



SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

Review period	Review Date	Signed
Written	April 2022	
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Purpose of this Policy:

Gym magic encourages the use of technology and innovation, yet wants to ensure all gymnasts, staff and coaches remain safe. We want to communicate with our members and interact with others in the gymnastics community.

'Social media' involves building online communities or networks to encourage participation and engagement. These platforms open up many new and exciting opportunities, but we know there are many issues to consider to operate in a safe environment.

These guidelines aim to provide our members with information concerning the use/development of social media applications and help them get the best out of the tools available whilst maintaining a safe environment and protecting themselves, as well as Gymmagic. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies including Gymmagics Safeguarding Policy; Gymmagics Anti-Bullying Policy, British Gymnastics Safeguarding Policies, British Gymnastics' Social Networking Guidelines (December 2021).

Definition of social media:

For the purposes of these guidelines, social media is a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes, but is not limited to e-mail, online social forums, blogs, video- and image-sharing websites/apps and similar facilities.

Throughout this guidance a young person/child relates to anyone under the age of 18.

Guidance for Coaches, Judges, helpers/volunteers and other officers in a position of trust and responsibility in respect of children in a British Gymnastics club:

- Coaches, staff and volunteers should not be in contact with any young people through any social networking sites whether the young person is a member of their club or any other club.
- Should a young person request to become a named friend on your Social Networking Page or request that you become a named friend on their Social Networking Page you should decline as you are in a position of trust and responsibility within a British Gymnastics registered club. Only club staff and parents, should be permitted access.
- Social networking sites should never be used as a medium by which to abuse or criticise Gymmagic, British Gymnastics, affiliated Home Countries, Regional Gymnastics associations,

British Gymnastics members or British Gymnastics clubs.

- The publishing of a photograph or video footage on a social networking site is governed by the same requirements as any other media- see the Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy.

Guidance to coaches who have children that they coach in a club:

Parents are becoming members of social networking sites that their children sign up to for security reasons in order to ensure the wellbeing of their own child by being able to view their child's site.

This will give the parent access via their child's site to all children listed as friends of their child. It would not be appropriate for British Gymnastics to prevent a parent who is also a coach from using this form of protection for their child's online activities. Therefore, in such cases the coach can: Have gymnasts on the site they are accessing providing the under 18 - year-old members on the site are listed as friends of their child; However, in this case the following also applies: The coach concerned should not have direct contact with gymnasts other than their own child through the social networking site; The coach should not accept such gymnasts as friends on their personal site; The coach should inform the Club Welfare Officer of this arrangement and a record kept of such.

Coaches/Judges/Club officials who are under 18:

Social networking sites can be a useful tool for judges, coaches and officials within British Gymnastics clubs to share information with other judges, coaches or officials. If, however, the judge, coach or official is under the age of 18 while they may be a colleague, the requirements of the above paragraphs must be adhered to.

However, for young people aged 16 or 17 it is the view of Gym magic and BG, that to restrict the ability to share professional information with them from other coaches, judges or officials may be detrimental in their professional development in their role in British Gymnastics. Therefore, in such cases if the parent of a young person in a position of responsibility aged 16/17 and the young person themselves requests to have contact with an adult club officer or coach for the purposes of sharing professional information relevant to their role the club should: Gain written consent of the parent/guardian and young person to have such contact naming the individual adult and social networking site concerned.

Guidance for Gymmagic Members Under 18:

- Do not ask your coach, judge, helper/volunteer or club official to be your social networking site friend- they will refuse as that would breach good practice and the British Gymnastics Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy.
- Use the internet positively and do not place yourself at risk. Have a look at www.ceop.gov.uk for some useful tips.
- Consider who you are inviting to be your friend and follow the good advice of the social networking sites to ensure you are talking to the person you believe you are talking to.
- Never share your personal details online and ensure your privacy settings are secure.
- Ensure that your social media platforms are password protected and that you do not share

this password, unless your parent/guardian requests it.

