

WELFARE POLICY: SAFEGUARDING & SOCIAL MEDIA

Our aim is for all our members to feel safe and have a fun and positive experience at Falcon.

We promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of all our members at all times.

Our Welfare Officers are dedicated to making our community inclusive, protected, and safe. They have all attended 'Time to Listen' courses and are fully compliant with all current advice and regulations.

Please note:

Overall responsibility for Welfare & Safeguarding

Hannah Shri – MD

Day to day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practise.

Mel Hale – Business & Welfare Director

To ensure Welfare & safeguarding standards are maintained/improved, Hannah, Mel and others have responsibility in the following areas:

HS - Investigations, consultations with Parents, Gymnasts, Staff, Police, Social Services and all work-related mental health concerns.

MH – Actively maintaining visual awareness at all venues for signs of any form of poor welfare, companywide communication, and training of all staff regarding Welfare. Maintaining Falcon's register for all coaches, Volunteers & officials qualifications relating to Welfare (DBS, Safeguarding, Time to Listen etc)

MH & HS – Creation of risk profile Safeguarding incident form for any situation that warrants further control and observation. Management of any emergency situation.

It is business critical that All employees should:

- Co-operate with SLT, SL & GL on Welfare and safeguarding matters at all times.
- Take reasonable care of their own mental health; and
- Report all mental health, welfare, safety concerns & safeguarding matters to an appropriate person and in particular Hannah Shri & Mel Hale.

At Falcon we:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people
- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify, and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people

- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- Ensure that confidential, detailed, and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- Prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals. All coaches, volunteers and administrators who work or help at the club regardless of the venue have rigorous background checks including enhanced DBS certification.
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.
- Session leaders must ensure no-one leaves the gym without permission during a training session.
- Session leaders must ensure young children (up to 6 years of age) are escorted to the toilet by a coach / parent chaperone.
- Session leaders must ensure All gymnasts are signed in and marked on the register at the start of the session and marked out on the register when collected.
- Session leaders must ensure all gymnasts are collected by their appropriate adult.
- All coaches over the age of 16 must do an on-line Safeguarding courses. Any coach over the age of 18 must attend a face-to-face Safeguarding" course.
- If you operate within Falcon as a coach, volunteer or official you are obligated to read Falcon's Policies on Welfare and Safeguarding.
- The name and details of Falcon Welfare and Safeguarding officers can be found on our website www.falcongym.com and are listed below.
 - Mel Hale– 07514 366894 mel@falcongym.com
 - Nikki Woodworth - 07761 375699 nikkiwoodworth1.falcongym@gmail.com

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is a term to describe methods used to protect individuals especially children, young people, and vulnerable adults from being harmed.

There are different kinds of abuse – Physical, Neglect, Sexual or Emotional (such as bullying or discrimination).

The club has trained Welfare Officers who would deal with a safeguarding situation should it arise.

All details for our Welfare Officers are detailed on our website under the "Welfare Officers" Page.

Everyone's role in safeguarding within Falcon Gymnastics Club at all sessions and venues are to be our eye and ears and pass on, immediately to a Welfare Officer any concerns you may have either by phone, text email.

What kind of things would trigger a concern?

As we said, abuse can take different forms, but some of the things you should look out for would be:

- A gymnast who is usually bubbly becoming quiet and withdrawn
- A gymnast is reluctant to remove leggings or top when this has not been an issue before
- A gymnast has unexplained bruises or marks.
- A gymnast is reluctant to go home / go with the adult designated to pick them up.
- A gymnast saying something that may alarm / concern you.

If you see or encounter any of the above, you must report this to Falcon's Welfare Officers Immediately.

What should you do if a gymnast discloses to you that they are or someone they know is being abused?

Children and young people often tell other young people (rather than staff or other adults) so it is important you have some guidance on how to act.

- **Always stop and listen** straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
- **Never make a promise** that you will keep what is said confidential or secret – if you are told about abuse you have a responsibility to tell the right people to get something done about it.
- **Report this to your Welfare Officer.** (see below)

What should you do if you see, hear or are told something that makes you think a gymnast has experienced some form of abuse?

- **Immediately inform a Welfare Officer** of any safeguarding concerns you may have, and don't tell other adults or young people what you have been told. Do not take any action yourself and do not tell anyone. The Welfare Officer will investigate your concerns.
- **Always stop and listen** straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
- **Never make a promise** that you will keep what is said confidential or secret – if you are told about abuse you have a responsibility to tell the right people to get something done about it.
- **Write down what you have been told** whilst it is still fresh in your mind and make a note of the time and date. Contact a Welfare Officer by phone, text or email and complete a 'Safeguarding Incident form' and pass this to one of the designated Welfare Officers. If no Welfare Officer is available, and it is appropriate to do so, please pass the form to Sue. Otherwise, take the form home and contact the Welfare Officer to advise you have it.

Training

- All training assessments, records and qualifications will be kept for 6 years..
- MH will hold all records and ensure all coaches have appropriate qualifications and legal documentations to carry out their coaching duties. (DBS, Safeguarding, Level 1 & 2 coaching grade etc)
- During the year there will be continual on-going assessments of the coaches to ensure standards relating to safeguarding are maintained, and any shortfall will be identified to MH to arrange appropriate training.
- During the summer break there will be training workshops to update and improve our awareness of safeguarding.

Social Media

To protect and safeguard our members, Falcon is committed to the safe, professional, and legal use of social media. The purpose of the following guidelines is to:

- Ensure that the relationships between coaches, officials, volunteers, helpers, and gymnasts always remain professional.
- Protect gymnasts, coaches, parents, and all associated with Falcon from allegations of inappropriate conduct and ensure they have clear guidelines for the use of social media and other communication methods.

Guidelines for the appropriate use of social media, text, and instant messaging services:

- Coaches, parents, and gymnasts should avoid posting comments, photographs or videos that are derogatory, inappropriate or could be disparaging or embarrassing to Falcon, another gymnastics club, its members, coaches, or officials.
- Parents/gymnasts must not upload photographs or videos containing gymnasts other than their own child to any social media site without prior consent from the gymnast's parent/guardian.
- Parents/gymnasts must not upload photographs or videos containing club coaches, officials, or volunteers without their prior consent.
- Coaches and officials should not communicate with a child or young person under the age of 18 via social media, text message or other electronic communication unless prior consent has been given by their parent/guardian.
- If a coach or official receives a message or friend request from a gymnast, they must not respond to the child directly but via their parent/guardian or they should inform a Welfare Officer (contact details below).
- Mobile phones should not be used in the gym, except where a phone is used as a club contact number or for emergencies.

Use of images / video recordings by Falcon Gymnastics Club for PR and social media purposes:

- No images will be taken of any individual who has not given their permission via the GDPR consent form.
- The gymnast/s will be made aware of the purpose of the photography / filming.
- At least one other responsible adult will be present in addition to the person taking photos / filming.
- All images / recordings will be stored securely and deleted when no longer required for PR / social media purposes.

- Before any images / recordings are posted on social media they will be approved by a member of Falcon's Senior Leadership Team or representative.

For further information or to raise any concerns regarding safeguarding or the inappropriate use of social media please contact one of Falcon's Welfare Officers:

- Nikki Woodworth – nikkiwoodworth.falcongym@gmail.com, 07761 375699
- Mel Hale – mel@falcongym.com, 07514 366894

Additional advice and guidance can be obtained from The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) and can be accessed via <http://thecpsu.org.uk>

This document was reviewed and updated 26.04.26

