



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Reviewed 14 September 2022

1. Purpose:

Thames Gymsports Club is committed to creating a positive, inclusive culture within the sport of gymnastics that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This includes prevention of harm from within as well as recognising and responding to concerns, disclosures, and allegations.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children and young people from abuse and neglect and to safeguard their wellbeing.
- Outline behaviours and requirements expected of those involved within our club.
- Provide staff members and volunteers with clear guidance on how to recognise and respond to suspected or confirmed cases of child abuse, neglect as well as how to prevent abuse from happening.
- Ensure that reported concerns are referred to the appropriate child protection agency or authority as required in a timely manner.

2. Scope:

This policy involves anyone involved with the Thames Gymsports Club, paid or voluntary. This includes (but is not limited to) the following people.

- All children and young people up to the age of 18 associated with the sport of gymnastics.
- All staff members and volunteers, visitors, and contractors.
- Persons appointed to the committee.
- Support personal appointed or selected to teams and squads, (e.g., managers, chaperones, stand in coaches)
- Coaches and assistant coaches
- Participants
- Judges and other officials involved at our club events
- Members
- Personal participating in events and activities
- Any other [people including spectators, parents/guardians
- Anyone working on behalf of Thames Gymnastics including child protection agencies.

3. Policy Statement

Thames gymnastics has zero tolerance for abuse or neglect in any context and has developed this policy to outline our organization's commitment to protect the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people involved with our Gym sports club.

This policy also relates to and supports:

- Thames Gymsports Constitution
- Codes of Behaviour and Ethics

4. Organisations Responsibility Statement

The overall responsibility for safeguarding the young people at Thame Gymsports rests with the committee. They are charged with the implementation and imbedding of this policy. The leadership team will take responsibility for the clubs safeguarding arrangements. At least one individual will be trained and will have the position of Child Safeguarding Representative. Whose role amongst other things will be to promote safeguarding our young people and to respond to concerns that are brought to their attention. Our current Trained Representative is Andrea Johnston.

Thames Gymsports accepts the responsibility to create a culture where the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is prioritized and to implement and embed robust procedures to safeguard to protect children and young people and will:

- Provide effective leadership to promote, implement and embed this and other associated policies.
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is our primary concern
- Develop procedures for responding to disclosure and/or allegations relating to child abuse.
- Develop and implement standards of conduct that establish appropriate behaviours and boundaries for individuals in positions of trust.
- Involve and listen to children about their safety and wellbeing.
- Implement appropriate practices for sharing information where it is necessary to protect a child with others.
- Ensure any suspicions or allegations involving abuse of a child are reported in line with the applicable statutory guidance.
- Provide appropriate support to individuals involved in the concern.
- Ensure confidence, detail and accurate records are kept.
- Ensure safeguarding of children is a key part of risk assessment
- Implement safe recruitment procedures in line with the children's act 2014 and the Children's Regulations 2015.
- Undertake regular risk assessments to remove or minimize that risk.
- Implement safe recruitment practices including Police Vetting and reference checks.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers receive induction and training.
- Ensuring that any suspicions or allegations of abuse or neglect are reported to the affiliated organisation, the Police and/or Oranga Tamariki and to GNZ promptly.
- Take action to address poor practice /behaviours such as bullying or harassment. Ensure that everyone knows what to do if they are concerned about a young person's wellbeing and promote a culture where everyone is encouraged to raise concerns early to minimize impact without fear of negative repercussions.

Protecting the safety of our young people is everyone's responsibility. It is essential that we are aware of the signs of abuse and how to report it. We cannot condone or ignore incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Anyone that has reason to believe there is neglect or abuse etc has a duty to report it.

Failure to comply with this policy and associated procedures may result in disciplinary action against the individuals concerned.

5. Definitions

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Appropriate Agency	This may include any of the following agencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Ministry for Children ● Ministry of Health ● Ministry of Social Development ● Ministry of Education ● Ministry of Justice ● The NZ Police
Bullying	Seeking to harm, intimidate or coerce. May be intentional or the misuse of power in the relationship. May be one off or repeated can be child to child or adult to child.
Child Abuse	Harming (physically, emotionally, sexually, ill treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation

