Jersey Gymnastics Club

British Gymnastics
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Safeguarding Children: Safe Environment

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Safe Environment

Approval

Approved by:	Name:	Dept.:	Date:
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Document History

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v1.0	Inclusion of new guidance on supervision and mixed age groups.	Live	17/07/14
v2.0	Amendments to Photography at Events.	Live	07/10/14
v3.0	Inclusion of new section on Adults in Positions of Trust in Dual Roles Removal of sections on Trips and Events & Hosting Gymnasts (now in Health, Safety & Welfare Guidance: Safe Trips).	Live	16/06/16
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Duty of Care

All clubs and gymnastics activity providers have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of gymnasts, coaches, volunteers, officials, visitors and others. This responsibility applies to all British Gymnastics (BG) registered clubs, regardless of their size or structure. There is a legal responsibility to ensure that participants are protected from harm whilst taking part in gymnastics. This is legally termed as the ***'duty of care'*** and is particularly significant when dealing with children.

For the purpose of this document and all Safeguarding policies, British Gymnastics (BG) refers to children as any person under the age of 16 years and a Young Person as being over 16 but under 18 years, irrespective of their role.

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

- Holding a responsibility for care and wellbeing during training.
- Safe dispersal after training.
- Providing first aid.
- Providing/consenting to emergency medical treatment.
- Supervision/chaperoning.
- Team managing.

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 as part of their duty of care, although it is impossible to establish detailed guidelines for every aspect of every situation that may arise. 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 meet their obligations in relation to safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of children and young people in their care.

The direction in this section will assist gymnastics providers to ensure an approach to safeguarding and the promotion of welfare that meets reasonable expectations in relation to the standards required by organisations' that provide services for children and young people. Further information on appropriate standards in relation to coaching gymnastics is provided

within BG Education resources. Any reports of failure to comply with the guidance in this section will be investigated as a breach of policy.

Club Registration

When gymnasts register with a BG club it is essential that the club (or BG on the clubs behalf) obtains 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, including any specific actions to take;
- Information on any disability or special needs, including English not being the first language;
- Medical consent;
- Consent for participation in gymnastics;
- Consent for photography and filming or option to object;
- 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.

Data Protection law requires that you must have a lawful reason to use an individual's personal information. Clubs need to explain clearly how the personal information being collected will be used and why and with whom it may be shared. This includes providing full details of any photography and filming that will take place during club activities (e.g. for coaching purposes or club promotion) and either requesting consent or providing the individual and the person with parental responsibility with the opportunity to object to photography or filming.

Any BG registered clubs who publish images of children must comply with the guidance on ***photography and use of imagery*** included in this document.

Welfare Officers

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 the welfare of children and young people. All BG clubs and gymnastics events are required to have an appointed Welfare Officer to be responsible for:

- Responding to safeguarding, 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 or event to be more 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 his/her 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.

Provision of Safe Environment

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

Clubs and organisations' must address the following environmental factors:

- Provide open training environment.
- Ensure there is a clear policy for use of changing rooms and toilets.
- Maintain 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 Management System and Guidance.***

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.

There is no requirement 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 relevant data protection legislation.***

Additionally, with the advance of modern technology, the use of Livestreaming to facilitate viewing remotely is possible. At present BG do not authorise the use of any Livestreaming in the absence of national guidance regarding the security and management of such images of children.

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.
- Club 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 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 or under. Additional arrangements may be required if there are children or young people with disabilities in the group and these should be clearer reflected in club policy.

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

Suitable notices explaining the above conditions of use should also be posted prominently in and around the changing facility.

* 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 children and 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.

Supervision and Mixed Age Group Training

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 recommends a minimum ratio of one adult to sixteen gymnasts for low-level floor activity. Where events are external to the regular club training venue, a minimum ratio of one adult to ten 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.

Mixed Age Groups

British Gymnastics does not prohibit adults from training alongside children. Clubs have a responsibility to ensure they consider the differences in needs based not only on age but also experience and stage of development for each of their participants. Where clubs have adults training with children, the club has a responsibility to create a safe environment for all its participants and where necessary, this includes putting safeguards in place to protect children and adults in our sport.

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.

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 child or young person is to address their care needs.

In order to provide adequate support to gymnasts, BG 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.

