



Managing Behaviour Policy – A Procedure to Raise a Concern/Complaint: Ruthin & Denbigh Gymnastics Club Ltd

updated 1.5.20

Club Statement

This document is intended to be a good practice guide to give structure and a course of action in the event of a concern/complaint being raised about a Coach, Official, Volunteer, Gymnast, Parent or Guardian.

As a Club affiliated to British Gymnastics, the 'Safeguarding & Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy' has guided our Club Policy both in how we respond to concerns and complaints and in the procedures used to deal with disciplinary issues, including membership suspension and expulsions. These procedures will be followed and if an issue cannot be suitably addressed at Club level, the case will be referred to British Gymnastics and their referral procedures will be implemented.

The Club sees the welfare and safety of its members as its highest priority.

The Club has a designated Health and Safety Officer, a Welfare Officer and a Secretary to whom all formal complaints should be addressed.

Matters will be dealt with confidentially and only those who need to know will be informed.

The Club's 'Anti-bullying and Whistle blowing policy and procedures' and 'Codes of Conduct for Parents and Gymnasts' comply with this document and will be referenced in conjunction with the British Gymnastics 'Safeguarding & Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy'.

All adopted policies by the Club are available on the policy downloads section of our website, or copies can be obtained from the Head Coach or British Gymnastics. The Club's noticeboard also offers a selection of policies to view.



Policy Aim

At Ruthin & Denbig Gymnastics Club Ltd, we recognise that parents/guardians have a crucial role to play in supporting their child's success. A good partnership between the home and our Club ensures that children are happy in gymnastics. Happy Face sessions, annual displays, the Club website and Facebook pages, Love Admin, email communication and an open door policy (at session end) for parents to speak to the Head Coach further strengthens this partnership and communication with the Club.

There may be occasions when problems occur and in most cases these are usually sorted out quickly at the informal stage. In line with current guidelines and good practice, the Club wishes to resolve all and any concerns/complaints speedily and with the minimum of distress to all participants involved.

This document is intended to be a good practice guide to give structure and a course of action in the event of a concern/complaint being raised about a Coach, Official, Volunteer, Gymnast, Parent or Guardian.

Whistleblowing

Our Club is a 'telling Club'. This means that if anyone is being treated unfairly or cruelly or knows of this occurring to someone else, then they are expected to tell a Coach or Welfare Officer, who will deal with the incidents effectively and promptly with a minimum of distress to all participants involved.

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 a gymnastics context a whistle blower may be:

- A coach or official
- A gymnast
- A parent
- A member of the public

BG understands that whistle blowers are often very reluctant to report concerns. Thus, BG recognises that whistleblowers may wish to raise concerns in confidence. In these circumstances, the identity of the whistleblower will be kept confidential. Any subsequent reason why disclosure may be required will be discussed in detail with the whistleblower before any action is taken.

As an affiliated Club, every member is bound by the adopted policy of BG 'Whistle blowing Policy & Procedures' and full details of this policy can be found in the policy download section on the Club website.

Confidentiality

All concerns and complaints are treated with discretion. British Gymnastics (BG) 'Whistle blowing procedures' policy is adopted by the Club to provide the necessary steps to ensure that members, their parents/guardians and others feel able to raise a concern without fear of negative repercussions. It is the aim of the Directors and Management Committee that parents/guardians feel confident in the knowledge that their complaint will not penalize their child.

Sharing of information

There may be circumstances when information may need to be shared with those involved, in order that the complaint be fully investigated. Parents can be assured that information will be provided on a strictly need to know basis in line with BG 'confidentiality and information sharing' guidance. The Management Committee will follow



guidelines and training provided by BG and as an affiliated Club, can seek advice through any part of the process from BG and/or its legal helpline for clubs.

Raising your concern/or making a complaint procedures



Any concerns about the specific Welfare of a child or concerns about allegations of child abuse and staff discipline should be directed to the Club's designated Welfare Officer, who is trained to follow the guidance outlined in the BG 'Safeguarding Children and Recognizing & Responding to Abuse and Poor Practice policy.'

[Be Safe Contacts- Trust your instincts \(Ruthin and Denbig Gymnastics Club Ltd\)](#)

Welfare Officer: Bethan Lindquist

Email:bethan_madoc-jones@hotmail.co.uk

Tel:01745 407800

Raising a concern

Concerns that the Club manage regularly are often linked to areas such as: a child's enjoyment in the class, a dip in motivation, (and the parent wants to seek advice to discourage their child from starting to disengage with their training), an issue with confidence, clarification of a gymnast's training pathway, behavior of another member, or a particular incident that has affected any of the above. A Director may also wish to challenge a behavior when a breach of the clubs standard has occurred.

1. Stage 1- (Informal Stage)

- 1.1 Most concerns can be raised and then positively resolved by talking them over with the Head Coach and we encourage such a discussion at registration, or at the end of the session. Alternatively you may telephone or email the Head Coach to raise your concern and then meet, when appropriate, to discuss further.

