



Flexibility Policy

Manchester Academy of Gymnastics is committed to ensuring that all flexibility training is delivered safely, progressively and in line with the safeguarding and welfare principles of **British Gymnastics (BG)**, our governing body. This policy supports the wellbeing of all gymnasts and aims to prevent harm or injury resulting from unsafe flexibility practices.

1. Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this policy is to establish safe, effective and age-appropriate standards for flexibility training within Manchester Academy of Gymnastics (MAOG). It applies to all coaches, gymnasts, volunteers and parents/guardians involved in flexibility or stretching activities during training, camps, and competitions.

2. Principles

- Gymnast safety and wellbeing are the highest priority.
- Flexibility training must never cause pain, fear or distress.
- Gymnasts have the right to voice discomfort and stop any activity.
- Coaches are responsible for appropriate progressions, supervision and feedback.
- Training must reflect BG's Safe Coaching Practices and safeguarding standards.

3. Safe Practice Guidelines

- A full **warm-up** must be completed before flexibility training.
- **Gradual progression** should be used to improve range of motion safely.
- Flexibility work must be **individualised** to the gymnast's age, development and ability.
- **Forced or painful stretching** is not permitted under any circumstance.
- Coaches must provide clear verbal instruction and physical support only with consent and where necessary.
- Flexibility sessions should be **supervised at all times** and documented in training plans.
- **Unsupervised stretching** outside of structured sessions should be discouraged, especially for young gymnasts.

4. Communication & Consent

Gymnasts must understand the difference between discomfort and pain and be encouraged to communicate openly. Parental/guardian awareness of flexibility methods is promoted through education and communication. Any hands-on support or assisted stretching by coaches must follow BG safeguarding guidance and obtain consent.

5. Coach Responsibilities

Coaches must:

- Complete relevant BG qualifications and CPD relating to flexibility and conditioning.
- Follow BG's **Flexibility Training Policy** and Safe Sport Framework.
- Monitor gymnast responses and adapt training where necessary.

- Record attendance and training activities for accountability.
- Immediately report any injuries, pain or welfare concerns to the Club Welfare Officer.

6. Gymnast Responsibilities

Gymnasts should:

- Participate in warm-ups and flexibility sessions as instructed.
- Report any pain or discomfort immediately.
- Avoid unsupervised stretching routines or comparing flexibility progress to others.
- Maintain hydration and recovery habits to support flexibility safely.

7. Monitoring & Review

The club will monitor flexibility practices regularly to ensure safety and compliance. This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if British Gymnastics updates its guidance or if a related welfare concern arises.

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