 

**THE CITY OF LANCASTER GYMNASTICS CLUB**

**Members Handbook 2023/24**

**Mission Statement**

We are committed to providing a program of excellence to all our **gymnasts** at all levels of participation. It is our goal to foster a life-long commitment and appreciation to fitness and health through the sport of gymnastics.

**Core Values**

Our CORE values stand for: Commitment, Ownership, Responsibility and Excellence.

These are a set of principles that help to guide the actions and behaviours of all our members and staff on a day-to-day basis. When followed, these principles increase the likelihood of fulfilment and success not only in gymnastics but also in general life. As such, the values are applicable at all levels of our club, including directors, coaches, gymnasts, and parents.

**Aims -** The three main aims of the City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club are:

1. to enable children of all abilities to fully develop their gymnastics potential.

2. to enable coaches to develop their knowledge, experience, and expertise.

3. to improve the gymnastics facilities available to the children and the coaches.

To achieve the **first aim** the main focus of the City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club is to enable the children to train appropriately, have fun and compete (if desired) successfully in events at local, regional, national, and international level. To this end the coaches are continually reviewing the training programmes, appropriate sessions, and eligibility for competitions to produce routines with good performance potential.

To achieve the **second aim** there is an ongoing series of coach education and judging courses and workshops. Parents who wish to help at coaching sessions or as judges at competitions are very welcome to join in – just leave a message with your Lead Coach and Marie will contact you with details.

To achieve the **third aim** and continually improve the facilities, we rely on fundraising events throughout the year. It is important that enough money is raised each year to maintain and renew the gymnastics equipment and the buildings to provide a safe and effective learning environment for the gymnasts.

**The Board**

The COLGC board of directors provides a strategic overview of the club. Our directors are Lynn Jackson, Paul Thompson, Marie Gardner and Lynne Pearson.

**Our Staff**

Marie Gardner is the Club Manager

Melissa Rabbett is the Competitive Gymnastics Co-ordinator

Sue Balderstone is the Recreational Gymnastics Co-ordinator

Lynne Pearson is the Club Administrator.

**Lead Coaches**

COLGC has a large team of both permanent and casual coaches.

Our ‘Lead Coaches’ at the club include Leah Hunter (Pre-school, Diamond and Amethyst Squads) India Moore (Recreational Squads) Millie Kent (Recreational Squads) Melissa Rabbett (Amber and Crystal Squads) Joanne Hart (Opal Squad) Sandra Booth (Adult and Recreational Squads) Chloe Macklin (Ruby and Emerald Squads) Mollie Hennah (Garnet Squad) and Georgia Clark Topaz and Recreational Squads)

Our other qualified coaches include Lucy Ip, Nick Jackson, Sophie Carter Steele, Rachel Butterworth, Kirsty Birdsall, Savannah Brickles, Lynn Jackson, Sophie Tolson, Nathaniel Hart, Hannah Gallacher, Ben Whyatt, Caitlin Balderstone, Abbie Edmondson, Mollie O’Sullivan, Emma Partington, Bethany White, Michelle Wanless, Freya Starling, Grace Ip, Saskia Rudge Thompson, Scarlett Harper, Molly McLeod, Jasmin Mason, Amelia Slaney, George Greenyer, Hannah Carruthers, Rebecca Webster, Nell Cheeseman, Millie Gibson, Lauren Herbert, Tess Belshire and Lilly Cheeseman.

**Dance Teacher**

Emma Packham is our Dance Teacher.

**Volunteer Coaches**

Our volunteer coaches & hopefully our future coaches include Maria Altham, Emily Blundell, Lillian Rushton, Imogen Tao, Maia Kendall, Isobel Leslie, Eve Redman, Evalyn Greenall, Scarlett Scholey, Eva Ranns, Joe Andrew, Annie McLoughlin, Eliza Mynott, Robert Paul, Gabriella Routledge, Jess Thompson, Violet Quick, Ava-Grace Large, Ola McClelland, Annalise Bamforth, Daisy Hickman, Meredith Robinson, Madison Taylor, Theo Baron, Mylah Kilifin, Freya McCartney, Charlotte Billington, Ellen Brown, Amelia Astin, Thais Alonso Green, Daisy Whitehouse, and Oscar Richings.

