



Creating friends through fun and fitness

**SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION
POLICY**

WGGC SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Monitoring & Review

The policy will be annually monitored, and a full policy review will take place every three years. A policy review may also be conducted in response to any of the following occurrences:

- Changes in legislation or guidance
- Changes in governance of the sport
- Changes in the nature or size of Wye Gymnastics & Galaxy Cheerleading (WGGC)
- A procedural review following a significant case.

At WGGC we are committed to safeguarding and protecting all of our members from abuse; particularly children whose safety and wellbeing are central in everything we do. Child Protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare but is specifically the work done to protect specific children who are suffering or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

WGGC have an important leadership role in embedding a no tolerance approach towards all forms of abuse and taking steps to prevent other forms of harm which include:

- Poor or unsafe practice
- Discrimination, harassment, and victimization
- Bullying or hazing
- Extremism

Roles and responsibilities

The overall responsibility for safeguarding children and adults at risk in gymnastics rests with the WGGC Board and CEO. WGGC has appointed a Welfare trustee who is responsible for the implementation of this policy and works in partnership with British Gymnastics, and coaches.

WGGC accepts our responsibility to implement robust arrangements and procedures to safeguard and protect our participants and will:

- Provide effective leadership to promote and implement the policy and minimise incidents of harassment and abuse
- Develop a skilled and competent safeguarding workforce
- Develop and implement standards of conduct that establish appropriate behaviours and boundaries for individuals in positions of trust
- Develop and implement appropriate training to recognise, identify and respond to signs of harassment and abuse
- Ensure children and their parents, adults at risk and other athletes are consulted and, where appropriate, fully involved in decisions that affect them
- Implement appropriate practices for sharing information, where it is necessary to protect a child or adult at risk with relevant statutory agencies and other stakeholders, including relevant gymnastics organisations
- Ensure any suspicions and allegations involving abuse of a child or adult at risk are reported in line with the applicable statutory guidance and where it relates to a WGGC member
- Provide appropriate support to the individual(s) involved in incidents or concerns, and, including the person who reported the concern
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all concerns are maintained and securely stored
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements are in place for all WGGC activities
- Develop and implement safe recruitment procedures to prevent unsuitable individuals from being appointed to positions of trust and responsibility
- Have appropriate systems and processes in place to make sure children and adults at risk are protected from harassment and abuse

- Take action against any coaches or volunteers where arrangements for safeguarding and/or behaviours fall below the expected standard required.

WGGC are accountable for having in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and others who may be at risk and is responsible for:

- Ensuring the CEO takes leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements
- Designate an individual or group of individuals with responsibility for safeguarding (Welfare Officers) whose role is to promote safeguarding and provide a safe environment for children and adults at risk and to respond to any concerns of harassment and abuse that are brought to their attention
- Promoting the safeguarding and welfare of all participants, including those who are children and adults at risk
- Ensuring that young people and adults at risk are listened to and are involved in decision making
- Ensuring staff and volunteers receive appropriate supervision and safeguarding training and are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk
- Ensure any suspicions and allegations of abuse to children and adults at risk involving a member of WGGC are reported to the relevant statutory authorities and to British Gymnastics Safeguarding Team
- Take action to address any poor practice and behaviours such as bullying and harassment that occur within their own organisation
- Ensure everyone knows what to do if they are concerned about someone's welfare and promote a culture where everyone is encouraged to raise concerns without fear of negative repercussions
- Ensure, where appropriate, that children and adults at risk are aware of behaviour that is not acceptable and how they can help to keep themselves safe
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are fully aware of the early signs of abuse and understands the appropriate steps to report these concerns

Anyone who has reason to believe that a child or adult at risk has or is experiencing abuse has a duty to report it to the relevant statutory authority and to WGGC were the abuse is connected to their role in the sport.

Failure to comply with the policy and associated procedures will be investigated and may ultimately result in disciplinary action against the individuals concerned.

Duty of Care

WGGC have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of athletes, coaches, volunteers, officials, visitors, and others on their premises.

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that participants are protected from harm whilst taking part in activity at WGGC. This is legally termed as the 'duty of care' and is particularly significant when dealing with children and young persons in the club.

For the purpose of this document and all Safeguarding policies, WGGC 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

To fulfil the 'duty of care', WGGC 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 in line with coaches' qualifications and discipline specific syllabus
- Provision of suitable first aid support and emergency procedures
- Exercising reasonable care at all times.

WGGC follow the appropriate safeguarding and welfare guidelines set out by British & Welsh Gymnastics, and within a coach's qualification their duty of care includes knowledge of the following documents and reference to policies when required.

Where a coach has not followed any of the following procedures, which may result in an allegation these documents will be referenced in the investigation.

All staff & volunteers of WGGC are advised to read the following documents which will be available on the HR portal and the British Gymnastics website:

- British Gymnastics Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Safeguarding children-safe environment
- Safeguarding children-safe recruitment
- Social networking guidelines
- Health, safety and Welfare Guidance-Safe trips
- Criminal records check policy and guidelines

Welfare Officers

Although the responsibility for safeguarding falls on everyone, a critical element in safeguarding is the designation of an individual or individuals (Welfare Officer(s)) who is/are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people:

The main roles of the Welfare Officers will include:

- 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 on its activities, e.g. involving children in decision making processes.

