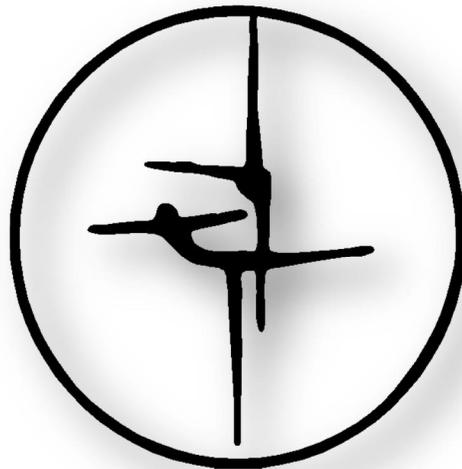


Policy Handbook



WINNIPEG GYMNASTICS CENTRE

Celia Champion

Facility Manager & Head Coach

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Disclaimer

The WGC Policy Handbook is subject to review and revision by the Facility Manager at any time without further notice. This includes the Code of Conduct and policies. It is the property and responsibility of the Facility Manager.

WGC Code of Conduct

WGC believes in a respectful environment. Members are expected to treat others as they would like to be treated themselves. But also, treat others the way they want and deserve to be treated.

Coaches Code of Conduct:

- Coaches are expected to treat athletes, parents, judges and each other with respect at all times.
- All coaches are expected to have appropriate coaching certification for the levels that they are coaching.
- Coaches always promote a positive training environment, while displaying the positive aspects of the sport.
- Coaches should encourage athletes to value their performance as a whole, not just the result.
- Coaches must act as role models, present high standards of behaviour and appearance; promote fair play and good sportsmanship.
- Coaches are expected to consider the safety and well-being of participants before the development of performance.
- Coaches are expected to teach appropriate skills for age, ability, experience and use relevant progressions. They should prepare gymnasts physically and mentally for new skills.
- Coaches are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures of Winnipeg Gymnastics Centre, as outlined in this handbook.
- During a competition, coaches should consider it unethical to express disapproval at a judge's work to that judge through any means other than the accepted protest procedure.
- Coaches must regard the relationship with their gymnasts with the utmost importance. Coaches must be observant of athlete behaviour and open to listening when athletes express illness, injury or discontent.

Parent's Code of Conduct:

- Parents do not publicly question the coaches or judge's judgment or honesty.
- Parents should encourage athletes to learn the rules and abide by them.
- Parents must use correct and proper language at all times within the WGC facility, as well as at competition venues.
- Parents should ensure that athletes arrive on time for class and ensure punctuality during pick up.
- Parents should ensure all athletes arrive with appropriate clothing (leotard, t-shirt and shorts) and with training equipment (i.e. wrist guards or grips).

- Parents shall never enter the training area, but are encouraged to watch training from the viewing area.
- Parents are discouraged from speaking to gymnasts or coaches from the viewing area.
- Parents should consistently act as role models, display high standards of behaviour, promote fair play and good sportsmanship.
- Parents are asked to be respectful of coach's decisions and opinions.
- Parents are encouraged to ask questions and discuss their child's progress with the gymnast's coach in private pre-arranged meetings.
- Parents are expected to have all fees kept up to date.
- Parents should ensure that registration forms are kept up to date.
- Parents are encouraged to learn more about the athletes programs and be aware of the coaching staff's philosophy, attitude, ethics and knowledge.
- Parents are asked to regularly check the gym notice board, website and handouts for up to date information.
- Parents are asked to become actively involved with the function of the gym and its events i.e. volunteering at special events, fundraising efforts.

Gymnasts Code of Conduct:

- Gymnasts are expected to attend all classes. As well as:
 - Display commitment and responsibility to their training.
 - Please call or email the gym when they will be absent from class.
 - ALWAYS try their best, believe in themselves and never underestimate what they can achieve.
- Gymnasts MUST arrive on time and ready to train (i.e. leotard or other appropriate clothing on, hair done neatly and off of face, training gear readily available, etc...)
- Do not enter the training area or go on the equipment until their scheduled class begins and the coach has instructed to do so.
- Gymnasts are expected to respect their coaches and their decisions.
- Gymnasts should not spend too much time talking, especially when they should be listening. Make sure when you are being given instructions you listen.
- Gymnasts are not permitted to use other athlete's equipment without permission.
- Gymnast's behaviour is always expected to be of high standard at all times.
 - Language must always be appropriate and socially acceptable.
 - Gymnasts will be given a chance to correct and change inappropriate behaviour. Although, depending on the situation, the athlete may be asked to leave the gym for that training session or remain out of the class for a short period of time. In extreme circumstances, the athlete may be asked to leave the club permanently.
 - No pushing, pulling or fighting with other club members. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

