

## Alton Gymnastics Club

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# Communications Policy

## Parents, Gymnasts, Coaches and Officials

These guidelines are to help avoid misunderstandings in communications between Parents, Coaches and Gymnasts.

Coaches should avoid opening themselves up to criticism through the content of any text message or email to parents or gymnasts.

Parents are advised to follow the same guidelines as coaches with regard to texting gymnasts other than their own children.

### The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that relationships between coaches and gymnasts remain professional.
- To protect gymnasts, coaches and parents from allegations of inappropriate conduct.
- To ensure that there are clear guidelines for parents, coaches and gymnasts with regard to the use of text messaging and other messaging services.

### Guidelines for appropriate communication:

- Coaches should not text gymnasts in their care for any reason, except for cases where the express permission has been sought and given by the parent. Please communicate through the parent.
- Parents and coaches should generally avoid calling or texting outside the hours of 9am and 8pm. Exceptions to this would be:
  - In an emergency where no other means of communication is possible.
  - To confirm / check arrangements for the following morning, if there is no other way of getting this information.
  - To update about an injury where a child has gone to hospital and coach wishes to be kept informed (thankfully very rare!)
  - To inform of an unavoidable and unplanned absence the next morning.
- Parents should where possible address any concerns in person or by email, allowing coaches to respond thoughtfully at a convenient time.
- Parents should be aware that coaches receiving communications from a parent or gymnast regarding a concern or complaint may forward this communication to the head coach or club welfare officer for advice on how to proceed.
- Please bare in mind that most of our coaches and officials have other jobs or occupations and may not be able to respond immediately to your call or message.
- Coaches, parents and gymnasts alike should avoid making disparaging comments or comments that could be perceived as such about the club, coaches or other gymnasts. This applies to private text messaging as well as all social media and instant messaging services.
- Email addresses may be shown at the top of messages when the email is sent to a specific group of parents. Parents of gymnasts in squads or involved in specific events are encouraged to have contact in order to discuss arrangements.
- Emails that are sent out to all members usually do not show all addresses at the top as we use the BCC facility to send these.
- If you are given a telephone number of a coach this is for your personal use only. You may not share this number with anyone else except with the express permission of the person who's number it is.
- Alton Gymnastics Club, its coaches, volunteers and officials are not allowed to share the telephone numbers of its members with other members or anyone else. Please do not ask us for numbers of other parents as we cannot give them to you.