

# Acknowledgements

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- NCF:** - National Coaching Foundation: Guidance for National Governing Bodies on Child Protection Procedures
- SAF:** - Scottish Athletics Federation – SAFe CHILD – A Child Protection Policy
- ASA:** - Amateur Swimming Association – Child Protection in Swimming
- BG:** - British Gymnastics – Procedures and Guidelines
- Sportscotland** - Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection (Model Policy and Procedures)
- CRBS** - Training and Guidance on Recruitment and Disclosure Process
- Children 1<sup>st</sup>** - Training and Guidance on Child Protection Issues

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# Child Protection in Gymnastics

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# Child Protection Policy

This document encompasses a Child Protection Policy, Safe Recruitment Policy and a Code of Ethics for all members of Scottish Gymnastics

## **1. Introduction:**

Sport can and does have a very powerful and positive influence on people - especially children, young people and protected adults. Not only can sport provide opportunities for enjoyment and achievement, it can also help those who participate to develop valuable qualities and skills such as self-esteem, leadership and teamwork. These positive effects can only take place if sport is in the right hands i.e. in the hands of those who place the welfare of all children, young people and protected adults first and adopt practices that support, protect and empower them.

Scottish Gymnastics accept that the welfare and safety of children, young people and protected adults is the responsibility of everyone in the sport, whether paid staff or volunteer. As an organisation we are committed to not only developing policies and procedures but to providing information and training opportunities to ensure those working with these groups adopt best practice and that at all times no child, young person, protected adult, coach or official is placed at risk.

**This policy will apply to all children and young people up to the age of 18 as well as protected adults.**

### **Child:**

A child is defined as anyone less than 16 years of age.

16 to 18 year olds: Young people aged 16 to 18 years are sometimes classified as children in Scotland. In terms of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, a 16 to 18 year old will be regarded as a child if he/she is subject to a supervision requirement through a Children's Hearing.

For the purposes of Part V of the Police Act 1997 a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years.

### **Protected adults:**

The term protected adult refers to any person aged 16 or over whom for the time being:

Is unable to safeguard his/her own welfare or properly manage his/her financial affairs, and is in one or more of the following categories:

A person in need of care and attention by reason of either infirmity or the effects of ageing

A person suffering from an illness or mental disorder

A person substantially handicapped by a disability

Protected adults may be in need of health or social support services and may be unable either to take care of themselves and/or to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

A number of studies suggest that children and protected adults are at increased risk of abuse. Various factors contribute to this such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves, or adequately communicate that abuse has occurred.

**Terminology – For the purposes of this policy, the words “children” or “child” refer to children and young adults up to the age of 18.**

## **Key Principles**

The key principles that underwrite this policy are:

- The welfare of all children and protected adults is paramount
- All children and protected adults whatever their age, culture, ability, disability, gender, language, racial origin, parental status, religious belief and/or sexual identity or socio/economic background have the right to protection from harm,
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- It is **everyone’s** responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and protected adults
- Clubs and other organisations will be provided with the appropriate documentation, education/training and support to ensure the implementation of this Policy
- Adults working with children are provided with opportunities for education and training to ensure best practice becomes the norm
- Working in partnership with children and their parents/carers is essential for the protection of the child.

The SGA recognise the statutory responsibility of Local Authority Social Work and Police Departments to ensure the welfare of children and it is committed to complying with Local Area Child Protection Procedures.

## **2. GUIDANCE & LEGISLATION**

The Scottish Gymnastics Child Protection Policy and supporting procedures are based on the following legislation and guidance:

### **Legal Framework**

Children (Scotland) Act 1995

Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995

Police Act 1997

Sex Offenders Act 1997

Human Rights Act 1998

Data Protection Act 1998

Sexual Offences (amendments) Act 2000

Disclosure Scotland Code of Conduct “Making Scotland Safer” 2002

Disclosure Scotland Code of Conduct “Protecting the Vulnerable by Safer Recruitment”

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, the Exclusions and Exceptions (Scotland) order 2003

Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003

Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007

### **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

Scottish Gymnastics strives to ensure that children, young people and protected adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst participating in gymnastics activities. We will endeavor to promote the highest standards of care for participants. For effective implementation of this policy all gymnastics providers must work in partnership, each with a role to ensure the protection of the children and protected adults in their care.

#### **Roles**

##### **SGA will:**

- Provide and implement robust procedures, support and guidance to safeguard the well being of all participants.
- Strive to ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and protecting children and protected adults.
- Strive to ensure a culture of listening to and engaging in dialogue with children
- Develop appropriate whistle blowing procedures and a culture that enables issues about the protection of children and protected adults to be addressed.
- Adopt best practice in recruitment and training of employees and volunteers
- Require all clubs registered with SGA and all members adopt the Association's Child Protection Policy.
- Require all clubs to adhere to the Association's Safe Recruitment Policy
- Require all those who work with children including those who act in a pastoral role whilst on trips, to attend child protection training
- Respond to all allegations and concerns, swiftly and appropriately.
- Initiate Disciplinary proceedings when necessary
- Provide Education, Training and Support to the Child Protection Co-ordinators and to Clubs
- Monitor the operation of this policy

##### **The club will:**

- Adhere to the guidelines and procedures contained within this policy
- Appoint a Child Protection Co-ordinator
- Ensure all those coming into the club to work with children and protected adults regardless of whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, are Safely Recruited in accordance with the SGA Recruitment Policy
- Accept that all Office and Committee members also have a responsibility in this area and be prepared to respond to any indication of abuse
- Be prepared to challenge and alter bad practice
- Implement any recommendations of SGA relating to this area
- Promote an open door policy
- Promote an environment where all legitimate concerns can be raised without fear of victimisation or reprisal
- Ensure all those working with children including those who act in a pastoral role whilst on trips; attend SGA organised Safeguarding and Protecting Children.
- Ensure that the SGA's equity policy is adhered to, and that discrimination is prohibited at all levels
- Maintain confidentiality, should an allegation be made, of the child and the person against whom the allegation is made

### **The Child Protection Co-ordinator will:**

- Ensure all persons working with children, young people and protected adults at the club are fully aware of what is required of them within the guidelines of the Associations Code of Practice
- Ensure all those working with children and protected adults are recruited in accordance with the Association's Safe Recruitment procedures
- Be the first point of contact for coaches, helpers, parents and gymnasts on any issues concerning the well being of the club members, (poor practice or potential alleged abuse).
- Conduct the administrative work associated with the safe recruitment of coaches, helpers and officials, including criminal record checks (verify ID documentation)
- Liaise closely with the clubs trainee coaches, ensuring that the agreed procedures for the prevention of risk are followed
- Act as adviser, when required, to the club's management committee on matters of policy & procedures related to Child Protection and Recruitment
- Ensure that all those working with children and protected adults attend SGA organised Safeguarding and Protecting Children
- Ensure that all incidents are correctly recorded and reported in accordance with SGA policy and procedures

### **4. ACTIONS TAKEN BY SCOTTISH GYMNASTICS**

Scottish Gymnastics Association (SGA) has appointed a Head of Child Protection. This person will work closely with the appropriate agencies responsible for Ethics and Child Protection and will represent Scotland on the British Gymnastics Ethics Focus Group.