- Gymnasts must inform their coach of any injuries or illness they may have before the warm up begins.
- In all situations, gymnasts should encourage and support teammates.
- A healthy lifestyle is encouraged for all gymnasts (i.e. getting appropriate rest, eating healthy foods, drinking water, etc...)
- Gymnasts shall take pride and be proud of their training facility. Maintaining gym cleanliness, keeping valuables secured and reporting any misbehaviour will accomplish this.
- Gymnasts shall not drink alcohol, smoke or take illegal drugs or speak about them during training or at competitions.
- Gymnasts shall not take drugs for the purpose of improving performance.

WGC Competitive Competition and Travel Policy

Travel

WGC offers different travel opportunities to specific competitive training groups and levels. Being asked to participate in such travel competitions, provides athletes valuable opportunities that they may not receive at club competitions in the city. The invitation to a competition is viewed as a privilege by WGC. Invitations are at the discretion of the Head Coach.

Competitions are either within province (where athletes can travel with their family) or out of province (where athletes generally travel and stay with the team). We understand that some children are ready to travel out of province before others. If this is the case, parents may decline the invitation for an out of province competition. There will be other opportunities to travel for competition in the future.

Please note: Parents and athletes should not feel obligated to compete at every competition they are invited to. If parents feel it is not in the athlete's best interest to compete, they may decline the invitation.

Competitions within the Province

- All transportation to and from the competition venue are the parent's responsibility. Furthermore, any other expenses that may be incurred, including lodging if necessary are the parent's responsibility.
- Parents are responsible for competition fees.
- Athletes are asked to arrive to the competition 15 minutes prior to the general warm up time. Athletes will be given a hand-out with the time of their competition and the competition site. Hand-outs are generally available one week prior to competition.
- Except when the athlete is on the competition floor, the parent is responsible for the athlete's health and well-being at any competition.

Competitions out of Province

WGC believes that out of province competitions expose athletes to valuable new experiences and situations. Out of province competition exposes the athlete to new coaches, competitors, and judges. These competitions can allow the athlete to learn new life skills, gain independence and maturity, and provide for team bonding and team spirit.

We ask that athletes, parents and chaperones adhere to a few simple rules, while competing out of province:

- Athletes are the responsibility of the coaches and chaperones at all times. They must respect the decisions made and act with high standards of behaviour or disciplinary action may be taken. Remember, athletes are representing the club!

- In specially arranged situations, athletes may travel and stay separately from the team. These arrangements must be made prior to competition and must be agreed upon by the Head Coach.
- In the situation that the team travels together, a travel itinerary will be provided to the athletes and their parents. WGC arranges transportation and accommodation. No changes will be made to the itinerary once it is finalized.
 - Each athlete must be selected to travel with the team by the Head Coach.
 - A signed travel form and fees must be returned to the office by the due date. The form includes details on expenses, conduct and responsibilities.
 - Gymnasts must provide enough funds for food and personal expenses.
 - The Club pays for expenses incurred by the traveling coaches. Athletes may be assessed a charge when paying for travel fees.
 - Athletes may go on team focused trips and outings. Parents will not be included in these trips. The purpose of these trips is to enhance team building and team spirit.
 - There will be a team manager chosen amongst the chaperones.
 - Chaperone duties include transportation, meal arrangements. They also act as liaison between parent and athlete, respond to medical incidents and emergencies, etc.
 - Parents are always welcome to come and enjoy competitions. They are however, not allowed to interfere with coaching or chaperone decisions or rules. They must make their own travel arrangements and accommodation.
 - All gymnasts, coaches and chaperones must remain with the team throughout the length of the trip. No exceptions will be made.

Competition Selection

To participate in competitions the Head Coach of the program will give a gymnast an invitation (in the form of a hand-out) for a competition they have been asked to attend. Parents and athletes should not feel obligated to compete at every competition they are invited to. If parents feel it is not in the best interest of the gymnast to compete, they may decline the invitation.

A gymnast will be asked to compete at competitions based on factors such as competitive level, levels offered at the competition and gymnast's level of preparation. The gymnast's health, attitude and attendance will also be taken into consideration. The coaching staff reserves the right to remove an invitation to a competition if any of the above factors are not met.

