

Idsall Gymnastics.

Version	Summary of Changes	Date
1	Agreed by coaching and welfare staff.	15 Apr 18
2	Table added to document to highlight changes and published to website.	15 Apr 18

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Whistle Blowing

Introduction.

This Safety Statement has been taken directly from British Gymnastics (BG) policy '*Safeguarding Children: Recognising & Responding to Abuse and Poor Practice*'. Idsall Gymnastics Club (IGC) will follow and adopt this policy fully.

Safeguarding children and young people requires everyone to be committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability. IGC 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 a gymnastics context, a whistle-blower may be:

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

There is a wide range of concerns that would come under the scope of this policy. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physical, emotional or sexual abuse, bullying or neglect of young people.
- Grooming of young people.
- Failure to comply with obligations set out in this policy and procedures.
- Repeated poor practice despite intervention.
- A criminal offence involving a child.

Concerns of poor practice should initially be made to the relevant Club Welfare Officer, except where:

- The whistle-blower believes there would be a risk of victimisation, either to the whistle-blower or child/children, if the matter was raised internally within the club or
- The whistle-blower has already raised the matter internally and the matter was covered up or no action was taken and the situation remains unchanged.

Concerns should be raised without delay to the BG Lead Officer. The earlier concerns are reported, the easier it will be to take action. Anyone reporting a concern should provide as much information and detail as possible. This should include:

- Names of the people involved.
- Other witnesses.
- Dates, times and locations of events.
- What action and/or advice was taken.
- Any other relevant documentation.

There may be some situations where there is a reluctance to raise concern. This may include situations where the subject of the concern is a close friend or colleague of the whistle-blower, or situations where other people are appearing to ignore the situation.

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One of the reasons that individuals do not report concerns is a fear of negative repercussions to the individual or their associates. In the case of parents, there is often a reluctance to raise concerns due to a worry that their child will be excluded from club or squad and isolated from friends.

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

It must be recognised that concerns that are reported anonymously are frequently very difficult to investigate. The decision whether to investigate an anonymous allegation will be made by IGC, based on the seriousness of the concern(s) and the credibility of the referral and the likelihood of identifying others who can confirm the allegations. Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.

All concerns raised under this procedure will be treated seriously and a decision made about whether or not an investigation is appropriate. Depending upon the nature of the matter it may be referred to the Police.

The whistle-blower, where possible, should be kept informed about the progress of the investigation and advised of the outcome. In some cases, the investigation may result in criminal or disciplinary proceedings. In these circumstances, the whistle-blower may be asked to provide a written statement and give evidence to the Police and/or at a IGC or BG hearing. IGC and BG will provide support to the whistle-blower during this process.

IGC and BG will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect anyone who has raised a concern in good faith. Any BG member who is found to have victimised or harassed a whistle-blower will face disciplinary action. Any BG member who raises concerns known to be untrue may also be subject to disciplinary action.

Review

This safety statement will be reviewed annually and checked for any amendments to current regulations and BG policy. Additional guidance may be sought from British Gymnastics to provide advice to IGC.

Signature:	<i>KHulme</i> . Original signed	Date:	15 Apr 18	Review date.
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