

# Dynamics Gymnastics Health and Safety Policy

## **DUTY OF CARE**

Dynamics Gymnastics realises that it has a responsibility for the safety and welfare of gymnasts, coaches, volunteers, officials and any visitors to the clubs. This is legally termed the 'Duty of Care' and becomes particularly relevant when dealing with children with the Class Manager or Head Coach acting 'in loco-parentis' i.e. decision making would be based on reasonableness and considering how a reasonable parent or coach would behave.

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

- The provision of a safe environment at all times
- Safe development of the gymnast
- Provision of suitable first aid support and emergency procedures
- Compliance with child protection and welfare policy and procedures

Dynamics Gymnastics policies and procedures for the areas covered within the 'Duty of Care' are outlined as far as possible in this policy document. As it is impossible to establish detailed guidelines for every aspect of every situation that may arise, Dynamics Gymnastics coaches are trained via British Gymnastics coaching courses and Living Sport courses giving them a sufficient knowledge base to make informed judgements regarding their 'Duty of Care'.

## **PROVISION OF A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AT ALL TIMES**

The criteria for creating a safe environment so far as is reasonably practicable are:

- 1) Coaches have the appropriate **qualification**, competence and experience for the role they are performing:

Dynamics Gymnastics classes are directed by a qualified British Gymnastics Level 3 Coach or a Level 2 Coach who has completed the add-on module in Club Management. As this direction can occur away from the gym itself, Dynamics Gymnastics classes are delivered in the presence of a Class Manager or Head Coach who holds the minimum British Gymnastics Level 2 Coach qualification in a related discipline. British Gymnastics qualified Level 1 Coaches, Award Scheme Coaches and trainee coaches may work under the supervision of the Class Manager or Head Coach. It is the role of the Class Manager or Head Coach to monitor that each coach works only to the level to which they are qualified.

- 2) Coaches carry out their duties with **reasonable skill and care** in a prudent and professional manner:

See the "Dynamics Gymnastics Code of Conduct for Coaches"

- 3) Reasonable **ratios** are adopted for the number of participants to coaches:

Dynamics Gymnastics works in accordance with British Gymnastics recommendations for the reasonable ratio of participants to each coach with the Class Manager or Head Coach supervising Coaches, Assistant coaches and Award Scheme Coaches leading an average of 8 participants at one apparatus station. On rare occasions, coaches holding a Level 2 or Level 3 Coach qualification are permitted to supervise 16 gymnasts across 2 pieces of apparatus in addition to supervising the other coaches and their participants. This can include the Class Manager or Head Coach provided all Award Scheme Coaches remain directly supervised by a Level 2 or Level 3 Coach. When groups are warming up, cooling down or working on low risk activities on a floor area, the stated ratio may be increased within the bounds of safety.

On the occasions where Dynamics Gymnastics classes involve trampolining, a suitably qualified British Gymnastics coach supervises the trampolines. A maximum of 10 participants will work to each trampoline supervised directly by a coach under the overall supervision of the suitably qualified British Gymnastics coach.

4) Coaches and gymnasts adhere to the Dynamics Gymnastics **dress code**:

- 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.
- Do not wear clothing with buckles, clasps, zips or other raised adornments.
- Gymnasts work in bare feet or gymnastics slippers.
- Coaches work in gymnastics slippers or soft clean training shoes.
- When trampolining, wear socks or suitable gymnastics footwear.
- Tie long hair back.
- Remove all jewellery. In the event that an item of jewellery cannot be removed it must be sufficiently covered with protective tape in order to eliminate any risk (Dynamics Gymnastics will not provide or apply the protective tape).
- Keep fingernails to a length compatible with the activity.

N.B. Any clothing that is considered by the Class Manager or Head Coach to be a safety hazard should be changed or participation may be prohibited. Any concessions on dress e.g. on religious grounds, must be within the bounds of reasonable safety. The Class Manager or Head Coach must explain the element of risk to the coach, gymnast and parent/carer and every attempt to control the risk adopted.