**Class information**

Due to health and safety, we need to restrict any disruption to classes as much as possible. As such, parents are not allowed to stand in the Lancaster Leisure Park gym, but the viewing area is available to parents who wish to watch the class. At the University of Cumbria site, parents will have the opportunity to view the sessions from the windows in the main reception area.

**Toileting**

Parents of our younger gymnasts are reminded to check their child has been to the toilet before the class as this can be very disruptive to the classes. At the University of Cumbria Sports Centre, gymnasts in the Lions classes will go to the toilet with a coach or volunteer and children in the Tigers, Leopards, Panthers and Jaguars will go to the toilet either with a coach/volunteer or with another gymnast depending on their age. This also applies to our Amber, Crystal, Topaz, Garnet, Opal and the Talent Development Squads. For our older gymnasts it will be at the lead coach’s discretion. No gymnast can leave either gym without coach permission.

**Dropping off and collecting your child**

The City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club aims to uphold British Gymnastics’ policy on Safeguarding and Protecting Children. To comply with this, it is essential that parents/carers dropping their child off at the UOC come into the sports centre itself. It is not acceptable to drop children off in the car park. In most but not all the classes at the UOC the gymnasts leave the gym from the side fire exit door. Please ask if you are unsure where your child is coming out of the building.

At the LLP gymnasts and parents queue up outside the main entrance of the gymnastics centre ready for the class to start and are safely dispersed out of the same door.

Our coaches have a legal ‘duty of care’ for your child/ren which begins when you bring them to their class and only ends when you collect them; we cannot allow children to leave the hall/sports centre, unless your child is 14 years or older and we have your consent. This can be given by emailing us and requesting a safe dispersal form that can be ParentMailed out.

If someone other than the usual parent/carer will be collecting your child/ren, please let us know in advance, either in person or by text on the WhatsApp for our competitive squad members and for the Recreational classes 07765 553601 or by email rec@cityoflancastergymnastics.co.uk to avoid any embarrassment, as we will not permit them to leave the gymnastics hall unless we hear from you.

Parents/Guardians are expected to collect their children on time. If you know that you are going to be late collecting your child for any reason you must contact the club ASAP by WhatsApp or the club mobile. Parents who are more than 15 minutes late in collecting their child will be charged £10 unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents that are regularly late in collecting their child will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss this.

**Supervision of children**

Please note that the supervision of children not participating in any gymnastics sessions is the sole responsibility of their parents or guardians. Children within the facility must always be supervised. The club will not accept any liability for injury caused to children in the public areas.

**Speaking to your coach**

You must not try and speak to a coach who is actively coaching. If you need to speak to the lead coach, then please speak to them before the session starts or once it has finished. If it is a minor issue and you are not able to speak to the coach, please go to reception and leave a message for the coach or message the club via email or leave a voicemail message.

Email; col@cityoflancastergymnastics.co.uk (Competitive) rec@cityoflancastergymnastics.co.uk (Recreational)

Mobile; 07807 009410 (Competitive) 07765 553601 (Recreational)

Club Landline; 01524 843344

If you need to have a longer discussion with the coach, please email the club to arrange a meeting with them.

**Important Information**

Coaches are not permitted to give out personal mobile numbers so parents/guardians should not contact them in this way, unless it is an emergency.

Any contact with coaches should come through official club channels which is email or through the club mobile or landline. The coaches will email you, give you a call when they are in work next or speak to you in person.

**Clothing**

Gymnasts generally work in bare feet and should wear appropriate clothing for sessions: a leotard and shorts to train in. (dance style leotards with narrow straps and crop tops are not allowed) Garments with zips, buttons and hoods should be avoided as these present a health and safety risk.

