



MEMBER HANDBOOK

Worcestershire Gymnastics Club Ltd, home to
Worcestershire Gymnastics Academy

Welcome to Worcester Gymnastics Club

About Us:

Based in the heart of Worcestershire, our dedicated gymnastics facility has classes for everyone of all ages and abilities. We offer Pre-school, Recreational, Adult and competitive Men's and Women's Artistic gymnastics. We also run holiday classes which are open to members and non-members. Full details of all classes can be found on our website.

Founded by Jill Coathup in 2000, with just 9 boys, the club has grown from strength to strength, and now trains over 300 gymnasts.

We believe gymnastics should be fun. To help achieve this, training sessions are informal and friendly, and we feel that progress is best made on an individual basis rather than formal group teaching. Experience has shown that this method of allowing gymnasts to develop at their own pace encourages a greater degree of independence and self-confidence from an earlier stage.

Mission Statement:

"Teaching Gymnastics is our passion, and our aim is to provide everyone with the opportunity to love, learn and laugh with gymnastics."

Gymnasts should want to come to our sessions because they want to learn, not because they are told to. We see the Club as one big family, not a disjointed series of different classes. We hope you will too.

Our Coaching Team:

All our coaches are DBS checked and trained in safeguarding and protecting children. All have the qualifications necessary to train the gymnasts in their respective groups.

Our coaches provide a fun, challenging environment, through setting appropriate targets and offering guidance and technical advice. To do this effectively, they all continually work on developing their professional coaching skills. Our coaches work as part of a team to deliver the most appropriate gymnastics programme and to give honest advice; ensuring all gymnasts have the opportunity to be the best they can be.

Memberships – Club and BG:

All members are required to pay an annual club membership fee, and gymnasts must also hold a current British Gymnastics (BG) membership for insurance purposes.

These fees become payable after a gymnast's second lesson and are due again at the end of September every year. Dependent upon which month your child joins the Club, there may not be the expiration of one full year before payment is due again. Other than their first two sessions, no child will be allowed to train without having paid the insurance premium and club subscription.

Policies – Club and BG:

Our club policies, together with the BG policies our club affiliates to, can be found on our website along with our Privacy Notice. Please do take time to read through these and let us know if you have any questions.

Class information:

Do parents/guardians have to stay on site?

Parents/carers of gymnasts under the age of 8 years need to be on hand to deal with any issues their child may have (*i.e. toileting, as this is not the responsibility of the coach*).

Some medical conditions will require a parent/carer to stay on site in case administration of medication is required *i.e.* use of an EpiPen.

Two up to date telephone contact numbers are essential in respect of all gymnasts so that we can contact you immediately in the event of any problems. At least one named contact must be available during training sessions.

Viewing:

Due to health and safety, we need to restrict any disruption to classes as much as possible. As such, parents are not permitted to enter the gym, however there is an upstairs area with a viewing screen.

Food and Drink:

During our normal weekly sessions, gymnasts will not have the opportunity to eat during their class so please don't send children with food. Should children bring a snack for afterwards, please bear in mind that others may have allergies.

Gymnasts should be given regular drink breaks to ensure they stay hydrated. Please send your child with a sports capped bottle of water to all training sessions and note fizzy drinks will not be allowed in the gym.

Medical conditions/disabilities/injuries:

Any medical condition, learning need, disability or attention disorder must be disclosed on our registration form and parents should speak to the lead coach to ensure everyone is made aware of any adaptations/risks which need to be considered. Gymnasts with Downs Syndrome will require an Atlanto-Axial Instability screening prior to attending any trial sessions.

If a new disability/medical condition/learning need arises after registration WGC must be informed in writing so up to date accurate information can be added to the gymnast's confidential records.

If a gymnast has been absent from class for a prolonged period and wishes to re-join after recovery, a discussion must be held with a lead coach in the first instance with written confirmation from a parent/guardian that they are fit and ready to come back to training.

Clothing:

Gymnasts should wear something suitable for movement (not skirts) so anything not too tight or loose is required. Leggings/shorts with t-shirt/leotard are ideal. Under BG requirements hooded tops are not allowed to be worn in the gym and will need to be removed before training starts.