5) **Equipment** checks are arranged and implemented:

On a session to session basis, coaches apply safety principles when using equipment as follows:

- Safe handling techniques are adopted when moving and placing equipment.
- Gymnasts and trainee coaches are taught how to handle equipment safely as suitable and relevant.
- Safe and appropriate landing surfaces are provided at all times in accordance with the level of activity inc. the placement of floor mats under safety mats where necessary to prevent slipping.
- The equipment layout is checked inc. inspection of each individual piece of apparatus.
- Equipment is adjusted according to the activity, age, size and ability of gymnasts.
- Equipment is stored safely and appropriately at the end of each session according to the facility storage space and system.

All Dynamics Gymnastics classes currently run out of school facilities governed by Local Authorities. It is a Local Authority requirement that each school organises an external company to inspect the gymnastics equipment on an annual basis. In addition to this inspection, Dynamics Gymnastics carries out and acts upon its own annual equipment check at each club. Completed annual inventory forms are filed in the Health and Safety folder. At other times, the Class Manager or Head Coach logs any arising equipment issues recording and taking necessary action as soon as possible. Where necessary, damaged equipment will be taken out of service until repaired or removed.

6) **Facility checks** are arranged and implemented:

All Dynamics Gymnastics classes currently run out of school facilities governed by Local Authorities. It is a Local Authority requirement that each school completes a risk assessment for the gymnasium and implements control methods identified to reduce associated risks. In addition to this risk assessment, Dynamics Gymnastics carries out and acts upon its own annual facility check at each club. Completed facility checks are filed in the Health and Safety folder. At other times, the Class Manager or Head Coach logs any arising facility issues recording and taking necessary action as soon as possible.

7) **Risk assessments** are arranged and implemented:

Throughout Dynamics Gymnastics classes, the coaches - under the direction of the Class Manager or Head Coach - visually risk assess the environment and activity to identify the potential hazards, judge the level of risk and apply control measures to minimise the risks. These continual risk assessments are routinely familiar within the coaching process and take place throughout classes without the necessity to make a written record.

In addition to this continual process, risk assessments forms are completed and reviewed by the Class Manager or Head Coach on an annual basis for each Dynamics Gymnastics Club addressing the general issues of:

- Who might be harmed
- Coaching qualifications and consideration for trainee coaches
- Equipment
- Facilities
- Manual Handling techniques for moving, erecting and dismantling gymnastics apparatus
- Emergency and First Aid Procedures

Additional hazards and arising hazards are risk assessed on a separate British Gymnastics risk assessment form by the Class Manager/Head Coach as they arise and are filed with the general risk assessments in the Health and Safety file.

8) **Spectators** are kept to a minimum:

To maximise space and minimise distractions during Dynamics Gymnastics classes, parents/carers are required to leave the gymnasium once the main session is underway. Parents/carers, however, are welcome into the gym during any warm up time to help younger gymnasts get ready, to make payments, clothing orders or to speak to the Class Manager or Head Coach.

So as not to contradict Child Protection Policy good practice guidelines of adopting an “open door” policy, however, parents/carers are welcome to view the class from outside the gym door and/or, where there are exceptional circumstances, arrange to sit in on an occasional class via negotiation with the Class Manager or Head Coach. In addition to this, parents/carers of new gymnasts are invited to view the first class their gymnast attends and all parents/carers are invited to an annual “open day” session during the summer term. The open day sessions are subject to an additional risk assessment to take into account the additional Health and Safety risks.

9) Additional good practice guidelines are adopted for **trampolining** activities as follows:

- Trampolining is supervised by a suitably qualified BG coach i.e. a Trampoline Coach or a qualified coach from another BG discipline in which trampolining features as part of the coach education syllabus.
- Trampolining occurs in a suitable environment – 5m ceiling height, away from overhead structures and stray balls, clear space under and around the trampolines, safety mats at either end and floor mats along the sides.
- The qualified coach is responsible for ensuring that the person sliding in the push in mat, if not a qualified coach, is trained, experienced and of sufficient maturity.
- Where two trampolines are set up end to end, a safety mat is positioned between the trampolines and where they are set up side by side they are directly touching.
- At least two trained suitably sized persons wearing training shoes set up and fold the trampolines under the direct supervision/involvement of the trained coach.
- Before use the trampolines are checked for:
  - bed wear and tear
  - uneven tension
  - spring placement with hooks pointing down
  - frame pads for wear and tear
  - even tension and tautness in the chains
  - legs fully in place
  - roller stands stored safely and securely