	All disclosures, suspected abuse, and allegations will be treated seriously, consistently and with sensitivity.
Child (or Children)	Under the age of 14
Child Protection	Actions taken to ensure the safety of a young person
Confidential Information	Information provided in a situation where the individual has a reasonable expectation that it would be confidential.
Core Worker	Staff, coach, or volunteer that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is the only children's worker present ● Has primary responsibility over the children ● (Adapted from the Children's Act 2014)
Cyberbullying	Use of digital tech to bully a person e.g., messages of an intimidating or threatening nature.
Disclosure	Information about abuse or neglect from a child, parent, caregiver, or any other person. Disclosure can also include things you have noticed in relation to a child. The people to whom this policy applies are not to make deliberately false or misleading allegations. ³
Emotional Abuse	Any act or omission that results in impaired psychological, social, intellectual, or emotional functioning and development. Can include rejection, degrading, ignoring, isolating. Can include age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed. Can involve active and passive members, athletes, parents, coaches and can both be received and initiated.
Family Harm	Any violent act by one family member on another. It has many forms including physical, mental, emotional, economic.
Grooming	Someone who builds a relationship with a child so they can be manipulated. Power and control with secrecy.
Harm	Putting another at risk often by someone they know. Examples are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical ● Emotional ● Sexual ● Neglect
Harassment	Covers a wide range of behaviours: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To demean ● Embarrass ● Threaten ● Derogatory jokes ● Racial slurs ● Personal insults ● Unwanted touching
Neglect	Any act or omission that results in impaired function or development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical Neglect ● Neglectful Supervision

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emotional Neglect ● Medical Neglect ● Educational Neglect
Personal Information	Information about an individual that would identify them
Physical Abuse	Unexplained physical harm
Position of Trust	Should be one of privilege and not lend itself to abuse Anyone engaged by Thames Gymsports Breaches of trust may be subject to disciplinary action.
Report of Concern	When an individual contacts either Oranga Tamariki or the NZ Police to raise concerns regarding the safety of a child or young person.
Safeguarding Incident Record	Concerns, disclosures, or allegations recorded in our safeguarding Incident record
Safety Check	For anyone working with young people
Sexual abuse	Contact/Non-contact acts/ unequal relationships
Vulnerability	Those at risk of harm due to their environment and/or complex needs
Child Safeguarding Representative	Charged with providing advice and support, responsible to act on concern, disclosures, allegations. Must be trained.
Wellbeing	Physical, development, safety, physiological, emotional, social and behaviour. Also, cognitive, and educational welfare.
Whistleblowing	Staff make a protected disclosure of serious wrongdoing they reasonably believe is true.
Young person	Over 14 but under 18

6. Child Safeguarding Representative:

- Is a trained person within Thames Gymsports responsible for providing advice and support to any individual who is concerned about a child or young person or wants advice about this policy. The representative acts on this and is also responsible for creating a child safe culture, embedding relevant policies and procedures, and ensuring that training is provided to those that need it. The representative needs to be impartial who can manage the role without undue bias and influence.
- Thames Gymsports Representative is **Andrea Johnston** and is supervised by the current committee.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

- Where a staff member receives confidential information there is a duty to ensure that this information remains confidential.

There are exceptions:

- When the individual gives consent
- A reasonable belief of risk to life
- A requirement to be disclosed by law

Therefore, giving information to others for the protection of the young person or child is a justifiable breach of confidentiality, and where there are concerns for their wellbeing or safety, is a legal duty. Disciplinary proceedings may not be brought against the person making the report in good faith

Confidential information may be shared with:

- ❖ An appropriate agency
- ❖ Gymnastics organisations affiliated with GNZ
- ❖ Other appropriate organisations unless it poses a risk to the child.

No proceedings can be brought against those that disclose confidential information in good faith.

When gathering and storing personal information the Information Privacy Principles in the Act of 2020 will be complied with.

Thames Gymsports as an affiliated organization will report any safeguarding concerns about GNZ members who may present a risk to others, to the GNZ Sport Integrity Unit.

Codes of Conduct (See Thames Gymsport Policy)

- ❖ To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children involved in Gymsport there are clear expectations of behaviour in our above attached policies.

Receiving a Disclosure or Allegation:

- ❖ Recognise, respond and report immediately (as far as practicable) any concerns, suspicions, or incidents of child abuse, neglect or misconduct with a child or young person. (Appendix A)
- ❖ If it is about a staff member the welfare of the child remains paramount throughout.
- ❖ Support needs to be provided to the child and the staff member. A senior member of the committee can act on behalf of the organization with employment matters relating to the staff member.
- ❖ If the allegation is about the CSR the issue needs to be made with the president of the committee. 1 person will need to support the staff member, and another will support the child or young person.

Safe Recruitment – Safety Checks for new and existing Employees

- Includes police vetting, reference checks (plus follow up PV every 3 years)
- Ascertain the suitability and safety for the role applied for
- Staff induction and training on safeguarding responsibilities
- Applies to all staff plus committee members

Induction and Training of Staff Members and Volunteers

- All staff complete basic training in safeguarding and child protection in sport, this will highlight needs and responsibilities
- In house training on reporting incidences and responding to reports of abuse or suspected abuse.
- Induction to understand responsibilities and processes

This policy is guided by the Children’s Act 2014 and relates to a range of other government legislation

This policy will be reviewed annually with feedback on its use sought.

