



Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy

Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy

Approval

Approved by	Name	Department	Date
Standards Committee	Michelle Fulford	Corporate & Community Services	17/05/2017

Document History

Version	Summary of Changes	Document Status	Date
0.1	Revised in line with new legislation and government guidance. Some changes to terminology. Changes to document format.	Approved	17/07/2014
1.0		Live	08/10/2014
2.0	Revised in line with publication of Working Together 2015. Some changes to terminology.	Approved	17/05/2017
3.0		Live	22/05/2017
3.1	Updates following GDPR legislation	Live	26/06/2018
4.0		Live	
4.1	Revised in line with publication of Working Together 2018. Changes to terminology.	Live	19 July 2018

Contents

Foreword.....	4
Key Policy Information.....	5
Introduction.....	7
Key Principles.....	7
Background.....	8
Aims and Objectives.....	8
BG Responsibility.....	9
Home Country Responsibilities.....	10
Club Responsibilities.....	11

Foreword

British Gymnastics is committed to supporting all young people to enjoy and excel in the sport and fully recognises that children need a safe, protective and nurturing environment if they are to fulfil their potential and remain in the sport.

British Gymnastics aims to achieve a high standard in the safeguarding of members and has a key role in supporting gymnastics clubs to ensure safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a fundamental consideration in everything they do. Anyone who provides or delivers gymnastics activity has a duty of care towards young people and needs to ensure that they offer a protective and child-friendly environment that gives parents reassurance that their children will be happy and safe.

British Gymnastics has made considerable progress in developing the network of trained Welfare Officers' across the sport. As a condition of membership, all British Gymnastics registered clubs are required to have a Welfare Officer with the designated responsibility for safeguarding. The Welfare Officer plays a key role supporting child-centred practice and ensuring robust safeguarding arrangements are in place in the club. British Gymnastics remains fully committed to developing the Welfare Officer network and continually improving our safeguarding practice and support to help ensure gymnastics has a positive impact on all children in our sport.

Key Policy Information

About the policy

The British Gymnastics policy is informed by the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children – a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, HM Government'. This guidance, which is applicable in England, sets out the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provides the framework to which Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs)/Safeguarding partners monitor the effectiveness of local services.

British Gymnastics policy translates for the gymnastics community the statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004*, including as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The British Gymnastics policy is also informed by other key pieces of legislation, which are highlighted in the relevant parts of the policy. This policy is developed in consultation with the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) and is informed by UN Conventions.

The British Gymnastics Safeguarding and Protecting Children policy 2018 replaces the 2017 policy. **The document is presented in four parts, namely: Policy, Recognising and Responding to Abuse and Poor Practice, Safe Recruitment and Safe Environment** and links to a number of other supplementary policies and procedures. In complying with the policy, affiliated organisations can be reassured that they meet their statutory responsibilities.

To whom does the policy apply?

British Gymnastics is a UK wide Governing Body of Sport with affiliated Home Country Governing Bodies in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Although British Gymnastics policy is based on the English guidance and legislation, in the light of the common principles and similar approaches taken by all Home Countries, most elements of this document are fully applicable to all individual members and affiliated organisations. Any necessary differences have been highlighted in the document and reference made to any complementary Home Country policy/procedures.

The policy is applicable to all levels of the sport and provides a framework for those involved in gymnastics to meet their duty of care towards young people. The policy, where applicable, is mandatory for all British Gymnastics staff, members and volunteers (except where there are home country variations arising from legislative differences). Any individual or organisation that is providing a service to British Gymnastics must also demonstrate that they comply with these standards.

Anyone who manages or has overall responsibility for a gymnastics club or organisation must support their Welfare Officer to fulfil their role and ensure their organisation is fully compliant with this policy. All British Gymnastics members should also read and comply with the policy.

How should the policy be used?

The policy is the key source of reference for all safeguarding and protecting children related matters. The main users of these policies and procedures are likely to be Welfare Officers, as it is their role to guide their organisation to plan, prioritise and implement the various safeguarding responsibilities and activities.