Members of our elite squads will require competition kit in addition to their regular training clothes, which can be purchased through WGC.

ALL jewellery must be removed prior to training including sports watches, rings, braids and earrings. We do not have lockers available and coaches cannot be held responsible for looking after personal items. If earrings cannot be removed due to a recent piercing these will need to be taped prior to arrival; for health and safety reasons coaches are not to apply tape to gymnasts and so this must be done at home. Gymnasts will not be allowed to train with uncovered earrings; this is a BG regulation and as such we cannot make allowances.

Arrival and collection:

All members should arrive on time for each of their sessions. Junior members must be accompanied into the gymnasium by a parent or guardian and handed over to a member of the coaching team. If you arrive early you must wait with your child in the Reception area until their session starts as gymnasts will not be allowed to wait inside the gym and must not be left unsupervised.

All gymnasts must be collected promptly at the end of their session. Junior members must be collected by a parent/guardian from inside the gymnasium, not the car park; gymnasts will not be allowed to leave the premises without a parent or guardian present.

Coaches are not responsible for supervising children who have not been collected, especially when the next class is starting. If you are going to be late collecting your child for any reason you must contact the club as soon as is possible. Parents who are regularly late in collecting their child will be asked to attend a meeting with the Club Welfare Officer.

Communication and Administration:

If you need to speak to a specific coach then please try to catch them before the session starts or once it has finished, as you will be unable to speak with them if they are actively coaching. If it is a minor issue, please leave a message with Reception. If you need to have a longer discussion with a coach, please email the club. Coaches are not permitted to give out personal telephone numbers, email/social media addresses and parents/guardians should not contact coaches in this way. Contact with any member of staff should come through official club channels.

Invoices will be e-mailed at regular intervals. News and information about the Club will appear on our notice boards, website, and social media pages.

If you have a change in circumstances (i.e. address, emergency contact details, gymnasts' health) please let us know in writing, email is fine, at your earliest opportunity. If a gymnast is going to be late or absent from a session, please contact the club to let us know.

Parking:

There are designated parking bays for visitors to use. Please ensure cars are not left on pedestrian walkways and do not obstruct emergency exits. Please note, all vehicles are left at the owners' own risk and WGC cannot be held accountable for any loss or damage.

Please ensure you adhere to the speed restrictions which are clearly marked.

Supervision of children/siblings:

Please note that supervision of children not participating in any gymnastic session is the sole responsibility of their parents/guardians. Children must always be supervised whilst on site, both inside the gym and in the car parks. Children who are not participating in a gymnastics session are not to enter the main gym hall.

Piercings and Body Adornments:

We follow the policy of British Gymnastics in connection with body piercings and adornments. Gymnasts must remove all relevant items to reduce the risk of injury to themselves, coaches and others. There is some flexibility regarding newly pierced ears whereby tape may be used to cover the piercings for up to six weeks; after which the piercings must be removed. Parents/carers must provide and apply their own tape prior to the start of any training session.

Lost property:

Whilst we cannot take responsibility for any property which is left in the gym, anything we do find will be kept in a 'lost property' container near Reception. If items are not claimed within 3 months they will be disposed of. All items – clothing, palm guards, water bottles etc - should be clearly named so they can be returned quickly, and we will do our best to find the owner of lost items.

Transferring classes:

We understand that situations change from time to time so you may need to request a change to the class your child attends. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to accommodate your child in another class straight away, so you may have to be placed on a waiting list for your preferred class.

Payment:

Invoices for all sessions will be emailed, so please ensure we have the correct and up to date contact details. Any missed payments could result in your child losing their place.

New gymnasts attending trial sessions will be asked to pay for these at the time of booking and have their first invoice adjusted accordingly.

Please note that refunds are not given for a child who does not attend classes regularly. Once a place has been booked and paid for, refunds will not be given.

Social networking:

Apart from very close friends and family members, gymnasts' parents should not request to become a named friend on a coach's social networking page, or vice versa, and any such requests should be declined. This is to safeguard coaches and members from inappropriate communication that could result in disciplinary action.