Appendix A

Procedures for responding to and reporting disclosure or allegations of abuse or neglect

Introduction:

- Procedure for person responding to and reporting disclosure or allegations of abuse and/or neglect
- Procedure for Child Safeguarding Representative responding to and reporting disclosure or allegation

Receiving and responding to an Initial Disclosure or Allegation

If a child or young person raises concerns about their or another child's safety or wellbeing:

- Believe the child – do not ignore them or normalise any concerns they may have
- Reassure the child and let them know that it is good they have shared this
- Prioritise the concern/s – ensure their safety and wellbeing is the priority
- Take them aside to somewhere quiet but within line of sight of others
- Listen carefully
- Let the child use their own words to explain
- Keep calm and supportive
- Clarify basic details if necessary but do not investigate
- Do not make promises not to tell anyone
- Explain what will happen next
- Ensure child is looked after
- Promptly and accurately record what they have said and your responses and actions
- Report immediately to your CSR

If an adult raises concerns about their or another child's safety or wellbeing:

- Prioritise the concern
- Reassure them that it is good they have shared this information
- Listen carefully
- Be calm and supportive
- Advise the discussion will be recorded in writing
- Clarify basic details but do not investigate
- Do not make promises not to tell anyone
- Explain information may need to be repeated to the authorities
- Advise them of immediate next steps
- Do not contact alleged offender
- Promptly and accurately record what they have said and your responses and actions
- Report immediately to your CSR

Child Safeguarding representative Responding to and Reporting Disclosure or Allegation

- Receive and record information
- Prioritise the concern
- Reassure them that it is good they have shared this information
- Listen carefully
- Be calm and supportive
- Complete a safeguarding incident record. This information, including time, who was present etc, should be recorded as soon as possible while fresh. File securely.

Assess the situation:

- Who to report to should not be made independently but with a member of the committee, Oranga Tamariki can also be contacted for advice.

- If a report of concern is not necessary, conduct a risk assessment.

Report:

- If the CSR believes there is immediate risk, they must report to Oranga Tamariki and/or the police.
- If there is any doubt, ask OT for advice.
- Action immediately
- Inform Thames Gymnastics Club President of all actions
- All reports of concern must immediately be shared with GNZ.

Conduct a risk assessment:

- When a person is alleged to have accused of, investigated for, or charged with child abuse the CSR must assess the level of risk to children in relation to the allegation. The level of risk will determine what immediate and/or interim safety measures should be implemented by Thames Gymsports.
- Measures will be documented

Implement Safety Measures:

- If there is any risk action must be taken to safeguard all children at the gym from additional harm through options such as:
 - Removing member from duty until an investigation complete
 - Redeploy member so not working with gymnasts
 - Suspension of membership
 - Additional supervision
 - Restrictions on gymnastics related event attendance/participation

Natural justice needs to be observed. If the person may not be guilty of the offence, privacy, and confidentiality of all concerned needs to be maintained. Measures should be in line with perceived risk.

Important: The risk to the child must be assessed on the presumption that the allegation has merit.

If the livelihood of the respondent of the complaint is likely to be adversely impacted by any disciplinary measures such as suspension, Thames Gymsports will seek legal advice prior to imposing safety measures.

When not reporting to Oranga Tamaiki or the police:

- Complete a safeguarding incident record and store securely
- Determine what actions should be taken to address the disclosure or allegation and record these
- Any action will be taken under Thames Gymsports complaints policy.
- Ensure all appropriate people are informed including parent or caregiver
- Provide feedback to the person raising the disclosure or allegation so that they are aware of what steps have been taken.
- Carry out actions determined above to ensure that the issue is appropriately addressed. This could include staff training, introducing additional safety measures, changing coaching practice.
- Review and update the safeguarding incident record to show actions taken

Provide Support:

Thames Gymsports must support staff, members, respondents, children, and young people throughout this process. Support may include:

- Providing an opportunity for members of staff to 'debrief' with senior management of the organisation
- Offering professional services to those involved
- Provide ongoing monitoring
- Meeting with the family to discuss concerns (if appropriate)
- Meeting with respondent to discuss concerns if appropriate

- Allowing a support person to be present in any discussions
- Further safeguarding and child protection training for the club and its staff

Support for the respondent must include making it clear to all other staff who are aware of the allegation that:

- The allegation does not mean the person is guilty and that the allegation will be properly investigated and will include the right to natural justice and
- They are not to discuss the matter with any person, except as directed by police, Oranga Tamariki and/or the organisation and only in direct relation to the investigation of the allegation