We actively look to resolve any concerns as quickly as possible and our Welfare Officer in the Club is there to support this process. The Welfare Officer will always be on hand or will be happy to attend any discussion to offer their support, so that any matter can be informally resolved as quickly as possible, giving a positive outcome for all those involved. If you require a more private area to discuss a matter please advise us of this.

- 1.2 Should it be felt by either party that there has been an unsatisfactory outcome at stage 1, the Welfare Officer can become actively involved at any time and look to liaise between the parties at any stage of the proceedings.

2. Stage 2 (Informal Stage)

- 2.1 The Welfare Officer can be contacted directly by email or telephone or can be approached in training if the concern is considered by either party to be more suitably raised with the Welfare Officer rather than the Head Coach. This pathway is promoted by the Club to encourage any concern to be raised and give the opportunity for the matter to be informally resolved as quickly as possible, resulting in a positive outcome for all those involved.



2.2 Should it be felt by either party that there has been an unsatisfactory outcome at stage 2, the 'Welfare Officer will liaise with the Management Committee and manage the concern/complaint following the guidelines and training provided by BG, seeking advice if necessary, from its legal helpline for clubs.

2.3 The Welfare Officer should be able to inform all parties how the Management Committee are to proceed and will liaise with all parties in order that the matter may be informally resolved as quickly as possible, resulting in a positive outcome for all those involved.

3. Stage 3 (Formal Stage Complaint)

Definition of a complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service, action or lack of action. A formal complaint must be submitted in writing to the Club Secretary (address available on the Club's website).

3.1 To raise a complaint of dissatisfaction you must complain formally in writing to the Club Secretary (contactable via the Club's website). The Secretary will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 7 days. The Management Committee (minimum of 3 Members) will meet to hear complaints within 14 days of a complaint being lodged.

3.2 You may be contacted and given the option to voluntarily meet to discuss your complaint with a minimum of 2 representatives from the Management Committee. It is important for the complainant to be aware that they may be accompanied by a friend, relative or representative (although the representatives are not able to be directly involved in the proceedings) at any stage of the procedure,

3.3 Resolution

At the end of this meeting, if appropriate, the Committee will advise what action will be taken and also inform the complainant when and how the Committee will report back to them.

3.3.1 When a complaint is considered by the Management Committee, a decision will be made as to the action needed to address that complaint. *The committee guided by BG consider where there is no compelling evidence will conclude on the balance of probability taking the information that they have in front of them, conclude if an incident took place. The Management Committee has the power to then take appropriate action to deal with it, which may consist of:*

- a) No further action*
- b) An informal resolution and remedial action plan*
- c) Investigating the matter through a panel hearing
- d) Referring the matter to a higher authority.
- e) Any other action

*For options a) and b) to be considered, the Management Committee (minimum 3 members) must all be in agreement with the findings and the outcome.



- 3.4 The outcome of all panel meetings shall be recorded and all parties concerned with the complaint shall receive written notice of the outcome within 7 days.
- 3.5 The complainant will be given the results of the Management Committee investigation in writing normally within 7 days of meeting.

4. Stage 4 (Formal Stage appeal)

- 4.1 If the complainant is still unhappy with the situation and wishes to appeal, the next step is to write to the Club Secretary within 14 days to launch an appeal making it clear both what the issue is and what the desired outcome would be.

The appeal is limited to:

- 4.2 *That the process was not followed*

- 4.2.1 *The outcome was not justified, and no other reasonable panel would come to that outcome or the sanction does not correlate with the outcome.*

- 4.3 The Management Committee will consider the appeal within 14 days of the Secretary receiving it and the complainant will be informed of their decision within 7 days of their meeting.

5. Stage 5 (Escalation/referral to British Gymnastics)

British Gymnastics 'Pathway for Reporting Serious Complaints/Concerns' (attached at the back of this document), provides a flowchart to clarify the pathway for complaints relating to serious breaches of the BG standards of conduct for members.

- 5.1 Complaints can be escalated to British Gymnastics' Regional Welfare Officer should the complainant have legitimate concerns regarding the fairness/objectivity of the process or investigation at club level.

Regional Welfare Officer (Welsh Gymnastics) Carys Kizito – 0845 045 4304
carys.kizito@welshgymnastics.org

- 5.1.1 The complainant may, for instance, believe that the Club has not followed their own procedures and is unfairly dismissing their complaints without reasonable cause and BG provide a pathway to escalate said complaints.
- 5.1.2 The complainant may, for instance, think that the person investigating said complaint at club level, has a clear and recognised conflict of interest regarding the individual being complained about.
- 5.1.3 The complainant should explain their complaint and say why they think the Club did not follow its complaint procedure properly. Wherever possible, evidence should be given as to why.
- 5.1.4 If BG advises that the Club did not follow its procedures properly, the matter will be referred



back to the Management Committee Panel and the Panel will re-investigate the complaint under the guidance of BG.