The policy also provides important guidance for anyone involved in gymnastics including parents, coaches, officials and other volunteers. It offers practical guidance for those involved in providing gymnastic activities for children and relevant sections should be reproduced in an appropriate format and widely shared across the gymnastics community to increase general awareness and good practice.

*Section 11 Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations, agencies and individuals to ensure their functions and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

How will the policy remain up-to-date?

Although the policy takes into account all relevant current legislation, the document will need to be amended as required in response to changes in the gymnastics, sport, political, legal, ethical, social and technological environment in which we operate. Any amendments will be recorded and communicated to all relevant parties.

British Gymnastics will also review its Safeguarding and Protecting Children policy on an annual basis and as required by the NSPCC CPSU, UK Sport and Home Country Sports Councils. The policy may also be reviewed following introduction of any new internal or external safeguarding process and as a result of any significant child protection case within gymnastics or other sports.

Acknowledgements

British Gymnastics wishes to express its gratitude to the NSPCC CPSU, for their continued support and guidance in developing this document.

Policy

Introduction

Safeguarding Children is described in Working Together to Safeguard Children as the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, which involves:

- protecting children from maltreatment.
- preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Therefore, everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe, irrespective of their role and whether they are paid or volunteers.

Children may be harmed in any environment, including the home, at school or in a sports club. Although young people are more likely to be abused in their own home, cases of abuse have occurred, and continue to occur, in gymnastics and in other sports. British Gymnastics acknowledges that gymnastics provides significant access to young people and can provide opportunities for an individual who wants to harm children. However, it is also recognised that those having regular contact with young people have a key role in promoting their welfare and are ideally placed to notice signs that a child may be being abused. It is therefore essential that anyone in contact with young people through their involvement in gymnastics is fully aware of the early signs of abuse and/or neglect and understands the appropriate steps to report these concerns.

In addition, it is important to be aware that some children may be more vulnerable than others. These may include disabled children with specific additional needs, children with special educational needs and children training at a high performance level within the sport.

British Gymnastics is fully committed to providing support, information and training opportunities to make certain that individuals understand their role and responsibilities and fully understand the risk factors linked to abuse within the sport.

British Gymnastics strives to create an environment where all children can thrive and realise their potential and, in accepting a duty of care towards children, will set the standards and define best practice for working with children within the sport. British Gymnastics wants to ensure that child-centred safeguarding principles are fully embraced by the whole gymnastics community as an integral part of all British Gymnastics and club activities.