- SGA has produced guidelines on "Safe Recruitment" of all staff whether paid or voluntary.
- SGA has established a semi-independent Case Referral Group, to ensure all child protection related incidents are appropriately managed.
- SGA maintains confidential records of complaints, concerns and sanctions.
- SGA has complaints and disciplinary procedures in place as per the Association's Constitution and Disciplinary Code of Practice.
- SGA has produced a Complaints: Process and Guidance booklet for clubs
- SGA undertakes a regular review of this policy in the light of legislative, governance or procedural changes.
- Health, Safety and Child Protection are included within Scottish Gymnastics' coach education programmes
- SGA extensively promote best practice through mailings, newsletters, on-line bulletins, training and education.
- Coaches, Officials and Clubs are advised to follow guidelines set down by the Association
- SGA inform British Gymnastics of any incidents or allegations of poor practice or abuse and co-ordinates a joint approach to such practices where appropriate.
- SGA is a Registered Body with CRBS and facilitates a criminal records check service on behalf of registered clubs, to prevent unsuitable people from working within the sport.

### **5. MONITORING PROCEDURES**

The Scottish Gymnastics' Child Protection policy and procedures will be regularly monitored and a full policy review will take place tri-annually. The policy will also be reviewed in the following circumstances:

- As a result of any changes in legislation
- As a result of any changes in governance of the sport
- Following a procedural review as a result of a significant case

## **6. Equity:**

**SGA** fundamentally believes that unlawful discrimination is unacceptable. SGA will endeavour through our policies, procedures, actions and decision making, to ensure that no employee, member or volunteer receives less favourable treatment or is discriminated against on the grounds of race, disability, gender, religious or political belief, sexual orientation, age, social background, marital status or pregnancy.

We believe the principles of equity should be integral to every aspect of our sport - development, delivery, decision-making - and everyone working in gymnastics whether in a paid or voluntary capacity should give due regard to equity as a matter of course

## **7. Abuse:**

Abuse of children can occur in any environment where there are young people, including the home, at school or in a sports club. Although children and protected adults are more likely to be abused by people they know and trust in their family, cases of abuse have occurred in gymnastics. SGA acknowledges that as gymnastics provides significant access to children, it can present opportunities for individuals who want to harm children. Therefore it is vital that those who have regular contact with children recognise the signs and indicators that a child or protected adult may be being abused and know the appropriate steps to take to report these concerns.

Coaches and officials may be best placed to help in identifying concerns, and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage and referring those concerns to SGA and the appropriate statutory organisation.

### **Types of Abuse**

All forms of child abuse involve the elements of a power imbalance, exploitation and the absence of true consent, whether they concern acts of commission or acts of omission.

Lord Clyde in his report\*<sup>1</sup> suggested that:

*"abuse is the wrongful application of power by someone in a dominant position".*

There has been growing awareness that the abuse of children can take many forms.

<sup>1</sup> The Report of the Enquiry into the removal of children from Orkney in February 1991

### **SIGNS OF PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL CHILD ABUSE**

It is important to remember this is not definitive or exhaustive. Any of these signs or behaviours has to be seen in the context of the child's whole situation and in combination with other information related to the child and his/her circumstances.

There can be an overlap between different forms of abuse.

## **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation of children.

***Some level of emotional abuse is present in all types of ill treatment although it may exist alone.***

## **Emotional Abuse in Sport**

- Exposing children to humiliating, taunting or aggressive behaviour or tone
- Demeaning children's efforts by continuous negative feedback
- Failure to intervene where a child's self confidence and worth are challenged or undermined

## **Signs of possible emotional abuse are:**

- Low self esteem
- Continual self – depreciation
- Sudden speech disorder
- Significant decline in concentration
- Socio-emotional immaturity
- "Neurotic" behaviour (e.g. rocking, head banging)
- Self-mutilation
- Compulsive stealing
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Running away
- indiscriminate friendliness

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical treatment.

## **Neglect in Sport**

Lack of care, guidance, supervision or protection, which may be caused by:

- Exposing children to unnecessary cold or heat
- Exposing children to unhygienic conditions, lack of food, water or medical care
- Non-intervention in bullying or taunting

### **Signs of possible physical neglect:**

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Frequent lateness and/or unexplained non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self esteem
- Poor peer relationships
- Stealing

**NON ORGANIC FAILURE TO THRIVE** – Children who significantly fail to reach normal growth and developmental milestones (i.e. physical growth weight, motor, social and intellectual development) where physical and genetic reasons have been medically eliminated and a diagnosis of non-organic failure to thrive has been established. (**Scottish Office 1998, Protecting Children a Shared Responsibility**)

### **Signs of possible non-organic failure to thrive:**

- Significant lack of growth
- Weight loss
- Hair loss
- Poor skin or muscle tone
- Circulatory disorders

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise harming a child.

Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy whereby a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health in a child is also child abuse.

### **Physical Abuse in Sport**

Bodily harm caused by lack of care, attention, or knowledge, which may be caused by:

- Over training or dangerous training of athletes
- Over playing an athlete
- Failure to do a risk assessment of physical limits or pre-existing injuries or medical conditions
- Administering, condoning or failure to intervene in drug use

### **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

#### **Signs of possible physical abuse:**

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries, or delay in reporting them

- Excessive physical punishment
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Avoidance of swimming, physical education etc
- Fear of returning home
- Aggression towards others
- Running away
- Genuine accidental injuries, which are common - the nature and site of the bruising relative to the child's age is important
- Bleeding and clotting disorders

*When considering the possibility of non-accidental injury it is important to remember that the injuries may have occurred for other reasons. Among the most important are:*

- Skin disorders, e.g. impetigo
- Rare bone diseases, e.g. brittle bones
- Swelling or dislocation of the eye caused by tumour
- Undiagnosed birth injury, i.e. fracture clavicle
- Mongolian blue spots which occur naturally in Asian, Afro-Caribbean and Mediterranean children

Medical forms should be issued to parents/guardians to complete as soon as a child or erable adult joins your club. Known medical conditions should be recorded on these forms. All forms containing confidential information should be kept under lock and key but should be readily available to those on a need to know basis i.e. to the coach or medical personnel in the event of an accident.

## **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non- contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in inappropriate ways.

## **Sexual Abuse in Sport**

- Exposure to sexually explicit inappropriate language, jokes or pornographic material
- Inappropriate touching
- Having any sexual activity or relationship
- Creating opportunities to access children's bodies

## **SIGNS OF THE SEXUALLY ABUSED CHILD**

Not all children are able to tell that they have been sexually assaulted. Changes in a child's behaviour may be a signal that something has happened.

**NB:** A child who is distressed may have some of these signs, which should alert you to a problem. It is the combination and frequency of these signs that may indicate sexual abuse. Always seek advice. Try to notice all changes in behaviour.

