# SAFEGUARDING POLICY

**UPDATED JUNE 2026**

At Bangor Gymnastics Club we are committed to safeguarding and protecting all our members from abuse; particularly children whose safety and wellbeing are central in everything we do.

Child Protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare but is specifically the work done to protect specific children who are suffering or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Bangor Gymnastics Club has an important leadership role in embedding a no-tolerance approach towards all forms of abuse and taking steps to prevent other forms of harm which include;

- Poor or unsafe practice.
- Discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Bullying or hazing; and
- Extremism

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The overall responsibility for safeguarding children and adults at risk in gymnastics rests with the Bangor Gymnastics Club Board of Directors and Club Manager.

Bangor Gymnastics Club accepts our responsibility to implement arrangements and procedures to safeguard and protect our participants and will;

- Provide effective leadership to promote and implement the policy and minimise incidents of harassment and abuse.
- Develop a skilled and competent safeguarding workforce.
- Develop and implement standards of conduct that establish appropriate behaviours and boundaries for individuals in positions of trust and athletes.
- Develop and implement appropriate training to recognise, identify and respond to signs of harassment and abuse.
- Ensure children and their parents, adults at risk and other athletes are consulted and, where appropriate, fully involved in decisions that affect them.
- Implement appropriate practices for sharing information, where it is necessary to protect a child or adult at risk with relevant statutory agencies, including relevant gymnastics organisations.
- Ensure any suspicions and allegations involving abuse of a child or adult at risk are reported in line with the applicable statutory guidance and where it relates to a Bangor Gymnastics Club member.
- Provide appropriate support to the individual(s) involved in incidents or concerns, including the person who reported the concern.
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all concerns are maintained and securely stored.
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements are in place for all Bangor Gymnastics Club activities.
- Develop and implement safe recruitment procedures to prevent unsuitable individuals from being appointed to positions of trust and responsibility.
- Have appropriate systems and processes in place to make sure children and adults at risk are protected from harassment and abuse.
- Take action against any coaches or volunteers where arrangements for safeguarding and/or behaviours fall below the expected standard required.

**Duty of Care**

Bangor Gymnastics Club have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of gymnasts, coaches, volunteers, officials, visitors, and others on their premises.
We have a legal responsibility to ensure that participants are protected from harm whilst taking part in gymnastics at Bangor Gymnastics Club. This is legally termed as the 'duty of care' and is particularly significant when dealing with children and young persons in the club.
For the purpose of this document and all Safeguarding policies, Bangor Gymnastics Club refers to children as any person under the age of 16 years and a Young Person as being over 16 but under 18 years, irrespective of their role.

When working with children, an adult who carries out a supervisory role takes on certain responsibilities while the child is in their care. This may include:

- Holding responsibility for care and wellbeing during training.
- Safe dispersal after training.
- Providing first aid.
- Providing/consenting to emergency medical treatment.
- Supervision/chaperoning.
- Team managing

To fulfil the 'duty of care', Bangor Gymnastics Club make sure that the following areas are properly covered:

- Safeguarding and Welfare.
- Safe Environment, including safe apparatus and equipment.
- Safe development of the individual through appropriate physical and psychological preparation and progressive skill development in line with coaches' qualifications and discipline specific syllabus.
- Provision of suitable first aid support and emergency procedures.
- Exercising reasonable care at all times.

Bangor Gymnastics Club follow the appropriate safeguarding and welfare guidelines set out by Welsh Gymnastics, and within a coach's qualification, their duty of care includes knowledge of the following documents and reference to policies when required. Where a coach has not followed any of the following procedures, which may result in an allegation these documents will be referenced in the investigation. All coaches of Bangor Gymnastics Club are advised to read the following policies, procedures and guidelines set out on the following web pages:

***Welsh Gymnastics Safeguarding Page:***
***https://www.welshgymnastics.org/keeping-safe/***

***Welsh Gymnastics Policies and Procedures Page:***
***https://www.welshgymnastics.org/policies-2/***

***British Gymnastics Policies and Procedures Page:***
***https://www.british-gymnastics.org/safe-and-fair-sport/policies-procedures***

**Welfare Officers**

Although the responsibility for safeguarding falls on everyone, a critical element in safeguarding is the designation of an individual or individuals who is/are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people:

- Responding to safeguarding, child protection and poor practice concerns.
- Providing support and advice in the implementation of procedures that safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Assisting the club or event to be more child focused on its activities, e.g. involving children in decision making processes.

**Provision of Care**

Pre-school Children Parents of children under three years of age and of children who require assistance to use the toilet must remain with their child on site during the class.

Bangor Gymnastics Club would recommend that parents of children aged 3-4 years remain nearby and contactable in case their child becomes distressed or requires assistance.

**Flexibility/Stretching Exercises**

There is a range of techniques and types of exercise for extending flexibility that involve the application of force. These techniques can also lead to the person applying the force coming into proximity with the gymnast and having prolonged contact with areas of the gymnast's body.

Coaches must follow the following guidelines:

- Use slow, progressive, and prolonged stretching exercises, within the "discomfort zone", rather than what might be excessive force.
- Avoid exercises that place the coaches and gymnasts' body in "close proximity" and might be 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.
- Consider sending the flexibility policy to parents and gymnasts.

**Transporting Gymnasts**

The following guidance relates to coaches who transport gymnasts to training or events/competitions. Additional guidance is provided for the official provision of transport by a club for away events. Bangor Gymnastics Club coaches do not take children alone on car journeys, except in unforeseen circumstances. *In such circumstance, the welfare team must be notified, and the following are practical requests to help alleviate transport problems:

- The parents aware (highlighted in the squad joining pack) that it is the coaches' responsibility to coach and not to provide transport for their child.
- When a child accepts a place in a squad, the parent should be asked to commit to ensuring the child attends all training sessions and to be responsible for making the necessary transport arrangements.
- We encourage parents to share transport with other parents.
- Transport gymnasts in groups.
- It is unacceptable for coaches to transport one child alone and in the case of transporting a group of gymnasts, best practice would require two responsible adults in the car. (This does not include another coach who is themselves under 18 years). However, in exceptional circumstances where the provision of two responsible adults is not possible and subject to prior

consent from all relevant parents, a coach could transport a group of gymnasts (Not individual) without another adult present.

<u>This is subject to the following conditions:</u>

- The driver must ensure there are central pick-up and drop-off points to ensure they are not alone with a child.
- The driver should also provide parents with full details of any planned breaks in the journey and departure and arrival times.
- Gymnasts must be seated in the back of the car with booster seats if required.
- The Club Welfare Officer should be made aware of the arrangements and called immediately.

* Unforeseen would only apply in the event of an accident or where something unexpected has happened and there is no other alternative but to take a child alone in the car and to fail to act would put the child at risk of harm. Where these situations are unavoidable, and whenever possible, the full consent of either the Welfare Officer, Head coach or Official and the child's parents should be obtained. The above guidelines still comply when transporting to coaching courses, regional/national squad training or competitions