

## **Special Educational Needs Gymnastics behaviour policy**

Welcome to City of Lisburn Salto Gymnastics Centre! We are committed to providing a safe, fun, and welcoming space where all gymnasts, including neurodivergent children, can thrive. Our policy ensures that everyone can enjoy gymnastics in an environment tailored to respect individual needs and abilities. Our goal is for all children to enjoy gymnastics and feel the benefits of physical activity in a safe, supportive environment.

### **1. Respect for Individual Differences**

- Every child is unique, and we celebrate diversity in learning, communication, and behaviour.
- Staff, parents, and gymnasts are expected to treat each other with kindness, patience, and respect, acknowledging each child's strengths and challenges.
- We encourage gymnasts to ask for breaks or support as needed and to communicate (verbally or nonverbally) in ways that feel comfortable. We have a quiet corner with a timer, fidget toys and there will be a coach present to support a gymnast during a break. A coach may also suggest a break if they find a child is becoming overwhelmed or is having a difficult time controlling their behaviour.

### **2. Clear and Supportive Communication**

- Coaches will give instructions in clear, simple steps and may use visuals or demonstrations to assist understanding. We use 'first' and 'then' when needed.
- Gymnasts are encouraged to ask for clarification if they don't understand a direction.
- We allow extra time for gymnasts to process information, recognizing that each child learns at their own pace.

### **3. Safe Environment for Exploration and Growth**

- It is important that all children feel safe in the gym.
- Coaches will help gymnasts learn skills at an appropriate pace, respecting sensory and physical needs.
- No gymnast will be asked to perform a skill if they're not comfortable or ready. Coaches are trained to adapt a skill to make it appropriate for each individual gymnast.

### **4. Positive Reinforcement and Encouragement**

- Our coaching staff are trained in positive reinforcement, focusing on encouragement, strengths, and celebrating each child's achievements, no matter how small.
- Coaches and parents are encouraged to acknowledge progress and efforts, not just outcomes.

### **5. Flexible Participation and Breaks**

- We understand that sensory, social, or emotional needs may require gymnasts to take short breaks. Breaks are always allowed, and children can rejoin the activity when they feel ready. We have a quiet corner which is available for gymnasts where they can go with the support of a coach.

- If a child becomes overwhelmed and distressed and cannot cope in the environment or if the child has a meltdown then the parents will be asked/contacted to come and take their child home. The wellbeing of our gymnasts is of top priority, and we do not expect a child to complete a class if they are distressed.

## **6. Parental Involvement and Communication**

- It is important to inform the club of any additional assistance requirements, so that we can arrange coaching cover or suggest an alternative class where we would endeavour to have additional support.
- Parents and guardians are encouraged to share any specific strategies or insights that can help our coaches better support each child. Such information may be recorded in the medical section on the 'Class for Kids' system when registering your child. This system can be modified as needed by logging into the account. Gymnast Profile sheets are also available to complete as this will also help the coaches to support the gymnast.
- Communication between parents and coaches is essential, and parents are welcome to discuss their child's progress, concerns, or suggestions with our staff.

## **Consequences for Unsafe Behaviour**

- Safety is our top priority. We have a lot of equipment around the gym and other gymnasts learning different skills. It is therefore very unsafe for a child to run around the gym or go on a piece of equipment without a coach present. If this happens the child will be redirected and taken to the quiet corner along with a coach for a short break and the rules around safety will be explained.
- Physical aggression towards other gymnasts and coaches is not acceptable. If this happens the child will be taken to the quiet corner along with a coach and may miss part of the class.
- Continued unsafe behaviour will lead to a conversation with the gymnast's guardians to develop a personalised plan for their success in the class.

## **Final Note**

At City of Lisburn Salto Gymnastics Centre, we believe every child deserves a space to grow, learn, and enjoy gymnastics. Together, let's create an environment where every gymnast can have fun and thrive at gymnastics.

**City of Lisburn Salto Gymnastics Centre Team**