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

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

Supporting Access for Children with Disabilities and Special Needs 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 may include children with significant disability 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 child or 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, Health and other relevant professionals and voluntary groups 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?

- ***Learning 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.

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. One of the four core principles is the need to show respect for the views of the child. Article 12 of the Convention states: '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 children and 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 children and young people:

- The extent that a child or young people 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 children and young people should be clear and accessible and in appropriate language and style of communication.
- Children and young people should be supported to enable them to make a positive and effective contribution, e.g. by the Welfare Officer.

Some ideas on involving children and 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 children and young persons' views in formal settings such as Club Committee Meetings.
- Involving children and 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 children and young people.
- Holding meetings with children and young people when considering changes to policies and gather their views.

Bullying

Bullying by children or adults on children within BG clubs and other affiliated organisations' must never be tolerated. All BG clubs must put in place a robust bullying policy that ensures that all forms of bullying are taken seriously and responded to appropriately in accordance with the following minimum standards.

Bullying is behaviour, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group; physically or emotionally. There is often a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim/s to prevent or deal with the perpetrator's actions. The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children and young people, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm).

Bullying can occur between:

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

Bullying may take many forms and may be conducted in person or through the actions of another person/other people. These include:

- ***Emotional:*** Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures), name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing/taunts, graffiti.
- ***Physical:*** Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- ***Sexual:*** Unwanted physical contact or sexually offensive comment/s.
- ***Cyber:*** Email, Social Media and internet chat room misuse, mobile phone threats by text messaging and calls or misuse of technology (ie photographs/ video footage).

Bullying may also take the form of singling out individuals because they belong to a particular group or are different in some way from others (prejudice-based bullying) and may include:

- ***Racist and religious based bullying.***
- ***Homophobic/ bi-phobic/ trans-phobic:*** Because of their sexual orientation, or perceived, or actual gender identity.
- ***Disablist:*** May focus on, or exploits, a particular aspect of the individual's disability.

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 circumstance. Examples of bullying in gymnastics could be:

- A gymnast who intimidates fellow gymnasts inappropriately.
- A coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy.
- A parent who pushes too hard.
- An official who places unfair pressure on a person.

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 Club 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 or young person is being bullied, they should offer reassurance and try to gain their trust.
- Explain that someone in authority may need to be informed.
- Keep accurate records of what happened and what was said, 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, or bullies; explain the situation and try to get them to understand the consequences of their actions.
- Seek an apology from the bully (or bullies) 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 (or bullies) to change his/her behaviour.

Supporting the Bullied

- Children who have been bullied will often need support from club officers 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 support 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 person.
- The club can advise the child, young person(s) or parent(s) to contact either:
    - Kidscape (Email info@kidscape.org.uk or call 0207730 3300), 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.
    - Anti-Bullying Alliance. A coalition of organisations and individuals that are united against bullying.

Communication

All clubs must have a communication policy that covers the use of communication devices and the manner in which coaches can communicate with children and 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 inappropriate for adult members to communicate with gymnasts under the age of 18 years by:
    - Text message.
    - Through internet chat rooms/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 either by group e-mails/texts or by copying correspondence to either the Club Welfare Officer or a senior official, as well as the parent(s).
- Coaches should limit communications to training related issues.
- 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 Club Welfare Officer.

As technology has developed, the internet and its range of services can increasingly 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 chat-rooms 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.

Further information and guidance on this subject can be found in the ***BG Good Practice Guidance on the Use of Social Networking Sites***.

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.
- 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. A written report should be made of any significant incident, which is to be reported to BG.

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.

Adults in positions of trust in dual roles

Some BG coaches hold relevant professional accreditations that would enable them to fulfil a range of support roles within the sport. Common examples include coaches who are also trained as physiotherapists, nutritionists and masseurs.

BG members who wish to make use of their professional qualifications within the sport must first ensure the person being treated is completely clear about the capacity in which they are acting.

The adult in the position of trust is ultimately responsible for maintaining appropriate professional boundaries and ensuring that there is a clear separation between their coaching/gymnastics role and any other activities they undertake. BG strongly recommends that anyone providing an additional

support service within the sport does not treat gymnasts that they coach without parental supervision.

High Performance Coaching

Key factors in safeguarding children and 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.

A small proportion of children/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 are in place. Requests will only be confirmed on the proviso that there is additional support staff in the building, available to assist in the event of an emergency.

Requests should be made in writing to the BG 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.

