have any health or other problems that might account for their current difficulties and explore sources of help as appropriate. Emphasise that all information given will be treated in the strictest confidence at this stage.
- If the person admits they may have a problem relating to substance or alcohol abuse, they should be advised to seek help from their GP or the various counselling agencies available.
- Discuss possible work related problem/s such as excessive workload etc. Enquire sympathetically whether there are any domestic worries causing difficulties.
- Agree future action including further meetings to monitor progress.
- If the employee, member or volunteer denies that they have a problem related to substance or alcohol abuse, or acknowledges the problem but refuses to seek help, then the usual disciplinary procedures should apply after consultation with the Club Managers/Committee.
- If there is a relapse or a persistent problem keep accurate confidential records of instances of poor performance, behavioural and other allied matters using the key indicators.
- Maintain accurate sickness absence records on all employees, members or volunteers in a simple comprehensible format (NOTE: It is good practice to have a 'return to work interview' after sickness where an employee, member or volunteer should be asked to declare any medication that they are taking

and the recommended dosage. This can then be assessed by occupational health to consider any risk in relation to the job performed).

British Gymnastics is committed to providing a safe environment for all members and volunteers. This may mean that an individual who poses a risk to themselves or to others will need to be excluded from the workplace if they are impaired through alcohol or some drug (legal or illegal).

Persistent substance abuse

British Gymnastics recognises that a persistent substance abuse problem is primarily a health matter requiring help and treatment. As an employer it will do all that it can to ensure everyone suffering from this problem gets appropriate advice and support with the objective of restoring people to their former good health and productivity. BG would recommend that clubs take a similar stance.

It is self evident that the policy can only be effective if those affected openly and honestly admit they have a problem and are willing to accept help.

All those seeking help will be treated sympathetically and in confidence.

If a member or volunteer admits to a substance abuse problem which has led to misconduct, British Gymnastics may suspend disciplinary action on condition that the member or volunteer has sought and agreed to a treatment and rehabilitation programme.

Where gross misconduct is involved, the substance abuse problem may be taken into account in determining disciplinary action.

It may be appropriate to suspend a member on medical grounds, but this should only be done after seeking authority from the Chief Executive Officer or in their absence, their nominated person in charge.

An employee, member or volunteer should return to the same role after treatment or another more appropriate area where they can be more effective and not be at risk of relapse.

In the event of the employee not being able to do their former job, attempts should be made to re-deploy that person.

Where treatment or re-deployment is unsuccessful or the point is reached where successive relapses can no longer be tolerated, consideration should be given to the option of terminating employment/involvement on the grounds of ill health.

6.0 USEFUL CONTACTS INFORMATION

British Gymnastics www.british-gymnastics.org	08451297129
Gymnastics Northern Ireland Email: admin@northernirelandgymnastics.org	02890 994288
Scottish Gymnastics www.scottishgymnastics.com	01786 466232
Welsh Gymnastics email: office@welshgymnastics.org	0845 045 4304
BG INSURANCE BROKERS Perkins Slade Ltd	0121 698 8150
HEALTH & SAFETY Health & Safety Executive www.hse.gov.uk Provides information on a range of subjects relating to health and safety arising from work activity in Britain	The HSE information line is no longer available
St John's Ambulance www.sja.org.uk Provides first aid advice and training	08700 104950
Advanced Safety Training Services www.ast-service.co.uk Providers of health and safety training	08000 897055
Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency www.dvla.gov.uk Provides information on road safety	0300 790 6801
Department for Business Innovative Skills www.bis.gov.uk Provides information on the best environment for business success in the UK	0207 215 5000
National Council for Voluntary Organisations www.askncvo.org.uk Provides resources for voluntary organisations, including sample contracts, health and safety information and legal advice	
NHS Direct www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk Official Web site for the National Health Service. Contains information about health problems and how to keep healthy	0845 4647
Department of Health www.dh.gov.uk Provides health and social care policy, guidance and publications	
WELFARE NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) www.thecpsu.org.uk Provides Child Protection resources and training including 'Safe Sports Events'- a comprehensive resource for clubs running events.	England: 0116 2347278 Scotland: 0141 342 4870 N/Ireland: 02890 351135 Wales: 0203 188 3616
NSPCC Free 24-hour Helpline	0808 800 5000