*It is important to remember that in sexual assault there may be no physical or behavioural signs.*

## **Signs of Possible Sexual Abuse**

### **BEHAVIOURAL**

- Lack of trust in adults or over familiarity with adults
- Fear of a particular individual
- Social isolation – withdrawal or introversion
- Sleep disturbance (nightmares, bed wetting, fear of sleeping alone, needing a night light).
- Running away from home
- Girls taking over the mothering role
- Sudden school problems e.g. falling standards, truancy
- Reluctance or refusal to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for games
- Low self – esteem
- Drug, alcohol or solvent abuse
- Display of sexual knowledge beyond child's years
- Unusual interest in the genitals of people or animals e.g. 'French kissing' or fondling of a parent's genitals
- Fear of bathrooms, showers, closed doors
- Inappropriate sexual drawings
- Fear of medical examinations
- Developmental regression
- Poor peer relations
- Over sexualised behaviour
- Compulsive masturbation
- Stealing
- Irrational fears
- Psychosomatic factors e.g. recurrent abdominal or headache pain
- Sexual promiscuity

### **PHYSICAL/MEDICAL**

- Sleeping problems, nightmares, and fear of the dark.
- Bruises, scratches, bite marks to the thighs or genital areas
- Anxiety/depression
- Eating disorder, eg anorexia nervosa or bulimia
- Discomfort/difficulty in walking or sitting
- Pregnancy – particularly when reluctant to name father
- Pain on passing urine, recurring urinary tract problem, vaginal infections or genital damage
- Venereal disease/sexually transmitted diseases.
- Soiling or wetting in children who have been trained
- Self mutilation, suicide attempts
- Itching, soreness, discharge, unexplained bleeding from the rectum, vagina or penis

### **Negative Discrimination (including racism)**

Children and protected adults may experience harassment or negative discrimination because of their race or ethnic origin, socio-economic status, culture, age, disability, gender, sexuality or religious beliefs. Although not in itself a category of abuse, it may be necessary for the purposes of the Child and protected adults Protection Policy and Procedures, for negative discriminatory behaviour to be categorised as emotional abuse.

**Note:** All organisations working with children and protected adults including those operating where black and ethnic communities are numerically small, should address institutional racism, defined in the McPherson Inquiry report on Stephen Lawrence as:

“The collective failure by an organisation to provide appropriate and professional service to people on account of their race, culture and/or religion”

## **Bullying**

Bullying is deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying occurs if someone regardless of age persecutes, intimidates or is sarcastic to another. All forms of bullying, both verbal and physical from other children is also a form of abuse. The lives of many people are made miserable by bullying. Victims of bullying can feel lonely, isolated and deeply unhappy. It can have a devastating effect on a child or protected adult's self-esteem and destroy their self-confidence and concentration. They may become withdrawn and insecure, more cautious and less willing to take any sort of risk. They may feel it is somehow their fault or that there is something wrong with them and at worst, bullying causes depression and/or feelings of worthlessness that could lead to suicide. Scottish Gymnastics has developed guidelines for identifying and managing bullying. Please refer to: *appendix 1*

## **8. Abuse of Position of Trust**

*This guidance is primarily intended to protect young people under the age 18 where a relationship of trust with an adult exists. This includes young people over the age of sexual consent (16).*

In Scotland young people aged 16 years can legally consent to sexual activity but they may still be relatively immature emotionally. It is essential that those who may be in a position of responsibility and trust recognise this vulnerability and ensure that it is not exploited. There is no simple definition of a protected adult but the position of trust and the vulnerability of adults must not be abused.

The principles and guidance apply irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships with a young person are acceptable in a position of trust.

**A Relationship of Trust** can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over another by virtue of their position. A genuine relationship can start between two people within a relationship of trust but the relationship of trust must end before any sexual relationship develops.

### **Abuse of trust and sexual or other abuse**

Any sexual activity, which is not freely consenting, is criminal. The sexual activity covered by abuse of trust may be ostensibly consensual, but rendered unacceptable because of the relative positions of the parties concerned. There is also the **abuse of trust** - where young people are indoctrinated with attitudes to training, drugs and cheating, or social, political and religious views which are unacceptable, to the young, the community or rules of the sport.

### **Conduct on sexual activity between individuals in a relationship of trust aims to:**

- Protect a young person or protected adult from an unequal and potentially damaging relationship
- Protect the person in a position of trust by preventing him/her from entering into such a relationship deliberately or accidentally by providing clear and enforceable guidance on what behaviour is acceptable.

### **Guidelines on abuse of trust:**

- Any behaviour, which might allow a sexual relationship to develop between the person in a position of trust and the individual (s) in their care, must be avoided.
- Any sexual relationship within a relationship of trust is unacceptable so long as the relationship of trust continues.
- All those in an organisation have a duty to raise concerns about behaviour by coaches, staff, volunteers, managers and others, which may be harmful to those in their care, without prejudice to their own position.

It is acknowledged that in some situations a shared attraction may develop between two people within a relationship of trust. In such circumstances, it is essential that the individual who holds the position of trust behaves in an open manner, makes the CPC aware of the situation, and resigns from this position of trust if the parties involved wish the relationship to develop beyond the existing professional one. This will ensure that the previous power differential is not a factor in any future relationship. It is strongly advised that the young person is given an opportunity for reflection before any sexual relationship develops. It is the responsibility of the adult to ensure that his or her conduct is fully in line with the SGA Child Protection Policy.

## **9. Grooming**

These are practices which may appear to be carried out with the best of intentions but are used by people who sexually abuse children to 'groom' their victim:

How abusers "target and groom" – they:

- engineer 1-1 situations
- develop a special friendship
- make promises of success
- engage family, other coaches, people of influence
- use text, internet chat rooms
- have "special secrets"
- extend the relationship from the gym to socialising
- buy gifts to buy affection
- have unnecessary physical contact with young people e.g. excessive handling/supporting, cuddling, kissing, "friendly" taps
- Alienate gymnasts and coaches from their peers

## 10. Your Emotional Feelings when dealing with allegations of Abuse

Everyone has a responsibility to maintain awareness and openness with regard to child protection issues. It is acknowledged that taking appropriate action is never easy and the discovery that a member of staff or colleague is, or may be abusing a child will raise concerns and emotional feelings among other colleagues.

These emotions may evolve around feelings of:

- Doubt: Is it true?
- Confusion: What will happen?  
What actions should be taken?  
What will be the effect?
- Guilt: Should I have known?  
Did I miss something?  
Did I have any suspicions?  
Should I have said something?
- Fear: Will I or others be suspected?
- Concerns: What can I do to support all those people who may need support?  
How will it affect further relationships or contact with children? Are there systems in place to expose future situations?

There is clearly a need to have support mechanisms for all those involved in or surrounding the issue, including those making the allegation, those who may be being abused and those against whom the allegation is made.

**Scottish Gymnastics is primarily concerned with the well being and safety of all its members and participants and Scottish Gymnastics will support anyone who in good faith and where he/she has reasonable grounds for doing so, reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.**

## 11. Responding to Complaints and Alleged or Suspected Incidents

Dealing with child abuse is rarely straightforward. In some cases the disturbed behavior of the child, or an injury, may suggest that the child has been abused. In many situations, however, the signs will not be clear-cut and decisions about what action to take can be difficult

### Abuse may become apparent in a number of ways:

- Through observation
- A child may tell you
- A third party may have reported an incident, or may have a strong suspicion
- You may have a suspicion

### If an allegation is brought to your attention:

#### Step 1 – Listen and Reassure

**DO**

**Stay calm** - do not rush into inappropriate actions.

**Reassure the child** - that they are not to blame and confirm that you know how difficult it must be to confide.

**Listen** - to what the child says and show that you take them seriously.

**Keep questions to an absolute minimum** - use open ended questions i.e. those where more than a yes/no response is required. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed if it appears that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested.

