

British Gymnastics

Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

June 2005



English
Gymnastics



WAGA



NIAGA



Scottish
Gymnastics

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FOREWORD

Perkins Slade were appointed as Insurance Brokers and Risk Management Consultants to British Gymnastics in June 2000.

We considered our first duty in respect of the latter was to advise the Association of the need to produce Generic Risk Management Guidelines for clubs, coaches and facility providers, advising them of their duty of care responsibilities and offering practical, sensible assistance. Naturally, we were thrilled to discover they had already done it!

Gymnastics [including all British Gymnastics' recognised disciplines] is "high risk", involving many thousands of predominantly young people taking part in an extraordinary variety of activities on complex pieces of equipment, requiring a combination of strength, flexibility and courage. Young developing bodies are often "put to the test" and as such it is essential that all reasonable steps are taken, by everyone who takes part, to understand the nature of the risks involved and ensure suitable steps are taken to control them.

This latest version of the British Gymnastics "Health, Safety and Welfare Policy" provides a superb benchmark for safe practice. Clearly a huge amount of time and energy has been spent, by a panel of acknowledged experts, in compiling it.

However, the policy only has value if it is implemented fully by all British Gymnastics' "constituents", namely clubs, coaches, facility providers, volunteers, participants and parents. It must also be seen in the context, not of a standard for good practice, but as a minimum standard.

Despite its high risk status the number of accidents each year, in relation to the millions of hours of participation in gymnastics, are relatively low. This is a testament to the very high safety standards already achieved throughout the sport. However, this must not be the excuse for complacency. Everyone involved in gymnastics must seek to continue to improve their safety standards and the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy is a massive step in the right direction.

Richard Doubleday

Director, Sport
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Terminology

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

The term "safe", as used in this document, means a situation where so far as is reasonably practicable, all reasonable steps have been taken to understand the nature of the risks involved and to ensure suitable steps have been taken to control the risks and keep them to a minimum.

The equivalent of Social Services in Scotland is the Social Work Department.

On occasion different legislation or policy may apply in the home countries. The terms used by BG in this policy must be read in conjunction with such legislation or policy and due account taken thereof.

INTRODUCTION

British Gymnastics (BG) regards the health, safety and welfare of all members to be of paramount importance, which should not be compromised. To this end, it is BG policy to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that procedures are in place to maintain a safe and healthy environment not only for our members but also for other persons who may be affected by the activities of BG and/or our affiliated clubs and organisations.

The Health, Safety and Welfare Policy 2005 is an essential document for all individuals who are involved in running a gymnastics club and supersedes the previous Health, Safety and Welfare Policy 2001. The document provides clubs with the appropriate guidance to address health, safety and welfare issues in order to minimise risks involved in the sport. There are clearly inherent risks in gymnastics activities, due to the complex nature of the sport, however, these risks can be controlled and minimised by adherence to best practice.

The Policy sets out good practice principles that if followed, will help reduce the risks of running a gymnastics club or organisation and most importantly reduce the risks associated with participation. In addition, following these principles will contribute to BG's aim of reducing the number of claims made against the BG insurance policy, which covers all affiliated members and organisations.

Insurance

In today's culture of blame and litigation, it is essential that clubs and coaches hold appropriate levels of insurance cover. Membership of British Gymnastics incorporates a comprehensive insurance cover and all registered members and clubs are provided with cover that pays legal costs and damages in respect of claims against the insured while involved in gymnastics activity in an environment that is under the control or influence of BG.

"An environment that is under the control or influence of BG" includes any facilities, coaching, training, competitions, events or courses, which are under the governance or management of:

- An Affiliated home country or region
- A BG Registered Club
- A Local Education Authority i.e. School/College/University
- A Health Authority i.e. Hospital/Rehabilitation Centre/Primary Care Trust
- A Public Body – Central Council for Physical Recreation (CCPR) /Sports Council etc
- A Local Authority i.e. County Council/District Council/City Council
- A Leisure Centre run by a Local Authority
- A Private Leisure Centre registered with BG under their Leisure Centre Scheme.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Coaches working in any facility that is not under the governance of BG or the organisations listed above, for example: unregistered Leisure Centres, Church Halls, Youth Clubs, Private Unregistered Clubs are not covered by their BG insurance. Coaches who hire facilities from any of the organisations listed above (in bullets) but are not directly under their governance must register all participants with BG or seek alternative insurance cover.

Any member or affiliated organisation that is found to be blatantly disregarding the BG Policy may well find that they are not covered in the event of a claim.

Responsibilities

It is important to recognise that this Health, Safety and Welfare policy does not remove the responsibility for clubs, officials and coaches to have and implement appropriate policies and procedures, relating to the activities they provide. However, the application of some safety measures will depend on whether your club owns, leases or hires their facility and whether the club has any employees.

Hired Facilities

There are many different types of clubs with a variety of structures using facilities that range from hired local authority centres and schools, to privately owned centres. There are some clubs that have paid employees and others that are run entirely by volunteers. As a club, you are responsible for the health and safety of your members and those who access the services provided by the club.

If you hire a gym from a Local Authority (LA), you will be subject to the Local Authorities Health and Safety policy. The LA will have their own Health and Safety procedures in place which will cover the facility, emergency procedures, risk assessments and so on. All coaches and officials will need to acquaint themselves with these procedures and arrangements. The club should confirm that the above procedures and risk assessments have been undertaken by the Local Authority.

If you hire a facility from another voluntary organisation, for example another sports club, they may not have well developed procedures for Health and Safety. Your club would therefore need to introduce their own procedures.

Owned Or Leased Facilities

If your club owns or leases a facility, you must take reasonable steps to ensure the facility and equipment are safe.

Affiliated Organisations With Employees

If an organisation is a source of work for someone (i.e. an individual makes their living as a gym coach) or if the organisation has employees, it will be subject to the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the associated health and safety legislation. The relevant Local Authority Leisure Department or equivalent health and safety provider or the Health and Safety Executive can advise on these matters. The club must ensure that all emergency procedures and safety policies are in place, which may include procedures above and beyond those outlined in this policy.

An organisation with five or more employees has further duties to comply with in relation to Health and Safety legislation. These include the recording of all significant findings of risk assessments and arrangements for health and safety measures, as well as drawing up a health and safety policy and ensuring all employees are well aware of all procedures.

Duty Of Care

Irrespective of whether an organisation has employees or not, the club and individuals who run it and operate within it have a legal 'Duty of Care' to the members. It is good practice to adopt similar measures for health, safety and welfare and to ensure the risks involved are properly understood and controlled. BG strongly recommends that clubs adopt the BG policy as a minimum.

As a club you have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of gymnasts, coaches, volunteers, officials and any visitors to your club. This responsibility applies to all clubs, regardless of their size or structure. There is a legal responsibility to ensure that participants are protected against harm or danger whilst taking part in gymnastics or related activities. This is legally termed the 'Duty of Care'. This becomes particularly relevant when dealing with children. In certain circumstances when working with children, an adult who carries out a supervisory role would take on certain responsibilities while the child was in their care. The legal terminology for the relationship is that the person would be 'in loco-parentis'. The expected standard for behaviour would be based on reasonableness. In this circumstance the test would be: How would a reasonable parent behave? In other circumstances, due to the extra knowledge a coach or other trained individual may have, the test of reasonable behaviour would be how a reasonable coach or trained individual would behave. The Duty of Care would start from the time a child arrives at a club or event, until the child is returned to their parent or guardian.

The 'Duty of Care' also extends to adults. e.g. if an accident occurred whilst a volunteer was helping move equipment, the club (or its members) may be liable. In order to establish liability, it would have to be proved that a club failed in its 'Duty of Care' to take reasonable care for that person.

The 'Duty of Care' extends over a number of areas –

- The provision of a safe environment at all times including safe apparatus
- Safe development of the individual through appropriate physical and psychological preparation and progressive skill development
- Provision of suitable first aid support and emergency procedures
- Exercising reasonable care at all times
- Compliance with child protection and welfare policy and procedures

Those with a managerial responsibility must ensure that policies and procedures are in place and implemented to ensure that the 'Duty of Care' is met, although it is impossible to establish detailed guidelines for every aspect of every situation that may arise. However, BG Policy, training courses and resource materials are designed to provide the prudent club, coach, judge, official and volunteer with a sufficient basis of knowledge and guidance to enable them to make informed judgements regarding acceptable standards of health, safety and welfare.



1.0 POLICY

1.1 BG ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

BG strives to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of everyone involved in the sport. We endeavour to promote the highest standards in all areas and have outlined below some of our key mission statements that impact on the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy 2005. These include: -

- Developing a UK wide vision, strategic plans and policies in partnership with key stakeholders.
- Ensuring that quality is consistent through licensing and development, monitoring and enforcement of rules at UK level.
- Developing and controlling coaching/coach education and judging/judge education programmes and training for other officials and volunteers within the sport.
- Providing information and technical expertise.
- Disseminating best practice and benchmarking across the UK.
- Developing and monitoring policies and principles for child protection, equity, health and safety, ethics and others.
- Delivery of World Class programmes and UK elite programmes i.e. those outside of World Class Performance.
- Providing cost effective services that would not be economical at a Regional or home country level in consultation with home countries.
- UK wide information systems and central database management.
- Creation of UK-wide programmes for club development.

In achieving these mission statements, BG and each of the Gymnastics Governing Bodies in the UK, agrees to the following key underlying core values governing gymnastics activity:

- Putting members first.
- Investing in and maximising the potential of members, staff and volunteers.
- Applying the principles of equity.
- Recognising and discharging all duties of care including Health, Safety and Welfare.
- Embracing the principles of Continuous Improvement.
- Embracing the principles of Best Value. (Challenge, Consult, Compare, Compete)
- Applying the principles of a drug free sport.
- Applying the principles of Long Term Athlete Development. (LTAD)

The above describes what BG considers to be accepted good practice and values, which gymnastic providers should adopt at all times.

1.2 GUIDANCE & LEGISLATION

The policy and procedures reflect best practice guidance and legislation. The following are the main pieces of legislation that are core to all procedures within the Health, Safety and Welfare policy 2005: -

The Children Act 1989 & 2004 (England and Wales only)
The Children (NI) Order 1995 (Northern Ireland)
The Children (Scotland) Act 1995
All relevant legislation for recruitment and selection of volunteers
All relevant anti-discrimination legislation
Human Rights Act 1998
The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
The Data Protection Act 1994 & 1998
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (and its subordinate legislation)

OTHER RELEVANT BG POLICY AND GUIDANCE

The following documents should be read and followed in conjunction with the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy 2005.

BG Member's Handbook: The Handbook contains all the Association Rules, Codes of Ethics and Conduct, Disciplinary and Appeals Procedures and the Articles of Association
Child Protection Policy 2004
Anti-doping Policy 2005
Equality Policy (to be revised in 2006)

Further guidance can be found within other BG publications, such as Coaching Manuals and Child Protection and Club Management Resources. Members who are also members of other affiliated home countries and Regions should also refer to the Articles of Association and Rules of these Organisations.

1.3 ACTIONS TAKEN BY BG

- BG has established an Ethics and Welfare Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Board. The Committee is responsible for advising the Board and recommending Policies on issues of Health, Safety & Welfare, Child Protection, Ethics, Sports Equity and Equality, Anti-Doping, GymMark and any related areas within British Gymnastics. The Committee is also responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of all policies within its remit.
- BG has an Ethics and Welfare Manager who supports the work of the Ethics and Welfare Committee.
- BG has a designated Health and Safety Adviser who provides information and advice, carries out inspections and helps in ensuring that we meet our legal duties.
- BG has introduced GymMark, a Gymnastics club accreditation scheme that assists clubs to comply with the requirements of the British Gymnastics' Policies and Procedures and helps to facilitate the provision of a safe, effective and child-friendly gymnastics environment.
- BG has a complaints and disciplinary procedure, which is followed in the event of any serious breaches of BG Policy and Procedures.
- BG maintains confidential records of all complaints, concerns and sanctions against clubs and members in line with data protection legislation.
- BG has reviewed the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy, initially implemented in 2001, and is committed to ensure that the reviewed policy is widely available.
- Health, Safety and Welfare issues are included within BG education programmes.
- Best Practice is extensively promoted, and coaches/officials/clubs and affiliated organisations are encouraged to adopt the British Gymnastics Policy for Health, Safety and Welfare.
- BG has introduced a Club Management Module that includes relevant information on the implementation of the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy.

1.4 MONITORING PROCEDURES

The Health, Safety and Welfare policy and procedures will be annually 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 or guidance.
- As a result of any changes in governance of the sport.
- As a result of any changes in the nature or size of British Gymnastics.
- Following a procedural review as a result of a significant case.

1.5 ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS AND MEMBERS

Although affiliated organisations may have policies and procedures in place, it is essential that these policies, as a minimum, 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 everyone and all members must take reasonable steps to ensure they are fully aware and compliant with the relevant aspects of the policy.

All affiliated organisations must: -

- Adopt and implement the BG policy guidelines or ensure existing policies are compliant with BG policy and UK legislation.
- Determine the responsibilities of the organisation in respect of any facilities and employees.
- Plan the work of the organisation to minimise all risks in respect of Health, Safety and Welfare.
- Ensure the responsibilities for health, safety and welfare are designated to individuals with the necessary skills and experience.
- Ensure there are adequate training opportunities for staff, coaches, officials and other volunteers.
- Ensure reporting procedures are followed for any accidents or incidents and inform BG of any serious allegations or concerns of poor practice.

All members must: -

- Take reasonable care of their own health, safety and welfare and that of others who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions.
- Co-operate with BG, your home country or Regional affiliated organisation and your club on issues relating to health, safety and welfare.
- Ensure reporting procedures are followed for any accidents or incidents and inform BG of any serious allegations or concerns of poor practice.



