

Policy for Collection of Gymnasts

Kestrel Acrobatics and Tumbling (Gymnastics Club) has a responsibility for the safety and welfare of gymnasts, coaches, volunteers, officials, and visitors. There is a legal responsibility to ensure that participants are protected against harm or danger whilst taking part in gymnastics or related activities. This is legally termed the 'Duty of Care'. This becomes particularly relevant when dealing with children - the definition being any person under the age of 18 years old.

When working with children, an adult who carries out a supervisory role takes on certain responsibilities while the child is in their care. This includes ensuring their safe return after training. The legal terminology for this relationship is that the person would be acting '*in loco parentis*' – the literal definition being 'for the parents'. In British Gymnastics terms, this is referred to as 'in place of a parent' and acting as a reasonable adult would be expected to.

The expected standard for behaviour is based on reasonableness and our Duty of Care starts from the time a child begins a session (when a register is taken), until the child is returned to the care of their parent/carer or nominated guardian (adults). In order to fulfil the Duty of Care, gymnasts **MUST** be dropped off in-person, with parents/carers (adults) ensuring that they have been handed over to a coach at the start of a session. Gymnasts **MUST** be handed back in-person to a parent/carer or nominated guardian (adults) at the end of the session. Any reports of failure to comply with the guidance in this section will be investigated as breach of policy by British Gymnastics and can result in prosecution.

Our coaches can never leave a child or young person alone unless she/he is over 16 and then only with parent/carer permission. We must also carry out appropriate assessments of situations as they arise, acknowledging that some young people aged 16 and over can go home alone if their parent is delayed, but only with notification this is okay.

Kestrel Acrobatics and Tumbling Club must stress that gymnasts **CANNOT and WILL NOT** be released from our care until a parent/carer or duly nominated person (adults) for collection is physically present at the appropriate collection point for the venue – which does **NOT** include being met outside of the premises in any circumstances. Children cannot be authorised to meet anyone in the car park, for example. At Thornbury Leisure Centre, the collection point is in whichever hall is being utilised for that day's session. At other events away from the Leisure Centre, the collection point will be communicated as soon as reasonably possible.

There has been an instance at another club where coaches allowed a child to leave and a person who was legally not allowed to have any contact with the child was waiting for them in the car park. Thankfully on this occasion no abduction was attempted, but the coaches were in serious trouble as they were legally still responsible as they had not dispensed with their Duty of Care correctly, by not ensuring that the gymnast was returned to a nominated adult. We hope that you can see from this real scenario that was communicated by British Gymnastics to all Welfare Officers, why it is important for both the safety of your children and the Coaches that the collection policy **MUST** be adhered to.

Late Collection of Children

In the event that you, a parent/carer or nominated person (adults), be delayed for any reason, the club **MUST** be contacted at the earliest opportunity on **07763240101**. If consent is given for another parent/carer (adults) to transport their child home on their behalf, please provide a description of the person so that our coaches can be certain the child is being handed back to the correct person responsible for collection.

Please note: coaches **CANNOT** take the child home/to another location, wait in a vehicle, or remain at the club with them alone, as that is in direct contravention of Welfare and Safeguarding of Children Policies.

If the parent/carer is considered by the club as being unduly late, the Club has to follow the below procedure in accordance with British Gymnastics Policy on Welfare:

1. Attempt to contact the parent/carer.
2. Attempt to contact the emergency contact person nominated.
3. If there is no reply from the emergency contact, ask the child if there is another family member who may be contacted.
4. Wait with the young person(s) at the club with at least one other adult official/coach/volunteer/parent/Leisure Centre staff member.
5. Respond to any instructions received from the parent/carer.
6. If no-one can be reached within 30 minutes, contact the Local Authority Children's Social Care Services (South Gloucestershire Access and Response Team (ART): 01454 866000 or 01454 615165 (out-of-hours/weekends)) to enquire about the best course of action.
7. If there is risk of danger, contact the local police (999).

PLEASE REMEMBER: THIS POLICY IS IN PLACE TO ENSURE THE BEST POSSIBLE SAFETY AND WELFARE FOR YOUR CHILDREN AND THE COACHING STAFF THEMSELVES.

Kestrel Acrobatics and Tumbling (Gymnastics Club) has the discretion to update this policy at any time. When we do, we will revise the updated date at the bottom of this page. We encourage Users to frequently check this page for any changes. You acknowledge and agree that it is your responsibility to review this policy periodically and become aware of modifications. This statement was last updated on the 25th of April 2026.