

British Gymnastics

Child Protection Policy

January 2004



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Foreword

Participation in gymnastics and trampolining can and does provide valuable life experiences. Sporting activities offer significant opportunities for children and young people to develop social skills, self-esteem, confidence, teamwork and leadership qualities that develop a well-rounded individual.

British Gymnastics acknowledge that despite all the benefits of participation, sport can provide easy access to children and present opportunities for an individual who wants to harm children. British Gymnastics accept that the welfare and safety of young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of everyone in the sport, whether paid staff or volunteers.

Most young people and vulnerable adults are well cared for and have happy and trusting relationships with adults. However, some less fortunate do suffer from physical, emotional and sexual abuse and possibly neglect. The abuse may occur in the home, at school or in the sporting environment. Indeed it is known that some perpetrators of abuse may actively seek employment or voluntary work with children in order to harm them.

British Gymnastics accepts their duty of care towards young people and is committed to providing information and training opportunities to ensure that those working with children and vulnerable adults adopt best practice, to ensure the safety and welfare of the participants.

British Gymnastics is a UK wide Governing Body of Sport with affiliate Home Country Governing Bodies in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Although this document describes the principles and procedures to be implemented and is mandatory for all British Gymnastics staff, members and volunteers, Governing Bodies in Northern Ireland and Scotland are subject to different legislation. As the core principles are the same, the legislative differences have been built into the BG Policy and procedures. Clubs, Regions and Home Countries may adopt their own policies, but must ensure that they comply with the standards set in British Gymnastics' policy and/or the relevant national guidance.

The Policy is based upon the following fundamental principles:

- The Children Act defines a child or young person as anyone under 18 years of age.
- All young people and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, gender, disability racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation have a right to be protected from abuse.
- It is the responsibility of the child protection experts to determine whether or not abuse has taken place but it is everyone's responsibility to report it.
- The welfare of young people and vulnerable adults is paramount and all concerns and allegations of potential poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- The best practice guidance and procedures apply equally in the protection of vulnerable adults, although different legislation is applied.
- Confidentiality should be upheld in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the common law of confidentiality.

Terminology

The term Gymnastics is used as a generic term and includes all British Gymnastics recognised disciplines: General (includes Team Gym, Gymnastics and Movement for People with Disabilities & Pre-school), Men's Artistic, Rhythmic, Sports Acrobatics, Sports Aerobics, Trampoline, Women's Artistic).

In the context of this resource the words "children" or "child" or the term "young people" are used to describe children and young people under the age of 18 and the term "parents" is used as a generic term to represent all parents, carers and guardians.

In Scotland, 'Social Services' should read as 'Social Work Department' and 'Welfare Officers' are known as 'Child Protection Co-ordinators'.

1.0 POLICY

1.1 RESPONSIBILITIES

British Gymnastics strives to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst participating in gymnastics and trampolining activities. We endeavour to promote the highest standards of care for participants and will:

- Provide and implement procedures to safeguard the well being of all participants and protect them from abuse.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of all participants.
- Adopt good practice in recruitment, training and supervision of all employees and volunteers, and provide guidance to parents and carers.
- Require all employees, members and clubs to adopt British Gymnastics' Code of Ethics and Conduct, Health, Safety and Welfare Policy and the Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Respond to all allegations and concerns, and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedure.

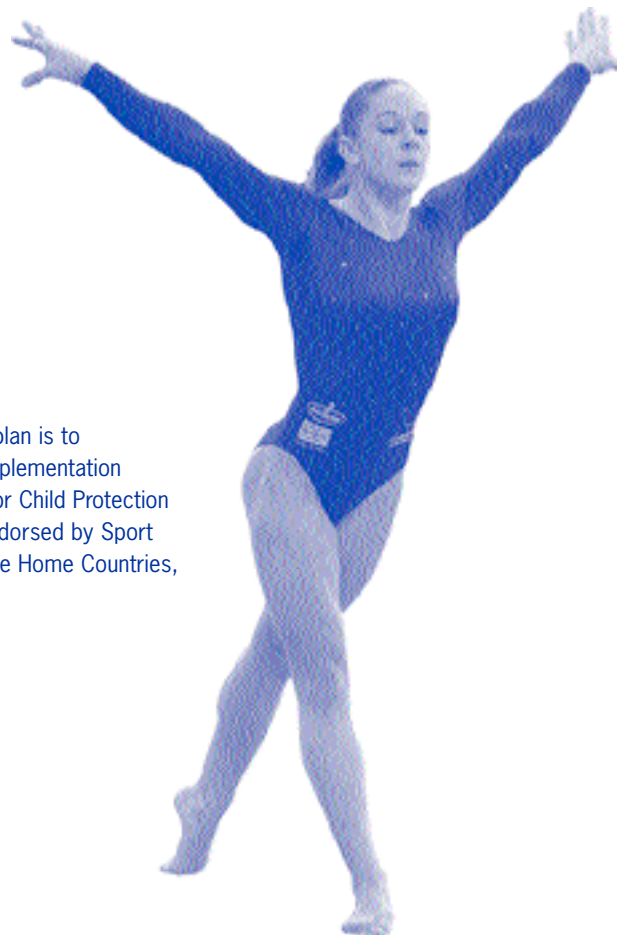
1.2 GUIDANCE & LEGISLATION

The policy and procedures reflect the framework outlined in the Department of Health document "Working Together to Safeguard Children 1999", which applies to England and Wales. In Northern Ireland (NI) the guidance is based on the Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety's document "Co-operating to Safeguard Children 2003" and in Scotland, guidelines are set by SportsScotland, the Executive Agency for Sports in Scotland. The following legislation is core to all procedures within the policy -

The Children Act 1989
The Children (NI) Order 1995
The Children (Scotland) Act 1995
The Police Act 1997
The Protection of Children Act 1999
The Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003
The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
The Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995
The Human Rights Act 1998
The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
The Data Protection Act 1994 & 1998

1.3 IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

The purpose of the British Gymnastics' Child Protection Implementation plan is to safeguard the welfare of the participants in gymnastics activities. The Implementation plan sets out how British Gymnastics will work towards the "Standards for Child Protection in Sport", developed by the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit and endorsed by Sport England and the Sport's Minister. Allowing for legislative differences in the Home Countries, this sets out a framework for our affiliate governing bodies.



1.4 ACTIONS TAKEN BY BRITISH GYMNASTICS

- British Gymnastics have appointed an Ethics and Welfare Manager who has been designated as the National contact for Child Protection. The Home Countries have a designated person in place with a responsibility for child protection.
- An Ethics Focus Group has been established to monitor, review and advise on all ethical issues and, in particular, the Child Protection programme. All Home Countries have the opportunity to be represented on this group.
- British Gymnastics have established a semi-independent Case Referral Management group, which includes representation from Social Services, to ensure all child protection related incidents are appropriately managed.
- British Gymnastics maintain confidential records of all complaints, concerns and sanctions against clubs and members
- British Gymnastics have complaints and disciplinary procedures in place, developed in line with the Human Rights Act and other recent legislation.
- British Gymnastics have reviewed their Child Protection policy, initially implemented in 2001, and are committed to ensure that the reviewed policy is widely available from January 2004.
- British Gymnastics will review the policy in November 2006, and will also review, if there are any major legislative, governance or procedural changes prior to this date.
- Health, safety, welfare and child protection issues are included within British Gymnastics' coach and officials education programmes.
- Best Practice is extensively promoted, and coaches, officials, clubs and affiliated organisations are encouraged to adopt the British Gymnastics Policy for Health, Welfare and Safety.
- British Gymnastics have introduced a 3-hour Child Protection Awareness course for anyone involved in the sport, and a Child Protection Implementation course to assist clubs with policy implementation.
- British Gymnastics have introduced a Club Management Module that includes relevant information on Child Protection for individuals with a club management responsibility.
- British Gymnastics is a Registered Body with the Criminal Records Bureau and facilitate a disclosure service on behalf of clubs and employers to prevent unsuitable people from working within the sport. In Northern Ireland the Northern Ireland Amateur Gymnastics Association (NIAGA) is registered with the Pre-Employment Consultancy Service to facilitate a similar disclosure, and in Scotland, Scottish Gymnastics is able to carry out disclosures through Disclosure Scotland.
- British Gymnastics have introduced GymMark, a Gymnastics club accreditation scheme that complies with the requirements of the British Gymnastics' Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

1.5 MONITORING PROCEDURES

The British Gymnastics' Child Protection policy and procedures will be regularly monitored and a full policy review will take place tri-annually. The following situations may also evoke a review of the policy:-

- As a result of any changes in legislation.
- As a result of any changes in governance of the sport.
- Following a procedural review as a result of a significant case.

1.6 ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY HOME COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

Although there are policies and procedures in place in the Home Countries, it is essential that these policies comply with the standards adopted by British Gymnastics.

The right to take part in gymnastics activities in a safe environment, and stay free from harm, applies to all children and vulnerable adults across the UK. Home Countries and Regions affiliated to British Gymnastics will be required to:-

- Adopt and implement the BG policy or a policy that complies with the standards set by BG and/or the relevant national guidance.
- Designate a responsible person with a lead responsibility for Child Protection.
- Ensure that Clubs implement Child Protection policies and procedures.
- Ensure that all competitions and events implement procedures for Child protection.
- Ensure there are adequate training opportunities for staff, coaches, officials and other volunteers.
- Inform BG of any incidents or allegations of poor practice or abuse involving BG members.



