



# Stevenage Sports Acrobatics Club

## Good Practice Guidelines

### Club Guidelines

#### Policies & Procedures

- SSAC Child Protection Policy is well publicised to all club members and their parents.
- Promotion of the club's commitment to Health and Safety procedures.
- Every effort is made to prevent situations where an adult is alone with a child or group of young people – there will always be at least two responsible adults present at Club sessions.
- Good practice guidelines are in place for trips and events away from the regular venue.
- Discrimination is prohibited in any form. SSAC will adhere to the BG policy regarding equal opportunity for all gymnasts.
- The Club provides written guidance that some physical contact will be required but only non invasive techniques will be used. If a gymnast or parents has any concerns, they should be raised with the Club Welfare Officer.

#### Child Protection

- The club will keep gymnasts and parents informed about Child Protection procedures.
- A Welfare Officer will be appointed to deal with Child Protection and welfare issues – this person will undergo a criminal records disclosure and will receive appropriate training.
- All Coaches, Helpers and Volunteers are aware of, and sensitive to, potentially abusive situations.
- SSAC promotes an anti-bullying policy

#### Coaches

- SSAC undertake the provision of regular training for Coaches and Helpers.
- Screening will take place of all Coaches and Helpers.
- SSAC regular appraise and monitor their Coaches and Helpers which provides feedback opportunities and raises training issues.

#### Complaints

- Promotion of an environment where legitimate concerns can be raised without fear of recrimination or reprisal.
- Compliance with club and BG complaint reporting guidelines.
- SSAC promote an open door environment
- SSAC keep written records of poor practice, child protection related incidents and accidents, along with any action taken.
- SSAC deal promptly and supportively with any concerns regarding suspicious or poor practice.

#### Photography

- Request for written consent for: participation, contact and medical details, photography consent and an agreement to act in loco parentis in an emergency.
- Use of photographic and filming equipment is monitored and controlled.
- SSAC will follow the Club Photographic Policy at Club events.



## **Coach and Helper Guidelines**

### **Policy**

- Allegations made by a child must not go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Adhere to the British Gymnastics codes of ethics, conduct and anti doping policies.

### **Parental Consent**

- Obtain written consent from parents to act in loco parentis and, if the need arises, administer emergency first aid and/other medical treatment.
- Obtain written consent from parents where gymnasts are to be transported by Coaches or Helpers.

### **Coaching Practice**

- All participants have the right to feel safe and to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Coaches and Helpers should constantly review their coaching style to ensure the safety and well-being of all gymnasts.
- The Club accepts that there may be times when an unexpected situation may occur. In this situation, the Coach or Helper should inform another colleague and immediately write down the event in a log. Wherever possible, and if appropriate, the parent must be informed of the incident. Examples could be:
  - ❖ A distressed gymnast
  - ❖ Accident hurt by a Coach or Helper
  - ❖ Gymnast misunderstanding/misinterpreting, or sexually aroused by, an action or words
- The Club accepts that non-intentional physical contact can arise out of error on the part of the gymnast or Coach/Helper. Do not ignore such situations – acknowledge through an apology and report to the Welfare Officer or Head Coach and parents.
- Physical contact should not be invasive of sensitive areas of the body.
- Treat all gymnasts with respect and dignity - respect their wishes and do not exert them against their will.

### **Events/Trips**

- If mixed teams are taken on trips, at least one male and one female Coach or Helper should accompany the gymnasts.
- Do not take a child alone on a car journey except in an emergency – make sure breaks are well-planned on long journeys.
- When these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the Head Coach and/or the child's parents.
- Do not take a gymnast home or to any other secluded place where they will be alone with the Coach or Helper
- Do not share a room with a child.

### **Safety**

- Do not leave the premises until the parents have safely collected the gymnasts.
- Always place the safety of all participants as the highest priority.
- Do not exceed qualification or competence level.
- Maintain a written log of any incident or injury together with subsequent treatment or action.

### **Contact**

- Avoid situations where a coach and an individual child or vulnerable adult cannot be observed.
- There should always be at least two responsible adults present during sessions.
- Care should be taken when providing manual support – avoid inappropriate contact.
- Do not engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games or any other form of inappropriate touching.
- Do not spend excessive amount of time alone with children and away from others.
- Do not do things of a personal nature for a child, which they can do for themselves unless requested to do so by their parent.



### **Behaviour**

- Behave in an exemplary manner and provide a role model for excellent behaviour.
- Motivate participants through positive feedback and constructive criticism.
- Keep up to date with knowledge and technical skills.
- Do not make sexually suggestive remarks to a participant even in fun.
- Do not reduce a gymnast to tears as a means of control
- Do not allow children to use inappropriate language.
- Do not abuse the position of power and trust with children or adults.
- Do not resort to bullying tactics or verbal abuse.
- Do not embarrass, humiliate or otherwise undermine the individual.
- Recognise the psychological and physical development of an individual and avoid excessive training and competition.



## Guidelines for Parents

Parents can be assured that the Club will:

- Promote and follow their published Child Protection, Health and Safety policies.
- Ensure all Coaches and Helpers follow codes of good conduct, have been checked for criminal disclosures and have a qualification appropriate to the gymnast's performance level.
- Ensure that gymnasts have access to the Welfare Officer and can talk to them about issues and concerns without fear of victimisation or reprisal.
- Follow procedures for dealing with concerns, complaints and disciplinary issues.
- Always have at least two responsible adults present during sessions, one of which must have a minimum of British Gymnastics Club Coach award.
- Encourage all Coaches and Helpers to attend child Protection Awareness training.
- Follow event guidelines for travelling and attending events outside of normal sessions.
- Ensure that discrimination in any form is not tolerated.

## Supervisory Care

From the moment a child arrives at the gymnastics sessions, or when handed over by their parents to travel to an event, the Coaches have a duty of care. While carrying out a supervisory role, they should act in loco parentis.

The child remains the responsibility of the Coaches until they are handed back to the parent.

Supervisory ratios are determined by the Head Coach, according to the age, type of activity and where it is taking place. As a general rule, there should be at least 1 adult for every 15 gymnasts at regular training and a minimum of 1 adult per 10 gymnasts for external events.

This ratio should be increased where gymnasts are under 8.

There should always be at least two adults present to ensure supervision in the event of an accident or an incident, which requires one of the adults to leave the room.