**Ensure that you clearly understand what the child has said** so that you can pass it on to the appropriate agencies.

**Consult with the appropriate child protection authority (e.g. Police, Social Work or CPC, depending on degree of urgency)**- ensuring that you communicate all the information accurately. They will advise as to your next step

**Maintain confidentiality.**

**DON'T**

**Panic.**

**Make promises you can't keep by** - Explaining that you may have to tell other people in order to stop what is happening, whilst maintaining maximum possible confidentiality.

**Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily.**

**Delay.**

## Step 2 - Record

If the allegation is **ABUSE**, the following process should be followed:

- Make a full report of what the child has said, as soon as possible after the disclosure, sign and date it **do not use a computer**
- Give the report to the CPC (unless they are involved in the complaint). The CPC will involve the appropriate authorities as and when necessary and will record this, using the SGA incident report form, which can be found in the SGA Child Protection Policy
- The SGA Head of Child Protection should also be informed and kept up to date with any local subsequent developments.
- Confidentiality must be maintained

If the allegation relates to **POOR PRACTICE**:

- Make a record of the allegations
- The SGA Head of Child Protection should be informed so that a disciplinary Panel can be appointed and an investigation can be carried out as necessary

### Misconduct/Allegation Reports

Record what the child has said, and/or your concerns, legibly and accurately. Details should include:

- The child's name, address and date of birth
- Date and time of the incident(s) and/or nature of allegations
- Your observations e.g. describe the behaviour and emotional state of the child and/or bruising or other injuries
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened
- Any action that you have taken as a result of your concerns, e.g. comments made to the child; whether or not the parents/carers have been contacted
- Record whether the person writing the report is expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of someone else
- Sign and date the report
- Keep a copy of the report in a secure P & C file

## Step 3 – Involve the appropriate people

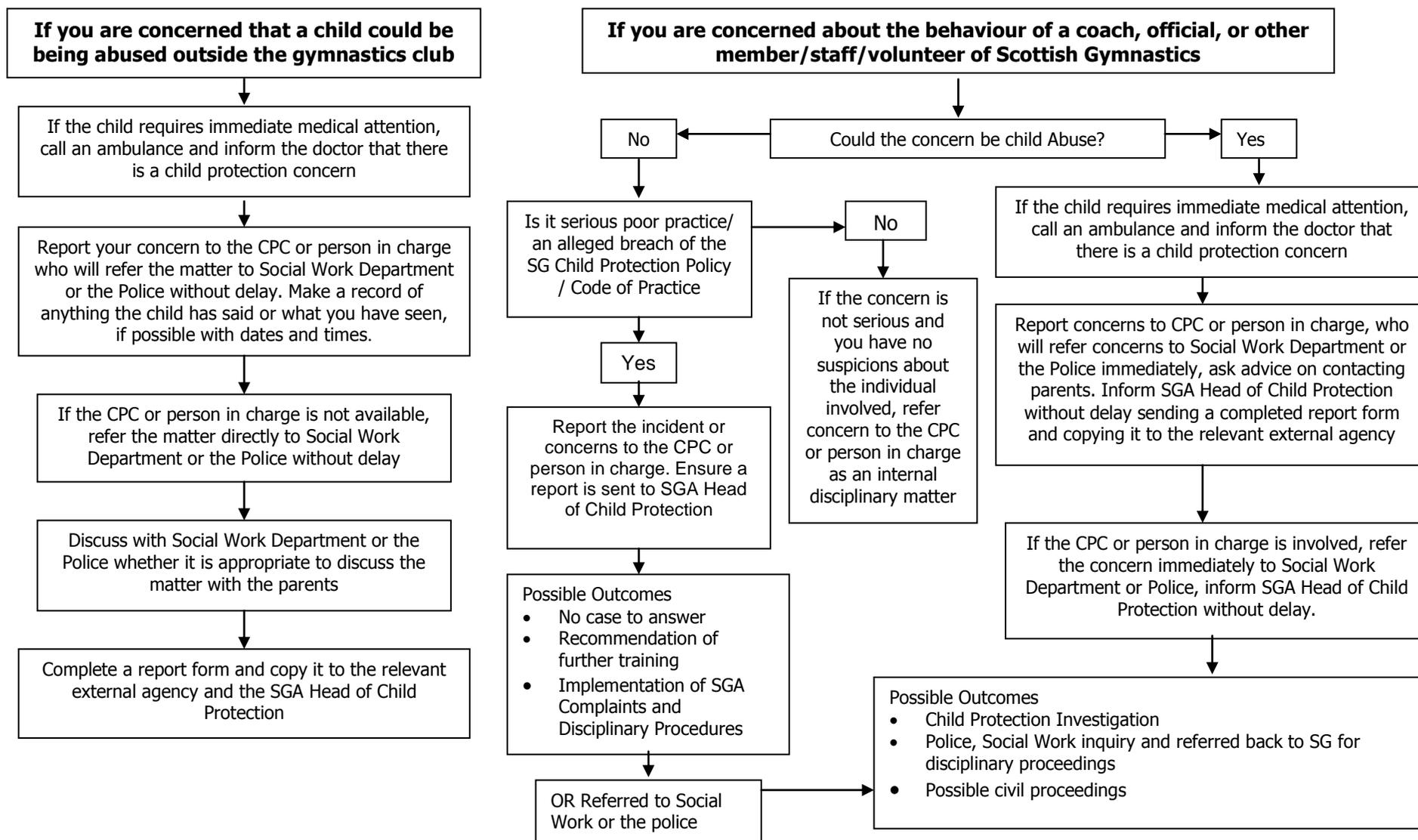
Once you have completed your report you must ensure that the Child Protection Co-ordinator in your Club has been informed so a decision can be made as to the most appropriate course of action. This person must forward the report to the SGA Head of Child Protection indicating whether further action is required, thus allowing a disciplinary panel to be appointed. The President of SGA has the power to appoint a Disciplinary Panel as necessary

If you are unhappy with the Child Protection Co-ordinator's handling of the incident or the allegations are made specifically against this individual, you should contact the **Person in Charge** immediately and make a record of this.

This person might be the Club Chairman, the Head Coach, the Sports Centre Manager, or the Team Manager. The person in charge shall then consult with the appropriate child protection authority e.g. Police, Social Work, SGA Head of Child Protection or CPC, depending on degree of urgency. A record of the name, and designation of the official informed, together with the time and date of the call should be kept in case future contact is required. Contact should also be made directly to the SGA Head of Child protection.

## 12. A QUICK GUIDE TO PROCEDURES IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE

This quick guide is designed to advise on the most appropriate action to be taken if you suspect abuse or witness repeated poor practice or breaches of SGA Code of Practice for Coaches and Officials. If you are uncertain at any stage, contact SGA Head of Child Protection. All reports should be made on the SGA Child Protection Incident Report form contained in the Child Protection Policy.