2.0 SAFE RECRUITMENT

The vast majority of coaches, officials/helpers are committed, dedicated people who are motivated to work within the sport for commendable reasons. However, it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable people or people with an inappropriate motivation are prevented from working with children. The following procedures should be adopted and applied consistently when appointing a coach, helper or official in either a voluntary or paid capacity.

2.1 ADVERTISING

When any form of advertising is used to recruit staff or volunteers, the following information should be reflected:-

- Aims of the club or organisation.
- Responsibilities of the role.
- Level or experience or qualifications required, particularly if experience of working with children would be considered advantageous.
- The club or organisation's open and positive approach to child protection.
- The use of criminal records disclosures as part of the recruitment and selection process.

2.2 PRE-APPLICATION INFORMATION

Anyone who expresses an interest in a job or role should, along with the application form, be given a job description and person specification, which clearly states required qualifications and experience.

2.3 APPLICATION FORMS

All potential staff and volunteers should complete an application form, which is designed to elicit information regarding an applicant's past career - including any gaps in involvement or employment, and any relevant experience, qualifications and training undertaken.

The candidate should be asked to supply the following information:-

- Name, address and telephone number.
- National Insurance Number to confirm the right to work and verify the identity of the applicant.
- Qualifications and validated relevant experience.
- Contact details of at least two references (not relatives), one of which should be a previous employer or club who have agreed to provide written comment on the individual's experience and suitability to work with children and young people.
- A signed agreement to abide by the Code of Ethics and Conduct and club policies, and British Gymnastics' Child Protection policy.

Applicants should be informed that failure to adhere to the relevant codes of ethics and conduct, may result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal/exclusion from the club or organisation.

2.4 PROCEDURES FOR SHORT-LISTED CANDIDATES

- Request in writing, and on formal headed paper, confirmation from BG of a coach's qualifications or any known reason for not employing/appointing that person as a coach/official.
- Applicants who are short listed for a position will be required to complete a self-declaration of convictions form and, if applicable, consent to carry out an enhanced level criminal records disclosure. The following organisations provide disclosures and the application can be facilitated by the relevant governing body in their role as a registered body:-
 - In England and Wales: Criminal Records Bureau (British Gymnastics)
 - In Scotland: Disclosure Scotland (Scottish Gymnastics)
 - In Northern Ireland: Pre Employment Consultancy Service (Northern Ireland Amateur Gymnastics Association)

Clubs can request a form from the relevant NGB and ask the candidate to complete the form. The relevant person within the club should complete the identity verification and return it to the NGB together with the disclosure application.

Enhanced level criminal records disclosures must be obtained for each person who may have significant contact with children or vulnerable adults. British Gymnastics recommends anyone over the age of 16, with substantial access to young people or anyone with a managerial responsibility for individuals in this position, should complete a disclosure.

2.5 INTERVIEWS

Where a position involves significant contact with young people a formal interview should be held according to correct procedures and protocol. At interview you can request any additional information to support the details contained in the application form and address/ask questions relating to any information disclosed on the self-declaration of convictions form.

2.6 MAKING THE APPOINTMENT

Once a decision has been made to employ someone or invite someone to take on a voluntary role within a club or organisation, an offer letter should be issued. This letter should specify full details and requirements of the position and any probation period if appropriate. The applicant should be informed that the appointment is subject to a satisfactory criminal records disclosure.

NB The candidate will receive their own copy of their disclosure and clubs/organisations should view the candidate's copy of the disclosure prior to confirming appointment. An individual may be allowed to commence their duties but care should be taken to ensure that a senior member of staff is always present.

- Following appointment, induction procedures should be conducted, whether the position is paid or voluntary. An induction should include:-
 - Explanation of Child protection procedures and other club policies.
 - Formally signing up to codes of ethics and conduct.
 - Clarification of roles, responsibilities and consideration of expectations.
 - Assessment of training needs, which should include attendance at a recognised Child Protection awareness course and other training relevant to the role.

2.7 MONITORING AND APPRAISAL

All staff and volunteers should be given the opportunity to receive feedback, either through a formal appraisal or more informally through a mentoring situation. Although this is good practice for any voluntary or paid position, appraisals are essential for positions that involve significant contact with young people. Appraisals should be offered at regular intervals, initially at the end of a probation period and thereafter at yearly intervals. An appraisal can help to establish training needs, review targets and consider any concerns.

2.8 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

A club or organisation should put in place a procedure to deal with complaints. Parents and all members should be made aware of the procedures for raising a complaint or concern. Provision should be made in the rules or constitution to allow complaints and disciplinary procedures to be implemented.



3.0 GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Although good recruitment procedures may help to deter potential abuse perpetrators, each club or organisation should also implement a policy which ensures that children are protected and kept safe from harm. A coach, official or volunteer within a club may be able to identify situations or raise concerns when a young person may need protection. The Child Protection policy should include procedures to safeguard young people, but also allow for incidents or concerns to be appropriately referred. The policy should be well publicised to all club members and their parents, and all coaches, volunteers and officials should be aware of and sensitive to potentially abusive situations.

3.1 GOOD PRACTICE FOR CLUBS

It is essential that child protection is paramount for all club activities, not only to provide the best possible protection for children in gymnastics, but also to avoid allegations of poor practice and to ensure the safety of staff and participants. Failure to follow the following guidelines could place young people, coaches and the club in a vulnerable position.

- Adoption of the British Gymnastics' Child & Vulnerable Adults protection policy and procedures.
- Promotion of the policy to all club members and parents to show the club's commitment to a safe environment.
- Promotion of an environment where all legitimate concerns can be raised without fear of victimisation or reprisal.
- Establishing procedures through which complaints or concerns can be voiced and dealt with confidentially, complying with BG reporting guidelines.
- Requesting written consent for participation, contact details, photography consent, medical information and an agreement to act in loco parentis in an emergency.
- Keeping written records of any poor practice or child protection related incident and accidents, and any action taken.
- Provision of regular training for coaches, assistants and officials.
- Provision of an open-door environment.
- Ensuring that every effort is made to prevent situations where an adult is alone with a child or group of young people.
- Ensuring that there are at least two responsible adults present at training sessions.
- Ensuring that there are good practice guidelines in place for any trips or events away from the regular training venue. (Refer to BG Club Management module for further guidance)
- Keeping parents and gymnasts fully informed about child protection procedures.
- Designating a person to deal with child protection and welfare issues and ensuring this person undergoes a criminal records disclosure and receives appropriate training.
- Ensuring that equal opportunities and equity policies are adhered to, and that discrimination is prohibited.
- Careful screening of all coaches, helpers, or officials according to the guidelines.
- Adopting British Gymnastics' guidelines to control the use of photographic and filming equipment, and monitor the use of photographic materials involving children.

- Publicising an anti-bullying policy.
- Providing regular Monitoring and Appraisal opportunities to receive feedback regarding staff training needs and issues such as poor coaching practice.
- Encouraging coaches to observe exponents of good coaching practice.
- Offering support to those who report concerns regarding suspicious or poor practice.

3.2 GOOD PRACTICE FOR COACHES AND OFFICIALS

All participants have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. The promotion of good practice will reduce the possibility of abusive situations occurring. A good and caring coach will continually reflect upon their own coaching style, philosophy and practices to ensure the safety and well-being of the participants at all times. Although these guidelines are written with coaches in mind, they are applicable to all adults with access to children through gymnastics.

The following are examples of good practice, which will create a safe and desirable environment:-

- Always be publicly open when working with children. Avoid situations where a coach and an individual child or vulnerable adult cannot be observed.
- Always ensure that there is at least one other responsible adult present during training sessions.
- Care should be taken when providing manual support (spotting). Recognised/advised techniques for spotting should be used. Avoid inappropriate contact.*
- Where possible, parents should be responsible for young children in the changing rooms or toilets. If a group of children must be supervised in the changing rooms try to ensure that adults work in pairs to supervise the children.
- Ensure that if mixed teams are taken away on trips, at least one male and one female member of staff accompany the gymnasts.
- Treat all participants equally with respect and dignity.
- Always place the safety and welfare of the participants as the highest priority.
- Behave in an exemplary manner and provide a role model for excellent behaviour.
- Keep up to date with your knowledge and technical skills.
- Do not exceed the level of your competence and qualifications.
- Respect the needs and wishes of the participants and do not exert them against their will.
- Recognise the stage of psychological and physical development of the individual and avoid excessive training or competition.
- Motivate the participants through positive feedback and constructive criticism.
- Create a safe and enjoyable situation.
- Obtain written consent from parents to act in loco parentis and, if the need arises, to administer emergency first aid, and/or other medical treatment.
- Request written consent from parents when children and young people are required to be transported by coaches or officials.
- Maintain a written report of any incident or injury together with any subsequent treatment or action.

- Ensure all members of BG adhere to the codes of ethics and code of conduct and anti-doping policy
- Do not take a child alone on a car journey except in unforeseen circumstances.

