

BULMERSHE GYMNASTICS CLUB

SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTING CHILDREN POLICY

1. This policy applies to all children under the age of 18 (referred to hereafter as gymnasts) at Bulmershe Gymnastics Club, whether they are registered members, triallists, party or holiday course participants. It also applies to all staff working for the club.
2. Separate policies exist for Health and Safety procedures (including the reporting of accidents), Codes of Conduct, Discipline and Club Rules. The club adheres to the British Gymnastics Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy. All these policies should be read and understood in conjunction with the Bulmershe Gymnastics Club Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy.
3. The safety and welfare of all gymnasts is the priority of Bulmershe Gymnastics Club staff at all times. As soon as gymnasts are delivered to the club for training, competitions or any other activity, they must be supervised with the same degree of care as that expected from a reasonable parent.
4. **All** staff working for the club must read and abide by British Gymnastics Policies relating to Safeguarding and Protecting Children.
5. **All** staff working for the club in a Regulated Activity (a position of trust) as defined by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) must complete a DBS check and have it validated by the Club prior to taking up voluntary or paid employment.
6. Communication directly to gymnasts, coaches or volunteers under the age of 18 via the internet and mobile phones is unacceptable unless prior permission is obtained from the parent. All correspondence directly to members under 18 years using these means should be copied to the Welfare Officer or Head of Operations. Coaches, judges, helpers, volunteers and other officers in positions of trust and responsibility should not be in contact with those under 18 at a British Gymnastics club via social networking sites and should decline requests by a young person to be a named friend. Exceptions and recommendations exist for coaches who have children at the club. Further guidance is in the British Gymnastics Good Practice Guidelines on the Use of Social Networking Sites by BG Clubs and Club Members, a copy of which is in the gym.
7. All gymnasts must be treated equally with respect and dignity. All participants have an equal right to be protected from harm. Discrimination will not be tolerated.
8. Bullying of any sort will not be tolerated.
9. Registers and contact details of all gymnasts must be kept and staff must ensure that all children have been collected from the premises before leaving themselves. In the event that a child has not been collected and where it is not possible to make contact with a parent/guardian, it may be necessary to contact social services and/or the Police for advice and assistance. A child must never be left alone.
10. Good coaching practice must always be followed. All coaches are trained in British Gymnastics approved techniques and all coaches and helpers are expected to abide by British Gymnastics procedures and guidelines for the protection of children in gymnastics. A copy of the BG Child Protection policy is available to all club members on request.
11. Coaching must always be constructive and supportive and gymnasts should never be belittled or criticised unfairly, especially in front of others. The coaching environment should be one that is challenging yet enjoyable and enables gymnasts to learn quickly because they feel secure and have confidence and trust in the Club's coaching staff.

12. Every effort must be made to ensure that an adult is never alone with a child or group of young people and that at least two responsible adults are present during training sessions.
13. All coaches are taught appropriate and recognised techniques for the supporting of gymnasts while learning new skills. By the nature of the sport some physical contact, in the form of supporting and shaping of gymnasts, is an essential part of coaching in that it helps the gymnast understand how to acquire skills and reduces the risk of injury due to errors in performance. Coaches must only support a gymnast when necessary and in a way that will not inhibit performance nor be invasive of sensitive areas of the gymnast's body.
14. In cases where non-intentional physical contact between coach and gymnast occurs due to error on the part of the performer or the coach, the coach will acknowledge the contact through an apology to the gymnast and will report the incident to the Welfare Officer or Head of Operations and to the parents of the gymnast concerned.
15. All staff are encouraged to attend regular training courses to refresh and enhance their skills. Monitoring of performance is on-going and annual appraisals are undertaken for all squad coaches.
16. Every coach in charge of a training session is responsible for ensuring that a qualified first aider is on duty at all sessions and that it is possible to contact an ambulance if necessary. They must also ensure that written reports are kept of any incident or injury, together with any subsequent treatment or action.
17. Photography, videoing or recording of any gymnast or training session is not permitted without the permission of the parents of the gymnasts concerned. With parental consent the Club may use photographs or video recordings of gymnasts for training, coaching or publicity purposes only. Use of photographic or video recording equipment at competitions may be permitted at the discretion of the Competition Organiser and should be for personal use only. Separate parental consent must be sought before any photographic images of gymnasts are published on the web or on social networking media, and consideration should be given to the appropriateness of content on such media.
18. All concerns (no matter how small) or complaints about issues of child protection will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly and in confidence, in line with British Gymnastics guidelines. Concerns should be reported to the Welfare Officer or if that is not appropriate then the Head of Operations.
19. The most serious situation with which a member or official of the Club may have to deal, will be an allegation or suspicion of child abuse. If this occurs, the person who suspects the abuse must bring it to the attention of the Club's Welfare Officer as soon as possible. The club member or official will not attempt to question the child but will make a written record of their observations as soon as possible. **Non-action is NOT an option if there is suspicion of child abuse: it is the responsibility of the person suspecting the abuse to act on those concerns and report it to the appropriate authority.**