2.0 FOUNDATION OF GOOD PRACTICE

There are inherent risks in the sport of gymnastics but the majority can be controlled and kept to a minimum through the adoption and implementation of accepted best coaching practices. Unnecessary risks should be removed by ensuring that safe practices are followed and that a safe environment is provided at all times.

2.1 SAFETY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN GYMNASTICS

Everyone in coaching owes a duty of care to those being coached. A general duty of care is owed to the participants to exercise reasonable care for their safety both in training and competition.

The criteria for creating a safe environment includes:

- The health and safety of each participant is paramount. This includes ensuring so far as is reasonably practicable that the place in which the gymnastics activity, training or coaching takes place, and the equipment and facilities used, are safe.
- The coach must have the competence and experience for the role he or she is performing.
- The coach must be fully qualified to do that which he or she is undertaking.
- The coach must carry out his or her coaching duties with reasonable skill and care and in a reasonable, prudent and professional manner in accordance with the British Gymnastics and sports coach UK (scUK) codes of Ethics and Conduct.
- Meticulous physical and mental preparation of the participant appropriate to the level of participation.
- Suitable, well maintained apparatus and adequate facilities in an appropriately safe environment.
- Best coaching practices are employed at all times.

2.2 THE PRUDENT AND CARING COACH

The prudent and caring coach will ensure that the following principles are implemented and continually upheld:

- A safe environment is provided at all times.
- Clear and adequate instructions are given prior to commencing an activity.
- Coaching methods and procedures are continually assessed for the safety of both performer and coach.
- Only competent and suitably trained and qualified persons supervise or coach an activity.
- The clothing and special equipment (e.g. hand-guards) to be worn by the participants must be suitable, not loose fitting, and in good order.
- The health status of each participant should be known before commencing a training session or competition. If a coach knows of any health reason, medical condition or injury which might affect a participant's ability to train or compete, or which might adversely affect his or her health if he or she were to train or compete, appropriate medical advice should be obtained before the participant undertakes any training activity or competes. If a medical advisor advises that the participant should not train or compete, the participant should not do so until a medical advisor has advised that the participant may do so.
- Medical advice should be sought in case of injury and only persons who are qualified should administer first aid.
- An accurate record of injuries and actions should be maintained and kept up to date.

- Medical approval should be sought following a debilitating injury before permitting a participant to recommence training or competition.
- Coaches must be immediately accessible and never leave the premises while a session is in progress.
- Always ensure that a minimum of two responsible adults are present during training sessions. One of the adults must be an appropriately qualified coach, the second adult must not be one of the participating gymnasts.

2.3 COACHING QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

Gymnastic activities involve an inherent risk and in the desire to protect the participants and ensure their safety and well being, British Gymnastics requires the following criteria to be implemented:

- The minimum qualification for a coach wishing to operate independently, or take responsibility for a club, is a BG Club Coach level qualification in the disciplines being offered.
- The minimum qualification required to take responsibility for a class is a British Gymnastics Coach level qualification. The Coach must however work under the direction of a more highly qualified coach.
- Qualified Assistant Coaches may work under the direct supervision of a qualified British Gymnastics Coach (or higher) but must not operate unsupervised.
- Coaches and Teachers should only work in the sports specific areas in which they are qualified and only to the level to which they are qualified.
- It is a BG requirement that the coach designing and directing the programme holds a minimum of Club Coach level qualification in the specific disciplines being offered.
- For coaching at higher levels of performance, the coach must hold a level of qualification appropriate to the level of performance to be undertaken in that particular discipline of the sport.
- British Gymnastics has a duty to ensure that coaches are safe to undertake the coaching of participants within their knowledge and competency according to current best practice. It is therefore required that Coaches should update or revalidate their Coaching Qualification to maintain a degree of currency in their coaching practices. BG will determine the frequency and method of revalidation or qualification update.
- British Gymnastics will require all coaches at Level 2 (Coach) qualifications and above to complete a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure, which will be considered prior to accreditation of a coaching award. Although a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an individual from holding a BG qualification, British Gymnastics will not award qualifications to candidates who are considered unsuitable to work in a voluntary or paid capacity with children or vulnerable adults.
- In a **competition or other BG event**, the coach must possess a current qualification according to the following criteria:
 - i) A coach who holds a Coach level qualification may be present on the arena and be responsible for activities to the level of the qualification.
 - ii) At other levels, the coach must hold a minimum of Club Coach qualification, but must hold a level of qualification appropriate to the level of performance of the participant in the particular discipline.
 - iii) A less qualified coach may assist a more highly qualified coach but only in those areas and to the level to which they are qualified.

2.4 GYMNAST TO COACH/TEACHER RATIOS:

There are a number of diverse factors to consider when making recommendations with regard to the ratio of participants to coach/teacher in Gymnastics and Trampoline activities.

These factors might include: the age and stage of development of the participants, the level and type of activity, the experience of the participants and coach and the type of facility and equipment available.

However, the coach in charge must always make an assessment (i.e. a risk assessment) of each situation and must determine a ratio of participants to coach/es that is reasonable, safe and effective.

Please note that there should always be at least two responsible adults in the gymnasium.

To ensure that a safe and effective coaching/teaching situation is maintained, British Gymnastics recommends the following reasonable ratio of participants to coach/teacher:

Pre-School Classes

For independent child classes, a ratio of eight participants to one coach is recommended. This can be increased proportionally to the number of qualified assistant coaches, i.e. 8 per additional directly supervised assistant coach.

For classes where the parent, guardian or carer is participating with the child, a maximum ratio of 20 children to one coach is recommended.

Gymnastics Classes

Suitably qualified British Gymnastics coaches or teachers must supervise all gymnastics activities. Coaches must be qualified to the level of performance of the participants in the specific discipline of the sport.

The recommended maximum number of participants to one apparatus/station is 8 participants.

Where more than one apparatus/station is to be supervised, the coach in charge must carefully assess the following:

- a) The age, stage of development, experience, varying ability and number and discipline of the participants.
- b) The coaches' own qualifications and experience.
- c) Their ability to observe, advise, support and respond to the difficulties of anyone in the gymnastics area.
- d) The level and type of activity and suitability of the apparatus arrangements.

Normally, one coach would not be expected to supervise more than 16 gymnasts, without other suitably qualified coaches being in attendance. However, where a directly supervised and qualified Assistant Coach is used, in addition to the supervising coach, each additional Assistant Coach may supervise a maximum of 8 participants (i.e. qualified lead coach = 16 gymnasts plus 8 gymnasts with AC = 24 in total).

Trampoline to Coach Ratios

All trampolining activities must be supervised by suitably qualified British Gymnastics coaches or teachers. It is incumbent upon the coach in charge to ensure that trained spotters of suitable size are provided at each side not protected by alternative safety measures such as end decks.

The recommended maximum number of participants to one trampoline is 8 participants.

Where more than one trampoline is to be supervised, the coach in charge must carefully assess the following:

- The age, stage of development, experience, varying ability and number and discipline of the participants.
- The coaches' own qualifications and experience.
- Their ability to observe, advise, support and respond to the difficulties of anyone in the trampoline area.

Normally, one coach would not be expected to supervise more than 16 recreational trampolinists, without other suitably qualified coaches being in attendance.

The coach in charge must also ensure that the person/s sliding in the "push in mat", if not a qualified coach, is trained, experienced, of sufficient maturity and familiar with the performer.

Coaching People with a Disability

When working with people with disabilities, a competent assessment of the risk to the individual and other participants must be made when determining the ratio of gymnasts to coach. Depending on the nature of the disability, one-to-one supervision may be necessary. For further information on Disability issues please refer to the BG guidance on the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

General Comment

When groups are warming up, cooling down or working on low risk activities on a floor area, the ratio may be increased within the bounds of safety.

2.5 AGE RELATED GUIDELINES

i) Age and Level of Participation:

It is impossible to legislate for every conceivable situation in gymnastics, since there are many variables to consider. However this statement provides some guidelines, which British Gymnastics considers appropriate to the safe participation and long term development of the gymnasts.

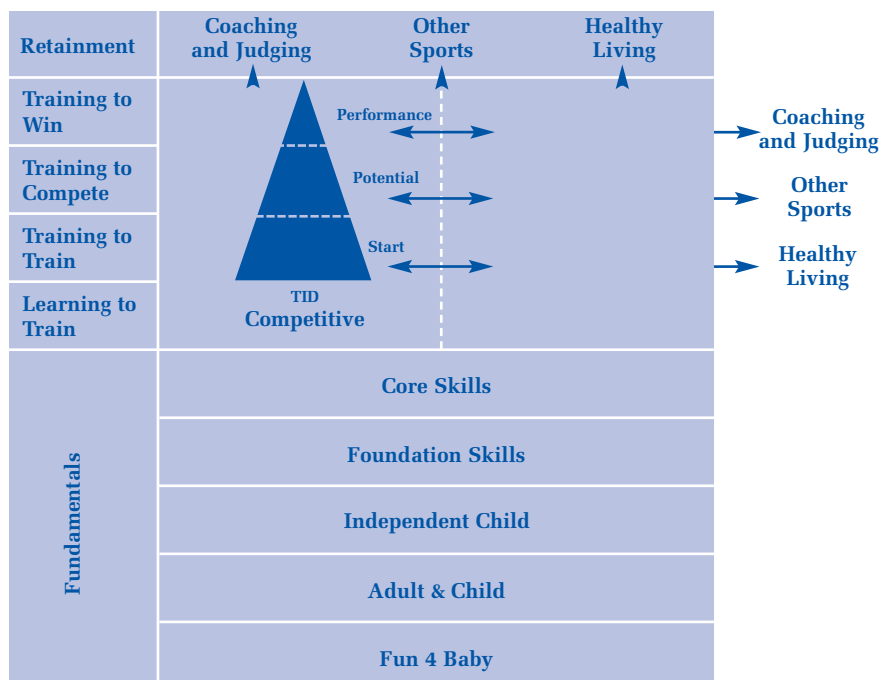
Factors that influence the guidelines include: the chronological age of the child, physical and psychological age characteristics, gender and stage of development of the participant. Consideration must also be given to the type of activity, suitability of the facility, and the needs and desires of the participants.

The levels of ability and aspirations of the participants should be of paramount importance when the level of participation is determined. It is possible to commence gymnastics participation at any stage, but the possible lack of flexibility, strength ability and spatial awareness may be debilitating factors with regard to high level performance. In addition, participants should only undertake gymnastics at a level at which it is safe for them to participate.

It is generally recognised that it takes eight to twelve years to successfully prepare an international gymnast and that it is best to commence a sport specific gymnastics programme at an early age although this may depend on the discipline, some not requiring such early specialisation as others. Commencement at an early age also enables a good work ethic and appropriate attitude to be formulated to prepare the young participant for future development.

Long Term Athlete Development

British Gymnastics has developed a Model of Long Term Athlete Development. This model has been designed to provide guidelines for the safe and appropriate/effective development of gymnasts. The model contains six progressive stages which apply across each of the gymnastic disciplines (See diagram below). It is extremely difficult to assign age bands to each of the stages as these will differ depending on the discipline, the age at which the participant enters the pathway, their physical, cognitive and emotional maturity and whether they wish to follow a competitive or recreational pathway.



Stage 1: Fundamentals (Approximate ages 8 weeks – 8 years)

Fundamentals is the first stage of development and is designed to encourage young people to become physically active and to develop the fundamental movement skills they need whether they choose to take part in gymnastics, other sports or pursue an active lifestyle. The Fundamental Movement Ideas for Early Years Programmes (Fun4Baby, Adult and Child and Independent Child) provide structured programmes of play for babies and children from 8 weeks through to school age. The Fundamental Movement Ideas for Foundation Years Programmes (Foundation Skills and Core Skills) continue to progressively develop Fundamental Movement Skills. The Foundation Skills stage should begin to introduce the foundations for gymnastics skills including an emphasis on body management and the acquisition of key body shapes. At this stage, children should be continuing to gain a rounded development of other important non-gymnastics specific fundamentals (possibly through participation in other sports, multi-skill sessions or through their gymnastic classes).

The Core Skills stage focuses on the development of core gymnastic skills and the physical preparation required to complete these skills. The development of fundamental movement skills should continue through the core skills stage but attention will increasingly focus on developing core gymnastics skills, parts of skills and developing the physical attributes (preparing the body) in a fun, enjoyable and challenging environment.

The British Gymnastics Fundamental Movement Ideas programme has been designed specifically for this purpose and is recommended to all providers in this area of development. Participants in the Fundamental programmes will normally train between 1 to 4 hours per week, depending upon their stage of development. However, slightly more hours may be appropriate in the Core Skills Stage within the early specialisation disciplines.

Stage 2: Learning to Train: (Approximate ages 7 – 9 years)

This area of basic specialisation involves the learning of multilateral physical preparation and basic skill/element acquisition, leading to low level competition. Up to 10 hours training per week is usual however, slightly more hours may be appropriate within the early specialisation disciplines.

Stage 3: Training to Train: (Approximate ages 10 – 13 years)

This stage involves specialised physical preparation, the acquisition of more advanced core skills and participation in intermediate – espoir level competitions, usually training up to 15 hours per week is usual, however, slightly more hours may be appropriate within the early specialisation disciplines.

Stage 4: Training to Compete: (Approximate ages 14 – 15 years)

The key areas are specific physical preparation, acquisition of advanced skills/elements and participation in junior level competitions. Normally training up to 20 hours per week.

Stage 5: Training to Win: (Approximate age 16+ years)

Advanced physical preparation, attainment of high performance levels of complex skills and participation in senior level competitions. Normally training up to 25 hours per week.

