

Energize Gymnastics – Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

1. Policy Statement

Energize Gymnastics is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and empowering environment for every child. Safeguarding is at the heart of our practice. We recognise our responsibility to protect children from harm, respond to concerns promptly, and work in partnership with families and external agencies.

This policy aligns with **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)** and **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)**.

Our approach blends professional safeguarding standards with the warm, supportive ethos of Energize Gymnastics.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Energize Gymnastics staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors
- All children attending Energize Gymnastics sessions, including HAF-funded places
- All activities delivered on-site or off-site under the Energize Gymnastics name

3. Safeguarding Principles

We follow these core principles:

- **The welfare of the child is paramount.**
- **All children have equal rights to protection**, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, or background.
- **Early help and early intervention** are essential.
- **Children's voices are valued**, and they are encouraged to express worries or concerns.
- **Parents and carers are partners** in safeguarding.
- **Staff are trained, confident, and supported** to fulfil their safeguarding duties.

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Jack Lambourn (Owner & OnSite Lead)

Deputy DSL: Tracey Cragg

The DSL is responsible for:

- Managing safeguarding concerns
- Liaising with IAM, local authority safeguarding partners, and external agencies
- Ensuring staff training and compliance
- Maintaining secure safeguarding records

5. Recognising Abuse and Neglect

Staff are trained to recognise signs of:

- Physical abuse

- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Child-on-child abuse
- Online abuse
- Grooming
- Domestic abuse
- County lines / exploitation

Staff understand that **concerns may be small, subtle, or based on instinct**, and all concerns must be reported.

6. Responding to Concerns

If a child makes a disclosure or a concern arises, staff will:

1. **Listen carefully** and reassure the child
2. **Avoid leading questions**
3. **Record the concern immediately** using factual, neutral language
4. **Report to the DSL without delay**
5. **Never promise confidentiality**

The DSL will:

- Assess the concern
- Seek advice from IAM safeguarding leads if needed
- Contact the local authority or police where appropriate
- Inform parents unless doing so places the child at further risk

7. Recording & Information Sharing

We maintain clear, confidential safeguarding records that include:

- Date, time, and details of the concern
- Exact words spoken by the child where possible
- Actions taken and decisions made

Information is shared **on a need-to-know basis only**, following GDPR and safeguarding legislation.

8. Safe Recruitment

Energize Gymnastics follows safer recruitment practices:

- Enhanced DBS checks for all staff
- Identity and reference checks

- Verification of qualifications
- Safeguarding interview questions
- Induction training before working with children

Volunteers and contractors are supervised until all checks are complete.

9. Staff Training

All staff receive:

- Annual safeguarding training
- Induction covering IAM safeguarding expectations
- Training on child-on-child abuse, online safety, and reporting procedures
- Regular refreshers and scenario-based discussions

The DSL receives enhanced training every two years.

10. Code of Conduct

Staff must:

- Maintain professional boundaries
- Use positive behaviour management
- Never use physical punishment
- Avoid being alone with a child where possible
- Use only approved communication channels
- Model respectful, inclusive behaviour

11. Safe Environment

We ensure:

- Secure premises and controlled access
- Clear supervision ratios
- Safe equipment and risk assessments
- A culture where children feel safe, seen, and heard
- A child-friendly safeguarding poster displayed on site

12. Online Safety

We protect children by:

- Not allowing staff to use personal devices for photography
- Using only approved platforms for communication
- Ensuring any digital content is appropriate and secure
- Teaching children simple online safety messages where relevant

13. Managing Allegations Against Staff

Any allegation or concern about a staff member is taken seriously.

The DSL will:

- Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) immediately
- Follow IAM reporting procedures
- Remove the staff member from unsupervised duties if required
- Maintain confidentiality throughout

14. Partnership with Parents & IAM

We work closely with:

- Parents and carers
- IAM programme leads
- Local safeguarding partners
- Schools and community organisations

Parents receive clear information about:

- Our safeguarding responsibilities
- How to raise concerns
- Behaviour expectations
- Attendance and collection procedures

15. Whistleblowing

Staff are encouraged to raise concerns about:

- Unsafe practice
- Poor safeguarding culture
- Concerns about colleagues

Concerns can be raised with the DSL, IAM safeguarding team, or external agencies.

16. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed:

- Annually
- After any safeguarding incident
- In response to changes in IAM requirements or legislation