



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Ensuring the safety, well-being, and development of young athletes is paramount in gymnastics. This safeguarding policy is designed to assist in maintaining a safe and supportive environment for athletes while avoiding actions or situations that could be misinterpreted or lead to grooming behaviour. Coaches are expected to adhere to the following principles:

Safeguarding - Best Practice Policy for Athlete Safety at NGA UK Events

1. Transparency and Parental Involvement

Parental Access: Parents or legal guardians must have access to observe their children during competition sessions.

Clear Communication: Always inform parents of any unusual circumstances or changes.

Visibility: Ensure that interactions with athletes occur in areas visible to others, maintaining open lines of sight to avoid any misinterpretation.

2. Changing Areas

Adult Presence: No unrelated adult should be alone with a minor athlete in changing areas or toilets. Only parents or legal guardians may accompany their child. If supervision is required, it must respect athlete privacy while ensuring safety (e.g., hallway or door supervision).

3. Physical Interaction

At NGA UK events, the athletes' club is responsible for ensuring that any physical adjustments, such as spotting, are limited to necessary coaching corrections. Coaches must inform athletes beforehand and clearly explain the purpose of the interaction. All such interactions must take place in public view, in line with the athletes' club's safeguarding policy.

4. Parental Consent for Treatments

At NGA UK official events, while NGA UK runs the event, the responsibility for ensuring compliance with safeguarding protocols lies with the participating club. Any physio or similar activity must be performed by a qualified professional. The professional must obtain parental consent and ensure that all treatments are carried out in an open, visible area, in accordance with the club's safeguarding policy. In the event of an accident requiring medical treatment and the absence of parents, the participating club's coach assumes responsibility for authorising necessary care and ensuring the child receives appropriate medical attention and for filling in the appropriate NGA Accident/Incident Form.



5. Impaired Behaviour

No coach, judge, instructor, or adult involved in gymnastics may participate while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Any individual found to be impaired will be immediately prohibited from interacting with athletes. While NGA UK mandates this policy at its events, it is the responsibility of the participating club to enforce it in accordance with its own safeguarding policies. NGA UK is not liable for the enforcement of this policy or any related incidents.

6. Travel Guidelines

Coaches should never transport minor athletes (under 18) alone in a vehicle. If travel is required to an NGA UK event, it is the responsibility of the participating club to ensure that all travel arrangements comply with the club's own safeguarding policy. NGA UK does not set specific safeguarding rules for travel; therefore, the onus is on the club to obtain parental consent and ensure the safety of their athletes during transportation. NGA UK is not liable for any travel arrangements made by the participating club.

7. Digital Communication (Social Media and Messaging)

All digital communication between coaches and athletes must include the athlete's parent or legal guardian. This applies to emails, texts, and social media interactions. It is the responsibility of the participating club to ensure adherence to this policy, and NGA UK is not responsible or liable for monitoring or enforcing these communications.

8. Photography and Videography

Parental Consent: Coaches and individuals may only take photos or videos of athletes in public view and with the explicit approval of the athlete's parent or legal guardian. These images must be appropriate and suitable for public sharing. NGA UK is not responsible or liable for any misuse of images or failure to obtain consent by the participating club.

Event Coverage: Images captured at competition events should focus on performance and achievement, ensuring that there is no unnecessary or inappropriate attention directed at any individual.

9. Mandatory Reporting

Legal Obligation: In the UK, there is a legal requirement for certain professionals, including those working with children (such as coaches and club staff), to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. This obligation is guided by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004, which emphasise the welfare of the child.

Reporting Protocol: If there is a suspicion or confirmation of child abuse, it must be reported to appropriate authorities, such as local child protection services and/or the police.



10. Child Welfare Contact

NGA UK will appoint a designated individual to act as the Child Welfare Contact at its events. This person will be responsible for guiding coaches, staff, and athletes on how to report concerns about child welfare. They will have access to local safeguarding contacts and child protection services to ensure that any issues are addressed appropriately. Additionally, if applicable the NGA UK representative will contact the associated club to inform them of any concerns raised at an NGA UK event.

11. NGA UK's Role

Non-Liability: NGA UK is not responsible for the actions of individual coaches or clubs regarding the reporting of abuse. Each organisation and individual have a duty to comply with the law and report any concerns appropriately.

Finally, by adhering to this policy, coaches can foster a safe, inclusive, and positive competitive environment where athletes can thrive. These guidelines aim to promote the best possible outcomes for both athletes and the broader gymnastics community, ensuring that the welfare of all participants is prioritised.