



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Introduction

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and it is important that we work together as a club to protect our members.

At Team Bath Rhythmic Gymnastics we are committed to safeguarding and protecting all our members from abuse. The safety and wellbeing of children at our club is central to everything we do. We recognise that children need a safe, protective, and nurturing environment to fulfil their potential and excel at gymnastics.

Child Protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare but is specifically about protecting children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

The framework for safeguarding children in England is set out in the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'. This document applies specifically to sports organisations and to anyone working within these organisations, irrespective of their role and whether they are paid or a volunteer. This document describes safeguarding as:

- 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; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children may be harmed in any environment, and although they are more likely to be abused in their home, cases of abuse have occurred in gymnastics as 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.

Club Statement

We believe that the wellbeing of children should be at the centre of everything we do and recognise our responsibility to promote their welfare. Team Bath Rhythmic Gymnastics aims ensure safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a

fundamental consideration in all the activities of the Club. The Club has a duty of care towards young people and needs to ensure that it offers a protective and child-friendly environment that gives parents reassurance that their children will be happy and safe.

The Club is committed to following the British Gymnastics:
[British Gymnastics Safeguarding Policies and Procedures](#)

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, gender, sexual orientation, parental status, religion or belief, colour, race including nationality or ethnicity or socio/economic background have a right to be protected from abuse;
- A child-centred approach of gymnastics provision will better meet the needs of children if it is informed by a clear understanding of the needs and views of children;
- Ensuring that all participants are aware of club rules and codes of conduct;
- To ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding;
- To ensure everyone at our club knows what to do if they are concerned about someone's welfare and is able to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people;
- To promote a culture where everyone is encouraged to speak out without fear of recrimination;
- 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 has 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.

Responsibilities

The Club will ensure that:

- The overall responsibility for safeguarding for the Club sits with the Welfare Officer, Liz Redfern (bath.rhythmic.welfare@gmail.com), who also reports to BG Welfare Officers (welfareandsafesport@british-gymnastics.org) and liaise with the Safeguarding Lead at Bath University, Greg Sharp (g.a.sharp@bath.ac.uk).

- 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;
 - being the first point of contact for club staff and volunteers, children and parents for any issue concerning safeguarding, poor practice or potential/alleged abuse;
 - ensure that all incidents are correctly reported and referred in accordance with club/British Gymnastics guidelines;
 - helping the club to put appropriate safeguarding policies and plans in place;
 - maintaining local contact details for Children's Social Care Services, the Police and Local Authority safeguarding teams;
 - liaising with BG 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 BG approved Safeguarding and Child Protection awareness training and the BG 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;
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers who are working with children receive appropriate safeguarding 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;
- Ensuring that safe recruitment procedures are followed for staff and volunteers and that all existing staff or volunteers have up-to-date Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks;
- Maintaining suitable codes of conduct for gymnasts, coaches and volunteers as well as parents and carers;
- All children and young people and their parents are aware of behaviour that is not acceptable and know 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 BG Confidentiality and Information Sharing Guidance;
- They comply with the BG guidance on safe recruitment to prevent unsuitable people from obtaining, or remaining in, positions of trust or responsibility;
- They comply with all the applicable supplementary policy and guidance, and accept responsibility for identifying and responding to any deficiencies or weaknesses in its arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- They work in partnership with BG to ensure poor practice is addressed and any required remedial action is taken;

- They will inform the BG safeguarding team without delay if an allegation is made against any individual who is a member of British Gymnastics;
- It is not the role of Club Welfare to investigate possible abuse or neglect. However, they have a key role to play by referring concerns about those issues to Children's Social Care Services and/or BG and providing information for police investigations.
- There is a robust complaints procedure in place to ensure that any complaints or grievances are dealt with effectively, sensitively and in confidence;
- The Welfare Officer will attend club management meetings to provide an update on safeguarding within the club;
- They will advise the club management on safeguarding issues.

If any parent or gymnast does not feel comfortable raising a concern with the Club Welfare Team they should contact the Bath University Department of Sports Development Recreation (DSDR) Safeguarding Officer, Greg Sharp, at g.a.sharp@bath.ac.uk or 01225 386907. Alternatively, they could contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at LADO@bathnes.gov.uk or 01225 396312, BG Welfare at welfareandsafesport@british-gymnastics.org or 0345 1297129, or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.

Welfare Team
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British
Gymnastics