Where these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the senior coach/official in the club and/or the child's parents. If transporting children, obtain prior consent from parents. Organise central pick-up and drop-off points to ensure the driver is not alone with a child and make sure the route and breaks (if necessary) are well planned.

Practice never to be condoned

You should never:-

- Take children to your home or other secluded place where they will be alone with you.
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Share a room with a child.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Make sexually suggestive remarks to a child or vulnerable adult - even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do for themselves, unless you have been requested to do so by the parents, or do so with the utmost discretion.
- Depart from the premises until you have supervised the safe dispersal of the children.
- Abuse your privileged position of power or trust with children or adults.
- Resort to bullying tactics, or verbal abuse.
- Cause a participant to lose self esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual.
- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.

British Gymnastics accepts that on occasion there may be situations where the unexpected does occur. In these situations, you should report immediately to another colleague and make a brief written note of the event. Where appropriate ensure that the parent is informed of any incident. Examples could include:-

- If a young person becomes distressed in your presence.
- If you accidentally hurt a child.
- If a young person misunderstands/misinterprets something you have said or done.
- If a performer appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.

***Additional Guidance on Spotting and Manual Support**

Supporting and shaping the gymnast is an essential part of coaching gymnastics in that it helps the gymnast to understand shapes, movement patterns and complex skills, but also reduces the risk of injury due to a fall or error in performance. Guidance on appropriate/recognised supporting techniques is given on British Gymnastics coaching awards but the coach must ensure that support is only used when necessary and "over-handling" is avoided. However the coach should always be alert to the possibility of performance errors or anxiety, which may increase the risk of injury.

Supporting techniques must not inhibit performance, and any physical contact should not be invasive of sensitive areas of the body.

Infrequent non-intentional physical contact can arise out of error on the performer or coaches part. Such situations should not be ignored and should be acknowledged through an apology to the gymnast and reported to the Club Welfare Officer or head coach and parents.

It is also good practice to explain and provide some written guidance, perhaps as part of an induction pack, to new members and parents that some physical contact will be required but that only appropriate non-invasive techniques should be used. If a gymnast or parent has any concerns, they should be raised with the club welfare officer. In any circumstance where abuse is suspected, BG reporting procedures should be followed.

3.3 GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

A good coach will develop a strong, trusting bond with his/her gymnasts. This is essential in a successful coach/gymnast relationship. However, as a parent you should check that:-

- The club has a published child protection policy, which ensures that all young people are protected and kept safe from harm. Clubs may adopt a Health, Safety and Welfare policy, which includes a Child Protection policy and procedures.
- The club has an anti-bullying policy.
- The club has codes of conduct for all members including coaches, staff and volunteers, parents and gymnasts.
- There is a designated person (Welfare Officer) in place with a responsibility for Child Protection, and young people and adults are aware that they can talk to them about concerns without fear of victimisation or reprisal.
- There are procedures in place for dealing with concern, complaints and disciplinary issues.
- The club has procedures in place for safe recruitment including criminal record disclosures.
- The coach in charge has a minimum qualification of BG Club Coach Award.
- The coach has a qualification appropriate to the gymnasts' performance level.
- The club makes every effort to ensure that at least two responsible adults are present during training sessions. (NB The second adult could be a parent helper or club official)
- There are suitable procedures for intimate care needs for children and the disabled: Routines for toileting and supervising.
- The club encourages all staff and volunteers to attend Child Protection Awareness training.
- There is guidance in place regarding arrangements for travelling to events.
- Parents are not discouraged from watching or becoming involved.
- The club has an equity/equality policy, which states that all young people have an equal right to be protected from harm and that discrimination is not tolerated .

Encourage your children to talk to you about their training and ensure that they know how to voice their concerns if they are not happy about any situations that may arise.

3.4 USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS OR RECORDED IMAGES

Implicit within the British Gymnastics Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures is the commitment to ensure that all publications and media represent participants appropriately and with due respect. **It is not the intention of British Gymnastics to prevent parents from taking pictures of their children but rather to ensure photographic practices are carefully monitored to allow the NGB to act if inappropriate imagery is circulated and to deter anyone with undesirable intentions.**

- The use of mobile phones within the event arena or training area is prohibited, unless registered as a photographic device.
- A photograph or image (website) of a child should not be published without written consent, and personal information of the individual, other than the name, should not accompany the image.
- Care must be taken to ensure that images of children who are under a court order are not recorded or published without permission.
- Simultaneous streaming of images onto a website should be avoided. The delayed streaming will provide an opportunity for editing inappropriate images. It is also recommended that an independent server is used to ensure that images can not be accessed, copied or downloaded.
- Websites should be carefully monitored to eliminate the use of inappropriate images or improper text.
- Any instance of the use of inappropriate images should be reported to British Gymnastics who may then inform the appropriate authorities.
- British Gymnastics competition entry forms will contain an informed consent statement, that photographers will be present at British Gymnastics events and images may be published by British Gymnastics. By entering for the event, there is acceptance that the child/participant may be photographed.
- It is also a recommendation that clubs should also introduce a parental consent form for the taking and publishing of video, photographs and images. (This should ideally be included on club registration forms)
- British Gymnastics Regions or Home Countries may implement their own photography accreditation system, which may be an annual accreditation or other procedure that suits the local needs.

3.5 USE OF VIDEO, FILM OR PHOTOGRAPHY AT EVENTS

The vast majority of people involved in gymnastics and trampoline activities derive their interest and pleasure from the performances and enjoyment shown by the participants. A British Gymnastics event, by its very nature is in the public arena and when entering for the event, the participant acknowledges this fact, which will include the recording of his/her image, since there is already an acceptance that at least professionally approved photographer, may take photographs. British Gymnastics does not wish to discourage the use of video or photographic equipment at events for appropriate use, but we will take all reasonable precautions to protect our members against the possible inappropriate use of films or photographic images. British Gymnastics has therefore introduced procedures, which require all persons wishing to use video or photographic equipment at a British Gymnastics event, to apply for permission, preferably prior to the event.

Photography Accreditation for British Gymnastics National Events:

- The permission to film, video or take photographic images is given on the basis that the person given the permission agrees not to cause or permit, directly or indirectly, any of the images to be published, shown, sold, distributed or otherwise disposed of by any method without prior written consent from [British Gymnastics or] the individual(s) concerned.
- Any person wishing to use a video or film or take photographs at an event must register their intentions with and provide proof of identity to, the registration desk at the event. A person wishing to take images with a mobile phone must register the device as a camera



at the registration desk. British Gymnastics or the organiser of the event may in its discretion, and without giving any reason, refuse to register any person and give that person permission to film or use a video or take photographs at the event.

- A British Gymnastics Region or Home Nation may operate their own annual accreditation system and issue an Identification/Accreditation card. A valid card may be presented to the registration desk and will be accepted for accreditation at the particular event.
- At the event and following registration and proof of identity, a sticker with name and date will be issued and must be worn during the event as proof of accreditation.
- Failure to comply with the above will result in the individual being refused entry or being required to leave the premises, or deposit the camera or other equipment with the registration desk or the event organiser until the individual leaves the event. If the camera or other equipment has been used at the event, the registration desk or the event organiser may require the film to be delivered or it to be destroyed or the recording to be deleted. The registration desk or the event organiser may refuse to return any such equipment to the individual until the film has been delivered to it or the recording has been deleted. The individual will not be entitled to any refund of the entry charge if he or she is refused entry or required to leave.
- If the event organiser/welfare officer or their representative suspects inappropriate photography or filming, they will request the person to leave the venue and to surrender any film relating to the event.
- The list of registered persons will be returned to British Gymnastics to be confidentially archived, to facilitate any enquiries by police or social services or any enquiries by British Gymnastics in respect of any breach of this policy statement.
- A copy of these rules and procedures will be displayed at the event and included in the programme.

3.6 USE OF VIDEO AS AN AID TO COACHING

The use of video equipment can be a valuable aid to coaching. The guidelines below should be implemented to safeguard against inappropriate practice.

- Ensure that the performers and their parent/carer are aware of the purpose of the filming as a coaching aid.
- Ensure that the person designated for participant's welfare and one other responsible and approved adult is present to ensure that performers are protected against inappropriate filming.
- Care should be taken to securely store the video materials to avoid inappropriate usage.

3.7 SUPERVISION

From the moment a child arrives at a gymnastics club or event, or when they are handed over by their parents to travel to an event, the staff or volunteers have a duty of care and, while carrying out a supervisory role, should act in loco parentis. The responsibility remains until the child is handed back to the parent.

It is essential that appropriate ratios for supervision are adopted and everyone is clear of their supervisory responsibilities. Ratios would be determined by considering age, the type of activity and where it is taking place. For club training, British Gymnastics would recommend a minimum ratio of one adult to fifteen gymnasts for low-level floor activity. Where events are external to the regular club training venue a minimum ratio of one adult to 10 gymnasts is required. This ratio should be increased for individuals under eight. There should always be at least two adults present. 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.