Health, Safety and Welfare:

The welfare and safety of children and vulnerable adults is paramount for WGC. If any of our members/parents/guardians has a concern, they should contact one of our Club Welfare Officers in the first instance who will investigate further and work to implement any resolutions. In order to effectively investigate and resolve welfare issues, members/parents/guardians are expected to maintain confidentiality around any welfare investigations. Photographs of the Welfare Officers of WGC can be found on the Club notice board and website.

Photography:

We do not publish any images or videos without written consent from the gymnast concerned (or in the case of a child from their parent/guardian). This is gained as part of our registration process. Personal information, other than their name and their club/class will not accompany the image.

We have a policy of no photography being allowed in the gym either by camera, mobile phone, video or other devices without permission being sought first. If you wish to take a photograph of your child or video a performance, please see their coach to check whether arrangements can be made for this. It is not acceptable to take photographs etc. when other children are visible in the footage.

Evacuation:

In case of a fire or other emergency, gymnasts will be evacuated under the supervision of their coach. Parents and other children under their supervision must evacuate the building and assemble at the designated meeting point in the car park.

CODE OF CONDUCT - For Club Coaches, Officials and Volunteers:

The essence of good ethical conduct and practice is summarised below. All Club coaches, officials and volunteers must:

- Consider the well-being and safety of participants before the development of performance
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with performers based on mutual trust and respect
- Hold the appropriate, valid qualification and insurance cover
- Make sure all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part and ensure all participants are suitably prepared physically and mentally when learning new skills
- Display consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance, dressing suitably and not using inappropriate language at any time whilst involved with club activities
- Always represent the Club in a positive manner, including any social media posts
- Never send/accept friend requests from members on social media. All contact must be through the correct channels via the dedicated Club telephone number or email address
- Never consume alcohol immediately before or during training or events
- Never have performers stay over at your home
- Never exert undue influence over performers to obtain personal benefit or reward

- Always report any incidents, referrals or disclosures immediately, following the appropriate guidelines set out in the BG Child Protection procedures
- Never condone rule violations or use of prohibited substances
- Make sure that confidential information is not divulged unless with the express approval of the individual concerned and in line with Data Protection rules and regulations
- Promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play)
- Encourage performers to value their performance and not just results
- Follow the guidelines laid down by BG and Worcester Gymnastics Club

CODE OF CONDUCT - For Parents, Guardians and Visitors:

As parents/guardians of our members, and visitors to our Club, we ask that you:

- Encourage your child to learn the Code of Conduct/rules and participate within them
- Publicly accept officials' judgements, and discourage challenging/arguing with officials
- Never force your child to take part in sport; help them recognise good performance, not just results, and never belittle or punish them for poor performance or making mistakes
- Set a good example by recognising good sportsmanship and applauding the good performances of all
- Always ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the activity and has plenty to drink
- Keep the Club informed if your child is unwell or unable to attend sessions. Members must not return to training within 48 hours of an illness involving sickness and/or upset stomach
- Endeavour to establish good communications with the Club, coaches and officials. Please check the noticeboard and website regularly for letters and information
- Do not communicate with gymnasts during training sessions. Waving, shouting, tapping on the window etc causes a distraction and will compromise their safety
- Filming and taking photographs during training sessions is strictly prohibited. Please speak with a senior team member if you would like to arrange a convenient time to take photographs
- Please ensure we have the correct, up to date contact details, and notify us of any changes
- Share any concerns or complaints about any aspect of the Club through the approved channels
- Use correct and proper language, and show respect to others at all times
- Always ensure your child arrives on time for their session
- Always collect your child promptly at the end of their session. Junior members are not permitted to leave the site unless they are accompanied by a known adult
- Support your child's involvement and help them to enjoy their sport
- Please encourage your child to collect their personal belongings at the end of each session and ensure that any litter is either taken home or placed in one of the bins provided
- Pay all fees, club membership and BG membership on time. Your child will be unable to attend any training sessions if their BG insurance lapses
- The Club has adopted the policies of British Gymnastics, which you will find on our website

CODE OF CONDUCT - For Participants:

We are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all our members. We believe it is important that all members, coaches, administrators and parents associated with the club should always show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others. Our members are always encouraged to be open and share any concerns or complaints that they may have about any aspect of the club.

