



Bicester & District Gymnastics Club

BDGC 010 – Welfare & Safeguarding

Document Owner: Welfare Officer

Document Approver: Chairman

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1. Purpose

Bicester & District Gymnastics Club is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all its members, particularly children and young people. We recognize our responsibility to provide a safe and supportive environment where gymnasts can participate in the sport free from harm, abuse, or neglect.

This policy sets out the framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all participants in line with best practices and legal requirements

2. Scope

This Policy applies to:

All individuals, organizations and systems that access, process or store BDGC data.

This includes but is not limited to all members, staff, coaches, volunteers, gymnasts, and parents associated with the club. It covers safeguarding responsibilities both within the club environment and during off-site events or competitions.

When multiple information procedures or policies are applicable to the same information, the stricter of the requirement must be enforced unless otherwise instructed by the Chairperson.

3. Safeguarding Responsibilities

The club is committed to:

- Ensuring that the welfare of the child is always the paramount consideration.
- Creating a safe and positive environment where all children can participate in gymnastics free from harm.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children through appropriate recruitment, including DBS checks and safeguarding training.
- Promoting a culture where safeguarding concerns are raised and addressed appropriately.

4. Guidelines on Recognising a Safeguarding Concern

Abuse can take many forms, and all club members should be aware of the following categories:

- Physical Abuse – Deliberate injury or harm.
- Emotional Abuse – Persistent emotional mistreatment.
- Sexual Abuse – Engaging a child in sexual activities.
- Neglect – Failing to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs.

Signs of abuse may include changes in behaviour, unexplained injuries, fear of certain individuals, or reluctance to participate in activities. If any club member suspects a safeguarding concern, they must report it immediately.

5. Our Safeguarding Procedures

- All concerns must be reported to the club's Welfare Officer (WO).
- Any reports of abuse or safeguarding concerns will be taken seriously and handled confidentially.
- The WO will assess the situation and determine the appropriate course of action, which may involve speaking with parents, the gymnast, or referring the matter to external agencies such as social services or the police.
- A record of the concern will be kept securely in line with data protection regulations.

6. Outcomes of Safeguarding Concerns

If a safeguarding concern is raised, possible actions include:

- Support and guidance offered to the individual.
- Internal investigations within the club.
- Referral to external agencies if necessary.
- Disciplinary action where appropriate.

The club will ensure that appropriate support is given to all parties involved in a safeguarding matter.

7. Bullying Prevention and Response

Bicester & District Gymnastics Club has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying in any form, including verbal, physical, emotional, or cyberbullying.

7.1. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is deliberate, repeated behaviour that causes harm, distress, or intimidation to another individual. This includes:

- Verbal Bullying – Name-calling, threats, insults, or offensive comments.
- Physical Bullying – Hitting, pushing, tripping, or any form of physical intimidation.
- Social Bullying – Exclusion, gossiping, or spreading false information.
- Cyberbullying – Sending harmful messages online or using social media to harass or intimidate.

7.2. Reporting Bullying

If a gymnast, parent, or coach witnesses or experiences bullying, they should:

- Report concerns to the Welfare Officer (WO) or a coach.
- If appropriate, report incidents anonymously via the club's welfare email or a designated reporting process.
- All reports will be taken seriously, and investigations will be conducted confidentially.

7.3. Actions Taken:

- Incidents will be investigated by the Welfare Officer and appropriate club officials.
- Support will be provided to the victim of bullying.
- If bullying is confirmed, disciplinary action will be taken, which may include warnings, temporary suspension, or removal from the club, depending on severity.
- Parents will be informed where necessary, and guidance will be provided on preventing future incidents.
- Follow-up support will be provided to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all.

8. Safe Recruitment and Training

- All coaches, staff, and volunteers working with children must undergo an enhanced DBS check.
- Safeguarding training is mandatory and must be renewed in line with regulatory requirements.
- The club will follow appropriate recruitment procedures, including obtaining DBS checks or previous coaching references (where applicable) for all new staff and volunteers.

9. Supervision and Parental Responsibility

- Children under 11 years old must have a parent or guardian on-site for the duration of their gymnastics session.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child is dropped off and collected inside the main hall at the end of the session.
- Gymnasts must not be left unattended before a coach is present.

10. Communication Policy

- Coaches and staff must not contact gymnasts directly via personal phone, email, or social media.
- All club communication should be conducted via official club channels (Email or the Club App), with parents copied into any gymnast-related correspondence.
- WhatsApp or similar messaging services must only be used for parent groups; gymnasts should not be included in these chats.

11. Reporting a Concern

If you have any concerns about the welfare of a child, you must report it immediately to the Welfare Officer (WO). Contact details for the WO are displayed on the club noticeboard and available on request.

All concerns will be handled confidentially and in line with safeguarding procedures. If necessary, external agencies such as social services or the police will be contacted.

12. Use of Photography and Social Media

- Parents must provide explicit consent for their child to be photographed or recorded.

- Images and videos taken within the club setting will only be used for coaching, club promotion, or event purposes.
- Gymnasts will not be named in public-facing posts without parental consent.

13. Medical and Emergency Information

- The club must be informed of any relevant medical conditions or allergies.
- Parents must ensure medical records are kept up to date within the club's management system.
- Coaches will only administer first aid in an emergency and will contact parents as soon as possible.

14. Helpful Documents and Information

For further information, club members and parents are encouraged to review the following resources:

- The club's Code of Conduct
- The club's Privacy Policy- [privacy policy](#)
- NSPCC guidance on safeguarding in sports - [What is safeguarding in sport? | NSPCC Learning](#)
- Independent Gymnastics Association (IGA) Safeguarding Policy - [IGA Safeguarding Policy](#)

15. Compliance and Disciplinary Procedures

Any breach of this policy will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary action. In serious cases this could include summary dismissal under our disciplinary procedure. Any breach of this policy must be handled in accordance with all other relevant company policies within BDGC.

16. Monitoring Compliance

The adoption of this policy is subject to monitoring and auditing. The outcomes from these reviews will inform and improve practices as part of BDGC's commitment to continual improvement.

17. Review

This Policy will be reviewed at least annually.

18. Amendment and Termination

This Policy can be amended, replaced, or terminated at any time at the sole discretion of BDGC. If you have any questions about whether you are reviewing the latest Policy, please confirm with the Owner of this document identified below.

Document Controls

Category	Description
Document Owner	Welfare Officer
Status (Draft, Published, Retired)	Published

History

Revision #	Change Description	Author Initials	Date
0.1	Document Conception	PK	04/02/2025