Cancellation of Competition

If, for any reason, a host club has cancelled their competition after invitations have come out, WGC will inform registered athletes and parents ASAP. This may be in the form of an email or phone call.

If an athlete cannot attend a competition, for whatever reason, the Head Coach must be notified as soon as possible. This is to avoid any unnecessary expenses that may occur. Typically, once an athlete has been registered for a competition and then cannot attend, the club must cancel the registration as well as any travel costs. Unless the club is able to obtain a refund, the parent will not be refunded.

Competition Guidelines

All WGC athletes are expected to display high standards of behaviour. Good sportsmanship to teammates and fellow competitors is expected as well. All coaches, judges, officials and athletes must be respected at all times. Athletes are discouraged at crying from poor performance either during or after the competition. We see these experiences as learning opportunities, not as failures.

On the competition floor, athletes and coaches must stay together until all athletes have finished competing. Athletes are not allowed to leave the competition floor without special permission. Athletes are not allowed to go into the stands to speak with parents during competition.

Parents are not allowed to enter the competition floor. They are asked to remain in the designated viewing area. Parents should not approach their child, other athletes, coaches, judges or officials during a competition. Parents should not question a judge's honesty, rulings or discuss gym policy at competitions. We ask instead that parents lead by example and display good sportsmanship and team spirit. Good performances should be applauded whether from a teammate or not. It is not always about how many awards are won, it's also about the honest effort given. Results should not be viewed with disappointment but as examples of progress.

WGC Competitive Training and Placement Policy

Selection

The Head Coach will determine if a child has the potential, strength, endurance, flexibility and power to become and succeed as a competitive gymnast. This is determined through observation, testing and speaking with other members of the staff. The coaching staff also evaluates, throughout the year, the athlete's mental toughness, emotional and psychological readiness and problem solving abilities. Only a limited number of children have the desire and potential to undertake the type of training regime required to achieve success at a competitive level. Thus, selection is taken very seriously and is only offered to a select few athletes. Entry into this program is either through the recreation program or by transfer from another club's competitive program.

Please note that a competitive program involves a lot of commitment. This may mean training upwards of 6 hours a week, 2 or more times a week. Therefore, family support is very important. Training fees, competitive leotard and tracksuit, competition fees, and travel costs may be expensive. Parents should fully understand the financial and time commitment competitive gymnastics requires prior to accepting entry into the program. Only families and athletes that are serious in their commitment will be asked to join the program.

Other factors to selection include:

- Age
- Maturity (mental and physical)
- Positive training attitude
- Willingness to learn and try their best. Determined to do their best.
- Good sportsmanship and team spirit.
- Ability to manage the discomfort, aches and pains of a rigorous training regime, without ignoring serious injury.
- Desire to work and improve on personal weaknesses. Not everybody is perfect right away. But the athlete has a constant desire to strive for perfection.
- Seeing everything as a learning opportunity, not as failure.
- Ability to handle the stress of competition and intense training.
- Capability to develop trust in coaches devoid of fear or other factors which may impede skill development.

Training Group Placement

Every gymnast is placed in their training group and level with great care and consideration from the Head Coach. They are placed in a level which the coaching staff believes the athlete will be

challenged but not feel overwhelmed or stressed. The goal of placement is to progress to attain success in their assigned competitive level, whether in regional or provincial levels. The placement of athletes is the sole responsibility of the Head Coach of the respective programs.

Every level of competitive gymnastics have certain and specific skill requirements. These skill requirements develop the score. Firstly, the score is determined by ascertaining whether the required skill has been achieved by the athlete. This is referred to as the “D” score or difficulty score. Then, how well the athlete performs the skill (often referred to as form) is taken into account. This level of perfection and mastery of the skill is the execution or “E” score. These two factors develop the overall score (“D” score + “E” score = final score). Based upon this, every athlete will be placed in a competitive level that best suits their skill development and execution. The Head Coach will place an athlete into a level that challenges but doesn’t overwhelm or discourage the athlete. The overall goal of placement, is that the athlete is in an appropriate level which allows them to experience personal success. Every athlete progresses at a different rate based upon many factors such as maturity level, age, and physical growth, etc... therefore no athlete will progress from one level to another at the same rate. But, with hard work and determination, even athletes in the same level who trains seriously will achieve personal progress and experience personal success.

