



# Adult Safeguarding Policy

## Contents

Definitions & Abbreviations .....	3
Contact Information.....	4
Introduction .....	5
The purpose & scope of this policy statement .....	5
IGA's commitments.....	5
Monitoring & evaluation.....	6

### Version History

Independent Gymnastics Affiliation (IGA) retains the authority to modify this policy at our own discretion.

Version	Summary of amendments/Changes	Published Date
Version 1.0	New policy	July 2023

## Definitions & Abbreviations

<b>Child(ren) / Young people</b>	Individuals who have not yet reached their 18 <sup>th</sup> birthday
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Safeguarding involves the measures we implement to advance the well-being of children and shield them from harm.
<b>Extremism</b>	Extremism refers to the expression or active resistance against core British values, which encompass democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, & mutual respect, as well as the tolerance of diverse faiths & beliefs.
<b>Position of Trust</b>	<p>A position of trust involves an individual holding authority over another person. It is necessary to safeguard young individuals aged 16 &amp; 17 who, despite reaching the legal age of consent for sexual activity, remain vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation under specific circumstances. These circumstances include engaging in sexual activity &amp; relationships with adults who hold positions of trust, responsibility, or authority, exerting significant power &amp; influence in the lives of the young individuals. In our policies &amp; procedures, we consider coaches, safeguarding leads, judges, &amp; other officials to be in positions of trust, even if the legal definition does not explicitly include those roles.</p> <p>These definitions &amp; indicators serve as guidelines &amp; are not intended to be definitive. It is important to note that many children may exhibit some of these indicators at certain times, &amp; the presence of one or more indicators should not be automatically interpreted as proof of ongoing abuse. Other factors such as a recent death, the arrival of a new baby in the family, or parental/carer relationship issues can also contribute to changes in behaviour. When assessing whether indicators are linked to abuse or not, authorities will always consider them within the context of the child's development and circumstances.</p>
<b>IGA</b>	means independent Gymnastics Affiliation
<b>Types of Abuse</b>	Any intentional act or omission that leads to harm, excluding accidents.
<b>Bullying or cyber-bullying</b>	Bullying is the act of engaging in behaviour that inflicts harm upon another individual. This behaviour encompasses actions such as name-calling, physical aggression, pushing, spreading rumours, making threats, and undermining someone. Typically, bullying occurs repeatedly over an extended duration & can cause both physical & emotional distress to the child targeted. On the other hand, cyberbullying refers to bullying that occurs in the online realm. Unlike traditional bullying, cyberbullying can persistently affect the child regardless of their location, taking place through social networks, online gaming, & mobile phones.
<b>Emotional Abuse</b>	<p>Emotional abuse refers to the ongoing mistreatment of a child that results in severe &amp; enduring negative impacts on their emotional development. This form of abuse involves conveying messages to children and young people that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or only valued based on meeting the needs of others. It can also involve placing inappropriate expectations on children, exceeding their developmental abilities. Additionally, emotional abuse may include overprotection, limiting exploration and learning opportunities, or preventing normal social interactions.</p> <p>One aspect of emotional abuse is constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying, or placing unrealistic pressure on children to consistently meet high expectations, such as in a sporting context.</p>
<b>Hazing</b>	Hazing behaviours are observed in various social groups, including sports teams, as a means of initiating new members or seeking social acceptance among peers.
<b>Neglect</b>	Neglect involves the ongoing failure to fulfil a child's essential and/or physical requirements, which can significantly impede their health or overall development. In a sports setting, neglect could manifest as a coach's inability to ensure the safety and well-being of children, neglecting to provide them with appropriate comfort, or subjecting them to extreme cold or avoidable injury risks.
<b>non-accidental violence</b>	The umbrella term encompassing both abuse and harassment.
<b>Physical Abuse</b>	Physical abuse refers to the deliberate infliction of physical harm upon a child or young person. It encompasses various actions, including but not limited to hitting, throwing, shaking, poisoning, burning, or scalding. In the context of sports, instances of physical abuse can arise when the training and competition demands surpass the physical capabilities of the child or young person's developing body, or when performance-enhancing drugs are employed to enhance performance or delay puberty.

<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	<p>Sexual abuse entails compelling or enticing a child or young person to engage in sexual activities, irrespective of whether there is a high level of violence involved, and regardless of the child's awareness of the situation. These activities may involve physical contact, such as assault by penetration (e.g., rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts like masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching over clothing. Additionally, they can encompass non-contact actions, such as exposing children to sexual images, involving them in the production or viewing of sexual content, encouraging sexually inappropriate behaviours, grooming a child for abuse (including online grooming), or engaging in activities to prepare for abuse. It's important to note that sexual abuse is not exclusive to adult males, as women, other children, and young people can also perpetrate such acts.</p> <p>In the context of sports, coaching techniques involving physical contact with children can create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power dynamic between the coach and the child/young person, if abused, can contribute to the development of abusive situations. One challenge in assessing whether sexual assault has occurred is the issue of exploitation. Other symptoms may include pain, itching, bruising, bleeding in the genital or anal areas, genital discharge, urinary tract infections, stomach pains, discomfort while walking or sitting, or sexually transmitted infections.</p>
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## Contact Information

<b>IGA Contacts</b>		
<b>Safeguarding Team</b>		safeguarding@igauk.com
<b>National Safeguarding Lead</b>	Malcolm Bridges	malcolm.bridges@igauk.com
<b>Deputy National Safeguarding Lead</b>	Sarah Wright	sarah.wright@igauk.com
<b>Other organisations</b>		
<b>NSPCC Helpline</b>	0808 800 5000	www.nspcc.org.uk www.thecpsu.org.uk
<b>KIDSCAPE (parent helpline)</b>	0845 1205 204	www.kidscape.org.uk
<b>Family Lives (formerly Parent Plus)</b>	0808 8002 222	www.familylives.org.uk

## Introduction

IGA is fully dedicated to safeguarding adults in accordance with national legislation and relevant guidelines at both the national and local levels. We prioritise the safety of adults by ensuring that all our activities are conducted in a manner that promotes their well-being and protection.