**13. INCIDENT REPORT FORM** – Remember to maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know in order to protect the child.

Your name:
Your position:
Child's name:
Child's address:
Parents/carers names and address:
Child's date of birth (if known):
Date and time of alleged incident:
Your observations:
Record exactly what the child said in their own words and any questions you asked if the situation needed clarified: ( <b>Remember</b> , do not lead the child - record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary).

<p>Action taken:</p>
<p>External agencies contacted (date and time)</p>
<p>Police yes / no          If yes – which:          Name and contact number:          Details of advice received:</p>
<p>Social Work Yes/No            If yes – which:          Name and contact number:          Details of advice received:</p>
<p>Other (e.g. Children 1<sup>st</sup>)            Which:          Name and contact number:          Details of advice received:</p>
<p>Signature:            Print name:            Date:</p>

**NB:** A copy of this form should be sent to the Child Protection Team in your local Social Work Department and to the SGA Head of Child Protection

## **14. Procedures for the SGA Disciplinary Panel**

These are contained within the Scottish Gymnastics Disciplinary Code which is available for download from the web site, under our organisation /policies & procedures [www.scottishgymnastics.org](http://www.scottishgymnastics.org)

### **Re-instatement and Allegations of Previous Abuse**

After a period of suspension, a person may apply to be reinstated. The panel shall give consideration to a request for reinstatement, but only if in their view there are good grounds for doing so. No individual will automatically be reinstated.

**Recruitment** - Should someone applying to work within an SGA registered club, regardless of whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, be listed or is being considered for listing either on the barred from working with children or the barred from working with protected adults list, they will be disqualified from working in the respective position with a club.

All those coming into a club to work with either children or protected adults and who meet the criteria, must complete an Application and a Self Declaration form. These can be found in the Association's Safe Recruitment Policy. Failure to disclose information on any previous convictions may also lead to suspension of membership and subsequent inquiry

### **Responsibilities**

The Scottish Gymnastics Association is not liable to reimburse any fees, expenses or other costs incurred by any party bringing or defending any action in respect of an allegation under this policy. The Association is not empowered to make any award of compensation and accepts no liability for such compensation for harm or suffering by any party in respect of any action taken by the Association under this policy.

## **15. Promoting Good Practice**

By promoting good practice throughout the Club and in the wider context of the sport, it is possible to reduce situations for the abuse of children. The Club should have a policy that ensures children are protected and kept safe from harm. Everyone should know what to do if there are concerns about possible abuse and where the procedures are kept.

The appointment of a Child Protection Co-ordinator is the key in this process and he/she will be encouraged to promote good practice throughout the Club by ensuring everyone is aware of their responsibilities. This role may include leading by example, organising simple training briefings and using leaflets/posters and notices throughout the areas used by the Club.

In addition to the procedures described above it is the Child Protection Co-ordinator's responsibility to ensure that the Clubs get all volunteers safely recruited in line with the Association's Recruitment Policy. Clubs should display, in a prominent place, Child Protection material highlighting the helpline numbers, the CPC contact details and the Childline phone number.

## 16. Code of Practice for Coaches and Officials

Adherence to good coaching practices, aligned with open communication with parents, children and young people should ensure that a safe and enjoyable environment is established and sustained. **The duty of care commences from the point of receipt of the child to the point of return to the parent/guardian and the duty of care is non transferable.**

### Conduct for Sports Coaches - Key Principles

- **Rights:** coaches must respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in sport.
- **Relationships:** coaches must develop a relationship with athletes (and others) based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect.
- **Responsibilities:** personal standards - coaches must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times.
- **Responsibilities:** professional standards - to maximise benefits and minimise the risks to athletes, coaches must attain a high level of competence through qualifications and a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice becomes the norm.

### Rights - Coaches should:

- Create an environment where every individual has the opportunity to participate
- Create and maintain an environment free of fear and harassment
- Recognise the rights of all athletes to be treated as individuals
- Recognise the rights of athletes to confer with other coaches and experts
- Promote the concept of a balanced lifestyle, supporting the wellbeing of the athlete both in and out of the sport

### Relationships – Coaches:

- should promote the welfare and best interest of their athletes
- should empower athletes to be responsible for their own decisions
- should clarify the nature of the coaching services being offered to athletes
- should communicate and cooperate with other organisations and individuals in the best interests of athletes
- must not engage in or tolerate behaviour that constitutes any form of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, bullying).

### Responsibilities - Personal Standards - Coaches:

- must be fair, honest and considerate to athletes and others in their sport
- should project an image of health, cleanliness and efficiency
- must be positive role models for athletes

### Responsibilities - Professional Standards - Coaches will:

- gain NGB coaching qualifications appropriate to the level at which they coach
- make a commitment to ongoing CPD
- be professional and accept responsibility for their actions
- promote safe and correct practice
- provide a safe environment that maximises benefits and minimises risks to athletes.
- make a commitment to providing a high quality service to their athletes

## Recommended Good Practice

Always work in the open when working with children to avoid situations where a coach and an individual child or protected adult cannot be observed.

- There should be at least two **responsible adults** present at all times during training sessions. One appropriately qualified coach plus one other responsible adult (preferably one female and one male). The second adult does not have to be a coach but must be aged 18+.
- Care should be taken when providing manual support (spotting). Recognised/advised techniques for spotting should be used to avoid inappropriate contact.
- Where possible parents should be responsible for young children in the changing rooms or toilets. If a group of children must be supervised in the changing rooms try to ensure that adults work in pairs to supervise the children.
- Mixed teams of gymnasts should, where possible be accompanied by a male and a female coach / pastoral carer.
- Where residential stays apply increased supervision, care and attention must be adopted (refer to *SGA Child Protection Policy* and *Help Pack for Clubs* when taking gymnasts on trips).
- Always place the safety and welfare of the participants as the highest priority.
- Behave in an exemplary manner and be a role model for excellent behaviour.
- Keep up to date with your qualifications, knowledge and technical skills.
- Only work within the level of your competence and qualifications.
- Treat all young people equally, with respect and dignity and put their welfare first, before winning.
- Recognise the stage of psychological and physical development of the individual and avoid excessive training or competition.
- Motivate the participants through positive and constructive feedback.
- Create a safe environment so that participants can enjoy their activity.
- Obtain written consent from parents to act on their behalf if the need arises for the administration of emergency first aid. Consent forms should be obtained from parents/guardians before children commence training.
- If children have to be transported then a male and female coach/pastoral carer should accompany them.
- Request written consent from parents (refer to the SGA Help Pack).
- Maintain a written record of any incident or injury together with any subsequent treatment and immediately complete an SGA Accident Report or Incident Report form.

## Practice to be avoided\*

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Sharing a room with a child
- Making contact or holding discussions with gymnasts via social networking sites or texting.