Stage 6: Retainment: (Senior/mature gymnasts)

At this stage, the gymnast maintains the level of physical preparedness, refined skills and routines and consolidated performance at high performance level. The gymnast may also seek to develop other skills such as coaching, judging or officiating as an extension to their career. Normally training up to 25 hours per week.

When planning the training programme and number of training hours, a coach must pay particular regard to the maturation age, stage of development of each individual and also the intensity and variety of activity. This is particularly relevant where there are mixed aged partnerships or groups.

The guidelines above are recommended training hours for Artistic Gymnastics but these will vary considerably in respect of the other gymnastics disciplines. They are likely to be substantially lower for disciplines where there are fewer apparatus in that discipline eg. trampolines or aerobic gymnastics.

The sequence of stages within the LTAD Pathway should be the same for all participants. However, how far a gymnast progresses through the pathway and the ages associated with these stages will vary according to whether the gymnast chooses to follow a recreational pathway, a competitive non-elite pathway or a competitive elite pathway.

Children under 8 years of age.

Where children under the age of eight years are involved in activities of duration of 2 or more hours, the provider may be required to register with the Local Authority Social Services. Although the legislation that regulates the care of children under eight years is not normally applied to sport, British Gymnastics recommends that clubs with classes for children within this age group should notify the Local Authority of their existence to avoid any uncertainty on the issue.

British Gymnastics recommends that sessions for children under the age of 8 years should not exceed 2 hours and classes for pre-school children should not be longer than 45 minutes.

Age and Competition:

Competition is an integral part of gymnastics and the performance-orientated gymnast must gain experience in competition over a period of time.

However, to protect the child, it is BG policy that for an event that leads to a National or UK final, the gymnast must attain the minimum age of 9 years in the calendar year in which the event is held.

It is recognised that children may wish to enter events when they are below the age of 9 years. BG therefore recommends that for events that lead to a County or Regional title, the child should attain the minimum age of 8 years in the calendar year in which this event is held.

Participation in other events should be at the discretion of the coach, but taking due consideration of the age and maturation stage of development of the child, with the welfare of the child being the primary factor. It is recognised that it is a natural trait for children to want to challenge themselves and others, and the British Gymnastics proficiency reward schemes, grades and club/class competitions can be utilised to meet this need.

The world governing body for gymnastics, the Federation Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG) has ruled that a gymnast must be aged at least 16 in the year of competition in order to compete at full senior international level. This action was designed to discourage the accelerated development of younger talented gymnasts and thereby extend the competitive career of the gymnast. This is more relevant to female gymnasts, since male gymnasts are not likely to achieve maturation strength until around 18 years and are therefore unlikely to compete at senior level at a young age.

In order that the gymnast gains the valuable knowledge and experience of competition, it is recommended that the following strategy for the number of competitions per year for each stage of development be adopted:

(Approx age)	Competitions/year
Stage 2: 7 - 9 yrs	4 - 6 competitions
Stage 3: 10 - 13 yrs	6 - 8 competitions
Stage 4: 14 - 15 yrs	8 - 10 competitions
Stage 5: 16+ years	10 - 15 competitions

This volume of competition is only appropriate if the gymnasts are adequately prepared, free from injury (including micro-trauma) and competent at performing their routines.

However, the prudent coach will plan the training and event programme according to the maturation age, the experience and needs of the individual as well as the level or intensity of the event. It is critical to ensure that gymnasts have an appropriate balance between training and competition to provide adequate time for skill development and recovery. The yearly competition programme must be planned appropriately to allow this to happen.

2.6 PERSONAL CLOTHING: DRESS

The Code of Dress for gymnastics activities is designed to safeguard the participants and coaches. The following points should be adhered to during training and events:

- Ensure that the gymnasts and coaches wear appropriate clothing, which does not impede the freedom of movement required by the activity and is not too loose as to constitute a hazard.
- The wearing of clothing with buckles or clasps must be discouraged.
- Raised adornments on gymnastics clothing are dangerous and are prohibited.
- Long hair may become a hazard and it should be tied back to avoid accidents.
- Participants should work in bare feet or gymnastics slippers.
- Do not permit the wearing of socks without gymnastics footwear on polished or slippery surfaces.

- When participating on a trampoline, ensure that socks or suitable gymnastics footwear (not training shoes) are worn.
- Long fingernails present a risk to the gymnast and coach. The coach is responsible for ensuring the length of fingernails is compatible with the activity.
- Coaches and gymnasts should be aware of the risks associated with wearing spectacles and minimise the risks by wearing flexible frames or contact lens or ensuring glasses are secure.

NB: The Code of Dress for participants at a BG Competition will be that stated by the FIG in the sport specific code. Any concessions or variance from this code will be published in the sport specific competition handbook.

Coaches at events:

Coaches who are active in the event arena should dress smartly according to the following: -

- Tracksuits, polo shirts or sweatshirts with long trousers, socks and training shoes or gym slippers, OR
- Where coaches are not physically active in the event arena, they should dress smartly according to the traditions of the particular discipline.

Sensitivity to religious beliefs should be afforded with regard to the dress code but safety is paramount and any clothing that is considered by the coach to be a safety hazard should be changed or participation may be prohibited. Any concessions on dress must be within the bounds of reasonable safety. The element of risk should be explained to the coach/participant (parent or guardian) and every attempt to control the risk should be adopted.

2.7 BODY PIERCING AND ADORNMENTS

British Gymnastics believes that jewellery and adornments worn in body piercing are inappropriate for safe practice in gymnastics.

A person with body adornments or jewellery must inform the coach and also remove the relevant items to reduce the risk of injury to the participant, the coach and others.

Coaches must ensure that risks associated with jewels and raised adornments on leotards are eliminated.

The policy applies to all participants and coaches in training and in events at home and abroad.

Coaches wearing rings that cannot be removed:-

It is acknowledged that in some circumstances, it may be impossible to remove a ring. Should this be the case, the ring must be sufficiently covered with protective tape in order to eliminate any risk.

Failure to conform will prohibit the individual's participation on the grounds of reasonable safety and may render the individual's insurance invalid should an accident result directly from non-compliance.

2.8 DISCIPLINE

A good standard of behaviour and code of conduct within the gymnasium will greatly reduce the risk of injury and enhance concentration and the work ethic. The standards should be applied equally to all participants. Full codes of ethics and conduct are contained within the BG Membership handbook.

3.0 SAFETY

3.1 SAFETY IN COACHING

It is essential that appropriate precautions are taken during activities to ensure that optimal levels of safety are maintained at all times. Particular consideration must be given to the following:

Preparation of the Gymnast

The physical and psychological preparation of the participant is of prime importance to facilitate the safe learning of skills or movements. Appropriate strength, flexibility and body awareness together with psychological factors must be developed prior to teaching a skill.

Progressive Learning

The use of carefully selected progressive sub-skills, which relate to the complete skill, is recommended good practice and time for consolidation in performance should be allocated.

Competent Spotting/Supporting

“Supporting” and “Spotting” are integral with the safe learning of gymnastic skills and involve the techniques of observation and handling, to ensure the safe performance of the skill. Recommended safe practices as taught on BG coaching courses should be used. Coaches must be continually alert to the risks encountered where an inferior performance occurs and be ready to provide emergency support.

Suitable Apparatus

Carefully erect and check the suitability of the apparatus for height, width and stability. Ensure that a safe and appropriate landing surface is provided at all times in accordance with the level of activity and the ability and experience of the participant. Frequently conduct a risk assessment of the environment to ensure that it remains safe.

Safe Landings

Correct landing techniques and methods of falling safely should be effectively taught and encouraged at all times.

Flexibility/Stretching Exercises

British Gymnastics has received a number of enquiries from concerned parents, regarding the techniques and types of exercise that BG promotes as correct practice. Concerns have been expressed about the coaches using their full body weight or excessive force during flexibility training. There are also concerns about the close proximity of the coach's body and hands to sensitive areas on the gymnast's body.

Coaches are encouraged to be mindful of these factors and to protect themselves against allegations of poor practice and should heed the following good practice guidelines:

- Use slow, progressive and prolonged stretching exercises, within the “discomfort zone”, rather than what might be considered to be excessive force.
- Avoid exercises that place the coaches and gymnasts body in “close proximity” and might be seen as unnecessary by the less-informed parent or observer.
- Be sensitive to how the exercise might be perceived by the parents and children.
- Consider holding a parents' forum to explain the flexibility training techniques, so that the parent is more aware and therefore less likely to misinterpret the techniques being used.
- Use partner exercises with more experienced gymnasts where possible.

Use of Weight Training in Gymnastics

British Gymnastics does not recommend the use of Olympic weight lifting “free weight” type training programmes or exercises with gymnasts, until the post pubertal stage of development.

British Gymnastics recommends that all physical preparation should be progressive and where possible, use the gymnast's own body mass as the resistance. This is particularly relevant in early childhood and periods of adolescent growth. Single weight discs, ankle, wrist and waist belts can be used to increase the resistance but this will depend upon the age and stage of maturation of the gymnasts.

The use of free weights (bar and weight discs) may be introduced with suitably prepared gymnasts once they have reached the post puberty stage of development. Appropriate types of weight training exercise are incorporated into the BG Coaching qualification courses where this is relevant to the particular discipline.

BG coaches are therefore qualified to deploy these exercises within the training programme.

Overuse and Growth Related Injuries

Due to the complex nature of the sport and the need for frequent, repetitive practice of skills or movements, participants in gymnastics are susceptible to overuse injuries. This is particularly relevant during the pubescent growth spurt periods. Coaches must be conscious of the need for meticulous physical preparation, a varied programme, use of appropriate techniques and a suitable environment to reduce the risk of overuse related injuries. Coaches must be continually vigilant in observing the growth pattern of young participants and sensitive to signs of soreness or pain particularly in growth plate areas. Advice should be sought from a qualified physiotherapist or medical practitioner.

Excessively repetitive exercises, poor facilities or bad technique may lead to “overuse injuries”. Coaches must take the necessary precautions to reduce the possibility of this type of injury by varying the programme, ensuring correct techniques are taught, adequate fitness is developed and suitable apparatus is used. The coach must take into consideration the age, stage of maturation and psychological and emotional state of the performer with regard to the demands of the training programme.

Fatigue

The principle of “overloading” by gradually increasing the physical demands of training is an accepted process for improving fitness, but a coach must be conscious of the onset of fatigue during training as this may have a deleterious effect on performance and may increase the risk of injury.

Personal Training Kit

It is recommended that coaches frequently inspect gymnasts’ personal equipment. It is particularly important to check that the handguards do not show signs of deterioration, such as stretching or wear.

3.2 RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is a process that identifies potential hazards in an activity, assesses the level of risk and then puts in place safe practices to control that risk. In other words, recognising anything that could realistically cause harm and taking all reasonable steps to reduce the likelihood of harm occurring.

While Health and Safety legislation places a requirement on all employers and self-employed people to carry out the relevant risk assessments, BG holds that it is good practice for all clubs to complete risk assessments and keep a record of any findings and remedial action. If a club becomes involved in any civil liability action, it will help to have these records available. Anyone who carries out a risk assessment for gymnastics must have a comprehensive knowledge of the type of activity and coaching processes that occur, in addition to an understanding of health and safety matters. Thus it is essential that gymnastics clubs do not rely solely on a risk assessment carried out by a Local Authority or other facility operator, but also ensure that those with the relevant gymnastics knowledge are engaged in this process.

For Gymnastics coaches this process of identifying the potential hazards, judging the level of risk and putting in safe practices to control the risk is one they are routinely familiar with in the coaching process and takes place throughout training without the necessity to make a written record.

Risk assessments can be carried out in a wide variety of circumstances or particular tasks: for example lifting a heavy piece of equipment, checking a facility, performing a gymnastics skill, wearing a piece of clothing or jewellery, running an event or even implementation of the club rules and procedures. Risk assessments should be carried out alongside the BG Facility and Apparatus Health and Safety checklists found in Section 8 of this document.

The Health and Safety Executive has produced a five-step guide to risk assessment and have many other publications that will provide extra support in these areas. The five steps are as follows –

- i) Look for hazards. (Ignore the trivial and concentrate on significant hazards that could cause serious harm).
- ii) Decide who might be harmed and how. (Gymnasts, coaches, visitors etc).

- iii) Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more needs to be done. (Aim to make all risks small and if necessary prioritise actions based on level of risk).
- iv) Record your findings and ensure these are communicated to all relevant people.
- v) Review your assessment and revise if necessary (particularly if you have new equipment or a new facility, are running an event or going on a trip).

These assessments should be of the individual locations at which gymnastic activities are undertaken and should be kept as written records. They are important as they allow clubs and coaches to show that they have thought about the wider risks associated with their activities.

A Risk Assessment template and a guideline facility checklist are available in Section 8 of the Policy. This is likely to require adaptation to the circumstances of individual clubs.

It is the responsibility of managers and coaches to ensure that a safe environment is provided at all times. It is therefore necessary to ensure that checks are carried out to ensure the safety of the following:

- **The Facility**
The owner and user of a facility must regularly check, record, and take appropriate action regarding the condition of: the building, heating, lighting, ventilation, floor plates, and ceiling and wall fixings.
- **Gymnastics Equipment**
Examine all apparatus for defects or damage and ensure that it is correctly erected and stored, on every occasion. Apparatus must be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. BG recommends that an approved agent carries a full annual equipment inspection and an appointed safety officer or coach undertakes regular inspections.
- **Manual Handling**
Staff and volunteers are often required from time to time to move items of equipment etc. Consideration needs to be given to the weight, size and bulk of equipment and the hazards associated with moving each piece of equipment and how to carry it out safely. Training should be provided when it is deemed necessary.
- **First Aid and Emergency Facilities**
Adequate First Aid facilities must be available and the emergency procedures extensively publicised to all users. Users must familiarise themselves with the particular emergency procedures and first aid facilities at each centre they attend.