Children First www.children1st.org.uk The Scottish Child Protection Charity who provide equivalent services to the NSPCC	0131 446 2300
Child Line www.childline.org.uk Free helpline for Children	0800 1111 (Child Line) 02890 327773 (NI Child line)
Department for Education and Skills www.dfes.gov.uk	0870 000 2288
Information Commissioner www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk Responsible for overseeing the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act, the site provides information on public access to official information and protecting personal information	01625 545 745
GYMNASTICS EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS The following suppliers are currently the official sponsors for British Gymnastics; Continental Sport – Gymnastics equipment www.continentalsports.co.uk	01484 542051
Gym-Aid – Trampoline specialists www.gymaid.com	01279 771941
Gymnova – Gymnastics equipment www.gymnova.com	0845 456 4470

7.0 SAMPLE FORMS

7.1 EQUALITY MONITORING FORM

British Gymnastics is committed to promoting and developing equality, which is about fairness and equality of opportunity. In order to develop our equality policy it is essential to monitor participants. This information will allow us to develop our equality action plans at the grassroots of the sport.

1. Please state your date of birth:

(Please tick the appropriate boxes below)

2. What is your sex? Male Female

3. What is your ethnic group? (Choose from A – E and then tick the appropriate box)

A WHITE

British Irish Other Please specify

B MIXED

White and black Caribbean White and black African

White and Asian Other Please specify.....

C ASIAN or ASIAN BRITISH

Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi

Other Please specify.....

D BLACK or BLACK BRITISH

Caribbean African Other Please specify.....

E CHINESE OR OTHER ETHNIC GROUP

Chinese Other Please specify.....

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as anyone with a 'physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect upon his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

4. Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Yes No

If yes, what is the nature of the disability?

Visual impairment Hearing impairment Physical disability

Learning disability multiple disability

Other Please specify.....

5. What is your religion? (If you do not wish to disclose this information, please leave blank)

None Buddhist Hindu Jewish Sikh

Christian (includes Church of England/Scotland/in Wales, Catholic, Protestant & other Christian denomination)

Muslim Other Please specify.....

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

7.2 PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

I confirm my child is fit and healthy and I will undertake to advise you of any change.. I have completed the section on medical details and give consent that in the event of any illness/accident any necessary treatment can be administered. If surgery is necessary this may include the use of anaesthetics. I confirm that I have read through the participant’s code of conduct with my child and they understand and agree to abide by the rules.

In signing this agreement I declare that I accept that the coaches and event personnel will take precautions to prevent accidents, I understand that they may not be held responsible for loss, damage or injury to my child.

I confirm that my child is a current member of British Gymnastics.

7.3 CONSENT TO PUBLICATION OF IMAGERY

I am aware that photographs and video footage may be taken during the event for coaching and promotional purpose. I do/do not consent (please delete as appropriate) for my son /daughter to appear in photographs. I understand that no personal information will be displayed with the image.

Parent/Guardian Name.....

Signed (Parent/Guardian).....

Date.....

All information will be kept strictly confidential in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1994 and 1998.

7.4 CLUB HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE 'FIT FOR PURPOSE' CHECKLIST

The following checklist is a quick guide to check whether a club is suitably organised with regard to its operational procedures.

