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**THE CITY OF LANCASTER GYMNASTICS CLUB**

**Pre-School 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, Grace Ip are Abbie Edmondson are the Club Administrators.

**Pre-School Lead Coaches**

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

Our Pre-school lead coaches at the club include Leah Hunter and India Moore. Other qualified coaches working alongside the lead coaches include Lynn Jackson, Sophie Tolson, Emma Packham, Melissa Rabbett, Millie Kent, Caitlin Balderstone, Molly McLeod, Molly O’Sullivan, Abbie Edmondson and Millie Gibson.

**Dance Teacher**

Emma Packham is our Pre-School Rhythm and Movement Dance Teacher.

**Class information**

Due to health and safety, we need to restrict any disruption to classes as much as possible. As such, parents of our Grasshoppers classes are not permitted to stand in the Lancaster Leisure Park gym (unless prior permission has been given) but the viewing area is available to parents who wish to watch the class. This is with the exception of parents from our Caterpillar and Butterfly gymnasts as these sessions are parent assisted classes.

**Toileting**

Parents of our younger gymnasts are reminded to check their child has been to the toilet before the session as this can be very disruptive to the classes. Our pre-school gymnasts will either be accompanied by a parent or a pre-school coach. All our coaches are DBS checked and have attended training for safeguarding and protecting children.

**Dropping off and collecting your child**

The City of Lancaster Gymnastics Club aims to uphold British Gymnastics’ policy on Safeguarding and Protecting Children.

At the LLP our preschool parents and gymnasts queue up outside the main entrance of the gymnastics centre ready for the next class to start.

If someone other than the usual parent/carer will be collecting your child/ren, please let us know in advance, either in person, by email col@cityoflancastergymnastics.co.uk or by calling the office on 01524 843344

**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 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. 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.

**Clothing**

Gymnasts generally work in bare feet and should wear appropriate clothing for physical exercise: a leotard and shorts, leggings, t-shirt sweatshirts etc are all acceptable items of clothing to wear. Garments with zips, buttons and hoods should be avoided as these present a health and safety risk.

Official Pre-school t-shirts and sweatshirts are available to purchase at the Lancaster Leisure Park. We also have a good stock of reasonably priced pre-school leotards.

**Medical conditions / Disabilities**

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, attention or behaviour problems must be disclosed on the British Gymnastics registration form and parents should speak to the lead coach to ensure that all the coaches are aware of any adaptations / risks which need to be considered. Participants with a disability 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.

**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 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, that 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 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.

**Communication & Feedback**

Please be aware that alterations to session 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.

**Hardship Policy**

COLGC operates a Hardship Policy. Should there be a problem with payment, please contact the Club Manager at the first opportunity at lancastergymnastics@outlook.com

**Nutrition**

Gymnasts may bring a drink of water to training if they are in a bottle that can be re-sealed. There is no eating and drinking in the gym.

**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 if you are an existing member.

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

**Pre-school Membership = £15**

This relates to gymnasts who attend the independent ‘Grasshoppers’ sessions only (not the Caterpillars or Butterfly classes)

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.

***Cash Payments***

Please note coaches are not permitted to accept cash payments of any kind.

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

N.B. If you have two children in the preschool programme a 10% discount for the child who attends the least number of hours applies.

Even though we are a non-profit sports club we need to ensure the sessions bring in enough subs to pay coaches, facilities, and venue hire.

**Pre-school 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, unfortunately this can’t be set up as a standing order due to the amounts being 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 in July 2024)