The following are a selection of specific examples that may also be relevant to gymnastics clubs and where the health and safety legislation relating to the work place requires that consideration must be given: –

- Exposure to dust (potential hazard from chalk and pit foam)
- Tripping over poorly stored equipment
- Uneven surfaces (matting etc)

It may be the case that a risk assessment identifies that the only way to have reasonable control is to wear some form of protective equipment. In gymnastics we do this in many situations, for example – hand guards, applying tape to hands, padding. A risk assessment may also identify certain activities that should only be carried out by people who have received appropriate training.

Clubs who offer additional activities such as parties for non-members should be extremely vigilant when carrying out risk assessments.

3.3 GUIDELINES FOR GYMNASTICS APPARATUS

There are many different types and designs of gymnastics apparatus and training aids. Some apparatus may be permanently fixed and other pieces of equipment may require frequent assembly, dismantling or transportation and storage. It is impossible to produce an exhaustive statement to cover the safe use of all gymnastics apparatus and the many differing situations in which it may be used. However the following recommendations will provide a guideline to cover a comprehensive range of gymnastic situations.



Assembly of Apparatus

Apparatus should be assembled or erected according to the manufacturer's instructions and the handling of apparatus should be supervised at all times by a qualified coach. Adequate instruction must be provided to all personnel handling equipment.

Where permanent fixtures such as floor plates or wall or roof attachments are used to support apparatus, these should be installed by qualified and experienced personnel.

Particular attention should be made to ensure that there is a complete length of screw thread on all tensioning or adjusting devices and this should be maintained at all times.

The apparatus must be adjusted in height and width to suit the needs of the participants but care should be taken to ensure that all adjusting devices are secured after use.

Provision of Matting and Padding

The World Governing Body for gymnastics stipulates requirements for matting at international gymnastics events. British Gymnastics applies these regulations to all national events but there are also an infinite number of other events and training situations to consider.

The coach must be diligent in providing a safe environment and the selection of matting should be made on the basis of functional suitability and safety, with particular reference to the following factors:

- The age, ability, degree of experience and level of physical preparedness of the participants.
- The type of activity planned and the inherent risks associated with the activity.
- The nature of the apparatus and type of movement to be attempted. Consideration should be given to the height of the apparatus, the degree of momentum that the gymnast may generate and the point at which the gymnast may be at greatest risk.
- Matting of sufficient area, thickness, resilience and shock absorbency must be provided.
- Additional matting or a safety-landing module (safety mat) should be placed upon the base matting particularly when the participants are inexperienced in the particular activity.
- Matting should be non-slip; in good condition and free of damage. Coaches and gymnasts must be vigilant in ensuring that gaps do not appear due to the separation or slipping of matting.
- Matting or padding should also be provided around parts of the apparatus against which the gymnast may collide in the event of an erroneous attempt at an activity particularly, during the early learning stages.

Foam Filled Landing Pits

The foam must conform to the regulations for fire retardance, should be regularly cleaned and frequently decompressed. The padding covering the edges of the pit must be in good condition and of suitable depth and resilience.

Dismantling and Storing Equipment

Gymnastics apparatus should be dismantled according to the manufacturer's guidelines and should be directly supervised by a qualified person. When moving apparatus ensure that the pathway is free from obstructions and that recognised safe handling techniques are employed. Ensure that equipment is **securely stored** and that wooden equipment and matting is not exposed to moisture or close to heating devices. Moisture or heat may cause warping or separation of the wooden laminations.

Rebound equipment such as trampettes and trampolines **must be secured** when not in use, to prevent access by unqualified or unauthorised persons.

3.4 GYMNASTICS APPARATUS INSPECTION GUIDELINES

Constant vigilance is required by the facility provider, coach and club management to ensure that the apparatus is in good order and a log of regular inspections and action taken should be maintained. Any damage to equipment should be recorded and reported immediately to the facility provider and taken out of service until the

damage has been repaired. Coaches should also frequently check the location of gymnastics apparatus to ensure that sufficient space and height is maintained around the apparatus.

The Provision of Use of Work Equipment Regulations may apply where access to and use of the equipment is under a commercial arrangement.

As a minimum, suitably qualified personnel should carry out a full annual inspection/repair service. The inspection sheet should be signed and dated and held on record as proof that the equipment inspection has taken place. In addition, interim safety inspection checks should be made at a frequency of one-month intervals by a qualified coach or the facility provider.

Where facility providers take responsibility for inspection and repair of the facility and apparatus, coaches should seek confirmation that this has been carried out.

A guideline gymnastics apparatus check is included in Section 8 of the Policy. This is likely to require adaptation to the circumstances of individual clubs and type of equipment.

3.5 TRAMPOLINING CODE OF PRACTICE

The British Gymnastics (BG) Code of Practice illustrates what BG recommends as Best Coaching Practice for Trampoline.

This information is for all those who coach/teach and participate in trampolining.

A safety poster is also available from BG and this should be displayed prominently.

Trampoline is potentially dangerous. The purpose of this Code of Practice is to help both participants and coaches operate safely. It is recommended that all equipment be inspected annually in line with the guidelines contained in this document.

General

Trampoline should always be supervised by a qualified BG coach/ teacher, who must adhere to the following general points of guidance:

- The coach or organiser is responsible for assessing the suitability of the environment.
- Coaches/Teachers may, during the course and post course guided learning, practice coaching those elements covered on the course, under the guidance of a mentor coach. However they may not prepare participants for competition until they are fully qualified at that level.
- Coaches/Teachers should be aware of the emergency procedures for trampolining at the facility.
- When using more than one trampoline, coaches should carefully assess the following:
 - i) The age, experience, varying abilities, number and discipline of the participants.
 - ii) Their own qualifications and experience.
 - iii) Their ability to observe, advise, support and respond to the difficulties of anyone in the trampolining area.
- It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure that the person sliding in the push in mat, both in training and competition, if not a qualified coach, is trained, experienced and familiar with the performer and of sufficient maturity.
- It is recommended that all participants develop “core stability” of the mid body through appropriate physical preparation exercises.

The Hall

The following guidelines relate specifically to the positioning of trampolines within a training hall.

- **Height** – at least 5m is recommended for recreational use and a minimum of 8m is required for national and international competitions.

- **Position of trampoline(s)** – away from fire exits or walls (unless suitably padded) and overhead or protruding structures.
- **Lighting** – bright and even avoiding dazzle from sunlight.
- **The trampoline area must be:**
 - i) Protected from stray balls or projectiles.
 - ii) Noise levels should be low enough for pupils to hear all instructions.
 - iii) The space under and around the trampoline/s should be clear.
 - iv) Where possible a 2 metre space should surround the trampoline area and floor mats should be placed around the trampoline area and end decks.
 - v) Where possible a safety mat should be placed at each end of the trampoline.
- **Multi-trampoline set ups**
 - i) The most suitable arrangement is with trampolines end to end, with a safety mat placed between the ends of the adjacent trampolines.
 - ii) Where trampolines are placed side by side they should be separated by at least two metres or be directly touching.
- **Storage** – trampolines should be either chained and locked or placed in a locked store.

The Trampoline

When putting out and putting away the trampoline, in the first instance the manufacturer's guidelines (where available) should always be followed. The following points provide general guidance in this area:

- At least 2 trained, suitably sized persons wearing training shoes, under the direct supervision and involvement of trained staff, coach/teacher are required.
- Great care should be taken when moving the trampoline.
- The trampoline is heavy - make sure parts such as the frame ends or the whole trampoline are moved slowly.
- **Putting out the trampoline**
 - i) Rotate the trampoline to horizontal by holding the inside leg and the outside leg together. Place the inside leg on the floor carefully.
 - ii) Use good handling technique when removing the roller stands and store them away from the working area.
 - iii) Support fully the first end whilst lowering into place and insert leg braces. The second end is under tension and needs greater care when pulling down. Beware pulling on the leg braces before first checking the security of the Allen screws.
 - iv) Beware trapping the fingers in the hinges or between chains and the legs.
 - v) Beware of all moving parts on lift/lower roller stands.
- **Putting away the trampoline**
 - i) Release the first end and control the folding as it may be under high tension. Again confirm the tightness of Allen screws before using leg braces.
 - ii) Keep the elbows/forearms away from the gap between folding ends and frame whilst lowering under control.
 - iii) Insert the roller stands fully before handling.
 - iv) Push the trampoline from the end where the bed is rounded and no metal frame showing until vertical.

Safety Check before use

- **Beds:** Check for tears and areas on solid beds that have worn thin, loose stitching or breaks in the webbing of webbed beds that might allow toes to be caught or uneven landings to be made. Check for uneven tension (shown by the centre/metre box red lines not being straight) caused by springs being of uneven length or missing or broken anchor bars on the edge of the bed and high tension caused by excessive shrinkage of the bed.
- **Springs or cables:** Ensure they are all in place with the hooks pointing downwards and arranged so there is even tension on the bed. Stretched springs or cables should be replaced.

- **Frame pads:** Check for damage and security of pads. It is better if safety landing mats are used supported on end decks, which should be securely attached to the frame.
- **Safety mats and push-in mats:** Check for damage and security.
- **Joints:** Check for wear, with the frame level all round and not bowed.
- **Chains:** Check for security and even adjustment.
- **Leg braces:** Ensure they are inserted with Allen screws tight, rivets secure, hinge pins and T-joint fully in place.
- **Roller stands:** Check they are freely running and the swivelling castors, wheels and hooks are in working order.

The Overhead Rig

The following checks should be made prior to use:

- Correct position of the trampoline under the centre of the rig.
- For effective use, the angle between the ropes and the performer when stationary on the bed should be between 30°-45°.
- Security of the ropes and their attachments and the condition of elastics and attachments on bungee rigs.
- Free movement of the swivels and pulleys.
- The security of the belt.
- The person supervising the use of the overhead rig must be suitably qualified.
- The ability of the supporter to hold the weight and control the descent of the pupil.
- That the coach, pupil and person controlling the push-in mat understand their roles and are ready.

Any damaged equipment should be reported to the responsible authority and taken out of use until repaired.

The Coach/Teacher duties

- Warn participants of the potential danger and give guidelines for safe practice.
- Check evidence that pupils are fit to participate particularly after illness or injury.
- Check that pupils wear suitable sports clothing; suitable non-slip footwear (trampoline shoes or non-slip socks) if possibility of toes going through the webbing.
- Check that jewellery (including that associated with body piercing), watches etc have been removed.
- Check that hair is tied back and nails are trimmed.
- Provide trained spotters of suitable size on all sides which are not protected by alternative safety measures. The spotters should be attentive at all times. If children are too small to act as spotters, other trained people of suitable size should be used.
- Only coaches (for coaching purposes) can stand/sit on the frame or end decks.
- Ensure suitable rest is allowed following a maximum of 1 - 1½ minutes, 4 or 5 attempts at a skill or 2 routines.
- Ensure that drinks and food are kept well away from the trampoline area.
- Ensure no one goes underneath the trampoline especially small children.
- Only teach new skills after assessing the readiness of the pupil by observing ability, confidence, and background experience.

- Use recommended progressive practices, including manual or rig support, and push-in mats where appropriate. Pupils of suitable size and experience may be trained to assist.
- Warn pupils of the extra rebound when changing to a more powerful bed and allow a period of acclimatisation.
- Only experienced, trained pupils of similar size should be allowed to double bounce.
- Prevent fooling around and jumping from the trampoline to the floor. Discourage jumping other than in the centre of the bed.
- Pupils should be instructed to climb on and off the trampoline with the stomach facing the trampoline. Very small children can be assisted by a suitable padded, stable platform at the side of the trampoline.

The Trampolinist/Pupil

- Always inform the coach/teacher of any medical condition or medication that could affect performance.
- Always inform the coach/teacher of any accident in the last 6 months which resulted in unconsciousness from a blow to the head.
- Use the trampoline only when a coach/teacher is present and has given permission.
- Wear sports clothing and non-slip footwear, tie hair back and keep nails short.
- Pay attention when spotting.
- Be attentive to the coach/teacher and attempt new skills only after progressive training and permission.
- Avoid going under or swinging under the trampoline or end-decks.
- Avoid getting involved in ‘tests of daring’.
- Avoid stepping on the bed when someone else is bouncing.

3.6 FIRST AID AND EMERGENCY PROVISION

There are minimum standards in relation to first aid provision that exist for an organisation with employees. It is the responsibility of the employer to fulfil the first aid standards but all gymnastics clubs should ensure that there is adequate provision for first aid at their facility.

Clubs whose risk assessments indicate that there is a potential for injury, should ensure these minimum standards are in place at all times. All clubs should aim to follow these good practice guidelines.

The Provision

- The facility must include a **telephone**, together with clear instructions on how to dial out for emergency services.
- A **list of relevant numbers**, including the nearest hospital **Casualty Department** should be readily available.
- A **First Aid Kit** containing the materials recommended by the appropriate authorities should be readily available.
- A **suitably fully qualified first aid person or appointed person** to be present when any gymnastics activities are being performed. (BG recommends that all coaches attend a recognised first aid course. Contact the Health and Safety Executive for full details of recognised providers).
- A notice to identify where the first aid box is kept, names of identified first aiders and where they can be found.

- A register must be maintained of all participants, together with a contact number for their next of kin, parent or guardian and any medical conditions.
(NB: Although this information should be securely stored to comply with data protection legislation, it MUST be easily accessible in the event of an accident).