- Before use the gymnasts are introduced to/reminded of guidelines for safe practice:
  - stand at the ends of the trampoline ready to spot (never sit on the edge)
  - never look or go under trampolines
  - only do as told by your coach
  - always bounce and stop over the central cross
  - dismount the trampoline by walking to the edge, sitting down and sliding off
  - don't get on the trampoline until the previous gymnast has fully dismounted unless the activity requires it
- Before use the qualified coach checks that the gymnasts are wearing suitable sports clothing including non-slip footwear or socks, have removed all jewellery and hair is tied back.
- A coach positions themselves along one side of the trampoline and acts as the spotter on this side. The gymnasts are positioned standing on mats on the other sides with at least one gymnast on each side suitably sized to spot.
- The length of each turn is restricted to a maximum of 1 - 1½ minutes, 4 or 5 attempts at a skill or 2 routines to ensure suitable rest periods between turns.
- Progressive practices are followed to ensure the readiness of the gymnast to attempt each new skill and stage of skill.
- Double bouncing is only done with smaller gymnasts remaining on their side of the central cross. Larger gymnasts do synchronised trampolining with one on each trampoline as an alternative activity.
- Trampoline games involving more than 2 gymnasts are permitted as part of a trampoline session under the direction and supervision of the qualified coach/teacher.

### **SAFE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GYMNAST**

Dynamics Gymnastics recognises the importance of safely developing each gymnast through appropriate physical and psychological preparation and therefore adopts the following best practice:

- Parents/carers are requested to disclose the health status of each participant on the record sheet completed as part of the Dynamics Gymnastics membership process. As necessary, the Class Manager or Head Coach uses this information (and any updates to this information) to adapt and monitor the class content for each individual.
- All Dynamics Gymnastics classes start with an appropriate warm up and end with a cool down.
- Coaching is based on the progression of skills guided by the British Gymnastics Proficiency Awards and Dynamics Gymnastics Award Scheme.
- Flexibility training is done progressively in a suitably warm environment when gymnasts are thoroughly warmed up using a balance of active and passive stretching methods. Coaches are encouraged to adopt passive flexibility training methods in which the gymnast can use their own body weight to enhance the stretch. On the rare occasions that a coach uses their body weight to enhance a stretch, however, the gymnast is in control and able to say stop and coaches never stretch gymnasts to the point of excessive pain or extreme discomfort, inappropriately place their body in close proximity to the gymnast, touch a gymnast's thigh, groin area or buttocks, use their full body weight or work alone with a gymnast.
- "Supporting" and "Spotting" techniques are used by coaches as taught on British Gymnastics coaching courses.

### **PROVISION OF SUITABLE FIRST AID SUPPORT AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In preparation for an accident or emergency, Dynamics Gymnastics aims to follow these good practice guidelines:

- The Class Manager or Head Coach has access to a telephone/mobile telephone in order to dial out for emergency services.
- The Class Manager or Head Coach carries a small First Aid Kit containing a selection of recommended materials in addition to the first aid materials available from each facility provider.

- At least one person trained in basic first aid (appointed person) is present in Dynamics Gymnastics classes with additional first aid personnel typically available from the facility provider.
- A register for all participants is maintained together with a record of emergency contacts, emergency contact numbers and relevant medical information for gymnasts and staff.

Dynamics Gymnastics adopts the following procedure in the event of any serious accident:

- The accident is brought to the attention of the first aider/appointed person.
- The class is stopped and participants not immediately involved in the accident are directed away from the injured person/s (at an appropriate time, the Class Manager or Head Coach may decide to resume the class).
- The first aider/appointed person makes and acts upon an initial assessment of the accident instructing a reliable person to contact emergency services if required.
- The facility management, parents/carers or immediate family of the injured person are contacted.
- The first aider/appointed person remains with and monitors the injured person/s until the emergency services arrive.
- A responsible adult (parent/carer or immediate family member where possible) accompanies the injured person/s to the treatment centre.
- Contact with the injured person/s and or their family is maintained until the incident reaches a conclusion.