DOES YOUR CLUB/ORGANISATION:	Yes	No
1. Follow recruitment procedures as outlined in the BG Child Protection Policy 2004 including Criminal Record Bureau checks on all staff or volunteers with repeated regular contact with children and/or vulnerable adults?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have a designated Child Protection Welfare Officer who holds BG membership, a current BG Enhanced CRB and has completed both Safeguarding and Protecting Children Awareness training through a recognised provider and the British Gymnastics Time to Listen training, which needs to be updated every 3 years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Have circulated information and contact details for the Club Welfare Officer and has information on display in the club venue?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Ensure that there are always at least two responsible adults of the appropriate gender at all times during training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Operate an open viewing of training policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Have a Photography and Filming Policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Have a designated Health & Safety Officer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Publicise its Health Safety and Welfare Policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Ensure all coaches have BG enhanced CRB's, have current BG Membership, and are suitably qualified to coach?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Carry out annual Risk Assessments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Regularly and systematically inspect the equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Provide adequate Emergency First Aid provisions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Have a process for recording accidents and incidents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Ensure all club members and officials are members of British Gymnastics and where relevant hold a BG CRB?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Carry out an annual fire risk assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Have a club constitution and/or rules?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Have an approachable, transparent and effective management committee or Management Team?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Ensure all new members complete registration and consent forms?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Have a new members induction or information leaflet/booklet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Have a policy to cover the transportation of children and other issues relating to events outside normal club sessions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Have published Complaints and Grievance Procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Have Codes of Conduct for coaches, club officials, gymnasts and parents/guardians?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7.5 BRITISH GYMNASTICS FACILITY HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST

Venue.....

Assessed by..... Date.....

Health and Safety Legislation places an obligation on Facility Managers, to ensure a responsible attitude to managing the health and safety of all who use the facility.

This checklist, whilst not exhaustive, will provide a guide to help audit health and safety in gymnastics facilities. An authorised person must carry out the audit on a regular basis.

1.0 Health and Safety Responsibilities	YES	NO	N/A
1.1 Have all staff, including volunteers been informed of their health and safety responsibilities?			
1.2 Have health and safety matters been considered in the last six months?			
2.0 Emergency and accident procedures	YES	NO	N/A
2.1 Is the emergency procedure clearly laid out and distributed to all staff and volunteers?			
2.2 Are the emergency exits free from obstruction and not locked when persons are in the building?			
2.3 Are the fire fighting appliances easily accessible and have they been examined in the last twelve months?			
2.4 Are all the fire doors kept closed and free from obstruction?			
2.5 Has there been a fire evacuation within the last 6 months?			
2.6 Are fire alarms tested according to the fire certificate?			
2.7 Do a sufficient number of staff know how to operate fire fighting equipment?			
2.8 Are all fire exits and routes adequately signed and emergency instructions displayed?			
2.9 Is there a separate bomb search or power failure procedure?			
3.0 Accidents and First Aid	YES	NO	N/A
3.1 Are there notices displayed listing first aiders and the location of the first aid boxes?			
3.2 Are the first aid boxes complete according to the contents list and are all wrappings undamaged?			
3.3 Are all staff aware of their responsibilities to report all accidents/incidents?			
3.4 Are the accident recording forms readily accessible?			
3.5 Have any accidents/incidents been recorded, and investigated?			

