



AC GYMNASTICS

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

At AC Gymnastics, we recognise that the welfare of children is of paramount importance. We have a responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all children and young people who attend our classes and activities.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

For the purposes of this policy, a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

At AC Gymnastics, we believe that all children, without exception, have the right to protection from harm and abuse. Every child should be treated fairly and have equal access to the services and support they need.

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to safeguard the children in our care and must never subject a child to any form of harm or abuse. Failure to follow AC Gymnastics safeguarding procedures will be taken extremely seriously.

Parents and carers may view this policy when required, and a copy will be made available through AC Gymnastics.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING PERSON

Designated Safeguarding Person: Anita Chilton

The Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) is responsible for overseeing safeguarding arrangements within AC Gymnastics.

The DSP has undertaken additional safeguarding training to fulfil this role:
Level 2 Safeguarding for Dance Professionals - 10/05/2026

- ★ Promote safeguarding best practice throughout AC Gymnastics.
- ★ Ensure staff and volunteers understand safeguarding expectations.
- ★ Receive, monitor and record safeguarding concerns.
- ★ Ensure concerns are referred to the appropriate statutory authorities when necessary.
- ★ Support staff and volunteers in understanding their safeguarding responsibilities.

All staff and volunteers must be familiar with this policy and understand how to report a safeguarding concern.

OVERVIEW OF RESPONSIBILITIES

- ★ Report safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Person at the earliest available opportunity.
- ★ Take reasonable steps to protect children and young people from harm.
- ★ Provide a safe environment for children attending AC Gymnastics.
- ★ Take appropriate action in the event of an accident or emergency.
- ★ Report any incident, disclosure or suspicion of abuse.
- ★ Follow AC Gymnastics safeguarding procedures and Codes of Conduct.
- ★ Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and young people.

Staff working at AC Gymnastics who have appropriate contact with children and young people must hold the required safeguarding checks for their role, including an appropriate DBS check where applicable.

SAFEGUARDING & PROMOTING WELFARE

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes protecting children from maltreatment, supporting their health and development, ensuring they receive safe and effective care and taking action to help children

achieve positive outcomes.

- ★ Identify and respond appropriately to concerns about a child or young person.
- ★ Provide a safe, happy and positive gymnastics environment.
- ★ Support children's development through gymnastics in a way that encourages a sense of belonging and community.
- ★ Give children and young people opportunities to communicate freely with us.
- ★ Respect and support individual communication needs.
- ★ Provide appropriate time and space for children to talk when they need to.
- ★ Foster an environment based on trust, respect and appropriate professional relationships.

CONSENT & INFORMATION SHARING

Consent is an important part of safeguarding practice. Appropriate consent will be obtained for activities undertaken by AC Gymnastics. General permissions relating to normal club activities will be obtained through the enrolment and booking process.

Where applicable, parents and carers will be able to provide or withhold consent for matters such as the use of photographs and marketing materials.

Safeguarding information may need to be shared when this is necessary to protect a child from harm. Any decision to share safeguarding information should be necessary, proportionate and appropriately recorded.

- ★ The decision that was made and the reasons for it.
- ★ What information was shared, where applicable.
- ★ Who the information was shared with.

There may be circumstances in which seeking consent before sharing safeguarding information would be inappropriate, including where:

- ★ Doing so could place the child or another person at increased risk.
- ★ A child is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical attention.
- ★ Seeking consent could place a member of staff or another person at risk.

The welfare and safety of the child must remain the primary consideration.

CHILD PROTECTION

Child protection forms part of safeguarding and relates specifically to protecting children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm.

A child may experience harm through the actions of another person or through a failure to protect them from harm. Abuse can occur within a family, institution, community or online environment and may be carried out by an adult or by another child or young person.

- ★ Physical abuse
- ★ Emotional abuse
- ★ Sexual abuse
- ★ Neglect
- ★ Multiple or overlapping forms of abuse

Further information is provided in Appendix A. Any concern that a child may be suffering or at risk of harm must be recorded and shared with the Designated Safeguarding Person. No member of staff or volunteer should assume that somebody else will report a safeguarding concern.

SEEKING MEDICAL ATTENTION

If a child requires urgent medical attention, appropriate medical assistance must be sought immediately.

Nothing should be allowed to delay necessary emergency medical treatment.

Where an injury also gives rise to a safeguarding concern, relevant information should be shared appropriately with medical professionals and the safeguarding concern should be reported in accordance with this policy.

REPORTING & REFERRING A CONCERN

The Designated Safeguarding Person will act on behalf of AC Gymnastics when safeguarding concerns or allegations need to be referred to Children's Social Care, the police or another appropriate statutory authority.

The role of the DSP is not to investigate allegations of abuse.

- ★ Receive and record concerns.
- ★ Clarify the information available where appropriate.
- ★ Ensure relevant information is shared.
- ★ Make or support appropriate safeguarding referrals.