Tracksuits and club leotards are in stock at the Lancaster Leisure Site should you wish your child to try garments on. We also have a small stock of training leotards at both sites.

Official kit is compulsory for all competitive squad members and includes club leotards, that can be used for training, sweatshirts, polo shirts and joggers. If your child has just joined the club, please let them settle in first to make sure it is what they want to do. Then Christmas and birthdays are always an excellent time to purchase these items!

Recreational gymnasts can train in comfortable shorts, t-shirts, leggings, joggers etc. Official recreational club hoodies and t-shirts are available to purchase at the University of Cumbria gymnastics desk. These are optional.

**Medical conditions / Disabilities / Challenging Behaviours**

Some medical conditions require a parent / carer to stay at the session in case the administration of medication is required e.g. EpiPen. Or if your child has asthma, please ensure an inhaler is brought into gym and collected at the end of the session. If you have a spare inhaler and wish to leave one at the gym, please ensure your child’s name is clearly written on it.

Any medical condition, learning disability or challenging behaviours should be disclosed on the British Gymnastics registration form and the club’s Information Form. Parents should speak to the lead coach to ensure that all the coaches are aware of any adaptations / risks assessments that need to be considered. Participants with a disability or children with challenging behaviour who require one to one support will need to provide a carer, who will be led by the coaches within the class. Downs Syndrome gymnasts will require an atlanto-atlas screening prior to starting the class.

**Verrucas** should be covered by a waterproof coating and secure plaster, swim sock, or suitable non-slip gym / dance shoes or swim socks. Socks are not suitable, as likely to slip on the apparatus.

**Jewellery Policy**

The City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club believes that jewellery and adornments worn in body piercing are inappropriate for safe practice in gymnastics. A gymnast participating with body adornments or jewellery MUST inform the coach and remove the relevant items to reduce the risk of injury to the participant, the coach, and others.

Exceptions to the above policy may be applicable in special circumstances which are outlined below:

Gymnasts or coaches wanting piercings should ideally have them pierced on or around the first week of the 6-week summer holidays. Consequently, for the 6 weeks of the summer holidays we will permit gymnasts and coaches to have their piercings covered with plasters/micropore tape. Once the gymnasts return to school in September all jewellery must be removed before they can participate in any gymnastics related activities.

*Religious and Medical Jewellery:*

* With regards to the wearing of jewellery, sensitivity to religious beliefs and medical requirements/reasons should be afforded, but safety is paramount and any jewellery that is considered by the coach to be a safety hazard, should be changed or participation may be prohibited.
* Any concessions on religious or medical jewellery must be within the bounds of reasonable safety.

Coaches and adult gymnasts are permitted to wear plain wedding rings if there are no raised surfaces on the band of the ring.

**False Nails**

The City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club believes that false nails are also inappropriate for safe practice in gymnastics. A gymnast will not be able to participate in any gymnastics activities until they are removed.

**Valuables**

 Any items of value brought into the gym, are done so at the users’ own risk as we cannot accept liability for any personal belongings left or damaged on site.

**Lost Property**

While we cannot take responsibility for any property which is lost in the gym centre, any lost property we do find we will keep for you in the lost property box. At the end of the month any unnamed and unclaimed lost property will be donated to a charity shop. Please note that if property is lost just prior to the end of the month, it will still be donated to charity.

**Child Protection**

City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club has adopted the British Gymnastics ‘Safeguarding and Protecting Children's Policy’ and the Health Safety and Welfare Policy’ (a copy is available on the club/BG website). We hope parents will help us maintain a safe and friendly environment at gymnastics sessions.  For example, it may be necessary for a coach to touch a child when supporting them or guiding them through a new skill.  If you consider the support to be inappropriate or if your child is uncomfortable about the way, they have been supported please let one of the Welfare Officers know - Lynn Jackson, Lynne Pearson or Fiona Ip. They can be contacted via the club website or by emailing

welfare@cityoflancastergymnastics.co.uk

Occasionally, it may be necessary to speak firmly to groups or individuals in the interests of safety, but this should never be aggressive, shouting nor appear to be bullying.  The City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club has always put the safety and welfare of the children above performance so please inform one of the Welfare Officers if you are concerned about any behaviour or activities within the club.