- Always remember that anything you say including photos, pictures and video clips posted on your site may be shared with people other than those for whom it was intended.
- Never post, share or send any photographs, videos or make comments that may be hurtful, untrue and upsetting and you may regret sharing later on or used by other people in a way you did not intend or want.
- Remember that it can be difficult to delete information that has been uploaded to the internet, it may have been shared or copied as soon as it is uploaded.
- Do not put pictures of other club members on your site within the club setting as you may breach the British Gymnastics Photography Policy. If you do wish to upload such a picture you must get advice and consent from your parent, the other young person and their parent and a club officer before considering uploading such a photo. This will not prevent you having pictures of your gymnastics friends on your site taken outside of the sporting arena, but it is good advice to always ensure they and their parents are happy with any picture you have of them on your site.
- Always be aware that social networking sites are a method of communication like email and the spoken word. They are bound by the same laws and rules. Such technology is instant and this allows you as the user to react in the 'heat of the moment', where in the past you would have been required to write a letter which would have taken time and allowed for you to think again before sending. So never place a comment on the internet that you would not put in writing or say to the individual concerned as to do so may not only breach British Gymnastics Policy but also the law.
- Remember to report any concerns you have to a responsible adult.

Guidance to parents of British Gymnastics members under the age of 18

With the increased development of technology, a number of internet connected devices are available for adults and young people.

The NSPCC (<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventingabuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/technology-toys-and-the-internet/provides-guidance>) and training for parents on how to keep your child(ren) safe.

Social Networking Guidelines:

- Get to know your child's online habits. Children are inquisitive. They will look to explore the internet as much as they do the real world. Knowing the sites they go to, the people they meet there and what they do will help to keep children safe.
- Stay alert to any sudden changes in mood or appearance, or to any major change in habits or to increased secretiveness. These are often tell-tale signs that something is not right.
- Keep lines of communication open- tell your child they can always talk to you or another trusted adult, such as a teacher or Club Welfare Officer, if they do end up in some sort of trouble on the internet. Make children aware that there are things on the internet which may distress them.
- Spend time with your child(ren) surfing the internet together. Explain the Applications (App), games and social media platforms that are acceptable for them to use and the reason for others not being suitable.

- If your child(ren) mentions that they wish to use an App, game or social media platform that you have not permitted them to, research the area and explain the reason it is not acceptable.
- Spend some time surfing the internet yourself. The more that you know about the internet, the better able you are, in turn, to help your child navigate around it without coming to any harm.
- Set parental controls. Install internet filtering software showing a Child Safety Online Kitemark on your computer. Filtering products with a Kitemark have been independently tested to provide a simple and effective means of support to parents, helping to ensure that a child's online experience is a safe one. The Kitemark scheme is sponsored by the Home Office and Ofcom.
- There have also been occasions where parents of British Gymnastics members have used social networking sites to criticise or verbally abuse gymnastics clubs, its officers, officials, coaches, judges, and gymnasts in an inappropriate and unacceptable manner. This has in some cases led the person who is the subject of the verbal abuse to take action through statutory agencies or statutory legislation to address the comments made. British Gymnastics members found to be abusing or working outside of these good practice guidelines, may be subject to disciplinary action or investigation as outlined in the British Gymnastics Complaints & Disciplinary Procedures.

What to do if you have a concern:

This is a list of agencies that can be contacted, anonymously if you wish, where such concerns can be raised:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk: the main UK Government website with advice for parents on how to keep children safe online.

www.ceop.police.uk: the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) is the Government body dedicated to eradicating abuse of children. Concerns about inappropriate contacts between a child and an adult, including online, can be reported directly to CEOP. Reporting can be accessed by pressing the CEOP button on the BG website's CEOP page.

www.iwf.org.uk: the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) works to remove illegal material from the internet. If you have found any material you believe to be illegal e.g. child sex abuse images, other obscene material or material which incites racial hatred, you can report it to the IWF.

A number of specialist websites contain general advice that may be of help to parents.

These include www.nspcc.org.uk, www.barnardos.org.uk, and www.beatbullying.org.

Other sites can offer parents support on broader issues. These include:

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/>

British Gymnastics Safeguarding and Compliance Team on 0345 129 7129 ext 2346

Childline 0800 1 1 1 1 or www.childline.org.uk is another NSPCC support service. Using this website, children can talk confidentially to NSPCC advisors online about any issues or problems they may be experiencing, using an application similar to Instant Messenger (1M).

Stop It Now freephone 0808 1000 900 or www.stopitnow.org.uk