Removal from Competitive Program

At WGC everyone (coaches, parents, athletes etc.) is expected to act with a high standard of behavior and be fully committed to WGC program. Space in the competitive program is limited therefore only committed members will be asked to join it. In rare and specific circumstances, an athlete may be asked to withdraw from the competitive program. Similarly, athletes may be suspended from the program either permanently or temporarily. This is at the discretion of the Head Coach. Certain factors are taken into account when suspension and withdrawal are being considered. They include:

- If, in the opinion of the coaching staff, the athlete’s attitude and temperament is preventing them from skill development that is essential for their competitive level. Or is a possible safety hazard.
- If the conduct of the athlete or parent is disruptive or unsupportive to WGC’s overall goals and policies.
- Unpaid fees.
- If the athlete has poor attendance, is continually late or leaving early without a reasonable excuse.
- If an athlete or parent take actions that are deemed to discredit or question WGC coaching staff or the club as a whole.

WGC Viewing Policy

This policy is in place for the following reasons:

Every athlete has a right to be provided a quality training environment that is safe and secure. To achieve this optimal training environment, a quiet atmosphere for serious training and complete focus of athlete and coach is necessary. It is the intent of WGC that the coach has the athlete's attention in 100% of class time. Athletes can be distracted by parents watching them and lose focus. Thus, unnecessary distractions from the viewing area does not achieve ideal training. This type of environment raises safety concerns.

Parents do not see the improvement in their athlete if they watch training all the time. Improvements are more notable when in intervals. Although, WGC does not have any viewing restrictions. We believe in an open policy where parents, family and friends can watch at any point during the training year. We do ask that some simple rules are followed as outlined below.

Outline:

- Every parent, friend, and relative is encouraged to watch the gymnasts train from the viewing area upstairs. Please refrain from knocking on the windows or railings, opening or closing doors loudly, yelling, waving, etc.
- For safety of all gymnasts and to provide the best training environment: ***Parents are not permitted in the training area.***
- Parents are not permitted to speak with any coaches during class times for safety and to respect all gymnasts. Even non-verbal communication is discouraged. All parental concerns and questions are important to WGC. However, they can be discussed outside of training time.
- The mezzanine area is considered a "quiet zone". We ask that everyone respects this for everyone's viewing pleasure but also for the safety of the athletes. Please ensure all children in the viewing area are supervised and remind them there is no running around upstairs.
- Athletes are discouraged from making trips to the mezzanine area. Multiple trips may result in the athlete not being permitted to return to their class.
- No videotaping or photographs are permitted during training by parents or guardians.
- The gym office is out of bounds for everyone but staff working in the office.

WGC Accident and Injury Policy

This policy applies to all coaches, athletes and visitors within the WGC facility or outside the facility (i.e. competition) at which any WGC sanctioned activity is being conducted. This policy sets out guidelines and procedures for the reporting and investigation of injuries or accidents involving any WGC members. This assists WGC in taking steps remedy hazardous situations or conditions to prevent reoccurrence. Depending on the injury, athletes may be asked to leave class early.

Procedure:

1. All accidents and injuries (regardless of outcome) will be reported by the coach prior to them leaving the building. Parents will also be notified verbally at the end of class. The reporting process includes filling out an accident report form. These accidents or injuries may include splitting the beam, rolling an ankle or more serious injury such as broken bones.
 - The first on the scene will provide the necessary first aid to assure prompt attention.
 - Other staff members will assess the scene to address any safety hazards which may have contributed to the accident. As well as, reassure the other athletes which may have witnessed the accident.
 - The accident report form must be signed by both the first aiders and the parent.
2. If the first aiders assess that the injured athlete requires more immediate medical attention that cannot be provided at the gym, the following process is followed:
 - a. The first aiders remain with the injured athlete, to provide reassurance and whatever necessary first aid.
 - b. The other coaches will escort the remaining athletes in the gym to the mezzanine area.
 - c. One other coach will call 911 first. Then, they will call the athlete's emergency contact on the athlete's registration form.
 - d. A staff member will always remain with the athlete until a parent arrives.

Please note: If the parent of the injured athlete is in the gym at the time of the accident, the parent may opt to taking their gymnast for medical attention on their own accord. They do not need to follow the above procedure.

Exceptions: Any seriously injured athlete (i.e. head injury, broken bones, etc.) will not be permitted back into the gym without speaking with the Head Coach and with clearance from medical professionals.

3. There will be follow up of the accident by the Head Coach or other designated coaching staff members the next day or practice.