The Health and Safety Executive recommend the following minimum contents for a first aid box -

- HSE leaflet 'Basic Advice on First Aid at work' (single copies available free of charge)
- 20 individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings (assorted sizes)
- 2 sterile eye pads
- 4 individually wrapped triangular bandages
- 6 safety pins
- 6 medium sized (approximately 12cm square) individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings
- 2 large sized (approximately 18cm square) individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings
- Disposable gloves

First aid boxes should not contain any tablets or medicines.

Please note that the above is a suggested list and other similar items would be acceptable. In addition, clubs may need to keep other items that are specific to the needs of gymnastics.

Whenever gymnastic activities are taking place it is imperative that the following emergency procedures and provisions are accessible and fully understood by all participants:

First Aid Procedures and Serious Injuries

Coaches should have pre-planned arrangements that can be put into operation in the event of a serious injury.

The best advice is to allow only a person qualified in first aid to carry out emergency First Aid and then seek the help of qualified medical personnel. However, the following minimum procedure should be adopted in the event of any accident that occurs.

- i) Stop the class and direct other members of the class not immediately involved in the accident away from the injured person, and contact a suitably qualified person and/or the emergency services.
- ii) Inform the management of the facility and contact the parents, guardian or immediate family of the injured person.
- iii) Stay with the injured person until the emergency services arrive.
- iv) Ensure a responsible adult accompanies the injured person to the treatment centre.
- v) Complete an appropriate Accident Report form.

It is also good practice to retain contact with the injured person, to remain informed and follow up action or treatment, but the club or coach must not admit any liability as this may prejudice the club and coach's position in the event of a claim.

Reporting Accidents

In the event of an accident, no matter how minor it may appear at the time, it is vital to make a record of the accident and/or complete an accident report form. Should there be any legal action the accident report form will supply important details about the incident and may lead to an individual being vindicated of any blame.

An accident report form should contain the following information –

- Details of the person who had the accident
- Full details of the incident – date, time, location, what happened
- Indication of injury (drawing if necessary)
- Any first aid or other actions taken and by whom
- Witnesses
- Signature of person who completed the form and date of completion

In addition it is helpful to add further details concerning treatment, diagnosis of injury and recovery time. If action needs to be taken to prevent a similar incident this should also be added.

Accident reporting books that comply with health and safety legislation are available direct from the Health and Safety Executive.

British Gymnastics must be notified as a matter of urgency in the event of any accidents that result in a visit to hospital. Failure to supply this information may result in the insurance company refusing to settle a claim.

Clubs who employ people must also comply with the RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995) and report all legally reportable accidents and dangerous occurrences to the relevant enforcing authority.

3.7 FIRE SAFETY AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS SAFETY ISSUES

All clubs and affiliated organisations must be constantly aware and assess the risks of fire hazard. Clubs or organisations with responsibility for a facility should contact the local fire brigade for advice on fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures on arrival. Fire instructions will be specific to each facility and are required to be displayed throughout. All staff, volunteers and facility users must be advised of the procedures in the event of fire.

The following are some additional areas that clubs and organisations with employees need to consider under the Health and Safety legislation. Affiliated Organisations with employees should seek additional advice to ensure appropriate policy and procedures are in place. Clubs without employees should also take steps to ensure safety in these areas.

- **Use of display screen equipment**
When employees use a visual display unit for a significant amount of their daily work, assessments should be made of their workstations in order to assess the risks of development of muscular-skeletal or upper limb disorders or visual impairment.
- **Use of electrical equipment**
When employees use electrical equipment on a regular basis there is a risk of electric shocks or fire. Each piece of equipment should be tested on a regular basis, frequency depending upon use, and a record maintained. Any piece of electrical equipment that is unsafe should be removed.
- **Use of Hazardous substances**
Any hazardous substances stored on the premises (for example bleach) may be subject to a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessment.

This short list is an indication only. If the club or organisation is a place of work or source of income for those involved, the full range of relevant health and safety legislation will need to be considered.

4.0 GYMNASTS' WELFARE

Participation in gymnastics activities can provide opportunities to experience and develop many desirable qualities. Such experiences might include enjoyment, personal achievement, self-esteem and self-confidence, teamwork social skills and leadership qualities. These qualities will be enhanced if those working with the participants have as their priority, the welfare and safety of the participants.

We have a moral and legal responsibility to protect young people and vulnerable adults from abuse.

British Gymnastics is committed to providing information and training opportunities to ensure that those working with children and vulnerable adults adopt best practice to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the participants.

The full BG Children Protection Policy is available as a stand-alone document and this policy permeates all BG activities. All coaches, officials, affiliated bodies, clubs and members should be familiar with and comply with the contents of this policy.

4.1 CLUB REGISTRATION AND CONSENT FORMS

When gymnasts register with a club it is essential that the club collects appropriate personal information about them. The type of information that should be collected on registration would include:

- Name and address
- Date of birth
- Ethnic origin
- Parent/Guardian/Carer information
- Emergency contacts
- Medical details – allergies, existing conditions, disability
- Consent for participation in gymnastics
- Photography consent

Clubs should ensure that this information is collected at the earliest opportunity to ensure that any necessary risk assessments based on medical information can be completed prior to participation.

Parental Consent should always be sought prior to participation in regular club activity and it is good practice to also request consent to take photographs/video for training purposes. Additional consent must also be sought in other circumstances, including: -

- When a child is taking part in other activities beyond regular training
- When membership information is used for other reasons beyond those stated when it was originally collected
- Publication of images

4.2 DATA PROTECTION

Any information a club holds on members will be subject to the Data Protection Act 1998. The Act applies to anyone holding information about individuals in electronic form and sometimes in hard copy. There are eight principles relating to data protection that must be followed. The principles state that data must be:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for specified purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate and kept up to date
- Not kept for longer than is necessary
- Processed in line with the rights of the individual
- Kept secure
- Not transferred outside the European Economic area unless there is adequate protection for the data

Any data controller MUST comply with these principles. Individuals may seek damages through the courts against an organisation that fails to comply with the principles of data protection.

A further requirement of the Act is that most data processors are required to make notification to the Information Commissioner. There are some exemptions to the requirement to notify. One of the exemptions relates to clubs

that are 'Not-for-profit' organisations who process data purely for the purposes of establishing or maintaining membership. This exempt purpose is intended for small clubs and voluntary organisations.

IMPORTANT NOTE: It is the responsibility of all BG registered clubs and organisations to verify with the Information Commissioner whether or not they are required to notify. Please note that failure to register when you are not exempt is a criminal offence punishable by a fine.

4.3 CARERS (PRE-SCHOOL AND VULNERABLE ADULTS)

On occasion there are circumstances that require some gymnasts to need help with personal care such as going to the toilet, changing and washing. In the main this is most likely to arise for pre-school or some gymnasts with disabilities. British Gymnastics expects all personal care to be carried out by someone other than the coach (except when the coach is also the parent). The reason for this is that there may be some situations where the gymnast will be unable to differentiate between the two roles, which can lead to confusion and leave the gymnast vulnerable, and coaches at risk of allegations of abuse.

In line with our existing Child Protection Policy 2004 it is not acceptable for a coach to be alone with a young person. BG also takes the view that it is inappropriate for coaches to be on their own with adults who are considered to be vulnerable.

This means that BG cannot condone coaches who:

- Routinely carry out care activities;
- Deliberately plan to take on both the role of coach and carer;
- Share a room with an unrelated gymnast to provide overnight support during events requiring an overnight stay.

In order to provide adequate support to gymnasts, British Gymnastics advocate that either a professional carer made available by the gymnast's family or the gymnast's parent or guardian should carry out the role of "carer". In respect of pre-school children, it is best practice for the parent to remain with the child in the event that the child requires assistance to use the toilet. Parents or carers who are aware that their child is unable to toilet themselves must stay with the child. Where gymnasts are likely to need personal care during an overnight stay for events such as competitions or training events, British Gymnastics suggests that the parents or guardians together with the coach consider and agree:

- i) Whether to provide a paid or voluntary professional carer to be awake during the night to give overnight support.
Or
- ii) Invite the gymnast's parent or guardian to give the overnight support.

4.4 USE OF IMAGERY ON THE INTERNET AND OTHER FORMS OF MEDIA

British Gymnastics recognises that there is a potential for abuse of any image placed on the Internet or within other forms of media. Although the exploitation of such images may be rare, British Gymnastics has a responsibility to provide guidance on how images of young people should be used to reduce the risk of potential 'grooming'.

British Gymnastics has a detailed policy in place for the use of images taken by BG approved photographers at National events. All affiliated members and organisations should adhere to the following guidelines:

When determining whether it is appropriate to publish a photograph on a website or another form of media, consideration should be given to both the potential for inappropriate use of an image and the possibility that an individual could make contact with a child by using any personal and club details placed on line.

The following steps can be taken to reduce this potential:

- Do not use any personal details if it is possible from the image to ascertain a specific location or there are any details on your site about the training venue.
- If it is not possible to ascertain any training or competitive location, you can consider using a first name next to an image.

- The dress of a child should be considered when using the photo: -
 - i) If it is a posed shot for example taken during a medal presentation, try to ensure that the child is fully clothed in a tracksuit or similar attire.
 - ii) If it is an action shot, try to use profile imagery and avoid full-length shots. Alternatively, use digital software to blur the child's facial features.
- Do not use images that can appear staged and potentially provocative.
- Avoid using images that appear to focus unnecessarily directly on the groin area in movements where legs are in a split position.
- Always use a parental consent form to request the use of a child's image for publication. The parent should be encouraged to discuss the matter with their child before signing a consent form. (A sample form is contained in Section 8 of this policy).

NB Although these guidelines relate to the use of imagery of children, it is good practice to seek consent to use the image of an individual over the age of eighteen.

- British Gymnastics should be informed of any inappropriate use of imagery on Gymnastics websites or any other form of media, which is not in keeping with this guidance. Please refer to the BG Child Protection Policy 2004 for reporting procedures or contact the BG Ethics and Welfare Manager.

If you discover a child's image that you believe is illegal being used on any website, please report the matter to the police.

4.5 CCTV POLICY

British Gymnastics encourages the use of CCTV as a way of allowing a more open training environment for gyms where there is not a suitable viewing area inside the gymnasium. The use of this technology could allow parents to view what was going on inside and outside the gym without presenting a health, safety and welfare risk. For this purpose it would not be necessary to record images.

Clubs that wish to use CCTV to record images must contact the Information Commissioner for advice on compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

4.6 USE OF MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones should be turned off in the gym except in the case where a phone is used as a club contact number or for emergencies.

It is inappropriate for adult members to communicate with gymnasts under the age of 18 years by text message or through Internet chat rooms or e-mail. All adults should avoid communicating direct to gymnasts under the age of 18 years in this way and always communicate through parents in the first instance.

4.7 EVENTS AND TRIPS

When a club takes gymnasts under the age of 18 years away from their normal training venue to competition, squad training, festivals or other events, there are many additional health, safety and welfare factors to consider. If the trip requires an overnight stay or is abroad, there are further implications to consider and substantial planning will be necessary. Clubs or organisations should appoint a Trip Manager, who will be responsible for ensuring all the necessary plans are in place for a successful trip. Clubs should ensure that there is a designated trained person with a responsibility for Child Protection (Welfare Officer) if the trip involves an overnight stay. Permission must be obtained from BG to take gymnasts abroad.

Transport

When an event is local, it is often the case that clubs arrange for everyone to meet at the event venue. However, where an event is further away, the best option is often for the club to co-ordinate transport arrangements. It is good practice for a club to ensure the following steps are taken in advance of any trip –

- Checks on driving licence, car insurance and MOT (if the car is over three years old)
- Ensure there are seatbelts for each passenger
- Check driving experience (additional training may be required for anyone driving a mini-bus – contact Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for further details)
- Additional checks on driver (see policies for recruitment of staff/volunteers)
- Organising central pick-up and drop-off points (to avoid the driver being alone with a gymnast)
- Consent from parents to allow their child to be transported to an event
- Planning the route and breaks (if necessary)
- Contact number for parents

Where groups are small, the most feasible option is often to travel in a private car. Although this is not recommended it may be the only practical way of getting to an event. As part of BG Child Protection Policy 2004, adults must not be alone with a gymnast under the age of 18 years in a car. In the event of an emergency or in completely unforeseen circumstances, parental consent should be sought, the gymnast should always travel in the back of the car and the Club Manager or executive committee member should be informed of the circumstances. In order to protect all young people in Gymnastics, this should only happen when there is no other alternative and must not be a regular, approved practice. Failure to comply with this guidance will be considered as a serious breach of the Health, Safety and Welfare and Child Protection Policies.

It is recommended that BG registered clubs who wish to use volunteers to drive groups of gymnasts, keep a register of volunteer drivers and keep a record of checks carried out. If an accident resulted in injury to a BG member, they would be covered under the BG personal accident insurance policy if travelling directly to or from a BG activity or event.

Other things to consider

Prior to any trip it is important to consider what would happen in all possible scenarios. Consider the worst case and make sure that you have procedures in place to deal with any problem and all the necessary information prior to departure. To help ensure a stress free trip, take time to consider the following: -

- **Risk Assessments:** The Team Manager/Group Leader will need to ensure an ongoing process of risk assessment. (See section 3.11)
- **Supervision:** BG recommends a minimum of 1:10 adult to child ratio as a minimum level for supervision on trips. This ratio may need to be increased if the group is made up of primary school aged children, or people with disabilities, or the trip is of a nature where more supervision may be required- i.e. trips abroad. If the group is mixed sex there should be at least one male and one female supervisor.
- **First Aid:** A first aid box should be taken on any trip along with a list of emergency contact numbers.
- **Trips abroad:** BG must be notified when any club intends to take gymnasts abroad. Travel insurance cover is required.
- **Overnight stays:** When large groups are travelling it is advisable to ensure accommodation is booked well in advance. This can help to ensure that groups are kept together in a hotel. It is not good practice for anyone over the age of eighteen to share a room (or changing facilities) with anyone under the age of sixteen. Members of staff should not share with gymnasts. This is only acceptable if the member of staff is the parent or registered carer of the gymnast. Room allocation should, if possible, be planned prior to the trip.
- **Facility providers/Tour Operators:** To help ensure that any arrangements made with facility providers or tour operators are formalised, BG recommends the use of a Service Provision checklist or agreement such as the one contained in Section 8 of this document.
- **Costs:** When a trip is being planned it is essential to consider the full cost of the trip. As well as individual cost of travel, food and accommodation and other extras, the club should consider how volunteers are funded and if staff will be paid to go on the trip. It is good practice to advise a recommended amount for spending money.
- **Consent forms:** It is essential for parents to complete a consent form for a trip. This is especially important when the event involves an overnight stay.



