



ACROBATICS
GYMNASTICS
CLUB

**ACRO COMPETITION SQUAD
HANDBOOK
AND
PARENT INFORMATION**

Squad Policy

We are thrilled that your child is a part of our gymnastics program, and we wanted to share some important information with you. Our policy is designed to ensure that your child has a safe, enjoyable, and successful gymnastics experience.

To ensure a successful and enjoyable experience for everyone involved, we ask that you please read and adhere to the following guidelines:

Training at The Base:

Coupled with the generic code of conduct and rules for participants and parents which you will have received when joining the club, please see below a more specific set of standards for our development and competition squads.

1. Insurance: All participating gymnasts must have British Gymnastics Insurance to join in with classes at The Base. They will require a minimum of Bronze level, but once competing, they will require Silver insurance. Parents must complete this directly on the BG website under the 'membership' section. Please ensure your child's primary club is **LOUGHBOROUGH ACROBATICS GYMNASTICS CLUB**.
2. Being on time: It is important that your child arrives on time to all scheduled classes and competitions. Being punctual not only shows respect for the coaches and other gymnasts, but it also allows your child to fully participate in warm-up and preparation activities before training.
3. Hair tied up: If your child has hair that is shoulder-length or longer, it must be tied up in a way that ensures no hair falls below shoulder length. This is to prevent hair from getting in the way during movements and to reduce the risk of injury.

4. Bringing a full water bottle: It is important for your child to stay hydrated during classes and competitions. Please ensure that your child brings a full water bottle to each session. For safeguarding reasons, we cannot permit gymnasts to go into our viewing gallery to fill water bottles.
5. Communicating with coaches: If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's participation in our program, please communicate with the coaches during working hours only. Coaches may not be available to answer phone calls or respond to messages outside of their scheduled work hours.
6. Attire: All gymnasts must wear a leotard during training sessions. All squad members are expected to have the current squad training leotard, and there will be at least one session a week where this must be worn. This is to allow for freedom of movement and to enable coaches to easily spot any issues with body alignment or posture. Gymnasts are not allowed to wear jewellery, as it can pose a safety hazard and it VOIDS their insurance.
7. Footwear: During summer months to ensure a smooth and swift entry and exit from practice it is recommended gymnasts come wearing easy-to-put-on footwear.
8. Attitude: we ask that all gymnasts in our program maintain a positive and respectful attitude towards their coaches, fellow gymnasts, and themselves. This includes being coachable, supporting teammates, and having a growth mindset. By embodying these values, gymnasts can succeed in gymnastics and beyond.
9. Attendance: We encourage gymnasts to prioritise their attendance to training. In acrobatics absence or lateness not only impacts the progress of the gymnast away, but also the progress and training of others in the partnership. Repeated absence will result in us reviewing your child's place within the squad.
10. Absences: Should a gymnast need to miss a session; it is important for coaches to receive notification in advance. Coaches need to plan and prepare for each training session, and knowing which gymnasts will be absent allows them to adjust their

lesson plans accordingly, and that the overall progress of the team is not hindered. Additionally, notifying coaches in advance shows respect for their time and dedication to the program, and helps establish open communication between coaches, gymnasts, and parents.

Competition Participation

The aim of this squad is to prepare gymnasts both physically and mentally for a competition pathway. Competitions provide a valuable opportunity for your child to showcase their skills, gain confidence, and develop their abilities. Our coaches will provide information on upcoming competitions, and we will require parents to sign a consent form indicating their child's participation in each competition.

Competition Eligibility

We require that all gymnasts meet certain eligibility requirements to compete. These requirements include attending a minimum number of practices, meeting skill level requirements, and maintaining a good attitude during sessions. Our coaches will provide guidance on eligibility requirements for each competition.

Competition Preparation

We believe that preparation is key to success in competitions. Our coaches will work with each gymnast to prepare them for competition day, including perfecting routines, practicing skills, and conditioning their bodies. We also ask that parents ensure their child gets enough rest, eats a healthy diet, and arrives at competitions on time.

Competition Conduct

We expect our gymnasts to conduct themselves with the utmost sportsmanship and respect during competitions. This includes following all rules and regulations, treating other

competitors and coaches with respect, and representing our club and program with pride. Any violations of conduct could result in disqualification from the competition.

Competition Results

We understand that competitions can be stressful and emotional for both gymnasts and parents. While we encourage healthy competition and the pursuit of excellence, we also remind parents to support their child regardless of the outcome. We celebrate each gymnast's individual accomplishments and encourage them to strive for continued improvement.