4.0 RECOGNITION OF POOR PRACTICE, ABUSE AND BULLYING

All adults involved in sport have a duty to respond to suspicions of abuse, inappropriate behaviour or poor practice. Clubs and other organisations should provide confidential communication lines through which concerns can be expressed. Clubs should designate a responsible person to act as the Welfare Officer to whom concerns can be expressed in confidence.

4.1 POOR PRACTICE

Poor Practice may be defined as any action or behaviour that contravenes the following:-

- Best coaching practice as advocated through the British Gymnastics coach education programme or resource materials.
- The BG Code of Conduct or Code of Ethics.
- The BG Equity Policy.
- The accepted roles and responsibilities of a coach.
- The BG Child Protection Policy and Health, Safety and Welfare Policy.

4.2 ABUSE

Abuse can and does occur in a wide range of settings, including sport. The effects of abuse can be so damaging, they may follow a person into adulthood. For example, a person who has been abused as a young person may find it difficult or impossible to maintain stable, trusting relationships, become involved with drugs, experience mental health problems or self-harm. A child who has been neglected can experience serious impairment in their health and development.

Racial Discrimination and Equity

It is likely that people from black and minority ethnic groups may experience harassment, discrimination and institutional racism. Although racism clearly causes harm, it is not itself a category of abuse. However, it may be considered emotional abuse and recent legislation has made racism illegal.

Equal opportunities must be provided for all, regardless of gender, race or culture and we must endeavour to protect ethnic minority groups from racial harassment, racial discrimination and institutional racism. Through adherence to the BG Equity Policy, problems such as discrimination against ethnic minority groups should be avoided.

People with a Disability

People with a disability or impairment may be vulnerable to abuse or poor practice, since they may not be suitably able to express their concerns or protect themselves or understand what is happening. Coaches, officials and organisations must avoid discrimination against people with a disability and must be vigilant in caring for these vulnerable people. Further information and guidance should be sought for organisations that require a policy specific to the needs of disabled and/or vulnerable people.

Abuse and Neglect

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children and vulnerable adults may be abused within their family, at school and sometimes in the sporting environment. There is growing evidence to suggest that peer abuse is an increasing concern for young people.

There are many forms of abuse:-

Physical Abuse

Where someone:

- Physically hurts or injures a child intentionally by hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning or any other physical harm.
- Gives alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison to a child.
- Uses drugs to enhance performance or delay puberty.
- Inappropriately restricts a child's diet out of a desire to increase chances of success but without concern for the child's health and nutritional needs.
- Inflicts a type and intensity of training which exceeds the capacity of the child's maturation.

Sexual Abuse

Where adults or other children (male and female) sexually abused boys or girls to satisfy their own sexual needs, or where children are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity.

This could include:

- Full sexual intercourse, fondling, masturbation or oral sex.
- Taking or possessing inappropriate photographic materials involving children.
- Showing inappropriate, pornographic materials to children.

It should be noted that in sports situations where physical contact is made i.e. in stretching exercises or supporting, sexual abuse may go unnoticed. These situations also provide the opportunity for abuse to occur.

The misuse of the power of the coach over young children or vulnerable adults may lead to abusive situations developing.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be described as the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child, which can cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Examples of this may include when:

- The child is constantly shouted at, taunted, humiliated or ignored.
- The child is subjected to constant criticism, name calling, sarcasm or bullying.
- An unrealistic pressure to perform consistently to high expectations is placed upon the child by the coach, club officials or parents.

Neglect

Failure of an adult to provide food, shelter and clothing for a child, or failure to protect a child from danger or physical harm, may constitute neglect. Failure to access appropriate medical care or provide love and affection may be clarified as neglect.

Coaches who allow children to be exposed to unnecessary risk of injury or harm are being neglectful.

Indicators of Abuse

Indications that a young person may be being abused can be difficult to recognise even for the experienced. There are signs which could alert you to the fact that a child might be being abused, and these include:

- Unexplained bruising or injury particularly in unusual places.
- An injury for which the explanation seems to be inconsistent.
- Unexplained sudden changes in behaviour (i.e. withdrawing, very quiet, sudden outbursts of temper or emotion).
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or language or engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
- Is prevented from socialising with other children or has difficulty making friends.
- Is distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected, (i.e. parents, coach, family friend).
- Displays variations in eating patterns (i.e. over eating or loss of appetite).
- Loss of weight for no apparent reason (the child may be trying to make himself/herself less sexually attractive).
- The child becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.
- Something another child has said which suggests a child is being abused.
- The child describes an act or behaviour that appears to be abusive.

This list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these symptoms is not proof that abuse has taken place, but it should raise concerns.

It is not the responsibility of the coach or official to decide that the child is being abused but it is their responsibility to act upon their concerns.

It is acknowledged that taking appropriate action is never easy and the discovery that a member of staff or colleague is, or may be, abusing a child will raise concerns and emotional feelings among other colleagues.

These emotions may evolve around feelings of:

- Doubt: Is it true?
- Confusion: What will happen?
What actions should be taken?
What will be the effect?
- Guilt: Should I have known?
Did I miss something?
Did I have any suspicions?
Should I have said something?
- Fear: Will I or others be suspected?
- Concerns: What can I do to support all those people who may need support?
How will it affect further relationships or contact with children?
Are there systems in place to expose future situations?

There is clearly a need to have support mechanisms for all those involved in or surrounding the issue, including those making the allegation, those who may be being abused and those against whom the allegation(s) are made.

British Gymnastics is primarily concerned with the well being and safety of all its members and participants, and will support anyone who in good faith, and where he/she has reasonable grounds for doing so, reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

4.3 BULLYING

It is important to recognise that in some cases, it may not be an adult who is carrying out the abuse. In the case of bullying, the abuser is often another young person. Bullying may be defined as deliberate, hurtful behaviour in the form of physical, psychological or aggressive verbal conduct against another person. Bullying can take many forms but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional. (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of a peer group.)

Victims of bullying are typically shy, timid and sensitive and are often physically small, overweight, have a disability or from an ethnic minority group. Bullies frequently have low self-esteem, are aggressive and manipulative in order to gain power over others.

Coaches and officials hold a position of power in the relationship with their athletes and must not abuse this position to bully the children or vulnerable adults in their care. An over zealous coach, or one who resorts to aggressive physical or verbal behaviour, tormenting, humiliating or ignoring a person, may be accused of bullying. In some instances parents can bully their children by pushing them too hard.

Symptoms that may indicate that a person is being bullied might include: -

- Behavioural changes such as a reluctance to attend school or activities previously enjoyed; tearfulness; depression; erratic emotions and loss of concentration.
- Physical symptoms such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, bruising, scratching or damaged clothing and bingeing on food, alcohol or cigarettes.
- Performance levels may also drop.

Regardless of who the perpetrator might be, the signs of bullying should be reported to a person of responsibility.

It is important that bullying is recognised and Clubs/affiliated bodies take appropriate action and rigorously enforce anti-bullying strategies. It is vital not to underestimate the damage that can be caused by bullying.

4.4 ABUSE OF POSITION OF TRUST

This guidance is primarily intended to protect young people over the age of sexual consent but under 18 years of age and vulnerable adults where a relationship of trust with an adult exists.

In England, Scotland and Wales, young people of 16 or 17 years can legally consent to some types of sexual activity but they may still be relatively immature emotionally. (In Northern Ireland the age of consent is 17). It is essential that those who may be in a position of responsibility and trust recognise this vulnerability and ensure that it is not exploited. There is no simple definition of a vulnerable adult but the position of trust and the vulnerability of adults must not be abused.

The principles and guidance apply, irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable in a position of trust.

Sexual Offences Legislation was recently reviewed and one of the amendments tabled related to breach of trust. The current legislation applies only to teachers but the proposed amendment would have included coaches, thus making it a criminal offence for a trusted coach to engage in a sexual relationship with their athlete.

The response from the Home Office Minister explained that key to introducing an amendment to cover coaches was the establishment of the National Coaching Certificate. Establishment of the new coaching certificate may see the introduction of a licensing system. Once the new measures are introduced, any coach using their position of power to manipulate a young athlete in their charge into a sexual relationship may also lose their licence to practice.

- i) **A Relationship of Trust** can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over another by virtue of their position.

A genuine relationship can start between two people within a relationship of trust but the relationship of trust must end before any sexual relationship develops.

- ii) **Abuse of trust and sexual or other abuse**

Any sexual activity, which is not freely consenting, is criminal. The sexual activity covered by abuse of trust may be ostensibly consensual, but rendered unacceptable because of the relative positions of the parties concerned.

- iii) **Code on abuse of trust**

The Code of Conduct on sexual activity between individuals in a relationship of trust aims to:

- Protect a young person or vulnerable adult from an unequal and potentially damaging relationship.
- Protect the person in a position of trust by preventing him/her from entering into such a relationship deliberately or accidentally by providing clear and enforceable guidance on what behaviour is acceptable.

The British Gymnastics Code on abuse of trust:

- Any behaviour, which might allow a sexual relationship to develop between the person in a position of trust and the individual(s) in their care, must be avoided.
- Any sexual relationship within a relationship of trust is unacceptable so long as the relationship of trust continues.
- All those in an organisation have a duty to raise concerns about behaviour by coaches, staff, volunteers, managers and others, which may be harmful to those in their care, without prejudice to their own position.