- **Communication with parents:** Parents need to be fully informed of all details in relation to the trip. This list is not exhaustive but parents should be informed of:
 - i) Transport arrangements
 - ii) Key timings – Pick up, Departure and Return
 - iii) Destination and contact details
 - iv) Room allocation
 - v) Code of conduct
 - vi) Contact details for trip staff
 - vii) Trip requirements – pocket money, kit etc

This is not a full list of factors that should be considered, but it should assist with planning for a trip. The checklist in Section 8 of this document will also support clubs when planning a trip.

4.8 HOSTING GYMNASTS

British Gymnastics is unable to regulate or insure against the hosting of gymnasts in any situation other than within establishments licensed for the provision of overnight accommodation.

Clubs who wish to host gymnasts under the age of 18 years with families or accommodate gymnasts within gymnasium facilities, school halls etc should seek advice from the local Social Services and may need to seek additional insurance cover as British Gymnastics insurance will not provide cover in these circumstances.

Hosting with families

If the club does not have appropriate procedures in place to ensure families are suitably vetted, hosting should not be considered as an option. Clubs that are able to carry out vetting procedures should undertake appropriate risk assessment prior to hosting taking place and they must consider the following: -

- Seek parental consent
- Ensure the host family has knowledge of any medical or dietary needs of their guests
- Ensure children are hosted in pairs that are appropriately matched
- Host families should be clear about the arrangements for transporting the children
- Children staying with host families should have easy access to a telephone and to their coach and welfare officer
- Parents should be made aware that children may not be as fully supervised as they are in the gym

BG has developed a sample form contained in section 8 of the policy, which should be completed by any family wishing to host a gymnast in their home.

Hosting in unlicensed establishments e.g. gymnasiums or schools

It is recognised that groups attending large gymnastics festivals are often accommodated within 'dormitories' in schools or gymnastics centres. This situation is not ideal but may be the only available option. The following guidance should be considered: -

- Ensure groups are sharing with other groups they know.
- Ensure there are separate sleeping and washing areas for males and females and staff and gymnasts. It would also be appropriate to allocate rooms in age groups where possible.
- Adults should not share the dormitory with young people but should be accommodated in a nearby room.
- Ensure that there are waking night staff to regularly patrol the accommodation and prevent unauthorised entry.
- Ensure accommodation is safe and secure (fire exits, emergency procedures etc).
- Ensure Welfare Manager/Event Organiser visits the accommodation prior to the event to ensure it is satisfactory and address any concerns.

5.0 GYMNASTICS & HEALTH

British Gymnastics advocates that a coach should encourage a healthy lifestyle and must ensure that the health status and fitness to participate is known before permitting participation to commence.

5.1 HEALTH AND FITNESS

The coach should check on the health and fitness status of each participant before commencing the training session and must make a risk assessment on the degree to which the gymnasts can safely participate. If the gymnast has been absent or unable to participate through a debilitating injury or illness, the coach is advised to seek evidence from an appropriate medical person to confirm that the gymnast is well enough to recommence training.

The health and fitness of the gymnast must always be the primary concern of the coach and the gymnast should not be persuaded to participate if it is not safe to do so.

5.2 NUTRITION

Coaches should encourage a balanced healthy diet that includes the appropriate quantities of carbohydrate, fat, proteins, vitamins, minerals and fluids to ensure the replenishment of energy resources and efficient functioning of the body. Ideally a gymnast should not carry excessive body mass since this may lead to under performance, ineffective technique and increased risk of injury due to excess loading on the body structure.

The body weight of children and adolescents can fluctuate considerably due to growth related activity. Consequently the practice of weighing gymnasts to monitor fat gain is not reliable, since the total body weight is not an indication of the percentage of body fat.


In the case of post pubescent gymnasts, monitoring weight before breakfast and before and after training can provide comparative measurements on weight and indicate the loss of body weight (usually fluid) as a result of training. However where it can be evidenced that a weight loss would be in the interest of the gymnast, this should be achieved through careful dietary planning. The advice of a dietician, nutritionist or appropriate medical professional should be sought to ensure that an appropriate diet and monitoring procedures are followed. Tact and diplomacy must always prevail when monitoring weight. The use of such phrases as “you are fat” or “you need to lose weight” etc are inappropriate and can be emotionally abusive and lead to long-term psychological damage. Coaches must be extremely vigilant for symptoms that may be an indication of a dietary related illness such as Anorexia or Bulimia Nervosa. In these circumstances, it is imperative that medical/professional advice is sought. In the case of gymnasts under 18 years of age, the matter must be brought to the attention of the parents or guardians.

It is advised that gymnasts should boost their energy stores through the intake of carbohydrates and non-gaseous fluids at least 1½ hours before commencing training or competing. Fluids should be taken in small quantities during training and the energy stores should be replenished within the first two hours following exercise. Carbohydrate fluids and foods with a high glycaemic index should be ingested immediately following completion of training, for best energy restoration results.

5.3 PREVENTING INFECTIOUS DISEASES – BLOOD AND OTHER BODILY FLUIDS

These guidelines should be followed whenever a Gymnast, Coach or other Person involved in training and competition, has a bleeding injury or open wound that may put others at risk of contamination with blood or other bodily fluids.

- i) Any individual who sustains a blood injury must seek treatment immediately. It is the responsibility of the Gymnast concerned and/or their Coach to ensure that all bleeding injuries and open wounds are dealt with appropriately in accordance with the following guidelines.
- ii) For all minor bleeding injuries, the individual should stop the activity that they are involved in and attempt to stop the bleeding. A fresh sterile dressing should be applied to the wound before continuing with training or competition.
- iii) All recent cuts or blisters should be covered.

- 
- A male gymnast in a dark blue leotard is performing a handstand on a pommel horse. He is holding the rings with both hands, and his body is in a vertical position. The background is a light blue wall with a grid pattern. The pommel horse has a blue strap with the word 'CONTINENTAL' written on it.
- iv) If the bleeding cannot be stopped, the individual should seek medical attention and should not continue with training or competition until advised otherwise.
 - v) Any individual treating an injury should wear disposable gloves, which should be disposed of as clinical waste after use (see below). Wherever possible, the injured individual should apply pressure to a bleeding wound with his/her own hands. If applying a dressing, wash your hands both before and after application.
 - vi) If the casualty's blood comes into contact with your mouth, eyes or broken skin use clean cold water to wash the affected area and take medical advice.
 - vii) In cases where blood or other bodily fluids are clearly visible on clothing, the individual should replace clothing before continuing with any further gymnastics activity.
 - viii) The contaminated clothing should be stored in a plastic bag and should be washed according to the guidelines on the label as early as possible after contamination. Washing is enough to remove the contaminated substance even if the stain remains.
 - iv) Where contamination of equipment or very minor contamination of clothing has occurred, the area should be treated with a decontamination solution made up of one part household bleach to ten parts water. Solutions that are more than one day old should be disposed of. Diluted bleach that has passed its expiry date should not be used.
 - x) Clinical Waste -
 - Wipe up spillage with heavy-duty paper and discard into a bag for incineration, including any soiled dressings or gloves.
 - The contaminated area should be thoroughly soaked with the decontamination solution and left for two minutes.
 - The area should then be rinsed with hot water and general-purpose detergent.
 - A 0.5% solution of bleach is not considered to be hazardous, however care must be taken to ensure that the solution does not come into contact with the eyes, mouth or wounds, and should not be left on the skin for prolonged periods of time.
 - xi) For spills of lower risk bodily fluids, e.g. urine and vomit, hot water and general-purpose detergent is sufficient.
 - xii) Any individuals who are likely to have to deal with injuries should ideally be immunised against Hepatitis B.

5.4 ANTI-DOPING

British Gymnastics has an anti-doping policy, which was revised in January 2005 and complies with the World Anti Doping Association (WADA) Code. A copy of the policy can be downloaded from the BG website.

5.5 SMOKING

British Gymnastics operates a No Smoking Policy within all BG Offices. British Gymnastics would encourage all clubs and affiliated organisations to operate a no-tolerance policy for any facilities open to the public. If smoking is permitted, it should only take place in specifically designated areas.

5.6 SUBSTANCE ABUSE

BG is committed to promoting the well-being and safety of all members and volunteers. Similarly, all members and volunteers should recognise that they have a duty of care towards themselves, their gymnasts and colleagues and to anyone else that their day-to-day work brings them in contact with. One key factor that can affect productivity, health, safety and welfare is the use of drugs or alcohol.

Any member or volunteer who is aware of having a drug or alcohol problem should, in the interest of themselves, their family and their job or role, discuss the matter in confidence with their Club Chairman, Manager or with their own doctor. They could also seek help from one of the independent treatment and advice services in their area.

Drugs including alcohol and medicines can affect the brain and body in a number of ways. They can alter the way a person thinks, perceives and feels, which can lead to impaired judgement and concentration. Such substance abuse can also bring about the neglect of general health and well-being. This may adversely influence performance at work, even when the abuse takes place outside the workplace.

Definition

British Gymnastics defines “substance abuse” as referring to:

- The use of illegal drugs
- The use of prescribed drugs and over the counter drugs where side effects can affect performance
- The use of alcohol where its effects carry on into the working day
- The use of other substances such as solvents that can have a negative effect on the mind or body

Aims

The aim is to avoid or reduce potential damage caused by substance abuse to:

- The physical and mental health of members and volunteers
- The safety of members and volunteers as well as that of others
- The efficiency and effectiveness of members and volunteers
- The reputation and public perception of British Gymnastics

British Gymnastics aims to ensure all issues of substance abuse problems are dealt with in a confidential and constructive manner.

British Gymnastics recognises that substance abuse is a serious issue within society. There is no reason to suspect that substance abuse is significant amongst members or volunteers, but British Gymnastics is committed to promoting policies that represent good personal practice and contribute to the health, safety and welfare of members and volunteers, and their general well-being.

British Gymnastics' guidelines on substance abuse are as follows: -

- BG members or volunteers must not use any substance while taking part in gymnastics activity
- No member or volunteer may use any substance (before or after working/volunteering hours) to the extent that while participating in gymnastics: -
 - i) It impairs their performance and/or
 - ii) It potentially or actually puts their or others health and safety at risk
- The possession, sharing and dealing in some drugs is illegal. Therefore the possession or dealing in illegal drugs on British Gymnastics' or an affiliated organisation's premises will be regarded as gross misconduct and may lead to the suspension of membership and possible criminal prosecution.
- Members who are identified as having safety-critical jobs may be liable for disciplinary action for gross misconduct if they are found to be impaired while taking part in gymnastics through any substance abuse.

Legal Position

Clubs who employ staff have a wide range of duties under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (and associated legislation) to assess and manage risks to the health and safety of their employees. Employees are also required to take reasonable care of themselves and others who could be affected by what they do at work.

The primary legislation for controlling illicit drugs is the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Roles and responsibilities of members

- Not to use illegal drugs
- Not to use legal drugs or substances including alcohol in such a way that might affect their performance or safety of others while taking part in gymnastics
- Not to drink alcohol or be affected by alcohol while participating in gymnastics
- Encourage colleagues to seek help if they have problems
- Avoid covering up for or colluding with colleagues who are using substances
- Seek help promptly if experiencing problems and commit to maintaining the required level of attendance and performance at work
- Co-operate with any investigations and support offered
- Be aware of and comply with this policy

Roles and responsibilities of Affiliated Organisations

- To implement BG guidance
- To ensure that they and any employees, member and volunteers understand the policy and their responsibilities
- To monitor changes in behaviour, performance and attendance and intervene early if there are signs of problems
- To act fairly and consistently, with understanding and compassion
- To support the employee, member or volunteer to achieve the necessary levels of attendance and performance
- To refer employees, members or volunteers for assistance where appropriate
- To identify and, where reasonably practicable, change aspects of the work that may contribute to substance abuse problems
- To set a good example

Practical guidance

The key indicators of alcohol abuse are:

- Smelling of alcohol during working hours or whilst conducting British Gymnastics activities
- Complaints and remarks (often joking, initially) by colleagues
- Increasing levels of sickness and absenteeism (especially short term)
- Decline in standards of dress or appearance
- Falling performance especially in the afternoons or after a work break
- Any abnormal behaviour which could include: obscene language, sexual harassment etc
- Incidence of minor accidents – falling down stairs, minor cuts etc
- Evidence of fighting or trouble with the police

These indicators are for general guidance only and the presence of some or indeed all of them are not exclusive to alcohol use problems. Other illnesses such as Alzheimer's, diabetes, thyrotoxicosis, epilepsy, depression, a cerebral tumour and other disorders may mimic those problems.

The key indicators of drug abuse include:

- Sudden mood changes
- Unusual irritability or aggression
- A tendency to become confused
- Abnormal fluctuations in concentration and energy
- Impaired job performance
- Poor timekeeping
- Increased short term sickness absence
- A deterioration in relationships with colleagues
- Dishonesty or theft (arising from the need to maintain an expensive habit)

NB: All the signs shown above may be caused by other factors, such as stress, and should be regarded only as indications that a member or volunteer may be using drugs.