As a member of Worcester Gymnastics Club, you are expected to abide by the following club rules:

- All members must participate within the rules and respect coaches and judges, and their decisions; remember some of our senior gymnasts are also coaches

- All members must respect fellow club members and opponents
- Members should keep to agreed timings for training and competitions or inform their coach if they are going to be late or absent - members must not return to training within 48 hours of an illness involving sickness and/or upset stomach
- Members must wear suitable attire for training and events. Casual trousers, jeans or baggy clothing can be dangerous as it can catch on apparatus and restrict a coach's ability to support sufficiently. Clothing with zips/hoods may only be worn during warm-up
- All gymnasts should arrive 'session ready' and bring any necessary personal equipment with them (e.g. floor music, hand guards)
- Squad members should wear leotards/longs for competitions
- Members are advised to bring a drink of still water in a 'sports capped' bottle; food items and canned/fizzy drinks are not to be brought into the gym
- Long hair must be tied back
- **All jewellery, including watches, is prohibited.** Earrings must not come into the gym; they must be taken out before entering and handed to a parent/guardian. For newly pierced ears, tape may be applied prior to entering the gym. Coaches are not permitted to apply tape to any gymnast
- **No mobile phones** are to be taken into the gym
- Members must pay all fees (Club membership, BG membership, event entry) on time
- Members must not smoke, consume alcohol or take drugs of any kind before/during training or whilst representing the club at competitions or events
- Members should treat all equipment with respect and assist with tidying up where necessary
- Members should not go on any piece of equipment unless they have been told to do so. This includes no leaping over or swinging on equipment whilst moving from one piece to another
- Members should respect the personal property of others, and **must not** touch any personal effects that do not belong to them
- Members should inform their coach of any illness or injuries before they begin any warm-up
- Members should not eat or chew gum during any training sessions
- Members must not use inappropriate language
- Members should remain with coaches at the end of their session until collected by a parent/guardian. No-one is permitted to leave the club unaccompanied

Discipline:

Our gym is used by a large number of gymnasts at any given time, and so in order to maintain a safe environment it is important that everyone listens and follows instructions from their coach.

We operate a "three strikes" policy for all gymnasts, parents and carers. Disruptive or threatening behaviour of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Prior to formal action being taken, any gymnasts failing to follow the rules may first be asked to sit out for a period of time. If this does not allow time for reconsideration of actions the following will be followed. Any breach of the codes of conduct will also be treated in the following manner:

1. Any gymnast, parent or carer failing to meet behaviour standards as set out in the appropriate Code of Conduct will receive a verbal warning from a lead coach or Welfare Officer. This will be recorded in writing and held in the club's records.
2. If the behaviour continues a written warning will be issued to the person concerned/their parents/carers by our Welfare Officer.
3. If the written warning has no effect the situation will be raised with the full committee, who may then decide to suspend or expel the person/s completely depending on the severity of the nature. There is a

right to appeal against suspension/expulsion and this must be made in writing to our Welfare Officer within five days.

Complaints:

WGC is committed to providing a high-quality experience for all and continually strives to improve and surpass expectations. There may be times when we do not meet our expected standards, and if this is the case, we want to hear about it, deal with the situation as quickly as possible and put measures in place to stop it happening again.

It is usually possible to resolve any problems as soon as they occur by simply speaking with the individuals concerned and/or the coach in charge of the session. We are committed to open, regular dialogue with parents/carers and welcome all comments whether positive or negative.

If a satisfactory resolution cannot be found, then our complaints procedure should be followed. Full details can be found on our website.

Volunteering at WGC:

We are always looking for coaches, judges, Welfare Officers, help with fundraising, help running the café, and help with Reception/administration to name but a few.

If you are interested in volunteering and would like to be more involved with our club then do drop us an email at: worcsgymrachel@gmail.com - we would love to hear from you.