Dynamics Gymnastics follows these good practice guidelines in the event of a bleeding injury or open wound to reduce the risk of contamination:

- For minor bleeding injuries, the individual stops the activity they are involved in and the first aider/appointed person treats the individual to stop the bleeding. A fresh sterile dressing is applied to the wound before continuing.
- If the bleeding cannot be stopped, further medical attention is sought.
- Individuals treating an injury wear disposable gloves which are disposed of as clinical waste.
- If possible, the injured individual applies pressure to a bleeding wound with his/her own hands.
- If blood comes into contact with the mouth, eyes or broken skin of any individual, clean cold water is used to wash the affected area and medical advice is sought.
- If blood or other bodily fluids are clearly visible on clothing, the individual is required to replace clothing before participating further.
- Where contamination of equipment has occurred the area is cleaned.
- Spillages are wiped up with heavy-duty paper and discarded with soiled dressings and gloves into clinical waste.

In the event of an accident requiring any form of first aid treatment, the parent/carer is informed and an accident report form is completed by the Class Manager, Head Coach, first aider or appointed person as soon as possible. The accident report forms comply with health and safety legislation. Accidents resulting in a visit to hospital or other further treatment are reported to the insurance company and RIDDOR as relevant. Accident report forms are reviewed on an annual basis at the time of the Policy Implementation Paperwork Audit to identify any patterns that may indicate a common risk or hazard that can be acted upon to reduce further accidents.

The facility providers who rent spaces to Dynamics Gymnastics have responsibility for ALL fire safety issues. Dynamics Gymnastics, however, will ensure all members safely exit the facility should the fire alarm sound using the following procedures:

- The Class Manager or Head Coach will stop the class and request that gymnasts line up behind their coach.
- The Class Manager or Head Coach collects all registers including the accounts/emergency registers and instructs the coaches to lead their groups out of the building via the fire exits to a safe place.
- The Class Manager or Head Coach leaves the building last, checking the changing rooms and toilets on the way where safe to do so.
- The Class Manager or Head coach takes the register to establish that all coaches and gymnasts are present.

N.B. No coaches or gymnasts will be allowed to collect anything, including shoes, coats, bags etc. Once outside and registered, provision to return to the gym or another safe part of the building will be made as soon as possible.

In the event of a power failure during a Dynamics Gymnastics class, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The Class Manager or Head Coach stops the class and requests that gymnasts line up behind their coach.
- Group by group the Class Manager or Head Coach directs all gymnasts and coaches to sit on the floor area.
- If there are any gymnasts in the changing or toilet facility the Class Manager or Head Coach directs two coaches to go to the area to aid their safe return to the gym.
- The Class Manager or Head Coach takes the register to account for all the gymnasts and checks all coaches are present.
- The Class Manager or Head Coach sends for and awaits further news from the facility site manager making sure that all gymnasts and coaches are ready to evacuate the building if necessary.
- If evacuation is required, the Class Manager or Head Coach directs gymnasts to line up behind their coach and then directs the coaches to lead their groups out of the building to a safe place. The Class Manager or Head Coach collects all registers including the accounts/emergency registers and leaves the building last behind all gymnasts and coaches. Once in a safe place, the Class Manager or Head coach repeats the register to establish that all coaches and gymnasts are present.
- If power is restored following an evacuation, the Class Manager or Head Coach directs the gymnasts and coaches back to the gym where a further register will be taken before the class recommences.
- If it becomes apparent that the power is not likely to be restored during the class time, the Class Manager or Head Coach starts the process of using emergency contact numbers to arrange for the collection of gymnasts and coaches and the Dynamics Gymnastics Class Cancellation Policy comes into operation.

## **COMPLIANCE WITH CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

See the "Dynamics Gymnastics Child Protection Policy".

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