5.0 RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE, SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS

People within gymnastics are ideally placed to recognise or receive concerns relating to the welfare of young people. Everyone has a responsibility to respond to these concerns whether they relate to a child's home or family or community situation or involve incidents within the club.

It is important to note that most children or young people do not share those concerns and rely on those adults who they are in contact with to be alert to the possibility that they may be experiencing harm in some area of their lives.

5.1 RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE OUTSIDE SPORT

British Gymnastics' primary responsibility is to ensure that concerns and any relevant information are passed on to the police or social services without delay. These organisations have the statutory responsibility to make enquiries to establish if a child is at risk of harm.

It is vital that individuals within the club are aware of British Gymnastics' guidance and pass any concerns to the designated person with the responsibility for Child Protection within the club or the person in charge. If neither person is available, the information should be passed directly to Social Services or the Police. The British Gymnastics' Child Protection incident form should be completed and, together with any other written information, be sent to the relevant statutory organisation and British Gymnastics within 24 hours.

5.2 RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

If a child indicates that he/she is being abused, or information is received which gives rise to concern that the child may be being abused, the person receiving the information should:

- Stay calm and ensure that the child is safe and feels safe.
- Tell the child that he/she is not to blame and it was right to tell you.
- Show and tell the child that you are taking what he/she says seriously and recognise any difficulties inherent in interpreting what the child says.
- Keep questions to a minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said and make a record of all that has been said, heard or seen. (This record will be referred to during further investigations and detailed questioning should be left to the qualified investigator.)
- Be honest and explain that you may have to tell someone else to help to protect the child.

If the child indicates that he/she does not wish others to be informed about the allegations, you should carefully and tactfully explain the reasons why it may be in the interests of everybody if the matter is referred to the appropriate person or department (i.e. Social Services).

The person to whom the disclosure is made is presented with a great responsibility and it is advisable, if there is any uncertainty, that you seek advice on how to deal with the issue, from the Social Services, NSPCC or from the Ethics and Welfare Manager at British Gymnastics.

Actions to avoid

- Dismiss the concern
- Panic
- Allow your shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information than is offered
- Make promises you cannot keep: such as agreeing not to tell someone else
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Approach the alleged abuser
- Make negative comments about the accused person

Social Services

When a referral is made to Social Services, they have a legal responsibility to make enquiries where a child or young person may be at risk of "significant harm". This may involve gathering information from others who know the child or talking to the young person and their family. Enquiries may be carried out jointly with the police when a criminal offence is suspected. If action needs to be taken urgently, contact the Police by dialling 999. If concerns are identified out of hours, the police and Social Services provide an out of hours service.

Sharing Concerns with Parents

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents where there are concerns about their children. Therefore, in most circumstances it would be important to talk to parents to clarify any initial concerns. For example if a young person seemed withdrawn, there may be a reasonable explanation. The child may have experienced an upset in the family, such as a parental separation/divorce or bereavement.

When not to share concerns with parents

If you are suspicious that the parents, guardian or carer may be the abuser or you believe that the parent may not be able to respond appropriately to the situation, speaking to them regarding the matter might place the child at greater risk. In these circumstances, if concerns still exist you should report the suspicion or allegation to the senior person or designated person. Advice must be sought from Social Services with respect to consulting with parents.

Sharing Concerns with a Designated Officer (Welfare Officer)

Each Home Country, Region and club should identify a designated person to handle child protection issues. If a designated person is in place, you should share your concerns with them. It is the responsibility of the Welfare Officer to make the decision to contact the Social Services. If a designated person has not been appointed, contact the person in charge or, if they are not available or the concerns are about him/her, you should contact British Gymnastics or the relevant Home Country, the NSPCC or Social Service who will be able to advise you on any action that should be taken.

The club or organisation should ensure that the Designated Welfare Officer:

- Signs a self-declaration form.
- Is police checked via the Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure Service.
- Is given adequate training and guidance to undertake the child protection role.

Records and Information

Any information passed to the Social Services or the Police must be as accurate and helpful as possible and it will be useful if a detailed record, including the following, can be provided:

- The nature of the allegation.
- Description of any visible injuries or bruising.
- Detailed description of the child's account of how the injuries or bruising occurred.
- Any times and dates or other relevant information.
- A clear distinction between what is fact, hearsay or opinion.

Reporting the matter to police or social services department should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. Wherever possible, referrals made by telephone to the Social Services or Police, should be forwarded a copy of the incident report within 24 hours. The club should record on the incident form, the name and designation of the social services member of staff to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call.

A copy of the incident report should also be sent to British Gymnastics or the appropriate Home Country governing body Child Protection Officer and marked "private and confidential".

5.3 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST COACHES, OFFICIALS OR OTHER MEMBERS

An allegation may involve volunteers or paid staff within British Gymnastics. Child abuse can and does occur outside the family setting. Although it is a sensitive and difficult issue, child abuse has occurred within a sporting situation. It is crucial that everyone involved in gymnastics recognises this possibility and takes seriously any allegations made against a coach, helper, official or anyone else working closely with children.

The designated person must be notified immediately of any circumstances that cause concern or raise suspicions. If the designated person is unclear about what action to take, advice should be sought from British Gymnastics (Ethics and Welfare Manager), from the NSPCC or from the Social Services. The circumstances may indicate poor practice, abuse or harassment by a coach, official or other member and may need to be referred to the Police or Social Services.

If you have reasonable grounds for being concerned about a particular case involving a coach or official or another club member, it is not your responsibility to decide if abuse is being perpetrated nor to investigate it but, **it is your responsibility to act on those concerns and do something about it.**

Taking the Appropriate Action

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between what may constitute abuse and what may be poor practice but the following guidelines may help to select the appropriate course of action.

Where an allegation has been received, a disclosure has been made, or a club employee or volunteer has observed behaviour that has caused them concern, clubs should consider what is the appropriate course of action.

Types of Investigation

Where a complaint of abuse is made there may be three types of investigation:

- Criminal
- Child protection
- Disciplinary or misconduct

The disciplinary or misconduct procedure is conducted by British Gymnastics and the results of the Social Services or Police investigation will inform the investigation. The disciplinary procedures can be found in the BG members' handbook.

The person that made the allegation, or their family, can also initiate civil proceedings.

Issues of Poor Practice

- If, following consideration the allegation is clearly poor practice, then the club and the Welfare Officer can deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice of the Welfare Officer or where a poor practice allegation continues to remain a concern, British Gymnastics must be informed and sent an incident report.
- If the incident of poor practice raises any suspicions or concerns about abuse, all details should be recorded and reported without delay to British Gymnastics.

Suspected Abuse

If there is any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a gymnastics club staff member or volunteer, the club Welfare Officer should immediately be informed so that they can either refer the incident to Social Services (or if necessary go directly to the Police). British Gymnastics should also be informed without delay and an incident report completed.

If a disclosure concerns possible abuse within the home, family or community then the club Welfare Officer should immediately be informed so that the information can be passed on to the relevant statutory organisation.



If the allegation concerns the Welfare Officer, then the incident should be referred to Social Service (or if necessary to the Police). British Gymnastics should also be informed without delay and an incident report completed.

If the Welfare Officer is unavailable, the BG Ethics and Welfare Manager (or if out-of-hours) the Police or Social Services, must be contacted. Any delay may place a child at risk.

If you are unsure of what action to take, you can contact the Social Services, BG Ethics and Welfare Manager or the NSPCC 24 hour Child Protection Helpline for advice. British Gymnastics MUST be kept fully informed of any allegations as it is essential that an early decision is made about whether to temporarily suspend any accused individual, pending further Social Services or Police enquiries. The BG Case Referral Management Group will be consulted on the appropriate course of action and will make recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer.

Further details on the disciplinary proceedings can be found in the British Gymnastics Handbook.

Irrespective of the findings of the Social Services or Police enquiries, the BG Case Referral Management Group will assess all individual cases to decide whether a recommendation should be made to reinstate a member or to move towards disciplinary proceedings. British Gymnastics will hold a disciplinary hearing for anyone investigated, or charged, by the authorities with abuse (accept when an individual has been convicted). This may be a difficult decision, particularly when there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the Police.

British Gymnastics disciplinary panels will comply with the principles of natural justice. The applicable standard of proof shall be the civil standard, of the balance of probability: whether it was more likely for the allegations to have occurred. All efforts will be made to obtain as much evidence to advise the panel and there is a right to appeal against the decision. British Gymnastics will make recommendation for inclusion on the Protection of Children Act (POCA) List in any instance where a decision is reached to exclude a member from the Governing Body. Throughout these processes the welfare of children will remain paramount and British Gymnastics will endeavour to provide appropriate support to children, parents, coaches and volunteers who are affected by an abuse situation including, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator.

5.4 ALLEGATIONS OF PREVIOUS ABUSE

It is possible that allegations of abuse by a coach may be made some considerable time after the event. Where such a belated allegation is made the designated person should report the matter to the Social Services Department or the Police Child Protection Unit and make sure that British Gymnastics or the relevant Home Country Governing Body are informed without delay. This is necessary because it is possible that other children may have been abused or may be at risk from the accused person.

