



Welsh Gymnastics
Gymnasteg Cymru

Position of Trust

Everyone who works with children and young people have a crucial role to play in shaping their lives. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children and young people in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This guidance has been produced to help those working in all settings to establish safe and responsive environments, which safeguard young people and reduce the risk of adults being unjustly accused of improper or unprofessional conduct whilst working in Welsh Gymnastics affiliated environments.

What is meant by a position of trust?

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all individuals working with children, young people and adults at risk are in positions of trust in relation to the individuals in their care. Broadly speaking, a relationship of trust exists when one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. It is vital for all those in positions of trust to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship.

A relationship between an adult and a child, young person or vulnerable adult is not a relationship between equals. Where there is an unequal relationship/power imbalance, there is always potential for exploitation and harm. Individuals in a position of trust have a responsibility to ensure that this unequal balance of power is not used against anyone for personal advantage or gratification. Adults, and those in a position of trust, should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoiding behaviour which might be misinterpreted by children and young people, or by other adults. They should report and record any incident with this potential. Where a person aged 18 or over is in a specified position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

This means that a person in a position of trust must not:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- Use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children, young people or adults
- Use their position to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so
- Use their position to lead children or young people to believe that their relationship is anything other than a professional one, or likely to become anything other than a professional relationship in the future.

What roles and responsibilities do I have?

As an individual in a position of trust you must adhere to Welsh Gymnastics Codes of Conduct and ensure that everyone in your organisation is also adhering to their Code of Conduct:

[Codes-of-Conduct-for-Coaches](#)

[Codes-of-Conduct-for-Gymnasts](#)

[Codes-of-Conduct-for-Parents](#)

It is your responsibility to read and understand Welsh Gymnastics Policies and Procedures and request further training and support should you require this. It is also your responsibility, with your manager, to ensure that you have a current DBS and appropriate safeguarding training commensurate with your role.

All staff and volunteers who work with children, young people or adults are automatically placed in a position of trust that carries authority, status, power and responsibility. If the adults involved are positive role models displaying high moral and ethical standards, the benefit to another's development can be significant.

Always remember the importance of the child's voice – it is paramount that we do everything possible to ensure they are heard and respected.

What does duty of care mean?

All individuals who work or volunteer with or on behalf of children young people or adults are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources, and safeguard. Whether working in a paid or voluntary capacity, you have a duty to keep children, young people and adults safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm, financial abuse and neglect. Children, young people and adults have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that individuals in a position of trust are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone in their care. Failure to do so may be regarded as neglect or breach of the duty of care.

The duty of care is in part, exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships. It is also exercised through the behaviour of those in a position of trust, which at all times should demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement. Everyone expects high standards of behaviour from those who work with children, young people and adults. When individuals accept such work, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in that role.

Welsh Gymnastics also have a duty of care towards their employees, both paid and unpaid, under the **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**. This requires us to provide a safe working

environment and provide guidance about safe working practices. Welsh Gymnastics also has a duty of care for the well-being of employees and to ensure that employees are treated fairly and reasonably in all circumstances. **The Human Rights Act 1998** sets out important principles regarding protection of individuals from abuse by state organisations or people working for those institutions. Adults who are subject to an allegation should therefore be supported and the principles of natural justice applied. **The Health and Safety Act 1974** also imposes a duty on employees to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failings. An employer's duty of care and the adult's duty of care towards children should not conflict.

Welsh Gymnastics role:

- Ensure that appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures are adopted, implemented and monitored.
- Ensure that codes of conduct/practices are continually monitored and reviewed.
- Ensure that a copy of the above is accessible to everyone.
- Where another body provides services or activities, ensure that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding training, policies and procedures.
- Foster a culture of openness and support.
- Ensure that systems are in place for concerns to be raised.
- Ensure coaches, volunteers, staff, and officials are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable.
- Ensure all members have access to Welsh Gymnastics policies and procedures.
- Ensure that all job descriptions and person specifications clearly identify the competencies necessary to fulfil the duty of care.
- Ensure support is offered to the staff whom an allegation has been made against.

Making a Professional Judgement

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is or is not appropriate behaviour in all circumstances. There may be occasions and circumstances in which an individual has to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the child, young person or adult which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists (however wherever possible seek guidance from your Designated Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer and/or the Welsh Gymnastics Safeguarding Team). Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of those in their charge.

In undertaking these actions individuals will be seen to be acting reasonably. Adults should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate and safe and applied equitably.

This means that where no specific guidance exists you should:

- Discuss the circumstances that informed your action, or proposed action, with a Designated Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer.
- Report any actions which could be misinterpreted to the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer.
- Always discuss any incident, misunderstanding, accident or threats with a Designated Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer, also alerting a line manager where appropriate.
- Always create a written record of discussions and reasons why actions were taken.
- Record any areas of disagreement about a course of action taken and if necessary, refer to a higher authority. The Welsh Gymnastics Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team can advise in these instances.