4.0	Temperature	YES	NO	N/A
4.1	Is reasonable working temperature achieved and maintained within each area? (at least 16°C)			
4.2	Has adequate provision been made for ventilating each area?			
5.0	Lighting	YES	NO	N/A
5.1	Is suitable lighting provided in each training area and any office and changing area?			
5.2	Is suitable lighting provided for any detailed work?			
5.3	Are light fittings, particularly fluorescent tubes quickly replaced when necessary?			
5.4	Do the diffusers covering lights need to be cleaned?			
6.0	Electrical safety and work equipment	YES	NO	N/A
6.1	Is all electrical equipment and work equipment in good working order?			
6.2	Where appropriate, have staff been trained in the use of office equipment?			
6.3	Has all electrical equipment and systems been tested according to best practice?			
7.0	Gymnastics Equipment and Facility	YES	NO	N/A
7.1	Has the gymnastics equipment been regularly inspected for damage and correctly assembled?			
7.2	Have all personnel been instructed on the correct procedures for moving, assembling and adjusting equipment?			
7.3	Are potential hazards and walkways clearly identified and protected where possible?			
7.4	Are all walkways and run-ups free from obstruction?			
7.5	Is all equipment stored safely and securely?			
7.6	Is there suitable access for disabled people?			
8.0	Good Coaching Practice	YES	NO	N/A
8.1	Are all coaches suitably qualified to coach the participants?			
8.2	Have all staff and volunteers been provided with basic health and safety training?			
8.3	Have all staff signed up to the British Gymnastics Code of Conduct and Ethical Code?			
8.4	Do all staff adhere to the British Gymnastics Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy?			
8.5	Have all staff been verified as being suitable for working with children and vulnerable adults?			

9.0 Certificates, Registers and Licences		YES	NO	N/A
9.1	Is there an up to date fire certificate for the premises?			
9.2	Is there a recent apparatus/equipment inspection certificate?			
9.3	Is there a certificate of adequate insurance cover for the facility and the participants?			
9.4	Is there a certificate of the facility/club being registered/affiliated to British Gymnastics?			
10.0 Housekeeping and Health Matters		YES	NO	N/A
10.1	Has suitable storage been provided for any dangerous substances, such as cleaning fluids?			
10.2	Are containers for dangerous substances clearly marked to indicate the content?			
10.3	Are adequate changing and toilet facilities provided?			
10.4	Are changing and toilet facilities regularly cleaned?			
10.5	Are soap and drying facilities provided?			
10.6	Is an adequate supply of fresh drinking water provided?			
10.7	Have staff been appropriately instructed in the care of substances which may be harmful to health, such as cleaning products?			
An equipment and facility safety checklist is available from British Gymnastics.				

7.6 BRITISH GYMNASTICS LARGE APPARATUS SAFETY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

The following checklist is intended as a guideline for coaches for the general inspection of gymnastics apparatus and it is recommended that suitably qualified personnel conduct a full annual inspection. This checklist is by no means exhaustive.

Venue Checked by.....

EQUIPMENT CHECK	CHECK	COMMENT
1. FASTENINGS AND ATTACHMENTS Floor anchor plates Eyebolts Wall, roof brackets	Screws are tight, plates not bent. Damage or wear to threads Eyebolt tight and not bent Clamps or bolts and nuts tight and not worn	
2. FLOOR COVERING General floor matting	Damage, tears or rucking: Gaps between mats; free from dirt	
3. FLOOR EXERCISE AREA Structure of floor area Carpet Covering Tumbling/Agility Mats/Landing Matting	Damage to spring system; wooden panels, separation between panels and surrounding boards. Tears, rucking or separation of mats, general wear. Damage, tears, rucking, worn surfaces, gaps in foam	
4. VAULTING EQUIPMENT Vaulting horse or buck Vaulting table Vaulting Boards Vault Run Up	Covering surface, torn or polished: loose bolts: height adjusters damaged: damage to foot pads Covering surface, torn or polished. Wood surface cracked or splintered Covering surface torn, or polished or rucked. Nuts or bolts loose damaged wooden leaves. Wooden surfaces – no splinters. Carpeted surfaces – no tears, gaps or rucking.	