Maintain Confidentiality

Only tell others if it will help to protect the child. Remember the accusation may be a misunderstanding or a fallacious allegation, which may cause great harm to the accused, as he/she may be innocent of the allegation. Confidentiality must be maintained until a case has been proven.

Every effort must be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned - including the accused. False allegations are of great concern not only because of the personal distress caused to the individual and their family, but also since the media may exploit the issue to their fullest benefit, and their actions may erroneously destroy the career of a fallaciously accused coach. Even the accused needs to be protected until sufficient evidence is gathered to substantiate the case against him/her.

If allegations are published that turn out to be unfounded, this may be defamatory. However, this would not apply to cases of alleged abuse, which are reported to the Police or Social Services in good faith when there are reasonable grounds for suspicion.

5.5 RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED BULLYING

The procedures set out in 5.2 should be followed if bullying is suspected.

Strategies to Discourage Bullying

- Create an open environment and provide adequate supervision at all times.
- Encourage children to speak out and share any concerns with the person in charge, the Welfare Officer or other responsible adults.
- Take all signs of possible bullying seriously.

Supporting the Victim of Bullying

- Reassure the victim that you will help them and can be trusted.
- Explain that you may have to inform someone in authority.
- Keep accurate records of what happened together with names of those involved and any action taken.
- Report suspicions or concerns to the person in charge.

Confronting the Bully(ies)

- Talk to the bully(ies), explain the situation and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their actions.
- Seek an apology from the bully(ies) to the victim.
- Inform the bully's parents.
- Insist that any borrowed items are returned to the victim.
- Impose sanctions or disciplinary action if necessary.
- Report and record all actions taken.
- Provide support for the victim and his/her coach.
- Encourage the bully(ies) to change his/her behaviour.

5.6 RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED ABUSE OF A POSITION OF TRUST

The procedures set out in 5.2 should be followed if abuse of a position of trust is suspected. It is still worth informing Social Services, as in some instances they may become involved. All concerns or allegations relating to a breach of the code of trust will be investigated according to the BG complaints and Disciplinary Procedures.

5.7 RESPONDING TO MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Child abuse is an area of great interest to the media. When incidents occur it is important to have a strategy to manage any media enquiries. Although British Gymnastics and the Home Countries can deal with media enquiries, it is important for Clubs and Regions to be able to handle initial enquiries in a sensitive and appropriate manner to avoid generating any negative publicity.

The media can become involved in cases as a result of approaches made by a source linked to the victim and may already have significant information before approaching the Club or Region. If a journalist approaches you, the following guidance should be followed:

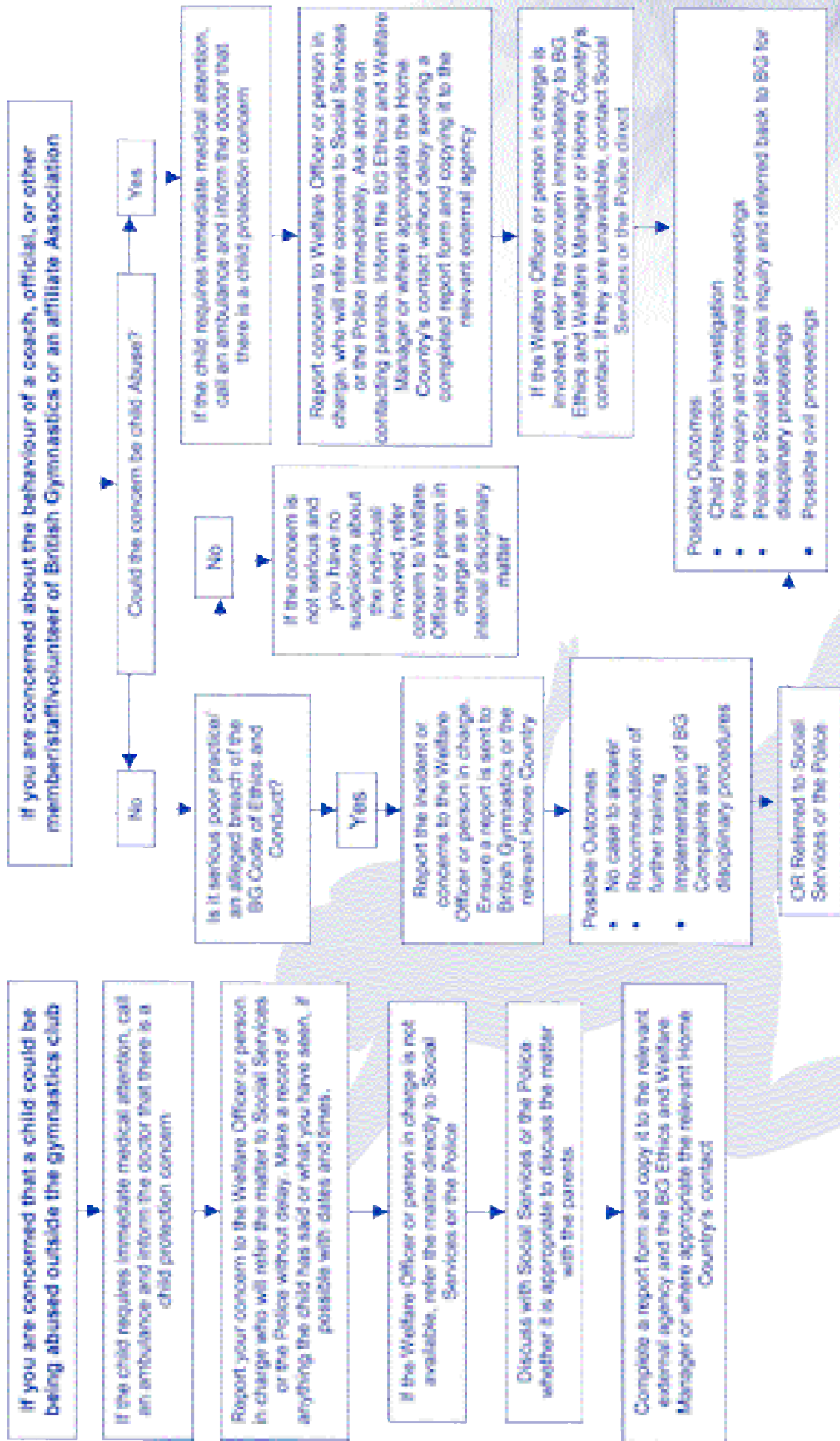
- Take a note of the journalist's name and whom they represent (ie. Newspaper, TV Company etc) and any contact details.
- Take a note of what the journalist is asking you and ask for any clarifications.
- Establish whether the journalist has any deadlines and inform them that the matter will be referred to BG or the appropriate Home Country who will contact them with a response.
- Inform the appropriate Welfare Officer or person in charge who will refer the matter to BG Ethics and Welfare Manager or the appropriate Home Country Lead Officer. An appropriate response will be formulated in consultation with BG Press and Media Officer or appropriate Home Country Officer.
- A copy of the response will be forwarded to the journalist, the club and appropriate region.

The same procedures should be followed for any subsequent enquiries and ensure that BG or the Home Country is kept fully informed of any local press coverage.

It is important to recognise the harm that can be done to a sport by negative media coverage. Do not be tempted to speak 'off the record' to journalists as this may result in damaging publicity but also do not pretend the situation is less serious, as this can often create equally detrimental press coverage.

5.8 A QUICK GUIDE TO PROCEDURES IF ABUSE IS SUSPECTED

This quick guide is designed to advise on the most appropriate action to be taken if you suspect abuse or witness repeated poor practice or breaches of BG Code of Ethics and Conduct. If you are uncertain at any stage, contact BG Ethics and Welfare Manger or NSPCC Helpline on 0804 800 5000. All reports should be made on the BG Child Protection Incident Report form contained in the Sample Forms section.