Return from Injury:

This policy is in place for the betterment of athlete health and safety. It is to ensure the current and future well-being of our athletes. We ask that parents are vigilant in the prevention of injuries by acting on them at the earliest sign of a possible problem. We understand that athletes are very enthusiastic about their training, and may wish to return to the gym prior to the healing of injuries. Depending on the nature and circumstance of the injury the athlete may not be permitted back into the gym. Returning to activity too early may aggravate the injury and possibly cause more harm than good. Although, to safeguard athletes health and well-being a procedure must be followed as outlined below.

- Athletes and parents must meet with the Head Coach or designate to discuss an individualized return from injury plan. This may involve days of conditioning only at reduced hours. The return to injury plan must be followed thoroughly prior to return to full training.
- The Head Coach may ask for a doctor's note to better understand the nature of the injury. The note must contain diagnosis, restrictions or clearance.
- If physiotherapy is required, we ask that a written exercise plan is brought to the gym. A copy will be made for the coaches to better understand the injury and for athlete reference. Also, it is the athlete's responsibility to do all exercises prescribed by a medical practitioner at all practices.
- No injured athlete will be permitted to compete without medical clearance and time for appropriate training. As well, parent and Head Coach authorization is necessary to return to competition.
- The athletes must be symptom free (i.e. pain free) while in the gym. If symptoms occur the athlete must stop whatever activity they are doing and speak with their coach. The athlete may be asked to leave class or rest the injury.

WGC Concern and Complaint Procedure Policy

WGC places the concerns of its members as one of the highest priorities within the club. We are committed to providing a safe, welcoming and fun environment for any child to participate in gymnastics activities. WGC recognizes that a parent's understanding of their child's progress is important. We simply ask that all concerns, criticisms, or complaints remain private. Thus, please no discussing of these issues in front of other parents, other coaches or any gymnasts. Parents are welcome to ask questions, discuss concerns and complaints by following the below procedure.

Procedure:

1. The first step to resolution is to discuss the concern / complaint with the athlete's coach in a private and informal setting. Although, this may not be done during class time. It is best to discuss concerns when both parties have the appropriate amount of time that the concern deserves. It is our intention that most matters are resolved at this stage. This should allow both parties to air their concerns and resolve the issue at hand without the involvement of the Head Coach or the Board of Directors.
2. If the athlete, parent or coach feel that the issue at hand has not been resolved via informal discussion, a private pre-arranged meeting with the Head Coach is the next appropriate stage.
 - A written letter (or email) requesting a meeting with the Head Coach will be the only accepted form of communication. Approaching the coaching staff or Head Coach during scheduled training to discuss these issues is strictly prohibited. The Head Coach's decision is final.

WGC Competitive Athlete and Parent Contract

PLEASE NOTE: This form must be filled out and returned to the office within the first two weeks of term.

Athlete's Name: _____

Competitive Level: _____ Date: _____

Parent:

As a Parent, I understand the existence of potential injury that accompanies rigorous training. This includes both minor injury (i.e. muscle strain, rolled ankles, rips, etc.) and serious injury (i.e. broken bones, etc.). It is my responsibility to have injuries reviewed by medical professionals.

I agree to support the decisions of the WGC coaching staff. I will show good sportsmanship to all athletes, parents, judges, coaches and officials. I agree to abide by the policies outlined in the WGC Policy Handbook.

I agree to send my athlete to class on time, prepared, well fed and rested.

I will support my athlete in good times and in tough times. I will see results not as failures but as examples of progress. I understand that my role in the gym is one of support and understanding not as a coach. Discussions regarding my child and gymnastics will include the coaches via the WGC concern/ complaint policy.

Parent Signature: _____

Athlete:

As a gymnast, I realize that it is a privilege to be a part of the competitive program. I agree to support coaching decisions. I will show good sportsmanship to all teammates, competitors, parents, judges, coaches and officials.

I agree to abide by the policies outlined in the WGC Policy Handbook.

I promise to try my hardest, both through the tough times and the good times. I promise to not be too hard on myself.

Discussions regarding my gymnastics will include my parents and my coach.

Athlete Signature: _____

The coaching staff agrees to be responsible for the development of this athlete's gymnastics. All staff agree to coach athletes to the best of their abilities and knowledge. As well as, arriving on time, and prepared for class. Any discussions regarding an athlete's gymnastics will include the athlete as well as the parent.

Coach signature: _____ Head Coach Signature: _____