EQUIPMENT CHECK	CHECK	COMMENT
<p>5. ASYMMETRIC BARS</p> <p>Bar Rails</p> <p>Bar Frames</p> <p>Cables and tensioning devices</p>	<p>Splintering or separation of laminations on wooden bars. Wear of outer surface of fibreglass bars. Wear to the knuckles and fixing points</p> <p>Wear in bar to frame attachments. Adjustors secure and free, but not worn. All pins, bolts secure and not worn.</p> <p>Cables not frayed or twisted or coiled. Threads on tensioners not worn or seized. Karabiner or clips secure and not bent</p>	
<p>6. BEAMS</p> <p>Beam covering</p> <p>Handles</p> <p>Foot Pads</p>	<p>Not polished, torn or rucked. Base for legs secured to beam. Height adjusters free but not damaged.</p> <p>Not splintered or damaged, securing mechanism effective.</p> <p>Rubber base pads not damaged</p>	
<p>7. POMMEL HORSE</p> <p>Horse</p> <p>Handles</p> <p>Foot Pads</p>	<p>Not slippery, torn or rucked. Base for legs secured to horse. Height adjusters free but not damaged</p> <p>Not splintered or damaged, securing mechanism effective.</p> <p>Rubber base pads not damaged</p>	
<p>8. RINGS</p> <p>Ring Frame</p> <p>Ring Cables</p> <p>Rings</p> <p>Cables and Tensioners</p>	<p>Height adjusters secure. Alignment of frame correct.</p> <p>Suspension point secure, not worn, swivels free to rotate, secure. Webbing not frayed or damaged.</p> <p>Not splintered, damaged or slippery.</p> <p>Not frayed, twisted or damaged. Tensioners free but not worn. Karabiner clips secure not bent.</p>	

EQUIPMENT CHECK	CHECK	COMMENT
9. ADJUSTABLE RINGS Cables Pulleys Chain	<i>In addition to the checks indicated in 8 above, check the following:</i> Not frayed, damaged or coiled; Free to rotate – but not worn. Fastenings secure and not worn. Chain and anchor points not damaged or worn.	
10. PARALLEL BARS Bar Rails Bar anchor points Height/Width Adjusters	Not splintered or laminations not separated Not damaged and screws secure Effective and not worn.	
11. HORIZONTAL BAR Bar Frames Cables and Tensioners	Not permanently 'set' with a bend. Anchor points secure and not worn (do not reverse the bar to remove bend). Adjusters effective and secure, not worn. Base pads secure not damaged. Cables not frayed or coiled; anchor fittings secure, not worn. Karabiner clips secure, not bent. Adjusters free but not worn.	
12. RHYTHMIC AREA Raised Carpet Area General Carpet Area Ballet Barre Mirrors Ceiling Height	Damage to wooden panels; separation between panels and surrounding boards. Damage, tears or rucking, gaps between mats, free from dirt. Not splintered, damaged or slippery. Secured safely to the wall. Not cracked, splintered or shattered. Minimum 8m high over performance area. No cables; cross bars below this level over performance area.	
13. AEROBIC AREA Floor Area	No splinters, check joints and surrounding framework for movement, free of dust, smooth and clean.	

EQUIPMENT CHECK	CHECK	COMMENT
<p>14. TRAMPOLINES, DMT and SINGLE TRAMPETTES</p> <p>Beds</p> <p>Springs</p> <p>Leg Braces</p> <p>End Decks</p> <p>Frame Pads</p> <p>Roller Stands</p> <p>Throw in Mats</p> <p>Joints</p> <p>Chains</p> <p>Anchor Bars</p>	<p>Loose stitching or breaks in the webbing, tears and areas of solid beds that are worn, uneven tension shown by the lines on the bed not being straight</p> <p>Springs/cables are all in place with hooks pointing down</p> <p>Leg braces are fully inserted plus allen screws tight, rivets secure, hinge pins in place.</p> <p>Connecting brackets effective. Platform skin that supports the safety matting has no tears and tensioning straps are all secure. Leg braces secure and not worn. Safety matting not torn and infill foam in good condition.</p> <p>Tears, loose or missing clips/fasteners or soft areas at the joints.</p> <p>Freely running and swivelling castors, wheels and hooks.</p> <p>Tears and other damage</p> <p>Wear at the joints and that the frame is level all around</p> <p>Chains for security and even adjustment</p> <p>Excessive wear due to movement</p>	
<p>15. THE OVERHEAD RIG</p> <p>Trampoline Position</p> <p>Security of Ropes and Attachments</p> <p>Swivels and Pulleys</p> <p>The Belt</p>	<p>Trampoline Position in relation to the overhead rig</p> <p>Security of the ropes and attachments and the condition of the elastics and attachments on bungee rings</p> <p>Unhindered operation</p> <p>Security of the belt</p>	