To meet the requirements of the British Gymnastics Safeguarding Policy, we need you to renew your membership to British Gymnastics every year in September giving any relevant information and medical history it is asking for. Also please update the club regarding any changing medical issues we should be aware of that could affect the gymnast’s time with us at the club.

**Competitive Squads ‘Codes of Conducts’**

Each gymnast and parent/guardian should read the club’s “Code of Conducts” and contact us if you have any questions regarding these. This covers issues such as health and safety during both training and competitions and are sent out at the beginning of every year.

**Competitive and Recreational Squads - Attendance and Absence**

The focus of the City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club is to train children to participate in gymnastics competitions at the level appropriate to their ability.  The competitive training schedules are often carefully geared towards set competitions and so when your child is working towards a competition it is essential you inform the club if he/she is going to miss a training session. This can be done by messaging your child’s squad WhatsApp group. Attendance and absence can be communicated by messaging the Recreational mobile on 07765 553601 or by emailing them at rec@cityoflancastergymnastics.co.uk

**Progression of Gymnasts, Club Structure and Training Schedule**

Gymnasts generally start in the recreational sessions at the University of Cumbria Sports Centre and progress through the classes with some being selected for the competitive squads. All gymnasts are continually assessed and progression through the club is at the Lead Coach’s discretion.

**Communication & Feedback**

Please be aware that alterations to training times may, from time to time, be necessary due to circumstances beyond the control of COLGC. Such changes will be communicated as soon as possible to parents via Parentmail. Please ensure updated email addresses are provided to the Club Administration Team.

It is important that coaches, gymnasts, and parents work closely as a team.

**Club Fees/Financial Considerations**

Competitive squad gymnasts are subsidised by the club. All competitive squad gymnasts pay club fees based on an hourly rate. The hourly rate is on a banding scale dependant on the number of hours training per week - the greater the number of hours per week, the lesser the hourly rate. Hence, as the number of hours per week goes up, the subsidy provided to a gymnast increases.

There are several financial considerations all of which are the responsibility of parents:

* Competition entry fees: These generally become more expensive as the level of the competition increases. COLGC will request entry fee payments for competitions in advance.
* Travel and subsistence expenses. Competition locations can be anywhere in the country and beyond and sometimes can involve an overnight stay.
* Competition admission fees: Admission fees are generally payable by all spectators entering a competition venue, including children over a certain age.

**Hardship Policy**

COLGC operates a Hardship Policy. Should there be a problem with payment, please contact the Club Manager at the first opportunity at manager@cityoflancastergymnastics.co.uk

**Competitions**

All squad gymnasts participate in competitions each year, and these are compulsory. Recreational gymnasts are offered a competition once a year and this is optional. The annual calendar of events listed on the club website is produced by the lead coaches and lists the competitions where COLGC anticipates participation.

**Conditioning and Fitness**

Competitive gymnastics demands an individual to have flexibility, strength, and stamina to cope with the skills and routines required.

Obtaining good flexibility is essential in achieving better skills, better appearance and helps to prevent injury. Manual stretching is a fact of life for gymnasts and although there is an element of discomfort, most competitive gymnasts adjust quickly. Stretching at home, when possible, will help a gymnast to become accustomed to this necessary process.

Obtaining strength and stamina is also essential to acquiring skills and combining them towards a routine. Gymnasts will be encouraged to do as much as they can in order that they can achieve new elements safely. Compromising on this aspect of preparation will reflect in the gymnast's performance.

**Nutrition**

Gymnasts may bring drinks (non-fizzy) to training if they are in a bottle that can be re-sealed. There is no eating and drinking in the gym at the Lancaster Leisure Park.