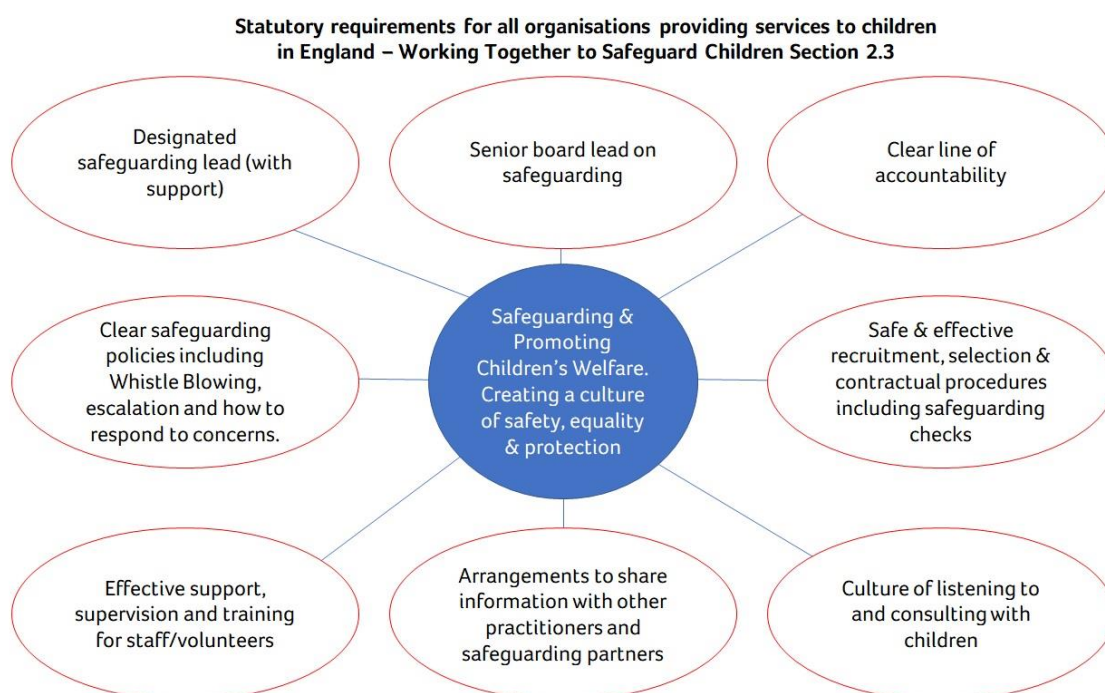
Key Principles

The Policy is based upon the following fundamental principles:

- The welfare of children (anyone under the age of 18 years) is paramount.
- All children, regardless of ability, age, disability, sexual orientation, parental status, race, religion or belief or socio/economic background have a right to be protected from abuse.
- Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility: every individual and organisation must play their part in ensuring the sport is safe.
- A child-centred approach: keep the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them and their families. Gymnastics provision will better meet the needs of children if it is informed by a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

Background

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' provides the overall framework on which this policy is based. The guidance highlights the need for organisations working together, to take a coordinated approach to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements, the important role played by voluntary organisations and private sector providers in the delivery of services to children and expects such organisations to put in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Working Together also highlights that both the paid and voluntary workforce need to be aware of their individual responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and how they should respond to child protection concerns and make a referral to local authority children's social care or the Police if necessary.



This policy puts into a gymnastics context these requirements; outlining the minimum standards to which all British Gymnastics staff, members and volunteers must adhere. In addition to the main policy, there are various additional policies that must also be applied.

Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of the policy is to ensure that everyone participating in the sport of gymnastics does so in a safe, holistic and child-centred environment that supports children to meet their potential. 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.
- To ensure everyone who comes into contact with children is able to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people.
- To promote positive practice and challenge poor practice.

- To ensure robust systems are in place to manage any concerns or allegations.
- To develop a skilled and competent safeguarding workforce.
- To ensure everyone who is involved in a role with children completes training at a level appropriate to their role in the sport, which covers the above areas.
- To ensure everyone who is involved in a role with children have been through appropriate pre-recruitment checks, including the appropriate level criminal record checks.
- To ensure young people and their parents/carers are consulted and, where appropriate, fully involved in decisions that affect them.

British Gymnastics Responsibility

The overall responsibility for safeguarding children in gymnastics rests with the British Gymnastics Board and sits within the portfolio of the Executive Director for Corporate & Community Services.

All Directors are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children participating in the sport. British Gymnastics has prepared a clear policy that provides a framework for any club, or individuals, working with children.

British Gymnastics Standards Committee (formerly the Ethics and Welfare Committee) is responsible for:

- development of policy, rules and regulations.
- monitoring the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and agreeing training needs.
- monitoring the effectiveness of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and reviewing the policy as required.
- providing reports to the Board on all matters relating to safeguarding.

British Gymnastics will ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities to work jointly with others to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. British Gymnastics will work in partnership with Home Country and Regional gymnastics organisations in order to support the development of robust arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children.

British Gymnastics recognises that it has a duty to help ensure affiliated and registered organisations and individual members understand and fulfil their responsibilities through the provision of clear guidance and support. British Gymnastics 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. British Gymnastics will support this duty through the development and provision of learning opportunities for members.

British Gymnastics will work closely with the NSPCC CPSU to review and continually develop our safeguarding practice and ensure it is evidence based.

Central to the policy is the need for British Gymnastics to support and develop the network of designated Welfare Officers' with the lead responsibility for safeguarding and protecting children. British Gymnastics will be responsible for appointing the network of Regional Welfare Officers (RWOs). British Gymnastics will provide training and development opportunities for both Home Country, Regional and, where relevant, County Welfare Officers and support them to develop their local network of Club Welfare Officers.