Signed Date

7.7 SERVICE PROVISION CHECKLIST

FOR COMPLETION BY SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR GYMNASTICS EVENTS OR ACTIVITIES

When considering using a provider or tour operator for gymnastic events, the organiser must seek written assurances that the provision complies with the British Gymnastics Health, Safety and Welfare Policy.

BG Discipline/Club.....

Person in charge: (HoD/Event Manager).....

Date(s) of Event.....

Name of Provider.....

The provider or tour operator providing services is asked to give careful consideration to the statements below and sign in the space at the end of the form that the standard of service provided will meet the conditions listed. Please tick all specifications you can meet. Indicate by a cross any you cannot meet. Write N/A against any specifications that do not apply to your provision.

SECTION A should be completed for all visits/events. **SECTION B** (Tour operators) should also be completed if applicable.

SECTION A – ALL VISITS

Health, Safety and Emergency Policy

1. The Provider complies with relevant health and safety regulations, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations, and has a health and safety policy and recorded risk assessments which are available for inspection.
2. Accident and emergency procedures are maintained and records are available for inspection.

Vehicles

3. All vehicles are roadworthy and meet the requirements of relevant regulations in the country in which they are being used.

Staffing

4. All reasonable steps are taken to check staff who have access to young people, for relevant criminal history and suitability for work with young people.
5. There are adequate and regular opportunities for liaison between club staff and the provider's staff and there is sufficient flexibility to make radical changes to the programme if necessary and the reasons for such changes will be made known to club staff.

Insurance

6. The provider has public liability insurance for at least £5 million with a clause giving "indemnity to principal".

Accommodation (if residential accommodation is provided)

- 7. UK accommodation is covered by a current fire certificate, or advice has been sought from a fire officer and implemented and a fire risk assessment has been completed. Provision has been recently inspected by the local Environmental Health Officer and any recommendations have been implemented.
- 8. If abroad, the accommodation complies with the fire, health and safety regulations, which apply in the country concerned.
- 9. There are appropriate security arrangements to prevent unauthorised persons entering the accommodation.
- 10. Separate male and female sleeping accommodation and washing facilities are provided and staff accommodation is close to gymnast's accommodation.

Activity Management

- 11. The provider operates a policy for staff recruitment, training and assessment, which ensures that all staff with a responsibility for participants are competent to undertake their duties.
- 12. The provider maintains a written code of practice for activities which is consistent with relevant National Governing Body guidelines and/or, if abroad, the relevant regulations of the country concerned.
- 13. Staff competences are confirmed by appropriate National Governing Body qualifications for the activities to be undertaken, or staff have had their competences confirmed by an appropriately experienced and qualified technical adviser.
- 14. Where there is no National Governing Body for an activity, operating procedures and staff training and assessment requirements are explained in the provider's code of practice.
- 15. Participants will at all times have access to a person with current first aid qualifications. Staff are practised and competent in accident and emergency procedures.
- 16. There is a clear definition of responsibilities between providers and visiting staff regarding supervision and welfare of participants.
- 17. All equipment used in activities is suited to the task, adequately maintained in accordance with statutory requirements and current good practice, with records kept of maintenance checks where necessary.

SECTION B – TOUR OPERATORS

Where a tour operator delivers services to clubs using other providers e.g. transport operators or accommodation, the tour operator must ensure that each provider meets the relevant specifications outlined above and that these providers operate to standards which meet the relevant regulations which apply to the country of operation.