If the DSP is unavailable and a child is believed to be at immediate risk, the person who has the concern must take appropriate action and contact the relevant statutory service directly. The DSP should then be informed as soon as possible.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

AC Gymnastics will make every reasonable effort to protect children from harm while they are attending our classes and activities.

- ★ Appropriate recruitment and selection procedures.
- ★ Safeguarding training and guidance for staff and volunteers.
- ★ Appropriate DBS checks for relevant roles.
- ★ Maintaining suitable health and safety arrangements.
- ★ Following our Health & Safety Policy.
- ★ Taking reasonable steps to prevent children being placed at unnecessary risk.
- ★ Maintaining appropriate professional conduct and boundaries.
- ★ Reporting safeguarding concerns promptly.
- ★ Promoting open communication, transparency and trust.
- ★ Ensuring everyone involved with AC Gymnastics follows the relevant Code of Conduct.

ONLINE SAFETY

AC Gymnastics recognises the importance of protecting children and young people from harmful online material, inappropriate communication and inappropriate contact.

- ★ Use technology appropriately and professionally.
- ★ Maintain professional boundaries in all electronic communication.
- ★ Communicate with a parent or carer rather than contacting a young child directly wherever appropriate.
- ★ Follow AC Gymnastics procedures relating to photographs, videos and online content.
- ★ Protect personal information in accordance with applicable data protection requirements.
- ★ Follow any additional safeguarding requirements relating to online training, assessments, examinations or performances.

SCHOOL & HIRED PREMISES

When AC Gymnastics operates from a school or another hired venue, all staff, helpers and volunteers must follow the safeguarding, health and safety and technology requirements that apply to those premises.

AC Gymnastics will cooperate with venue safeguarding procedures and ensure that its own safeguarding standards continue to be followed.

Personal devices should not be used inappropriately during sessions involving children. Where a dedicated AC Gymnastics work phone is available, this should be used for appropriate parent/carers communication during class times.

Children's personal mobile phones and devices should remain stored away during gymnastics sessions unless their use has been specifically authorised.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

Any concern or allegation regarding the conduct of a member of staff or volunteer must be treated seriously.

- ★ Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child.
- ★ Committed an offence against or relating to a child.
- ★ Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a safeguarding risk.

Concerns should be reported immediately to the person responsible for managing safeguarding allegations within AC Gymnastics.

Responsible Person: Anita Chilton

Neither the person raising the concern nor the person who is the subject of the allegation should conduct their own investigation or question children about the allegation.

Where required, the matter will be referred to the appropriate safeguarding authority, including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Safeguarding concerns relating to conduct outside AC Gymnastics may also need to be considered where that conduct indicates that an individual could present a risk to children.

STAFF & VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

AC Gymnastics is committed to safer recruitment. When recruiting staff or volunteers, appropriate recruitment and safeguarding procedures will be followed to help assess an individual's suitability to work with children and young people.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes in legislation, guidance or AC Gymnastics procedures make this necessary.

Date of last review: August 2026

Signed: Anita Chilton
Designated Safeguarding Person

APPENDIX A

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also occur where the symptoms of illness are fabricated or deliberately caused in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional maltreatment that causes, or has the potential to cause, serious adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may include making a child feel worthless, unloved or inadequate; deliberately silencing or humiliating them; imposing inappropriate expectations; preventing normal social interaction; serious bullying or cyberbullying; or causing a child repeatedly to feel frightened or in danger. Emotional abuse may occur alongside other forms of abuse or independently.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. A child may not always understand what is happening or recognise the behaviour as abuse.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

These definitions provide examples and are not an exhaustive list. It is not the responsibility of AC Gymnastics staff or volunteers to determine whether abuse has taken place. Their responsibility is to recognise concerns, record them and report them appropriately.

APPENDIX B

RECOGNISING POSSIBLE HARM

- ★ Information provided by the child.
 - ★ Information from a family member, friend or other person.
 - ★ A significant or unexplained change in a child's behaviour.
 - ★ Behaviour that appears unusual or concerning.
 - ★ A child acting out potentially harmful situations through play.
 - ★ An injury that does not appear consistent with the explanation provided.
 - ★ Different or conflicting explanations being given for an injury.
 - ★ A child appearing particularly anxious when discussing an injury.
 - ★ Unexplained bruising or injuries, particularly in a child with limited mobility.
 - ★ A pattern of concerns developing over a period of time.
 - ★ Knowledge that a child is having contact with someone believed to present a safeguarding risk.
- Any concern should be taken seriously and reported appropriately.

APPENDIX C

MANAGING A DISCLOSURE FROM A CHILD

- ★ Listen carefully.
- ★ Remain calm and give the child time to speak.
- ★ Do not ask leading or probing questions.
- ★ Do not stop a child who is speaking freely.
- ★ Never promise to keep the information secret.

- ★ Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling someone.
- ★ Do not attempt to investigate the allegation yourself.
- ★ Make an accurate written record as soon as possible.
- ★ Record the child's own words wherever possible.
- ★ Pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Person as soon as possible.
- ★ If a child is in immediate danger, take appropriate emergency safeguarding action.

The welfare and safety of the child must always come first.