Specific competition information

Hairstyle Guidelines

We require all gymnasts to follow our hairstyle guidelines during competitions to ensure safety and prevent hair from obstructing their vision during routines. Here are some of the guidelines we recommend:

- All hair must be pulled back away from the face.
- Hair longer than the chin should be tied back, hairstyles may vary from competition to competition. Please speak to your gymnast's coach in advance if you are unsure of what to do here.
- Use of hair net: When styling hair in a bun, we recommend using a hair net to ensure that the bun stays in place and the hair does not come undone during the competition.
- Avoid the use of donuts: While we understand the appeal of using hair donuts to create a perfect bun, they can come undone and pose a safety risk during routines.
- We recommend using hair gel over hair spray to keep hair in place and avoid any distractions during routines, as hair spray can be an irritant to those with breathing difficulties or sensitivities.

Leotard Guidelines

Leotards are an essential part of the gymnastics uniform, and we require all gymnasts to follow our guidelines on wearing and maintaining them. Here are some of the guidelines we recommend:

- The club competition leotard must be worn during events. Details on how this can be purchased or hired will be available when nearing events.
- Girls wearing leotards should use leotard glue to prevent the leotard from rising. Brands our gymnasts use are 'Staysput' and can be found on ebay and amazon.
- Boys wearing trousers should also wear clean white ankle socks.

Competition scoring and rules

In acrobatic gymnastics, scoring is based on the difficulty, performance and execution of routines. Each routine is evaluated by a panel of judges, who assign a score based on several criteria, including:

- Artistry: The quality of movement, expression, and choreography in the routine.
- Execution: The accuracy, control, and synchronization of the routine.
- Difficulty: The complexity of the routine, including the types of elements and transitions performed.

Execution holds a maximum of 20 marks, Artistry holds a maximum of 10 marks and difficulty varies depending on the level being competed. The total score is the sum of the execution, artistry and difficulty minus any penalties.

Acrobatic gymnastics also has specific requirements regarding age, height and the number and types of elements that must be included in each routine amongst others, depending on the level and discipline. These requirements are designed to ensure that routines are safe,

fair, challenging and well-rounded, but this also makes the selection/matching of partnerships very complex.

Costs

Gymnastics competitions can vary widely in cost, depending on the level of competition, the location, and other factors. Some competitions may have entry fees, while others may require payment for travel and accommodation expenses. In addition, gymnasts may need to purchase special uniforms or equipment for the competition.

For local competitions, the cost may be relatively low, but for larger regional or national competitions, the cost can be substantial. Some competitions may require a registration fee that ranges £15-£60. Other expenses that should be considered include travel expenses such as petrol, hotel accommodations, transportation, meals, and other incidentals.

If cost is an issue for a gymnast or their family, it is important to speak to the coach or the gymnastics program director regarding possible options for payment or funding opportunities that may be available. Grants or other financial assistance programs are often available in the local area.

Progression

There are two main competition pathways within Acrobatics Gymnastics.

1. The National Development Plan: Grade 1,2,3,4,5; Youth; IDP1 and IDP2
2. FIG age group pathway: 11-16yrs; 12-18yrs; 13-19yrs; Senior

The National Development Pathway

Starting at Grade 1 and progressing through to the International Development Plan (IDP). At each level there are different rules/restrictions in terms of age of participation. Gymnasts can (and it is normal) to spend more than 1 year at a Grade as each Grade has progression in

terms of difficulty of skills, meaning it can take them some time to progress towards the top skill level. Only when they can achieve the top skills in one Grade will they be ready to progress to the next. Just because a gymnast does not move up a grade, does not mean they are not progressing.

For Grades 5, Youth and IDP these will be for higher level gymnasts training a minimum of 9-12 hours per week. Only a few gymnasts will have the capabilities to progress safely to this level.

FIG Age Group Pathway

Only a very small percentage of gymnasts will be able to follow this pathway. Other than the very high skill level required, there are many other factors around age/age difference between partners, attendance, ability to commit and expense that make it very difficult to achieve this standard of competition.

For those partnerships we feel have the potential for this level, we will discuss in detail what this means and how best we can support to enable them to achieve it.

Our Mission and Core Values

All our decisions and the work we do on behalf of all of our gymnasts are very much guided by our core mission and values set out below:-

OUR MISSION

INSPIRE, IMPROVE AND INVEST in the growth of young people and adults both physically and mentally through the sport of gymnastics

OUR CORE VALUES

HAVE FUN

We want our members first and foremost to enjoy the sport of gymnastics and have fun.

RESPECT

Respect for your environment and all the people involved in it helps keep our gym safe, clean, and friendly

TRUST

We believe to be a successful team this needs to be based on truth and honesty. We believe trust starts with putting the individual needs of each one of our members first.

EMPATHY

We believe this helps us focus on listening. It enables us to reflect on our own and on other's actions and words giving us a deeper understanding of another person's perspective, then react with compassion, helping advance our relationships and performance.

LEARN CONSTANTLY

Creating knowledge and skills through teaching and learning is the core of what we do. Having the hunger to continue to build on our knowledge, review and reflect will enable us to grow into a better team.

BUILD COMMUNITY

We are made stronger by our partnerships and collaborations and listening to diverse voices and using a diverse set of skills. "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together"