6.0 USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

Gymnastics Contacts	Address	Contact Number
British Gymnastics	Ford Hall Lilleshall NSC Near Newport Shropshire TF10 9NB	0845 129 7129 Child Protection Helpline Ext 323
Northern Ireland Amateur Gymnastics Association	House of Sport Upper Malone Road Belfast BT9 5LA	02890 383813
Scottish Gymnastics	2 Lint Riggs Falkirk FK1 1DG	01324 886 505
Welsh Gymnastics	140 North Road Cathays, Cardiff CF14 3BH	02920 624321
National Contacts		
The NSPCC	National Centre 42 Curtain Road London EC2A 3NH	020 7825 2500 Helpline 0808 800 5000
Childline UK	Freepost 1111 London N1 0BR	0800 1111
NI Childline	PO Box 111 Belfast BT1 7DZ	028 90 327773
Sports Coach UK	114 Cardigan Road Headingley Leeds LS6 3BJ	0113 274 4802
Coaching Northern Ireland	Queens PEC Botanic Gardens Belfast BT9 5EX	028 90 686940
Department of Health (for POCA list details, CRB information and current legislation)	Consultancy Service Room 133 Department of Health Wellington House 133-135 Waterloo Road London SE1 8NG	
Child Protection in Sport Units (NSPCC)		
England	3 Gilmour Close Beaumont Leys Leicester L4 1EZ	0116 234 7278
Northern Ireland	Block 1 Jennymount Court North Derby Street Belfast BT15 3HN	02890 351135
Scotland	Children First c/o Learning & Teaching Scotland 64 Victoria Crescent Road Glasgow G12 9JN	0141 342 4870
Wales	Unit 1, Cowbridge Court 60 Cowbridge Road West Cardiff CF5 5BS	

**Disclosure Providers
(contact NGB for
information initially)**

Criminal Records Bureau

Address

PO Box 110
Liverpool L3 6ZZ

Contact Number

0870 9090 822

DHSS & PS Pre-employment
Consultancy Service

Child Care Unit
Department of Health
Social Services & Public Safety
Room D
Castle Buildings
Belfast BT4 3SQ

028 90522559

Scottish Criminal Records Office
(Disclosure Scotland)

0870 609 6006

Local Contacts

Local Social Services
(including out of hours contact)

Insert address details

Insert contact number

Local Police

In emergency call 999

NSPCC Freephone 24 hour helpline

0800 800 5000



7.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

British Gymnastics wishes to express its gratitude to the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU), Sport England, Sports Coach UK, the Avon Police Child Protection team, colleagues within the Home Countries gymnastics' governing bodies and other sport's governing bodies for their support and guidance in developing this document.

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8.0 SAMPLE FORMS

The following sample forms are to be used to ensure that:

- British Gymnastics and affiliated clubs and organisations take all steps within our power to prevent unsuitable people from working within the sport.
- If incidents of suspected abuse of children or vulnerable adults do occur, then standard procedures are followed.

The sample forms include:

- Self Declaration Form
- Application Form
- Child Protection Incident Form
- Reference Form
- Registration form - Photography, filming or videoing



SELF DECLARATION FORM

You have a right of access to any information held on you and additional rights under the Data Protection Act 1998

PART A

Title: _____ First Name(s): _____ Surname: _____

Previous names by which you may have been known: _____

Address: _____

Post Code _____ Tel. No. _____

E-mail _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Sex: Male/Female _____

Club (Please complete if appropriate) _____

Please give details of the positions you currently or wish to fulfil or relevant job title:

Start Date _____

Please give details of any other clubs you are or have been a member of and give details of the positions you held.

SELF DECLARATION FORM (continued)

PART B

1) Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offences? YES/NO*

If YES, please supply details of any criminal convictions:

NOTE: You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions) order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Amendment) Order 1986 you should declare all convictions including 'spent' convictions, cautions, reprimands and written warnings.

2) Are you a person known to any Social Services department as being an actual or potential risk to children or currently under investigation for a Child Protection related incident? YES/NO*

If YES, please supply details:

3) Have you had a disciplinary sanction (from a sports or other organisation's governing body) relating to child abuse? YES/NO (Delete as appropriate)

If YES, please supply details:

I certify that all information in this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and realise that false information or omissions may lead to termination of my services.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE BRITISH GYMNASTICS' CHILD PROTECTION POLICY. I HEREBY CONSENT TO A CRB DISCLOSURE

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Part C : To be completed by club or other designated official

I confirm that I have seen identification documents (please refer to Identity Verification form for details of acceptable identification documents) for the above person, and I confirm to the best of my ability that these are accurate.

Please provide details of documents:

Signature of club / designated official: _____

Position: _____

Print name: _____ Date: _____

This form should returned direct to:

APPLICATION FORM

This form is to be completed by employees and volunteers in sport.

Confidential

Position applied for:	
Surname and title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss):	
First Name (s):	
Any first name, surname or maiden name previously known by:	
Date of birth:	Place of birth:
National Insurance Number:	
Present address:	
Postcode:	
Telephone Number (s):	
E-mail address:	
Former address (if moved within the previous three years):	
Current occupation:	Name of organisation:
Role:	Address:
Start Date:	
Previous occupations:	
Name of organisation:	
Start Date:	
Finish date:	
Relevant experience:	
Previous experience of working with young children in a voluntary or professional capacity:	

APPLICATION FORM (continued)

Qualifications:

Academic/school:

Vocational/interests:

Sporting qualifications and experience:

Reason for applying:

Name and address of two people who know you well (and are not related to you) who have first-hand experience of you working with children and that we can contact for a reference, or who have provided you with a reference testimonial:

With your approval we shall also contact your current employer (where appropriate) for a reference.

I am a member of British Gymnastics (please delete where appropriate) Yes/No
Full/Associate

I agree to abide by any Code of Ethics and Conduct, which the organisation has in force.

Signed:

Date:

Print name:

NB: Failure to disclose this information may result in exclusion from the club or organisation.

BRITISH GYMNASTICS CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT FORM

This form should be used by Club Welfare Officers to record the details of any concerns raised. A copy should be sent to the Ethics and Welfare Manager at British Gymnastics. If there is more than one alleged victim a separate form should be completed. All efforts must be made to keep the information confidential. The information should only be shared with those that need to know if it is in the best interest of the child or vulnerable adult. Please note that where a concern is immediate please make initial contact by telephone and return the completed form as soon as possible. The form should be completed for all levels of concern, even where no immediate action may be necessary.

DETAILS OF PERSON COMPLETING THE FORM

Name: _____

Club Name _____

Position: *(welfare officer, Coach, club official, volunteer, parent, gymnast etc.)* _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Contact number _____

Name / details of person who raised concern *(if different from above)* _____

DETAILS OF PERSON CONCERN IS ATTRIBUTED TO

Name _____

Position _____

Club Name _____

Relationship to alleged victim _____

DETAILS OF ALLEGED VICTIM

Name _____

Club _____ Discipline _____

Date of Birth _____ Age at time of incident(s) _____

Address of parent /
carer _____

Postcode _____ Contact number _____

Any identified special needs or
disability _____

REFERENCE FORM (Confidential)

(Name)_____ has expressed an interest in becoming a coach/official/team manager/helper (please circle as appropriate) and has given your name as a referee. The post involves substantial access to children and we are anxious to know if there are any concerns about this individual having a post that allows significant access to children.

If you are happy to complete this reference, all the information contained on the form will remain absolutely confidential, and will only be shared with the applicant's immediate supervisor should they be offered the above position. We would appreciate you being extremely candid and honest in your evaluation of this person.

- 1 How long have you known this person?
- 2 In what capacity?
- 3 What attributes does this person have that would make them a suitable volunteer?
- 4 How would you describe their personality?
- 5 Please rate this person on the following (please tick one box for each)

	Poor	Average	Good	V/Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Dealing with Children					
Maturity					
Patience					
Self Motivation					
Can Motivate Others					
Commitment					
Energy					
Reliability					
Trustworthiness					

This post involves substantial access to children. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we are anxious to know if you have had any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children or young people.

Yes No (Please tick one box)

If you have answered Yes we will contact you in confidence.

Name _____ Organisation _____

Contact Numbers _____

Signed _____ Date _____

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM - Use of Video, Film or Photography at British Gymnastics Events

The British Gymnastics Child Protection Policy requires that any person wishing to engage in photography, filming or videoing at an event, must register their intent with the event organiser. Please refer to the policy statement overleaf for further guidance.

Please complete the information and request a senior club official to sign the form to validate your identity and intentions then return with a SAE to:

Closing date for applications: _____

Name of applicant: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____

Telephone: _____

- I _____ declare that the purpose of videoing, filming or photographing at the _____ is for coaching or family use and that I will not in any way use, alter or permit the altering of images for inappropriate use. I have read the policy statement and agree to abide to its contents. I agree that I will ensure that the images will not be published, sold, distributed or otherwise disposed of without the prior written consent of British Gymnastics or the individual(s) concerned. I also consent to British Gymnastics obtaining, recording, retaining and processing for as long as it considers necessary the personal data relating to me included on this form (when completed) for the purposes referred to in the policy statement and to it erasing or destroying any such personal data at any time.
- I agree that British Gymnastics and I intend that the obligations and restrictions on me pursuant to this form will confer a benefit on any individual whose image may be taken or captured and that any such individual will be entitled to enforce in his or her own right any such obligations or restrictions pursuant to the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999.

Signed by the applicant: _____ Date: _____

- I can confirm that the applicant is associated with:

(Name of Club) _____

- Participants Name/s _____

and that the identification details above are to my knowledge correct.

Senior Club Official (PRINT NAME) _____ Position: _____

Signature: _____ BG Membership No: _____ Date: _____

IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO PROCESS APPLICATIONS AT THE EVENT.

Note: Individuals must register at the event registration desk with their confirmation form and must show proof of identity.

- At which point a small administration fee will be required.
- An identification label will be issued at the photography registration desk and this must be displayed whilst in the arena
- This form with the information contained will be retained at British Gymnastics offices for such period as British Gymnastics considers necessary.

CLUB WELFARE OFFICER

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- Assist the club to put in place policies and implementation plans for child protection, equity and welfare.
- Be the first point of contact for club staff and volunteers, young people and parents for any issue concerning child welfare, poor practice or potential/alleged abuse.
- Ensure that all incidents are correctly reported and referred out in accordance with BG guidelines.
- Ensure that all relevant club members have the opportunity to access appropriate child protection training.
- Ensure that BG procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed and all appropriate existing staff or volunteers have up-to-date criminal records disclosures.
- Maintain local contact details for Social Services, the Police and Area Child Protection Committees (ACPC).
- Ensure that codes of conduct are in place for club staff and volunteers, young people and parents.
- Sit on club management committee to advise on welfare issues.
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis.