Photography and Use of Imagery

General Principles Concerning the Use of Photographs or Recorded Images

Implicit within the BG 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 BG 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 are in place to deter anyone with undesirable intentions from taking and publishing inappropriate images.

All BG registered organisations' must comply with the following guidelines:

- Ensure that gymnasts and/or the person with parental responsibility is fully aware, in advance of the details of where images of the gymnast may be published and are afforded the opportunity to object.
- No personal information, other than their name and their club, should accompany published images (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 no longer recommended by BG until national guidance is provided. Prior guidance must be sought from BG. BG recommends pre-recording and, where appropriate, editing material to remove any inappropriate images before it is published.
- Any instance of the use or publication of inappropriate images of gymnasts should be reported to BG who may then inform the appropriate authorities and/or consider any further action.
- Clubs are strongly recommended to introduce a consent form, ideally as part of the process applied when a gymnast joins the club, concerning the taking or use of images whilst at events or during training.
- Clubs are to give due consideration to the secure storage of images. They should not be stored on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks or mobile phones. Avoid using any personal equipment or personal social media platform (whether to publish or store). Only use devices belonging to the club.
- Withdrawal of consent to use photographs/Images. In circumstances, where parental consent is withdrawn, clubs must adhere to existing Data Protection legislation and guidance provided by the Information Commissioners Office. The Act states that where consent has been removed, the relevant organisation must conform to such a request within a reasonable amount of time. Whilst this is not further defined in law, clubs must do so as soon as possible and provide confirmation to the parent(s) of such.

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, BG has a responsibility to provide guidance on how images of children and 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 should 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.

BG 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 online should report the matter to ***Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (UK) (CEOP)***, who provide a single point of contact for reporting abuse of children online.

Photography at Gymnastic Events

Official Photography

BG accredited photographers may be present at BG events, and in some cases events will be videoed and/or live steamed by BG TV. These images may be used by BG and our subsidiary companies for the purposes of promotion, education and development of the sport. They may also be shared with relevant third party organisations for journalistic/promotional purposes.

British Gymnastics competition entry forms will advise participants that photography and filming will take place at the event. BG will also announce the photography/filming arrangements at the event. Clubs must ensure that gymnasts/parents are informed of the photography arrangements for the relevant event. Any gymnast or parent who does not wish themselves or their child to be photographed/filmed at the event must advise the BG Events department or the event organiser. Although it is not always practical to manage the content of live steamed footage, British Gymnastics will ensure any identifiable images of the participant are not published.

Personal Photography

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 gymnasts against the possible inappropriate use of films or photographic images. ***BG Photography Regulations*** require anyone organising a gymnastic event to regulate the taking of photographs and apply, as a minimum, the BG Conditions for Photography at Gymnastic Events.

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 his/her powers under the conditions to request the person to leave the venue and to surrender any film and/or delete any images relating to the event. Any person 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.

Use of Video as an Aid to Coaching

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

- Ensure that the performers and the person with parental responsibility are aware of the purpose of the filming as a coaching aid.
- Ensure that there is at least one other responsible adult present in addition to the person filming.
- Ensure any video recording is stored securely to avoid inappropriate or unauthorised use and deleted when it is no longer require for coaching purposes.

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 children or young people alone and abuse has occurred. As a result, BG 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. (This does not include another coach who is themselves under 18 years). However, in exceptional circumstances where the provision of two responsible adults is not possible and subject to prior consent from all relevant parents, a coach could transport a group of gymnasts (Not individual) 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.

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:

- Attempt to contact the parent from the information sheet completed on joining/renewing membership.
- Attempt to contact the emergency contact person nominated.
- If there is no reply from the emergency contact, ask the child if there is another family member who may be contacted.
- Wait with the child at the club with at least one other official/coach/teacher/volunteer or parent.
- Respond to any instructions received from the parent.

- 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. It may be the parent/carer needs assistance to arrive on time.

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 Safeguarding & Compliance Department.

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.

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 to report back to a nominated adult at a specific point and time.
- 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 as this will be required by the Police. This should include:
    - Approximate height.
    - Build.
    - Hair and eye colour.
    - Ethnicity.
    - Clothing he/she was wearing.

- Report the concern to the Police if the search is unsuccessful. This must happen ***no later than 30 minutes*** after the child or 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 Safeguarding & Compliance team.