5.2 British Gymnastics Lead Officers can be contacted directly regarding complaints of a more serious nature. N.B: **only** complaints about matters which 'seriously compromise the welfare of participants or that could do so', should be referred to British Gymnastics. BG will investigate complaints which are in the scope of BG Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures. However, **BG will not adjudicate in disputes between members. British Gymnastics Lead Officers: Niall O'Carrol & Heidi Saxon**
0345 129 7 129 ext 2347 ethics@british-gymnastics.org

6. Escalation to disciplinary

It is important to be clear to all concerned that the stages of the complaints procedure are distinct from the formal disciplinary proceedings for staff. Should there be an occasion where a complaint leads to a disciplinary procedure, then this puts the complaints process on hold. The complainant will be informed of this, and updated regularly on the likely delay.

After the disciplinary process is completed, the complainant shall receive written notice of the outcome following the decision within 21 days in writing by the Secretary. The amount of confidential information disclosed should be no more than is strictly necessary to ensure the welfare of BG members and young people.

7. Investigations

7.1 Staff, Leaders and Role Volunteers may be questioned as part of the investigation of a complaint and must be made to feel that they are being treated fairly and that they will have the opportunity to put their case forward. A friend or representative may accompany them at any stage.

7.2 The Club's 'Anti bullying, Whistleblowing policy' outlines to parents, gymnasts and coaches:

- What the Club considers to be unacceptable behaviour and what different types of bullying may occur.
- What gymnasts, parents and coaches should do if they are being treated unfairly or know of others that are experiencing unfair treatment.
- That any form of abuse will not be tolerated and the Club's "zero tolerance" approach to abusive behaviours.
- The Club's procedure in response to unacceptable behaviour.

7.3 Parents need to be assured that they will be supported when reporting an incident and that the procedure that will follow will be of minimum distress to all participants involved.

7.4 If a formal complaint centres on a gymnast member, the gymnast should be interviewed with a parent/guardian present.

7.5 Parents of any gymnast under the age of eighteen years will be informed in writing if their child is subject to any disciplinary action.



7.6 If a member of staff, Leader, Volunteer, Judge, Parent or Guardian is complained against, the needs of that person should be borne in mind. This should include acknowledgment that such a member could be accompanied by a friend or representative (although said representative is not able to be directly involved themselves in the proceedings). He/she is entitled to 5 working days' notice of any meeting and a subsequent adjournment of a further 5 working days if the friend or representative is unavailable.

7.6.1 At any point following a complaint being raised, should the proceedings be delayed or agreed by the Management Committee that the nature of the complaint seriously compromises the welfare of participants or that it could do so (minimum of 2 representatives), the Committee have the power to temporarily suspend any person's membership whilst investigations take place (on full pay if a staff member).

7.7 Following an investigation, any recommendations will be circulated to the appropriate staff members, Leaders or Volunteers for any action to be taken or any amendments to be made to Club policies or procedures.

8. Disciplinary Panel Hearing process

8.1 A disciplinary hearing panel will consist of a minimum of 3 appointed members of the Management Committee, the person who is the subject of the complaint and/or their representative or friend (although the representatives are not able to be directly involved in the proceedings).

8.2 If considered beneficial to the investigation, the Management Committee will also request the voluntary attendance of the complainant and/or their representative or friend (although the representatives are not able to be directly involved in the proceedings). The complainant may be asked to attend for all or part of the proceedings.

8.3 If a person who is the subject of a complaint or their representative declines to attend any panel hearing, the hearing shall continue in their absence.

8.4 Where a complaint is upheld against or admitted by a Coach, Judge, Volunteer, Gymnast, Parent or Guardian, the Management Committee has the power to take appropriate action, which may consist of:

- a) Informal resolution and remedial action
- b) Sanctions and remedial action plan
- c) Note on personal file and remedial action plan
- d) Recorded Verbal Warning and remedial action plan
- e) Recorded Written Warning and remedial action plan
- f) Termination of Membership
- g) Any other action

8.4.1 For any of the options above to be considered, all the panel members must be in agreement with the findings and the outcome.

8.4.2 The outcomes of all panel meetings shall be recorded and all parties concerned with the complaint shall receive written notice of the outcome within 7 days.



9. Staff, Leaders, Volunteers Criminal Conduct

- 9.1 Any conduct of a criminal nature with reference to staff, Leaders or Volunteers, that takes place during gymnastic activities or Club business shall be referred to the appropriate authority and BG will be informed.
- 9.2 Any conduct of a criminal nature with reference to staff, Leaders or Volunteers, that takes place but is not connected with Gymnastic activities or Club business shall be considered by the disciplinary panel.

10. Recording

All complaints received will be recorded in a register held by the Club. The register will be kept secure but open to scrutiny from British Gymnastics. The register shall contain details of the complainant, details of the person subject to the complaint, any minutes taken of proceedings and the outcome of any subsequent disciplinary panel.

Chairperson name ___Tamsin Jones_____Signature_____T. C. Jones_____

Adopted by Ruthin Gymnastic Club at AGM meeting held _6th March 2015_____

Amended by Ruthin Gymnastic Club at EGM 20th October 2015

Amended by Ruthin & Denbig Gymnastics Club Ltd Gymnastics Club Ltd 2nd January 2017

Amended by Ruthin & Denbig Gymnastics Club Ltd 5th May 2020