To avoid any potential conflicts of interest, WGGC has a team of Welfare officers and the role is not taken on by one key member.

Reporting safeguarding concerns

When a concern or a report has been made regarding a safeguarding issue, child protection, or poor practice, a welfare officer will be notified immediately and the Reporting SPC Concerns procedure will be followed

Provision of Safe Environment

Open training policy

At WGGC, our aim is to work in partnership with parents/carers to provide an open training environment whilst ensuring the safety of our coaches and gymnasts is our main priority. In our current environment, we are restricted with providing a spectator area but have plans to introduce an

onsite café from which, all classes can be viewed.

At any stage parents may request a viewing session if they wish to observe their child during training.

Coaches can be available to speak to about individual progress or concerns on request by contacting them via the individual discipline email as stated in the Club Welcome Pack and under the Contact Us page on the website.

Our provision of an open training environment is much wider than the goal of simply providing WGGC 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
- Encouraging parents to attend events or keep in close contact with their child

Supervision and Mixed Age Group Training

WGGC follow the British Gymnastics ratio policy for essential, appropriate ratios for supervision. Staff are trained in their supervisory responsibilities and ratios should be determined by considering age, the type of activity and where it is taking place.

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 will always be a minimum of two responsible adults present in the gym. 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

WGGC does not prohibit adults from training alongside children. We have a responsibility to ensure coaches consider the differences in needs based not only on age but also experience and stage of development for each of their participants.

Where we 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 the children and adults in our sport.

Our current timings of when we have mixed age groups training together are during our evening sessions during adult and cheerleading classes.

Consideration is given to the type of music played to ensure it is appropriate for all ages. Swearing is also prohibited during these times, and no photography or filming is allowed that involves anyone under the age of 18.

Provision of care (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 on site during the class.

WGGC would recommend that parents of children aged 3-4 years remain nearby and contactable in case their child becomes distressed or requires assistance.

Photography and Use of Imagery

WGGC is committed to ensure that all publications and media represent participants appropriately

and with due respect.

WGGC will strive 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.

WGGC 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, will accompany published images
- 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
- The person responsible for advertising and marketing will be aware of children who are under a court order are not recorded or published without permission. This will be kept confidential and the welfare team will be informed of these individuals. It is the CEOs responsibility to inform the welfare team of any children that fall under this category
- Any instance of the use or publication of inappropriate images of gymnasts should be reported to the welfare team who may then inform the appropriate authorities and/or consider any further action
- All members are requested consent at the enrolment point to use their image/identification in any promotional material at WGGC
- All images of WGGC gymnasts are securely stored on our restricted access cloud storage and Facebook pages
- Coaches must store images on any personal equipment such as phones or tablets etc or personal social media platform
- Withdrawal of consent to use photographs/Images. In circumstances, where parental consent is withdrawn, WGGC will 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.

The club welfare team should be informed of any inappropriate use of imagery on social media platforms or websites or any other form of media, which is not in keeping with this guidance.

Personal Photography

WGGC 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 Coach analysis

The use of video equipment can be a valuable aid to coaching.

The points below have been implemented to safeguard against inappropriate practice:

- Inform the performers and the person with parental responsibility 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 filling
- All video recording is deleted when it is no longer require for coaching purposes
- No imagery should be stored on personal tablets/phones

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 event.

WGGC coaches will not take children alone on car journeys, except in unforeseen circumstances. In such circumstance, the welfare team must be notified, and the following must be adhered to:-

- Transport gymnasts in groups never with one child alone
- When transporting a group of gymnasts, best practice would require two responsible adults in the car. (This does not include another coach who is under 18 years).

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 at any point
- The driver should also provide parents with full details of any planned breaks in the journey and departure and arrival times
- Athletes 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 and called immediately if there are any changes to these arrangements

Transporting a child alone would only be acceptable under extenuating circumstances. This 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 and the child's parents should be obtained. The above guidelines still comply when transporting to coaching courses, regional/national squad training or competitions.

Afternoon training

It is the Heads of Discipline responsibility to inform the welfare team when consent has been given by the school for the gymnasts to attend afternoon training. This can be emailed to welfare@wyeandgalaxy.co.uk at the time of approval.

A risk assessment is completed for each session, and confirmation sent to the appropriate professional body at the school for the coaches responsible in the session who hold a DBS and SPC certificate.

Any changes to the coach in charge will be communicated direct to the school through the welfare officer.

Safe trips

When a squad requests a national or overseas trip, they must following the British Gymnastics Safe Trips policy found here which can be found on the WGGC HR Portal or on the British Gymnastics website.

When a request has been discussed for an elite performance trip, the welfare team are informed to have the necessary discussions with the Head of Discipline on the welfare arrangements.

The decision of who will attend in this capacity is decided with the HOD, Club Manager and Welfare representative.