**Annual** ***British Gymnastics membership for 2023/24*** for existing gymnasts must be paid ***directly*** to British Gymnastics and not to the City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club. This needs to be paid ***before the 1st of October*** ***2023.*** Please look out for a reminder email from British Gymnastics.

**Annual** ***British Gymnastics membership for 2023/24***

**Pre-school Membership = £15**

This relates to gymnasts who attend the independent ‘Grasshoppers’ sessions.

**Gymnast Membership = £22**

This relates to all Recreational, Amber, Crystal, Ruby, Opal, Garnet, Topaz, and Adult gymnasts

**Competitive Membership = £60**

This relates to all gymnasts in the Emerald, Amethyst, and Diamond Squads.

If this membership payment to British Gymnastics is ***not paid*** on or before these dates your child will be **unable to participate in the squads for insurances reasons.**

**Competitive membership to the City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club**

Diamond/Amethyst/Emerald Squads

£38 per child which includes affiliation to the North-West Gymnastics Association, access to our Parent Mail app and help to pay for the running costs of the club such as supporting our coaches and judges with their education, general administration, replacing equipment and general maintenance.

Gymnastics Crystal/Amber/Opal/Garnet/Topaz/Ruby and Adult Squads

£31 per child which includes access to our Parent Mail app and help to pay for the running costs of the club such as supporting our coaches and judges with their education, general administration, replacing equipment and general maintenance.

***Cash Payments***

Please note coaches are not permitted to accept cash payments of any kind. This includes subs, membership, and competition entry fees.

Gymnasts who have not paid the appropriate fees or membership will not be permitted to participate in sessions.

**Discounts for siblings**

For those families that have multiple siblings in the club please note that there is a 10% discount for the child who attends the least number of hours and if 3 or more children are from the same family a further 10% discount is made for the subsequent child. This applies to multiple siblings in the Pre-school programme only, the Recreational programme only or the Competitive programme only. No sibling discount will be applied for those siblings across different programmes.

For example.

1 gymnast in Recreational and 1 gymnast in Competitive / no discount will be applied.

2 gymnasts in Recreational / sibling discount will be applied

1 gymnast in Preschool and 1 gymnast in Competitive / no discount will be applied

2 gymnasts in Preschool / discount will be applied

***Three children attending***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Child 1  | Attends 13 hours per week  | Full Price  |
| Child 2 | Attends 5 hours per week  | 10% discount  |
| Child 3  | Attends 3 hours per week  | 10% discount  |

***Two children attending***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Child 1  | Attends 1.5 hours per week  | Full Price  |
| Child 2 | Attends 50-minutes per week  | 10% discount  |

Even though we are a not-for-profit sports club we need to ensure the sessions bring in enough subs to pay coaches, facility hire. Please see your individual invoice for a breakdown of payments.

**Competitive Squad Payments**

The cost for training for this year 2023/24 should be paid in 12 monthly instalments. (September 2023 to August 2024) All City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club memberships (£38/£31) should be paid on or before 20th September 2023. Details of your individual costs for 2023/24 and the clubs bank account details will be emailed to you on an individual invoice by Parentmail. Fees are paid by monthly BACS transfer and can be paid on a suitable date in the month that works best for your own personal circumstances. **However, these *must* be regular dates every month and you are requested to contact us immediately should your situation change.** If payments are irregular in nature, there may be an extra administration charge incurred.

**Recreational Squad Payments**

The cost for training for this year 2023/24 should be paid within the first 2 weeks of each half term to secure your child’s place. Details of the amounts due for each half term and the clubs bank account details will be emailed to you on an individual invoice by Parentmail. **Please note** this invoice will only be sent once a year and not each half term. Fees are to be paid by bank transfer every ½ term unfortunately this can’t be set up as a standing order due to the differing amounts payable each half term and not each month. If payments are late, there may be an extra administration charge and your child will be at risk of losing their space.

(To be reviewed next July 2024)