Our commitment to creating a culture of zero-tolerance towards harm to adults entails:

- Identifying adults who may be at risk and recognising the factors that may increase their vulnerability.
- Understanding the various forms in which adult abuse, exploitation, or neglect can occur.
- Encouraging individuals to report any concerns or suspicions related to safeguarding.

We emphasise the importance of recognising and reporting instances of harm experienced by adults, regardless of the setting in which it occurs. This includes within our own activities, as well as in other organised community or voluntary initiatives, the community at large, an individual's own residence, or any care facility.

IGA is firmly dedicated to implementing best practices in safeguarding and upholding the rights of all adults to live a life that is free from abuse, exploitation, and neglect.

## The purpose & scope of this policy statement

The purpose of this policy is to clearly communicate IGA's unwavering dedication to safeguarding adults and to ensure that all individuals associated with IGA understand the following:

- The relevant legislation, policy, and procedures pertaining to safeguarding adults.
- Their specific roles and responsibilities in safeguarding adults.
- The appropriate course of action and whom to approach in the event of any concerns regarding the welfare or well-being of an adult within the organisation.
- By outlining these key points, this policy aims to provide comprehensive guidance and empower individuals to actively contribute to the protection and well-being of adults involved in IGA.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of IGA & its affiliated clubs.

This safeguarding adult's policy and its accompanying procedures are applicable to all individuals engaged with IGA, encompassing board members, staff, delivery teams, volunteers, members, and any other affiliated individuals. It extends to addressing concerns regarding the safety of adults participating in IGA's activities, both within the organisation and in the broader community.

We hold the expectation that our partner organisations will also embrace and exhibit a steadfast dedication to the principles and practices outlined in this safeguarding adult's policy and its associated procedures. By doing so, together we can ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for adults across our collective efforts.

## IGA's commitments

IGA firmly believes in the following principles:

- Adults should never be subjected to any form of abuse.
- We have a responsibility to promote the well-being and safety of all adults and to conduct our practices in a manner that protects them.
- Everyone has the right to participate in gymnastics without experiencing any intentional harm, regardless of various factors such as sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, marital or parental status, disability, religion or belief, race, nationality, ethnicity, or socio-economic background.

IGA acknowledges the following:

- The well-being of adults is of utmost importance in all our work and decision-making processes. All adults, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation, have an equal entitlement to protection from harm or abuse.
- Certain adults may be particularly vulnerable due to their past experiences, level of dependency, communication needs, or other factors.
- Collaborating with adults and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of adults.

IGA recognises that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone involved. Therefore, regardless of their role or employment status (paid or volunteer), all individuals working with adults have a duty to ensure their safety. IGA has appointed a designated safeguarding lead, a deputy safeguarding lead, and a lead director for safeguarding.

IGA will strive to keep adults safe by:

- Valuing, listening to, and respecting them.
- Appointing designated safeguarding officers and a lead director for safeguarding.
- Adhering to safeguarding best practices through the implementation of policies, procedures, and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring that everyone involved with IGA is aware of adult procedures and knows how to address concerns regarding the welfare and well-being of adults.
- Ensuring that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities concerning safeguarding.
- Responding promptly and seriously to any concerns about the safety of adults, following IGA's Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures.
- Communicating and enforcing a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of intentional harm or violence.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training, and quality assurance measures to ensure adherence to policies, procedures, and codes of conduct.
- Handling and storing information professionally, securely, and in compliance with data protection legislation and guidelines.
- Encouraging a culture where individuals feel comfortable reporting concerns without fear of reprisal.
- Taking appropriate action in response to incidents or concerns of abuse and offering support to individuals who raise or disclose such concerns.
- Utilising safeguarding and child protection procedures to share relevant information with relevant agencies.
- Ensuring safe recruitment and selection practices, including conducting necessary checks (such as DBS checks) and regularly updating and securely storing relevant information.
- Employing proper procedures to address any allegations against staff and volunteers.
- Providing effective support to staff and delivery team members if an allegation is made against them until a thorough investigation is conducted.
- Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures.
- Cultivating an anti-bullying environment and implementing policies and procedures to address instances of bullying effectively.
- Establishing effective measures for handling complaints and whistleblowing.
- Maintaining a physically safe environment for all adults by adhering to health and safety regulations and guidelines.

This policy and its guidelines are obligatory for all individuals participating and involved in IGA activities. They will be widely promoted and must be followed by all individuals associated with IGA. The responsibility to report concerns applies to any situation, whether it occurs within or outside the gymnastics environment. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed promptly and may result in dismissal, exclusion, or termination from the organisation.

## Monitoring & evaluation

This Safeguarding policy will undergo regular monitoring, & a comprehensive policy review will take place every three years. Additionally, IGA may conduct a policy review in the event of any of the following circumstances:

- Changes to legislation and/or guidance related to safeguarding.
- Changes in the sport of gymnastics that may impact safeguarding practices.
- Changes in the nature or operations of IGA that necessitate a policy review.
- A procedural review prompted by a significant case or incident.

By regularly monitoring & reviewing the policy, we ensure that it remains up to date & aligned with the latest legal requirements, industry standards, & the specific needs of IGA & its participants.