**\*These practices should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation and / or the child's parents e.g. a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick up a child at the end of a session.**

## **Practice which should never be condoned:**

### **You should never:**

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Take children to your home where they will be alone with you.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Make sexually suggestive remarks to a child or protected adult - even in fun.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for a child or protected adult if they can do it for themselves, unless you have been requested to do so by the parents (do so with the utmost discretion).
- Never depart from the premises until you have supervised the safe dispersal of the children (for SG squad sessions a parent / guardian's signature must be obtained).
- Abuse your privileged position of power or trust with children or protected adults.
- Cause a participant to lose self-esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual
- Have favourites.
- Compromise your position by suggesting anything is "your and your gymnasts 'special secret'"

## **Safe Practice in Unforeseen Circumstances**

If any of the following incidents should occur, you should report them immediately to another colleague and make a written note of the event, signed and dated. Parents should also be informed of the incident:

- If you accidentally hurt a child
- If a child misinterprets something you have said or done.
- If you have to restrain a child (please note: minimum force must only be used).

Many concerns have been expressed recently about what is acceptable practice with regards to stretching exercises and flexibility training for gymnasts. To protect the gymnasts in your care and to protect yourselves against possible allegations of poor practice, coaches must carefully consider their actions and how they might be perceived by an observer.

## **Important factors for a safe and successful gymnastics flexibility programme:**

- Encourage a good flexibility programme from the beginning as young children are more flexible and once a good range of movement is achieved it is easier to maintain.
- For a flexibility programme to be effective the gymnast must be motivated and want to improve in this area.
- Develop an understanding of why flexibility is essential for gymnastics. The gymnast must understand that if they do not improve / maintain their flexibility it will limit their skill development, the quality of their work and make them more susceptible to injury.
- Always remember there are a variety of ways to stretch, not just 'hands on' passive stretching. Situations where the gymnast is using their own body weight are usually more effective and longer lasting.
- It is important to maintain a balance between passive and active stretch.

- Stretching must only be done in a suitably warm environment and only when the gymnast is thoroughly warmed up.
- Regular, gradual and progressive stretching with a focus on achievable and measureable targets is likely to be far more effective.
- Expectations must be consistent with all other factors related to gymnastic development i.e. age, potential, physiology and training situation.
- It is not necessary or desirable to experience extreme discomfort in order to become more flexible – in fact it is this aspect of a flexibility programme that is likely to put the gymnast off and make it less effective.
- In all situations the gymnast must be in control and able to say STOP.

**To be avoided:**

- Unrealistic expectations for a 'quick fix'.
- Situations where gymnasts may feel 'exposed' i.e. for stretching box splits it is better to have gymnast lying on stomach as opposed to lying on back, better to have gymnasts wearing shorts etc.
- Coach stretching gymnast to the point of excessive pain or extreme discomfort.
- Exercises that place the coach's and gymnast's bodies in "close proximity" and could be considered inappropriate.

**The coach should never:**

- Touch a gymnast's inner thigh, groin area or buttocks during stretching exercises.
- Use their full body weight to push down on a gymnast.
- Work alone and with only one gymnast.
- Work alone in a secluded or separated area in the gym where they cannot be observed by other adults.

**It is impossible to establish guidelines for every situation that may occur in our sport and common sense should be used at all times. If you are unsure of the appropriateness of any stretching activity do not be afraid to discuss it with someone you trust or alternatively contact the Ethics and Child Protection department at Scottish Gymnastics.**

**17. Team Management/Team Travel** – implicit within this Policy is the Duty of Care that a Team Manager and/or Club has to children and protected adults when traveling to events. It is recommended that Clubs travel with a full address list, parental consent forms (which would include contact telephone numbers for all the children/protected and young adults within their team), signed medical consent form and code of conduct forms (where applicable) for each child. The inclusion of special instructions, i.e. dietary requirements and any allergies is also extremely useful. This will allow Team Managers to take the necessary action in the event of an emergency.

**also:**

- Ensure all vehicles are correctly insured.
- All reasonable safety measures are taken, e.g. children in the back seat, seatbelts are worn.
- Ensure the correct number of adults to children ratio, note: that increased supervision may be required depending on the group travelling i.e. pre-school or special needs groups.
- Ensure a male and female accompany mixed groups of children or protected adults. These adults should be safely recruited in line with the SGA recruitment policy and should be familiar with and agree to abide by, SGA's Child and Protected Adult Protection Policy and Procedures.

SGA has developed a **Help Pack** for clubs taking gymnasts on trips. This was developed as a working guide to support clubs. It takes into account: Risk Assessment, Safe Recruitment, Health & Safety and Child/Coach Protection. Contained within the pack are several templates including medical and permission forms. This excellent support tool is available for download from the web [www.scottishgymnastics.org](http://www.scottishgymnastics.org) under Ethics & CP or can be provided in hard copy on request. Any person whether coach, assistant or parent acting as a support member of staff in this situation should make themselves familiar with this pack.

**18. Hosting of Gymnasts**

Scottish 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.

**19. First Aid /Treatment of Injuries:**

Accidents should be reported/recorded as per the Associations accident / incident reporting guidelines which can be found on [www.scottishgymnastics.org](http://www.scottishgymnastics.org) under Ethics & CP.

Only those with a current, recognised First Aid qualification should respond to any injuries.

**20. Use of photography and video recorders** - there has been an increase in the misuse of sports photography and video recording within the sporting arena. Scottish Gymnastics has developed guidelines for coaches, officials and parents/guardians. These are not intended to prevent bona fide use of this equipment for family or coaching,

**21. Use Of Digital Images and the internet** - with the growth of the internet and digital images, parents need to be aware that web sites such as gymnastic sites that appeal to children can be targeted by undesirable adults in order to gain information on children. Parents are advised to monitor their children whilst they are on the net. Scottish Gymnastics has developed guidelines on the use of internet and web. Please refer to appendix 6

## Appendix 1

### Guidelines for Identifying and Managing Bullying of Children and Protected Adults

In some cases of abuse it may not be an adult abusing a young person. Children and young people may also be responsible for abuse, for example, in the case of bullying. Bullying may be seen as particularly hurtful behavior usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. '**Kidscape**' ([www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)), a UK charity established specifically to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse, defines bullying as the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person that results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** - pushing, theft, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, harassment e.g. using abusive or insulting behavior in a manner intended to cause alarm or distress.
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic** - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- **Cyber** - All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.

### Identifying Bullying

Bullying can be difficult to pick up because it often happens away from others and victims do not tend to tell. However you can watch for signs that may indicate the presence of bullying. The following lists common bully/victim behaviour.

If a child or protected adult:

- Hesitates to come to training sessions
- Is often the last one picked for a team or group activity for no apparent reason, or gets picked on when the other children think your back is turned.
- Is reluctant to go to certain places or work with a certain individual.
- Has clothing or personal possessions go missing or become damaged.
- Has bruising or some other injury.
- Keeps 'losing' their pocket money.
- Is quite nervous, withdraws from everybody else and becomes quiet and shy, especially in the case of those who are normally noisy and loud.
- Becomes suddenly prone to lashing out at people, either physically or verbally when they are usually quiet.

**Action to Help the Victim(s) and Prevent Bullying:**

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. Help the victim(s) to speak out and tell the Coach in charge or the Club Child Protection Co-ordinator (someone in authority).
- Create an open environment.
- Take all allegations seriously and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully (bullies) separately.
- Reassure the victim(s) that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said i.e. what happened, by whom and when.
- Report any concerns to SGA Head of Child Protection.