British Gymnastics recognises the responsibilities of Statutory Authorities and is committed to working with Local Safeguarding Children Boards/Safeguarding partners and Local Authority Designated Officer(s) in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

British Gymnastics and where relevant in consultation with Home Country Organisations, will ensure that any allegations or suspicions of abuse or significant harm to any child are reported without delay to the relevant Statutory Authorities in line with established information sharing protocols.

British Gymnastics will comply with the principles set out in current **Data Protection** legislation and [Information Sharing for Practitioners \(HM Government guidance\)](#) 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.

In the event of an abuse allegation against a British Gymnastics member, employee or other person with an involvement in the sport, British Gymnastics will take action to ensure young people are protected and, where appropriate, will support the prosecution of individuals accused of a criminal offence against a child/children.

All other misconduct or poor practice issues/non-compliance with policy and procedure will normally be managed in partnership with the affiliated organisation that is closest to the point of complaint or disclosure.

British Gymnastics provides a **Case Management Team (CMT)** with the responsibility for agreeing: -

- the referral route for all cases that deal with the welfare of children.
- whether suspension of BritishGymnastics membership is required.
- the appropriate course of remedial action.
- British Gymnastics will refer to the **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** anyone we believe is or has been, or might in the future be, engaged in **regulated activity** whose British Gymnastics membership has been revoked (or would, or might, have been withdrawn if the individual had not otherwise ceased involvement in the sport) on the grounds that they harmed a child or pose a risk of harm, or received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence.

British Gymnastics will ensure that robust systems are in place to help prevent people who present a risk to children from becoming involved in the sport and to support the removal of anyone who is considered unsuitable.

Home Country Responsibilities

In partnership with British Gymnastics, the responsibility to lead the implementation of this policy is shared with the Home Country Gymnastics Governing Bodies who will need to:

- adopt the British Gymnastics 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.
- ensure all clubs have a trained Welfare Officer in line with Working Partnership Agreements.
- establish and strengthen Welfare Officer networks.
- provide support and professional development for Welfare Officers.
- offer sufficient learning opportunities to meet local needs.
- 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 have a common law duty of care to take such steps that, in the circumstances of a gymnastics club, are reasonable to ensure the safety and welfare of these children. British Gymnastics policy and procedures set out the minimum standards that clubs should apply. British Gymnastics will provide support and guidance to help clubs to meet their responsibilities.

All clubs must ensure that: -

- the overall responsibility for safeguarding sits at the most senior level of their organisation.
- there is at least one suitably trained and competent Welfare Officer designated within the club to take the lead role in dealing with safeguarding issues. The responsibilities of the individual should include:
 - promoting the welfare of children and importance of safeguarding.
 - ensuring that young people are listened to and are involved in decision making.
 - ensuring that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding/child protection.
 - responding to safeguarding/child protection and poor practice concerns.
 - liaising with British Gymnastics and local Statutory Agencies.
 - working with other organisations as required.
 - acting as the designated person for criminal records checks.
- the Club Welfare Officer has attended British Gymnastics approved Safeguarding and Protecting Children awareness training and the British Gymnastics Time to Listen course.
- the Club Welfare Officer holds a minimum of BG Bronze membership and has undertaken a criminal record check in line with [BG Criminal Records Checks Policy and Guidelines](#).
- all staff and volunteers, who are working with children receive appropriate training, updated every three years, and have access to advice on child protection, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children through the Club Welfare Officer.
- all children and young people and their parents, are aware of behaviour that is not acceptable and how they can help to keep themselves safe.
- they support [Whistle Blowing](#) and take steps 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 genuine 'need to know' basis in line with [British Gymnastics Confidentiality and Information Sharing Guidance](#).
- they comply with the [British Gymnastics guidance on Safe Recruitment](#) to prevent unsuitable people from obtaining, or remaining in, positions of trust or responsibility.
- they comply with the all applicable supplementary policy and guidance and accept responsibility for identifying and responding to any deficiencies or weaknesses in its arrangements for safeguarding and promoting welfare of children.
- they work in partnership with British Gymnastics 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 to Children's Social Care Services/Police, providing information for their investigations and notifying British Gymnastics.