CORE SKILLS

- Basic administration and record maintenance.
- Child-centred approach.
- Communication skills.
- Confidence in relation to referring cases externally.
- Ability to ensure policy and procedures are effectively implemented.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- Child Protection Awareness (BG, Home Country, scUK, ACPC training or recognised training within another NGB).
- Child Protection in Sport "Time to Listen" training for designated persons for child protection/welfare in sport (Club Level).

The above courses are 3-hour training modules that are essential for Welfare Officers. The additional courses are additional recommended training.

- BG Child Protection Implementation training.
- BG Club Management Module (includes equity training).
- A Club for All (Equity training).



REGIONAL WELFARE OFFICER

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- Assist the Region and technical committees to put in place policies and implementation plans for child protection, equity and welfare.
- Ensure that technical committees and event organisers are aware of the requirement for a designated person for child protection/welfare at all Regional events. (This person must be contactable at all times throughout the event. An appropriately trained Welfare Officer should accompany any trips that involve an over-night stay - this role may be taken on by an one of the existing staff/volunteers).
- Offer advice and support clubs in relation to child protection and welfare issues.
- Ensure that all incidents are correctly reported and referred out in accordance with BG guidelines.
- Help ensure adequate provision of BG/Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) child protection training courses.
- Deliver (following training) or attend Regional based courses for Club level CPSU "Time to Listen" module.
- Ensure that BG procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed and all appropriate existing Regional staff or volunteers have up-to-date criminal records disclosures.
- Maintain local contact details for Social Services, the Police and Area Child Protection Committees (ACPC).
- Ensure that codes of conduct are in place at Regional events for staff, and volunteers, young people and parents.
- Sit on Regional management committee to advise on welfare issues.
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis.

CORE SKILLS

- Basic administration and record maintenance.
- Child-centred approach and implementation plan across the Region.
- Communication skills.
- Confidence in relation to referring cases externally.
- Ability to ensure policy and procedures are effectively implemented.
- Ability to influence key people and ensure ownership of policy and implementation plans across the Region.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- Child Protection Awareness (BG, Home Country, scUK, ACPC training or recognised training within another NGB).
- Child Protection in Sport "Time to Listen" training for designated persons for child protection/welfare in sport (Regional Level).

Optional:

- Tutor training to deliver BG CP modules and Child Protection in Sport "Time to Listen" Club Level Module (if appropriate prior knowledge and experience).

The above courses are 3-hour training modules that are essential for welfare officers. The additional courses are additional recommended training.

- BG Child Protection Implementation training.
- BG Club Management Module (includes equity training).
- A Club for All (Equity training).

NATIONAL (HOME COUNTRY) LEAD OFFICER

TERMS OF REFERENCE

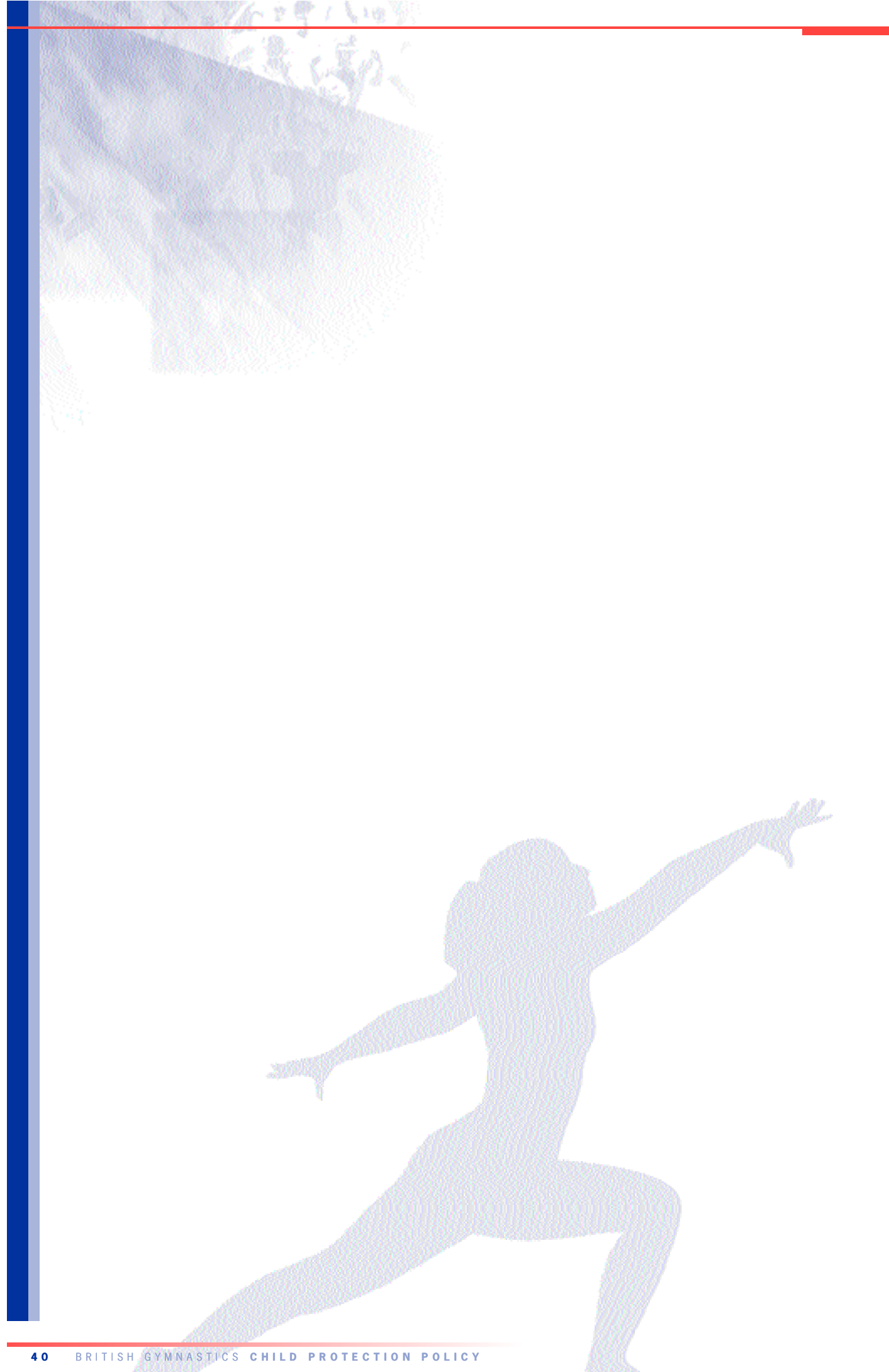
- Take a lead role in ensuring there is a child protection policy in place that is mandatory for all staff, members and volunteers and implementation plans to support.
- Take a lead role in managing and reviewing all Welfare policy and implementation plans.
- Ensure that technical committees and event organisers are aware of the requirement for a designated person for child protection/welfare at all National events. (This person must be contactable at all times throughout the event. An appropriately trained person should accompany any trips that involve an overnight stay - this role may be taken on by one of the existing staff/volunteers).
- Be available to advise and support clubs and technical committees in relation to child protection and welfare issues.
- Ensure that all incidents are correctly managed and referred out in accordance with BG (Home Country) guidelines.
- Take a strategic approach towards provision of BG/CPSU/Home Country child protection training courses.
- Take a lead role in identification, support and monitoring of Welfare Officers.
- Deliver (following training) or attend Nation based courses for CPSU "Time to Listen" module or equivalent welfare officer training.
- Ensure that BG (or appropriate Home Country) procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers are in place and all appropriate existing National staff or volunteers have up-to-date criminal records disclosures.
- Establish National links with NSPCC and represent the governing body at external child protection meetings.
- Ensure access to national and local contact details for Social Services (Work), the Police and Area Child Protection Committees (ACPC).
- Ensure that the child protection policies and procedures are well published among all staff, members (including gymnasts), volunteers and parents.
- Ensure that codes of conduct are in place at National events for staff and volunteers, young people and parents.
- Sit on relevant National committees to advise on welfare issues.
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis.

CORE SKILLS

- Knowledge of key legislation and government guidance on child protection.
- Understanding of roles of child protection relevant agencies.
- Ability to manage systems for administration and record maintenance.
- Child-centred approach.
- Communication skills.
- Confidence in relation to referring cases externally.
- Ability to ensure policy and procedures are effectively implemented.
- Ability to influence key people and ensure ownership of policy and implementation plan across the governing body.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- Child Protection Awareness (BG, Home Country, scUK, ACPC training or recognised training within another NGB).
- Child Protection in Sport "Time to Listen" training for designated persons for child protection/welfare in sport (Regional/National Level).
- Tutor training to deliver Child Protection in Sport "Time to Listen" Club Level Module (if appropriate prior knowledge and experience).
- Appropriate Equity training.





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