- 18. Sections A and B of the form, as relevant, have been completed to show that suitable and sufficient checks of providers to be used have been made, records of which are available for inspection.
- 19. The Tour Operator complies with Package Travel Regulations, including arrangements to safeguard customers' monies.

20. ATOL, ABTA or other bonding body name and numbers:.....

SECTION C – GENERAL

21. The provider has completed sections A and B of this form and agrees to provide additional assurances which are specific to the activities being proposed and which will be made clear to the provider by the event/activities organiser.

If any of the above specifications cannot be met or are not applicable, please give details:

Details of any other accreditation with national governing bodies, tourist boards etc.

Signed..... Date.....

Name (in capital letters).....

Name and address of provider or tour operator
.....
.....

Tel..... Fax.....

Email..... Website.....

Thank you for completing this form. Please return the form to British Gymnastics.

Persons requiring advice on the interpretation of information given by providers or tour operators on this form should contact British Gymnastics on telephone number: 01952 822300.

7.8 CLUB TRIP CHECKLIST

The following checklist is a quick guide to check health, safety and welfare procedures when organising a club trip.

CHECKLIST	YES	NO	DATE
1. Have you identified the roles required and responsibilities for trip staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
2. Have you followed recruitment procedures as outlined in the BG Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy including Criminal Record Bureau checks on all staff and volunteers over the age of 14 years who are in a regulated activity either working or volunteering with children and/or vulnerable adults as part of their role on the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
3. Have all trip staff completed Safeguarding and Protecting Children Awareness training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
4. Do you have a sufficient ratio of trip staff (1:10 plus one if under 10 participants) and are they of the appropriate gender?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
5. Have you a designated Welfare Officer for the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
6. Has the designated Welfare Officer attended 'Time to Listen' Training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
7. Have you circulated responsibilities and contact details for all staff to parents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
8. Have parental consent forms been completed for all participants? (including emergency contacts etc).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
9. Have you addressed any specific special needs of the participants? e.g. Diet, Disability related, Religious etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
10. Have you completed a risk assessment for the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
11. Have you completed a detailed itinerary and circulated it to participants and their parents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
12. Has a Service Provision Checklist been completed (if required)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
13. Do you have Codes of Conduct for Staff and participants whilst away on trips?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
14. Have you ensured that all coaches are suitably trained, updated and qualified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
15. Have you made arrangements for overnight accommodation and considered room allocation and layout?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
16. Have you made arrangements for transport?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
17. Do you have adequate First Aid provision?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
18. Do you have a process for recording accidents and incidents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
19. Are all trip staff and participants members of British Gymnastics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
20. Have you considered any additional insurance needs for the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
21. Do you have a procedure in place in the event of a participant going missing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
22. Do you have all necessary directions and maps?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
23. Have you ensured that all new members have completed registration and consent forms?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>

7.9 RISK ASSESSMENT SAMPLE TEMPLATE

Company name:.....

Date of risk assessment:.....

Step 1 What are the hazards?	Step 2 Who might be harmed and how?	Step 3 What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Step 4 How will you put the assessment into action?		
Spot hazards by:	Identify groups of people: Remember					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking around the gym Asking employees what they think Visiting the HSE website Checking manufacturers' instructions Contacting NGB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some workers have particular needs Members of the club Members of the public If you share the workplace think about how your work affects others present 	List what is already in place to reduce the likelihood of harm or make any harm less serious	You need to make sure that you have reduced risks 'so far as is reasonably practicable'. An easy way of doing this is to compare what you are already doing with good practice. If there is a difference, list what needs to be done	Remember to prioritise. Deal with those hazards that are high-risk and have serious consequences first.		
Don't forget long-term health hazards	Say how the hazard could cause harm			Action by whom	Action by when	Done
Step 5 Review date:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review your assessment to make sure you are still improving, or at least not sliding back. If there is a significant change in your workplace, remember to check your risk assessment and where necessary, amend it. 				



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Welcome to Aspire Gymnastics Club!