**Action taken to deal with the bully:**

- Talk with the bully (s), explain the situation and try to get the bully (s) to understand the consequences of their behavior.
- Seek an apology from the bully to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully's parents/guardians.
- If appropriate, insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully (s) compensates the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(s) to change behaviour
- Keep a written record of action taken.

## **Appendix: 2**

### **Whistle Blowing**

The Protection of children and young people requires everyone to be committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability. SGA supports an environment where people feel free to raise their concerns with the knowledge that all concerns will be taken seriously.

The term 'whistle blowing' is often used in such circumstances to describe the raising of a concern about practices, procedures or conduct of an individual. In gymnastics context a whistleblower may be: a Coach, Official, Gymnast, Parent or a Member of the Public.

Concerns should be raised without delay to either the CPC, the SGA Head of Child Protection or a trusted adult. The earlier concerns are reported, the easier it will be to take action.

SGA understands that whistleblowers are often very reluctant to report concerns within the club setting. Therefore we recognise that whistleblowers may wish to raise concerns in confidence with SGA. In these circumstances, the identity of the whistleblower will be kept confidential. However, disclosure may become necessary to pursue action against the alleged wrong-doer; in these circumstances, the whistleblower will be consulted in advance wherever possible and practicable.

Scottish Gymnastics will follow up all complaints, concerns or allegations relating to child protection matters including those which are raised anonymously. In some cases, without an identified complainant, Scottish Gymnastics are unlikely to be able to proceed with disciplinary actions, but in all cases, an initial assessment will be made to consider whether there is sufficient substance in the complaint, the credibility of the referral and the likelihood of identifying others who can confirm the allegations to warrant some initial enquiries or risk assessment.

All concerns raised under this procedure will be treated seriously and depending upon the nature of the matter it may be referred to the police. In these circumstances, the whistleblower may be asked to provide a written statement and give evidence to the police and/or at a SGA hearing. SGA will provide support to the whistleblower during this process.

SGA will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect anyone who has raised a concern in good faith. Anyone who is found to have victimised or harassed a whistleblower will face disciplinary action. Anyone who raises concerns known to be untrue may also be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Appendix: 3**

### **Supporting access for special needs groups to participate in Gymnastics**

It is the responsibility of every club to consider the needs of children and protected adults, making reasonable adjustments to help provide for the inclusion of anyone who wishes to participate. All registered clubs should be willing to help young people and their parents to ensure the necessary support is in place for children with disabilities and other special needs to access gymnastics activity.

Under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, Local Authorities are required to provide services for any child who would be defined as a 'Child in Need'. This includes disabled children and children with impaired health and development. Although the Local Authority is responsible for ensuring appropriate needs are met, services may be provided by a voluntary organisation acting on behalf of the Local Authority.

SGA expects registered clubs, where a child or young person with a disability requires support from a carer to access gymnastics activity and the support is not already provided, to look with parents at the child's needs and if appropriate approach Social Services to request such support. In the event that no support is available, the club should examine whether they can meet the needs of the child or young person without significantly affecting the club's ability to provide gymnastics activity to others.

Not every child or young person will need continual one-to-one support. Additional support may only be required for a temporary period until the child or young person settles into the club, for a transition period (e.g. for the first half hour of the club) or for personal care.

#### **Key points to consider:**

##### **Consultation**

Working in partnership with families, Social Services, health and other relevant professionals and voluntary groups, to determine a child's needs and identify support. Start by asking parents and, if appropriate the child or young person, about the specific needs and ascertain if other professionals should be approached so there is a clear understanding of the support required.

##### **Funding**

Additional funding may be required where there is requirement for one-to-one support or a higher ratio of staff to participants (depending on needs). Funding sources include: local authorities, local sports councils, lottery grants, private businesses, voluntary services and charities that provide grants to support children and protected adults with disabilities. Local authority schemes may be able to help with funding for one-to-one support workers.

##### **Facilities**

Are they suitable and accessible? Are there reasonable adjustments that can be made?

##### **Learning Needs**

Although British Gymnastics does not require coaches to hold a BG qualification for coaching people with disabilities, specialist training may be beneficial to help with communication methods, ensuring a positive attitude towards inclusion.

## **Appendix: 4**

**The following information provides guidance for clubs on how to respond where a parent, for whatever reason, does not arrive at the required time to collect their child.**

All parents must be advised that in the event that they are delayed for any reason, they must:

- Contact the club at the earliest opportunity
- Provide clear guidance on what they wish the club to do e.g. consent for another parent to transport their child home.

The club must:

- Maintain a list of parent/guardian contact details and emergency numbers
- Never leave a child or young person alone unless she/he is over 16 and then only with parent/guardian permission
- Carry out appropriate assessments of situations as they arise, acknowledging that some young people can go home alone if their parent/guardian is delayed, providing the parent/guardian has given permission

The coach must not:

- Take the child to their (the coaches) home
- Take the child to another location without permission
- Send the child home with another person without permission.

If the parent/guardian is considered by the club as being unduly late, the coach should:

- Attempt to contact the parent
- Attempt to contact the emergency contact person nominated. If there is no reply from the emergency contact, ask the child if there is another family member who may be contacted.
- Wait with the young person(s) at the club with at least one other official/coach/teacher/volunteer or parent.
- Respond to any instructions received from the parent
- If no-one can be reached, contact the local police or Children's Social Work Services to enquire about the best course of action.

### **Persistent Failure to Collect a Child/Young Person on Time**

Parents, who persistently fail to collect a child on time or have not arrived after a reasonable period of time, and have given no prior notice or informed the club they are delayed, may be failing to provide adequate care for their child.

If the parent makes no effort to contact the club or provide reasonable explanation for the delays, the CPC and another club official should arrange to meet with the parent to discuss the matter. If this continues to be the norm, the CPC should contact Social Work or Children 1<sup>st</sup> for advice.

If a parent/guardian arrives to collect a child and you have concerns that he/she may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs and is in no fit state to care for the child you must inform the police without delay.

## Appendix: 5

### **The following information provides guidance for clubs on how to respond in the event of a missing child or young adult.**

In the rare event that a child goes missing from a club, the following actions should be taken. At the point that a child has been identified as missing the club should:

- Ensure that other children in the group are looked after appropriately while a search for the child concerned is conducted.
- Inform the child's parents if they are present, or nominate an appropriate person to telephone them and advise them of the concern.
- Reassure them that everything is being done to locate the child.
- Organise all available responsible adults by areas to be searched. It is best to take a short time to organise the search properly so that all places are searched fully.
- Search the area in which the child has gone missing including changing rooms, toilets, public and private areas and the club grounds.
- Request all those searching report back to a nominated adult at a specific point.
- Make a note of the circumstances in which the child has gone missing and where he/she was last seen
- Prepare a detailed physical description of the child, including:
  - ❖ Approximate height
  - ❖ Build
  - ❖ Hair and eye colour
  - ❖ Clothing he/she was wearing, as this will be required by the police
- Report the concern to the police if the search is unsuccessful. This must happen no later than 30 minutes after the young person's disappearance is noted, even if the search is incomplete.
- Follow police guidance if further action is recommended and maintain close contact with the police
- Ensure that you inform all adults involved including the parents, searchers and police if at any stage the child is located
- Incident to be logged and a report sent to SGA Head of Child Protection as soon possible.