Above all, Managers should avoid an overcritical attitude to what in the first instance should be regarded as a health problem. On the other hand the initial steps in applying the policy should be managerial rather than medical since it is the impact of the disorder on the workplace that is likely to be the first indicator of a problem.

Procedure

In the event of an allegation, complaint or suspicion of substance abuse (which may include smelling of alcohol in an inappropriate situation) it is important to establish whether it is purely a management/disciplinary issue or whether there are health problems that need to be addressed. To establish this, follow the format set out in the disciplinary or capability procedure as appropriate, taking note of the following points: -

- Interview the member in private about their performance, the allegation or complaint without making it obvious to other colleagues. Consider including that an employee representative can be requested to be present for support. Ensure that an accurate record of the meeting is made and kept safely, including what was said and agreed.
- Do not interview someone who has obviously been drinking heavily recently, is actually drunk or under the influence of drugs or solvents. Send them home – making the necessary arrangements for them to do so safely. Ensure that they do not drive or operate machinery. Arrange to interview them promptly on the next working day.
- Draw attention to the incidents causing concern, ask for explanations to establish facts and make notes. Avoid making accusations.
- Draw the employees', members' or volunteers' attention to the Substance Abuse Policy statement and ask whether they agree to comply with it.
- Ask the employee, member or volunteer whether they have any health or other problems that might account for their current difficulties and explore sources of help as appropriate. Emphasise that all information given will be treated in the strictest confidence at this stage.
- If the person admits they may have a problem relating to substance or alcohol abuse, they should be advised to seek help from their GP or the various counselling agencies available.
- Discuss possible work related problem/s such as excessive workload etc. Enquire sympathetically whether there are any domestic worries causing difficulties.
- Agree future action including further meetings to monitor progress.
- If the employee, member or volunteer denies that they have a problem related to substance or alcohol abuse, or acknowledges the problem but refuses to seek help, then the usual disciplinary procedures should apply after consultation with the Club Managers/Committee.
- If there is a relapse or a persistent problem keep accurate confidential records of instances of poor performance, behavioural and other allied matters using the key indicators.
- Maintain accurate sickness absence records on all employees, members or volunteers in a simple comprehensible format (NOTE: It is good practice to have a 'return to work interview' after sickness where an employee, member or volunteer should be asked to declare any medication that they are taking and the recommended dosage. This can then be assessed by occupational health to consider any risk in relation to the job performed).

British Gymnastics is committed to providing a safe environment for all members and volunteers. This may mean that an individual who poses a risk to themselves or to others will need to be excluded from the workplace if they are impaired through alcohol or some drug (legal or illegal).

Persistent substance abuse

British Gymnastics recognises that a persistent substance abuse problem is primarily a health matter requiring help and treatment. As an employer it will do all that it can to ensure everyone suffering from this problem gets appropriate advice and support with the objective of restoring people to their former good health and productivity. BG would recommend that clubs take a similar stance.

It is self evident that the policy can only be effective if those affected openly and honestly admit they have a problem and are willing to accept help.

All those seeking help will be treated sympathetically and in confidence.

If a member or volunteer admits to a substance abuse problem which has led to misconduct, British Gymnastics may suspend disciplinary action on condition that the member or volunteer has sought and agreed to a treatment and rehabilitation programme.

Where gross misconduct is involved, the substance abuse problem may be taken into account in determining disciplinary action.

It may be appropriate to suspend a member on medical grounds, but this should only be done after seeking authority from the Chief Executive Officer or in their absence, their nominated person in charge.

An employee, member or volunteer should return to the same role after treatment or another more appropriate area where they can be more effective and not be at risk of relapse.

In the event of the employee not being able to do their former job, attempts should be made to re-deploy that person.

Where treatment or re-deployment is unsuccessful or the point is reached where successive relapses can no longer be tolerated, consideration should be given to the option of terminating employment/involvement on the grounds of ill health.



6.0 USEFUL CONTACTS

British Gymnastics www.british-gymnastics.org	0845 1297129
HOME COUNTRY GOVERNING BODIES	
English Gymnastics www.englandgymnastics.org.uk	0845 1297129
Northern Ireland Amateur Gymnastics Association email: Nigymnastics@btopenworld.com	028 90383813
Scottish Gymnastics www.scottishgymnastics.com	01324 886505
Welsh Gymnastics email: office@welshgymnastics.org	029 20624321
BG INSURERS	
Perkins Slade	0121 698 8050
HEALTH & SAFETY	
Health & Safety Executive www.hse.gov.uk Provides information on risks to health and safety arising from work activity in Britain	08701 545 500
St John's Ambulance www.sja.org.uk Provides first aid advice and training	0870 0104950
Advanced Safety Training Services www.ast-service.co.uk Providers of health and safety training	0700 0700278
Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency www.dvla.gov.uk Provides information on road safety	0870 240 0010
Department of Trade and Industry www.dti.gov.uk Provides information on the best environment for business success in the UK	020 7215 5000
National Council for Voluntary Organisations www.askncvo.org.uk Provides resources for voluntary organisations, including sample contracts, health and safety information and legal advice	0800 2798798
NHS Direct www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk Official Web site for the National Health Service. Contains information about health problems and how to keep healthy	0845 4647
Department of Health www.dh.gov.uk Provides health and social care policy, guidance and publications	0207 2104850
WELFARE	
NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) www.thecpsu.org.uk Provides Child Protection resources and training, including 'Safe Sports Events' - a comprehensive resource for clubs running events.	0116 2347278

NSPCC Free 24-hour Helpline	0808 800 5000
Children First www.children1st.org.uk The Scottish Child Protection Charity who provide equivalent services to the NSPCC	0141 418 5670
Child Line www.childline.org.uk Free helpline for Children	0800 1111 (Child Line)
Department for Education and Skills www.dfes.gov.uk	0870 000 2288
Information Commissioner www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk Responsible for overseeing the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act, the site provides information on public access to official information and protecting personal information	01625 545 745
GYMNASTICS EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS The following suppliers are currently the official sponsors for British Gymnastics:	
Continental Sport – Gymnastics equipment www.continentalsports.co.uk	01484 542051
Gym-Aid – Trampolining specialists www.gymaid.com	01279 771941
Gymnova – Gymnastics equipment www.gymnova.com	0845 456 4470

7.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

British Gymnastics wishes to express its gratitude to the members of the Ethics and Welfare Committee, Keith Atkinson - BG Health and Safety consultant, NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit and colleagues within our home country Gymnastics Governing Bodies for their support and guidance in developing this document.

8.0 SAMPLE FORMS

CLUB REGISTRATION & CONSENT FORM

PERSONAL AND CONTACT DETAILS

Gymnast's name Date of birth.....
Club..... Discipline.....
Address.....
.....
..... Postcode.....
Contact no. (home)..... (mobile).....
Emergency Contact.....
Contact no. (home)..... (mobile).....
Personal Coach.....
Contact no. (home)..... (mobile).....
School..... Address.....
.....

MEDICAL/HEALTH INFORMATION

Please give details of any medical condition or health needs that the club should be aware of*:

.....
.....

Please give details of any allergies.....

.....

Doctor's Name..... Contact number.....

Please give details of any specific dietary requirements.....

.....

* Please supply any additional information on conditions that may require extra consideration by staff. It may be necessary to seek medical advice to confirm that participation in gymnastics activity will not have a negative impact on health. Medical information will be sought and where necessary any screening carried out prior to participation in the sport.

RELIGIOUS NEEDS

Please specify any specific religious requirements.....

.....

.....

EQUITY MONITORING

British Gymnastics is committed to promoting and developing equity, which is about fairness and equality of access. In order to develop our equity policy it is essential to monitor participants. This information will allow us to develop our equity action plans at the grassroots of the sport.

1. What is your sex? Male Female

2. What is your ethnic group? (Choose one section from A – E and then tick the appropriate box)

A. WHITE

British Irish
 Other Please specify.....

B. MIXED

White and Black Caribbean White and Black African White and Asian
 Other Please specify.....

C. ASIAN or ASIAN BRITISH

Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi
 Other Please specify.....

D. BLACK or BLACK BRITISH

Caribbean African
 Other Please specify.....

E. CHINESE OR OTHER ETHNIC GROUP

Chinese
 Other Please specify.....

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a disabled person as anyone with a 'physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect upon his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

3. Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Yes No

If yes, what is the nature of the disability?

Visual impairment Hearing impairment Physical disability
 Learning disability Multiple disability
 Other Please specify.....

PARENTAL CONSENT

I confirm my child is physically fit and healthy and I will undertake to advise you of any change. I consider him/her capable of taking part in gymnastics. I have completed the section on medical details and give consent that in the event of any illness/accident any necessary treatment can be administered. If surgery is necessary this may include the use of anaesthetics. I confirm that I have read through the participant's code of conduct with my child and they understand and agree to abide by the rules.

In signing this agreement I declare that I am aware of the element of risk involved and while I accept that the coaches and event personnel will take precautions to prevent accidents, I understand that they may not be held responsible for loss, damage or injury to my child.

I confirm that my child is a current member of British Gymnastics.

I am aware that photographs and video footage may be taken during the event for coaching and promotional purpose. I do/do not consent (please delete as appropriate) for my son /daughter to appear in photographs. I understand that no personal information will be displayed with the image.

Parent/Guardian Name.....

Signed (Parent/Guardian)..... Date.....

All information will be kept strictly confidential in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1994 and 1998.

Please return this form to:

Ethics and Welfare Department, British Gymnastics, Ford Hall, Lilleshall National Sports Centre, Newport, Shropshire TF10 9NB,

CONSENT TO PUBLICATION OF IMAGERY

.....(Organisation) is keen to promote the sport of gymnastics and would like to take photographs to promote achievements and capture children participating/competing.

Venue

Date.....

All photographs will be taken in accordance with British Gymnastics Child Protection Policy 2004.

I.....(Parent name) consent to the publication of photographs of my child taken on the above occasion.

I have discussed this matter with my child and they understand and are in agreement.

The photographs can be used the following purposes: (please tick as appropriate)

- Promotional materials, publications and presentations**
 Official Website

I understand that these photos will be published in line with the guidance contained in the BG Child Protection Policy 2004 on Use of Photographs and Recorded Images and the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy 2005 on Use of Imagery on the Internet.

Signed (parent or guardian)..... Date.....

CLUB HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE “FIT FOR PURPOSE” CHECKLIST

The following checklist is a quick guide to check whether a club is suitably organised with regard to its operational procedures.

DOES YOUR CLUB/ORGANISATION:

	YES	NO
1. Follow recruitment procedures as outlined in the BG Child Protection Policy 2004 including Criminal Record Bureau checks on all staff or volunteers with repeated regular contact with children and/or vulnerable adults?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have a designated Child Protection Welfare Officer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Have circulated information and contact details for the Welfare Officer and has information on display in the club venue?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Ensure that there are always at least two responsible adults of the appropriate gender at all times during training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Operate an open viewing of training policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Have a Photography and Filming Policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Have a designated Health, Welfare, Safety Officer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Publicise its Health Welfare and Safety Policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Ensure all coaches are suitably trained, updated and qualified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Carry out and annually review Risk Assessments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Regularly and systematically inspect the equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Provide adequate Emergency First Aid provisions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Have a process for recording accidents and incidents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Ensure all club members and officials are members of British Gymnastics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Have adequate insurance cover for any additional activities not covered by British Gymnastics insurance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Have a club constitution and/or rules?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Have an approachable, transparent and effective management committee or Management Team?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Ensure all new members complete registration and consent forms?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Have a new members induction or information leaflet/booklet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Have a policy to cover the transportation of children and other issues relating to events outside normal club sessions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Have published Complaints and Grievance Procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**BRITISH GYMNASTICS
FACILITY HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST**

Venue

Assessed by Date

Health and Safety Legislation places an obligation on Facility Managers, to ensure a responsible attitude to managing the health and safety of all who use the facility.

This checklist, whilst not exhaustive, will provide a guide to help audit health and safety in gymnastics facilities. An authorised person must carry out the audit on a regular basis.

