

## Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Warrington Gymnastics Club (WGC) is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all our members and ensuring that those working with children and vulnerable adults will adopt best practice to ensure the highest standards of care. The Club believes it is important that all associated members, coaches, administrators and parents should show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others.

**The Club adheres to and follows the British Gymnastics Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy and Health, Safety & Welfare Policies, and this document (which sets out how the Club discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of members of our Club) should be read in conjunction with the British Gymnastics policies, which are available through our website, for a comprehensive approach to how we safeguard and promote child protection.**

One of WGC objectives is: 'providing a high quality of gymnastic activities in a supportive, friendly, progressive and safe environment aiming to help each gymnast reach their fullest potential.'

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child. A child should be able to go to WGC and feel safe so that they can achieve their very best and enjoy their gymnastics activities.

Safeguarding and child protection is an important subject in which all staff receive training through approved British Gymnastics providers. Our priority is to work with parents/carers but there may be times when we have to involve other people. Everybody has a responsibility to keep all children under the age of 18 safe.

**Warrington Gymnastics Club has a statutory responsibility** to share any concerns it may have about a child in need of protection with other agencies and in particular police, health and children's social care. WGC is not able to investigate these concerns but have a legal duty to refer them. In most instances, WGC will be able to inform the parents/carer of its need to make a referral.

However, sometimes the Club is advised by children's social care or police that the parent/carer cannot be informed whilst they investigate the matter. We understand the anxiety parents/carers understandably feel when they are not told about any concerns from the outset. The Club follows legislation that aims to act in the interests of the child.

### Safeguarding Issues

**Attendance** - Your child's attendance is monitored and significant absences are always followed up by the coaching team. This is also important for coaches to be aware of any illness or health requirements which may affect their training.

**Behaviour** – WGC has clear behaviour rules for the whole Club community that must be followed to keep everyone safe and happy. There are codes of conduct that we expect all

# Warrington Gymnastics Club

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members (and parents/carers) to follow. WGC will not tolerate any threatening or abusive behaviour towards any member of the Club.

We understand that children do sometimes fall out and this will be dealt with by an adult (Coach, Staff Member or Welfare Officer) who will listen to the children involved and help resolve the situation, according to our codes of conduct.

**Bullying** - The Club takes all cases of bullying very seriously and will work with children and families to try and resolve any problems. The Club has an anti-bullying policy that you should read and understand. You can also contact our Welfare Officer directly about anti-bullying concerns.

**Health and Safety** - Everyone at WGC has a responsibility to keep adults and children safe within the gym environment. The Club has a clear health and safety policy which everyone must follow. The Club has trained first aiders to assist with any accidents in the gym.

**E-safety** - The Club recognises that technology plays an important role in the education of our children and is committed to safeguarding children in the virtual world. Parents/carers should inform their child's coach if they do not wish for their child to be included on any photographs or social media publicity. The Club follows a social media policy, which is available from the website. We advise that gymnasts under the age of 16, should not be in personal contact via email, Facebook and social media with coaches, but that communication should be relayed through parents.

## Confidentiality

- All matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are strictly confidential
- The Welfare Officer will disclose personal information about a gymnast to other members of staff on a need to know basis only
- Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the Welfare Officer feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual gymnast
- A written record will be made of what information has been shared, with whom, and when
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's own safety or well-being, or that of another child
- All welfare disclosures are taken seriously and will be investigated initially by our Welfare Officer
- Where significant concerns arise, the Welfare Officer may seek support from the Regional Welfare team, the WGC Welfare Director or British Gymnastics.

## Specific Expectations

### The Club will ensure:

- Robust and rigorous recruitment procedures for employees and volunteers. Our recruitment and selection policy includes all appropriate checks on employee suitability including Disclosure and Barring Service checks (formerly Criminal Records Bureau checks)

# Warrington Gymnastics Club

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- The name of any individual considered not suitable to work with children will be notified to either the Disclosure and Barring Service and / or British Gymnastics depending on the nature of the concern
- All employees and volunteers complete regular safeguarding and child protection, and health, safety and welfare training
- All Club members adhere to all WGC and British Gymnastics policies and procedures
- All employees and volunteers are provided with opportunities every year to receive additional training and / or guidance in order to develop their understanding of child protection and safeguarding in particular the signs and indicators of abuse
- All staff and volunteers know how to respond to a disclosure and the procedures to be followed
- That all grievances and complaints are dealt with promptly.
- There is a designated Welfare Officer who complete mandatory British Gymnastics training
- That the role of the Welfare Officer and the importance of welfare is promoted and visible
- Details of the Welfare Officer are prominently displayed (noticeboards & the welfare page of our website) along with the process to follow to raise concerns
- That we always listen and work closely with parents/carers if we are concerned about a child though sometimes, we may not be able to discuss our concern (in accordance with safeguarding legislation and British Gymnastics Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy)
- That at least two responsible adults are present at all training sessions or events
- That all participants and their parents are aware of the purpose of videoing, filming or photography during training or events
- That we benefit from the use of experienced safeguarding leads, who have received training through Local Children's Boards including Child Protection, Prevent and Channel.
- That legislation and guidance is taken in to account when updating policies and procedures
- Our procedures will be reviewed annually.

## **Staff, volunteers and visitors will:**

- Have access to a copy of, demonstrate their understanding of and be well versed in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; which will also form part of their induction and revisited every year through updates, monitoring and / or training
- Be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks, whether they are new staff, contractors, volunteers etc.
- Understand the role of the Welfare Officers and the procedures for reporting any concerns
- Have access and adhere to the WGC / British Gymnastics Code of Conduct

# Warrington Gymnastics Club

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- Have a zero tolerance level of poor practice, bullying or any potential form of abuse
- Be alert to signs and indicators of possible safeguarding concerns
- Be in regular communication with the Welfare Team
- Record concerns/disclosures and give the record to the Welfare Officers; and
- Deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child in line with our procedures; informing the Welfare Officer immediately, and provide a written account as soon as possible.

**If, a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately, notifying British Gymnastics.** Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the Welfare Officer, the Welfare Officer should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made.

**Parents/carers** are the most important people to keep their children safe. You should always:

- Feel confident to raise concerns about your child
- Talk to your child's coach or Welfare Officer if you need help or support
- Read the policies about safety issues available on request and on the Club website
- Let us know if your child has a medical condition
- Let us know if you have any court orders, family matters relating to the safety of your child
- Let us know if there is a change in your circumstances such as a house move, a new contact number, a change of name, a change of parental responsibility
- Ensure we have details for two different emergency contacts
- Let your child's coach if there is any specific person who we should not release your child to on collection following a training session
- Let your child's coach know if your child is going to be absent and the reasons why, by emailing [absent@warringtongymnastics.co.uk](mailto:absent@warringtongymnastics.co.uk)

## **Welfare Officers:**

- Will deal with all safeguarding concerns raised/allegations of abuse within the Club, investigating and / or refer all cases of suspected abuse to the appropriate agencies
- Be a visible presence within the Club on a regular basis to gymnasts, coaches and parents/carers
- Seek advice from the police and liaises with British Gymnastics if a crime has been committed
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding appropriate action to take

# **Warrington Gymnastics Club**

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- Receive regular training to be competent and confident in the role
- Maintain confidential records on disclosures and concerns
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the Club's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Be alert to the specific needs of our children, those with special educational needs and young carers
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
- Keep and monitor written records of concerns, even if there is no immediate need for action or referral
- Mark all child protection records as such and keep securely locked, and if these are stored electronically, that they are differently password protected from the pupils' other files
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the Club may put in place to protect them.