Older gymnast/young adult volunteer is suspected of being missing –

If a coach, friend or other person notices the absence of a young adult the staff present, in conjunction with the CPC, should make an assessment of the situation, e.g. child seen stepping into a car = immediate concern and the police should be contacted.

Otherwise:

- Conduct an immediate search of appropriate area but do not send other young people to search.
- Ensure parent/guardian is informed in person or by telephone
- Prepare a detailed description of the young person as this will be required by the police.
- Report the concern to the police if the search is unsuccessful. This must happen no later than 30 minutes after the search began.
- If the young person is found, call off the search and inform all relevant parties including the police if they have not already arrived
- Incident to be logged and a report sent to SGA Head of Child Protection as soon possible.

## **Appendix 6**

### **Photographs, Publications, Internet & Mobile Technology including iPad**

Scottish Gymnastics aim is to create a fun and safe environment for children, young people, protected adults parents/guardians, coaches and officials to enjoy our sport. We fully expect and encourage action photographs to be taken as these provide fantastic records and memories for families to keep. However, with the increase of gymnastics action photographs appearing in publications and on the internet, we must all take the time to ensure these photographs are suitable for publication. Particular care should be taken to make sure children and protected adults are not portrayed in a demeaning or tasteless manner. The following guidelines should be adhered to:

#### **Internet including Social Media sites:**

Publications or information on an Internet site i.e. facebook or similar, must never include personal information that could identify a child or protected adult e.g. home address, e-mail address or telephone number. Written consent must be obtained from the child young person or protected adult's parents/guardians **before** any images are posted.

If the material is changed from the time of consent, the parents/guardians must be informed and consent provided for the change.

As well as the above guidance, common sense should also be used when deciding which photographs to print:

- Do not use images that appear to focus on the groin area in movements when the legs are in a split position.
- The content of photographs or videos must not depict a child, young person or protected adult in a provocative pose or in a state of partial undress other than when depicting a sporting activity.
- Where relevant, a tracksuit may be more appropriate attire.
- For photographs or videos of groups or teams of children, young people or protected adults, ensure that only the group or team is referred to, not individual members. Credit for achievements is to be restricted to first name e.g. Tracey was Gymnast of the Year 2002.
- All published events involving children, young people or protected adults must be reviewed to ensure the information will not put them at risk. Any publication of specific meetings or child/protected adult events e.g. team coaching sessions, must not be distributed to any individuals other than to those directly concerned.
- Particular care must be taken when publishing photographs, film or videos of children who are considered particularly vulnerable e.g. the subject of a child protection issue or a custody dispute.
- Care is to be taken when publishing photographs, films or videos of children, young people or protected adults with physical, learning and/or communication or language disabilities, as they could be particularly vulnerable to abuse.

**All photographs/videos or other media produced at Scottish Gymnastics (SGA) events or competitions remain the property of the SGA. The SGA acknowledges that media produced at its events by parents, coaches or others involved in supporting SGA events/competitions may be used for personal purposes. Any media produced at an SGA event/competition cannot be distributed for commercial purposes without the express permission of the SGA.**

**Important Note: Any concerns about publications or Internet information should be reported to the Club CPC or to Scottish Gymnastics Head of Child Protection.**

## **Photographing, Videoing and Filming of Children and Protected Adults at events:**

The following is required for **(insert name of club)** activities or events where children, young people or protected adults are participating:

- All materials promoting **(insert name of club)** events or activities should state that accredited photographers will be present.
- Consent forms should be obtained from the parent/guardian for photographing, videoing and/or filming of a child, young person or protected adult prior to the event or activity.
- Anyone wishing to use photographic/film/video equipment at a venue must obtain the approval of **(insert name of club)**.
- No unsupervised access or one-to-one sessions should be permitted.
- If the event organiser suspects inappropriate filming or photography, they will request the person to leave the venue and surrender any film, device, disc or memory card relating to the event.
- The requirements above are publicly promoted to ensure all people present at the event or activity understand the procedure and are aware of whom to contact if concerned.

**Note:** When recruiting a photographer for events such as club championships, the Scottish Gymnastics Safe Recruitment Policy must be followed.

## **Concerns about Photographers, Video or Film Operators**

Any concerns with photographers or video or film operators are to be reported to **(name of club)** Child protection Co-ordinator and when relevant to Scottish Gymnastics Head of Child Protection and the Police.

## DATA PROTECTION ADVICE

Detailed below are guidelines for storing, destroying and accessing records and various other forms related to Recruitment and Child Protection.

<b>DOCUMENT</b>	<b>WHERE TO STORE</b>	<b>WHO HAS ACCESS</b>	<b>HOW LONG TO KEEP</b>	<b>HOW TO DISPOSE</b>
<b>Application Form</b>	<b>Secure</b>	<b>Interview panel</b>	<b>6 – 12 months</b>	<b>Shred or burn</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>Secure</b>	<b>Interview panel</b>	<b>Until person leaves</b>	<b>Shred or burn</b>
<b>Incident Reports</b>	<b>Secure</b>	<b>CPC / other professional agencies depending on follow up.</b>	<b>12 months</b>	<b>Shred or burn</b>
<b>Accident Forms</b>	<b>Secure</b>	<b>CPC or SG and possibly insurance company / other investigation authorities.</b>	<b>12 months</b>	<b>Shred or burn</b>
<b>Medical Forms</b>	<b>Secure</b>	<b>Team Manager, Head of Delegation, Coach depending on situation</b>	<b>Varies, depending on situation. Seek guidance from SG</b>	<b>Shred or Burn</b>

**Please note that in Child Protection issues, all documentation may be required for a criminal investigation.**

**Definition of: secure - Kept in a locked place with restricted access.**

## **Useful Contacts:**

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Tel: 01786 466232 ext 115 or [lorna@scottishgymnastics.org](mailto:lorna@scottishgymnastics.org)

**Scottish Gymnastics Confidential telephone line: 07534084730**

**Scottish Gymnastics Confidential Email: [safegym@scottishgymnastics.org](mailto:safegym@scottishgymnastics.org)**

### **CHILDREN 1<sup>ST</sup>**

Child Protection in Sport Service  
Learning and Teaching Scotland  
Sussex House  
61 Sussex street  
Glasgow  
G41 1DY  
Tel: 0141 418 5674 [WWW.childprotectioninsport.org.uk](http://WWW.childprotectioninsport.org.uk) or  
[cpinsport@children1st.org.uk](mailto:cpinsport@children1st.org.uk)

Internet Safety:  
[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)  
[www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)

**ParentLine Scotland**  
0808 800 2222

**NSPCC Child Protection Helpline**  
0808 800 5000

**Childline Scotland**  
0800 1111

**Scottish Criminal Records Office**  
0870 609 6006

(Your) **Local Social Work Department** (including out of hours contact telephone number)

(Your) **Local Police Contact** telephone number (in an emergency dial 999)