	YES	NO	N/A
1.0 Health and Safety Responsibilities			
1.1 Have all staff, including volunteers been informed of their health and safety responsibilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2 Have health and safety matters been considered in the last six months?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.0 Emergency and accident procedures			
2.1 Is the emergency procedure clearly laid out and distributed to all staff and volunteers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2 Are the emergency exits free from obstruction and not locked when persons are in the building?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3 Are the fire fighting appliances easily accessible and have they have been examined in the last twelve months?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4 Are all the fire doors kept closed and free from obstruction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5 Has there been a fire evacuation within the last 6 months?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6 Are fire alarms tested according to the fire certificate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.7 Do a sufficient number of staff know how to operate fire fighting equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.8 Are all fire exits and routes adequately signed and emergency instructions displayed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.9 Is there a separate bomb search or power failure procedure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.0 Accidents and First Aid			
3.1 Are there notices displayed listing first aiders and the location of the location of the first aid boxes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2 Are the first aid boxes complete according to the contents list and are all wrappings undamaged?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3 Are all staff aware of their responsibilities to report all accidents/incidents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4 Are the accident recording forms readily accessible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.5 Have any accidents/incidents been recorded, and investigated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	YES	NO	N/A
4.0 Temperature			
4.1 Is reasonable working temperature achieved and maintained within each area? (at least 16°C)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2 Has adequate provision been made for ventilating each area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.0 Lighting			
5.1 Is suitable lighting provided in each training area and any office and changing area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Is suitable lighting provided for any detailed work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3 Are light fittings, particularly fluorescent tubes quickly replaced when necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.4 Do the diffusers covering lights need to be cleaned?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.0 Electrical safety and work equipment			
6.1 Is all electrical equipment and work equipment in good working order?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.2 Where appropriate, have staff been trained in the use of office equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.3 Has all electrical equipment and systems been tested according to best practice?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.0 Gymnastics Equipment and Facility			
7.1 Has the gymnastics equipment been regularly inspected for damage and correctly assembled?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.2 Have all personnel been instructed on the correct procedures for moving, assembling and adjusting equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.3 Are potential hazards and walkways clearly identified and protected where possible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4 Are all walkways and run-ups free from obstruction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.5 Is all equipment stored safely and securely?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.6 Is there suitable access for people with disabilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.0 Good Coaching Practice			
8.1 Are all coaches suitably qualified to coach the participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.2 Have all staff and volunteers been provided with basic health and safety training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.3 Have all staff signed up to the British Gymnastics Code of Conduct and Ethical Code?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.4 Do all staff adhere to the British Gymnastics Child Protection Policy 2004?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.5 Have all staff been verified as being suitable for working with children and vulnerable adults?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	YES	NO	N/A
9.0 Certificates, Registers and Licences			
9.1 Is there an up to date fire certificate for the premises?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2 Is there a recent apparatus/equipment inspection certificate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.3 Is there a certificate of adequate insurance cover for the facility and the participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.4 Is there a certificate of the facility/club being registered/affiliated to British Gymnastics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.0 Housekeeping and Health Matters			
10.1 Has suitable storage been provided for any dangerous substances, such as cleaning fluids?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.2 Are containers for dangerous substances clearly marked to indicate the content?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.3 Are adequate changing and toilet facilities provided?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.4 Are changing and toilet facilities regularly cleaned?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.5 Are soap and drying facilities provided?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.6 Is an adequate supply of fresh drinking water provided?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

An equipment and facility safety checklist is available from British Gymnastics.

BRITISH GYMNASTICS LARGE APPARATUS SAFETY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

The following checklist is intended as a guideline for coaches for the general inspection of gymnastics apparatus and it is recommended that suitably qualified personnel conduct a full annual inspection. This checklist is by no means exhaustive.

Venue..... Checked by

EQUIPMENT	CHECK	COMMENT
1. FASTENINGS AND ATTACHMENTS Floor anchor plates Eyebolts Wall, roof brackets	Screws are tight, plate not bent. Damage or wear to threads Eyebolt tight Clamps or bolts and nuts tight and not worn	
2. FLOOR COVERING General floor matting	Damage, tears or rucking: Gaps between mats; free from dirt.	
3. FLOOR EXERCISE AREA Structure of floor area Carpet Covering Tumbling/Agility Mats/Landing Matting	Damage to springs; wooden panels, separation between panels and surrounding boards. Tears, rucking or separation of mats, general wear. Damage, tears, rucking, worn surfaces, gaps in foam.	
4. VAULTING EQUIPMENT Vaulting horse or buck Vaulting Box Vaulting Boards Vault Run Up	Covering surface, torn or polished: loose bolts: height adjusters damaged: damage to foot pads. Covering surface, torn or polished. Wood surface cracked or splintered. Covering surface torn, or polished or rucked. Nuts or bolts loose, damaged wooden leaves. Wooden surfaces – no splinters. Carpeted surfaces – no tears, gaps or rucking.	
5. ASYMMETRIC BARS Bar Rails Bar Frames Cables and tensioning devices	Splintering or separation of laminations on wooden bars. Wear of outer surface of fibreglass bars. Wear in bar to frame attachments. Adjusters secure and free, but not worn. All pins, bolts secure and not worn. Cables not frayed or twisted or coiled. Threads on tensioners not worn or seized. Karabiner or clips secure and not bent.	

EQUIPMENT	CHECK	COMMENT
6. BEAMS Beam covering Handles Foot Pads	Not polished, torn or rucked. Base for legs secured to horse. Height adjusters free but not damaged. Not splintered or damaged, securing mechanism effective. Rubber base pads not damaged	
7. POMMEL HORSE Horse Handles Foot Pads	Not slippery, torn or rucked. Base for legs secured to horse. Height adjusters free but not damaged. Not splintered or damaged, securing mechanism effective. Rubber base pads not damaged.	
8. RINGS Ring Frame Ring Cables Rings Cables and Tensioners	Height adjusters secure. Alignment of frame correct. Suspension point secure, not worn, swivels free to rotate, secure. Webbing not frayed or damaged. Not splintered, damaged or slippery. Not frayed, twisted or damaged. Tensioners free but not worn. Karabiner clips secure not bent.	
9. ADJUSTABLE RINGS Cables Pulleys Chain	<i>In addition to the checks indicated in 8 above, check the following:</i> Not frayed, damaged or coiled. Free to rotate – but not worn. Fastenings secure and not worn. Chain and anchor points not damaged or worn.	
10. PARALLEL BARS Bar Rails Bar anchor points Height/Width Adjusters	Not splintered or laminations separated. Not damaged and screws secure. Effective and not worn.	

EQUIPMENT	CHECK	COMMENT
11. HORIZONTAL BAR Bar Frames Cables and Tensioners	Not permanently “set” with a bend. Anchor points secure and not worn (do not reverse the bar to remove bend). Adjusters effective and secure, not worn. Base pads secure not damaged. Cables not frayed or coiled; anchor fittings secure, not worn. Karabiner clips secure, not bent. Adjusters free but not worn.	
12. RHYTHMIC AREA Raised Carpet Area General Carpet Area Ballet Barre Mirrors Ceiling Height	Damage to wooden panels; separation between panels and surrounding boards. Damage, tears or rucking, gaps between mats, free from dirt. Not splintered, damaged or slippery. Secured safely to the wall. Not cracked, splintered or shattered. Minimum 8m high over performance area. No cables; cross bars below this level over performance area.	
13. AEROBIC AREA Floor Area	No splinters, check joints and surrounding framework for movement, free of dust, smooth and clean.	
14. TRAMPOLINES Beds Springs Leg Braces Frame Pads Roller Stands Throw in Mats	Loose stitching or breaks in the webbing, tears and areas of solid beds that are worn, uneven tension shown by the lines on the bed not being straight. Springs/cables are all in place with hooks pointing down. Leg braces are fully inserted plus allen screws tight, rivets secure, hinge pins in place. Tears, loose or missing clips/fasteners or soft areas at the joints. Freely running and swivelling castors, wheels and hooks. Tears and other damage.	

<p>14. TRAMPOLINES cont</p> <p>Joints</p> <p>Chains</p> <p>Anchor Bars</p>	<p>Wear at the joints and that the frame is level all around.</p> <p>Chains for security and even adjustment.</p> <p>Excessive wear due to movement.</p>	
<p>15. THE OVERHEAD RIG</p> <p>Trampoline Position</p> <p>Security of Ropes and Attachments</p> <p>Swivels and Pulleys</p> <p>The Belt</p>	<p>Position of the trampoline under the centre of the rig.</p> <p>Security of the ropes and attachments and the condition of the elastics and attachments on bungee rings.</p> <p>Unhindered operation.</p> <p>Security of the belt.</p>	

Signed Date

SERVICE PROVISION CHECKLIST FOR COMPLETION BY SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR GYMNASTICS EVENTS OR ACTIVITIES

When considering using a provider or tour operator for gymnastic events, the organiser must seek written assurances that the provision complies with the British Gymnastics Health, Safety and Welfare Policy.

BG Discipline/Club

Person in charge: (HoD/Event Manager)

Date(s) of Event

Name of Provider

The provider or tour operator providing services is asked to give careful consideration to the statements below and sign in the space at the end of the form that the standard of service provided will meet the conditions listed. Please tick all specifications you can meet. Indicate by a cross any you cannot meet. Write N/A against any specifications that do not apply to your provision.

SECTION A should be completed for all visits/events. **SECTION B** (Tour operators) should also be completed if applicable.

SECTION A – ALL VISITS

Health, Safety and Emergency Policy

1. The Provider complies with relevant health and safety regulations, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations, and has a health and safety policy and recorded risk assessments which are available for inspection.
2. Accident and emergency procedures are maintained and records are available for inspection.

Vehicles

3. All vehicles are roadworthy and meet the requirements of relevant regulations in the country in which they are being used.

Staffing

4. All reasonable steps are taken to check staff who have access to young people, for relevant criminal history and suitability for work with young people.
5. There are adequate and regular opportunities for liaison between club staff and the provider's staff and there is sufficient flexibility to make radical changes to the programme if necessary and the reasons for such changes will be made known to club staff.

Insurance

6. The provider has public liability insurance for at least £5 million with a clause giving "indemnity to principal".

Accommodation (if residential accommodation is provided)

7. UK accommodation is covered by a current fire certificate, or advice has been sought from a fire officer and implemented and a fire risk assessment has been completed. Provision has been recently inspected by the local Environmental Health Officer and any recommendations have been implemented.
8. If abroad, the accommodation complies with the fire, health and safety regulations, which apply in the country concerned.
9. There are appropriate security arrangements to prevent unauthorised persons entering the accommodation.
10. Separate male and female sleeping accommodation and washing facilities are provided and staff accommodation is close to gymnast's accommodation.

Activity Management

11. The provider operates a policy for staff recruitment, training and assessment, which ensures that all staff with a responsibility for participants are competent to undertake their duties.
12. The provider maintains a written code of practice for activities which is consistent with relevant National Governing Body guidelines and/or, if abroad, the relevant regulations of the country concerned.

- 13. Staff competences are confirmed by appropriate National Governing Body qualifications for the activities to be undertaken, or staff have had their competences confirmed by an appropriately experienced and qualified technical adviser.
- 14. Where there is no National Governing Body for an activity, operating procedures and staff training and assessment requirements are explained in the provider's code of practice.
- 15. Participants will at all times have access to a person with current first aid qualifications. Staff are practised and competent in accident and emergency procedures.
- 16. There is a clear definition of responsibilities between providers and visiting staff regarding supervision and welfare of participants.
- 17. All equipment used in activities is suited to the task, adequately maintained in accordance with statutory requirements and current good practice, with records kept of maintenance checks where necessary.

SECTION B – TOUR OPERATORS

Where a tour operator delivers services to clubs using other providers e.g. transport operators or accommodation, the tour operator must ensure that each provider meets the relevant specifications outlined above and that these providers operate to standards which meet the relevant regulations which apply to the country of operation.

- 18. Sections A and B of the form, as relevant, have been completed to show that suitable and sufficient checks of providers to be used have been made, records of which are available for inspection.
- 19. The Tour Operator complies with Package Travel Regulations, including arrangements to safeguard customers' monies.
- 20. ATOL, ABTA or other bonding body name and numbers:.....

SECTION C – GENERAL

- 21. The provider has completed sections A and B of this form and agrees to provide additional assurances which are specific to the activities being proposed and which will be made clear to the provider by the event/activities organiser.

If any of the above specifications cannot be met or are not applicable, please give details:

Details of any other accreditation with national governing bodies, tourist boards etc.

Signed Date

Name (in capital letters)

Name and address of provider or tour operator

.....

.....

Tel Fax

Email Website

Thank you for completing this form. Please return the form to British Gymnastics.

Persons requiring advice on the interpretation of information given by providers or tour operators on this form should contact British Gymnastics on telephone number: 01952 822300.

CLUB TRIP CHECKLIST

The following checklist is a quick guide to check health, safety and welfare procedures when organising a club trip.

CHECKLIST	YES	NO	DATE
1. Have you identified the roles required and responsibilities for trip staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
2. Have you followed recruitment procedures as outlined in the BG Child Protection Policy 2004 including Criminal Record Bureau checks on all staff over the age of 16 years who will have repeated regular contact with children and/or vulnerable adults as part of their role on the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
3. Have all trip staff completed Child Protection Awareness training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
4. Do you have a sufficient ratio of trip staff (1:10 plus one if under 10 participants) and are they of the appropriate gender?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
5. Have you a designated Child Protection Welfare Officer for the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
6. Has the designated Welfare Officer attended 'Time to Listen' Training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
7. Have you circulated responsibilities and contact details for all staff to parents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
8. Have parental consent forms been completed for all participants (including emergency contacts etc).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
9. Have you addressed any specific special needs of the participants? e.g. Diet, Disability related, Religious etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
10. Have you completed a risk assessment for the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
11. Have you completed a detailed itinerary and circulated it to participants and their parents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
12. Has a Service Provision Checklist been completed (if required)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
13. Do you have Codes of Conduct for Staff and participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
14. Have you ensured that all coaches are suitably trained, updated and qualified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
15. Have you made arrangements for overnight accommodation and considered room allocation and layout?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
16. Have you made arrangements for transport?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
17. Do you have adequate First Aid provision?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
18. Do you have a process for recording accidents and incidents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
19. Are all trip staff and participants members of British Gymnastics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
20. Have you considered any additional insurance needs for the trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
21. Do you have a procedure in place in the event of a participant going missing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
22. Do you have all necessary directions and maps?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
23. Have you ensured that all new members have completed registration and consent forms?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>

RISK ASSESSMENT

Record No.

Club Name Training Venue

Activity Signed

Location/source of risk:

Nature of risk:

Severity of consequences of risk is realised:	Outcome Severity Rating Low Medium Low Medium High High
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Likelihood of the risk being realised:	Likelihood Rating Low Medium Low Medium High High
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Current control of risk:	Control Rating Low Medium Low Medium High High
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Any further action required to control risk:	Overall Rating <input type="text"/>
	Assessment Date <input type="text"/>
	Action Due by date <input type="text"/>
	Action completed <input type="text"/>



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