YORK CITY GYMNASTICS

Competitive Squad Handbook – Trampoline 2026

Dear Parents and Gymnasts,

Firstly, we would like to welcome all new gymnasts to the York City Gymnastics competitive programme and welcome back all current squad members. This squad handbook is a tool that YCG has created to establish an understanding between parents, athletes, and coaches. We also want to thank you for the commitment you are making to our club, your gymnasts training, and the competitive programme.

All coaches and team members will offer their full dedication and coaching expertise to the squad, providing specific training catered to the gymnasts as the individuals they are. Coaches and team members acknowledge and respect all gymnasts' opinions and input at any stage

Joining a competitive squad requires dedication and commitment, and this handbook outlines expectations for all involved so to make it clear and concise for everyone.

1. Team and Coaching Philosophy

Our aim is to give every gymnast an opportunity to fulfil their potential while prioritising the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of all participants. Gymnasts will progress at their own pace and throughout their training they will be treated as an individual and encouraged through their own capabilities and strengths. These considerations will determine level of competition and training programmes across their time with us. The coaching team will give appropriate guidance and feedback for each gymnast, to help them succeed not just in the sport but throughout their lives. Self-confidence, resilience, positive thinking, positive body image and critical thinking are very much values that we hope to instil in our gymnasts, and this will be taught throughout our programme. We hope that this will continue to ignite the passion and joy that led our gymnasts to the sport initially.

2. Positive Coaching Approach

Gymnasts will experience times of success and times of difficulty within their training journey. There are many reasons why a gymnast may experience some difficulty, or a perceived lack of progress. Coaches commit to supporting gymnasts throughout all their experiences and continue to encourage a positive mindset when facing struggles or difficulties and offer to provide them with as much technical knowledge and understanding as to 'why' they are finding something particularly difficult.

We feel it is extremely important to teach gymnasts this skill so as to steer away from a self-blame or negative mindset as much as possible and help them understand that they are able to achieve goals with the right perspective, knowledge, understanding, dedication and time.

3. The Training Squads

Foundation Squad Training hours: 4hrs per week

The Foundation squad is the first introduction to the squad and sessions are a step up from the general gymnastics' classes. These sessions start to introduce physical preparation and some more advanced skills. Training is still aimed at being fun, developing confidence and making friends. Gymnasts will begin preparing for regional competitions and progress onto

the regional pathway when ready. Gymnasts will not necessarily progress to further squads; we will determine the best class for each gymnast based on their progression and commitment.

Development Squad

Training hours: 5 hrs per week

The development squad is the group that continue along the regional pathway and begin preparing for National League. The development squad is about building the foundations for competitive trampoline gymnastics, so has a strong focus on physical preparation as well as learning new and more technical skills. Whilst training with the development squad, gymnasts will continue along the regional pathway and start competing at national league competitions. Please be aware whilst your development squad gymnast may progress to the Performance Squad, this is not the case for all, with some gymnasts returning to recreational gymnastics or alternatively transitioning advanced trampoline gymnastics classes.

Performance Squad

Training hours: 10 hrs per week

The Performance Squad is for our most advanced gymnasts who have progressed through our development levels. Training at this level is focused on high-level skills and routines. Because these moves are more difficult, we place a heavy emphasis on strength and conditioning to ensure gymnasts are physically prepared and safe.

Gymnasts in this squad aim to compete at the highest levels available in the UK. This includes entering the English Gymnastics series to qualify for the English Championships, and the British Gymnastics national series with the goal of reaching the British Championships.

4. Competitions

We enter a range of competitions throughout the year, from introductory local events to elite national championships. Below is a breakdown of the competition series each squad typically works toward.

Competition Levels by Squad

- **Kingston League** (Foundation)
- **Regional Pathway** (Foundation / Development)
- **Trampoline League** (Development / Performance)
- **English Series** (Performance)
- **National Pathway** (Performance)

A full list of competition dates will be sent to you by email at the start of each year as soon as they are confirmed.

When it comes to competitions, **trust your child's coaches**! Feel free to ask why your gymnast is doing the level that they are, but remember the coach has experience here, and is seeing things in the gym that you don't or can't see. The pathways in Trampolining are flexible and allow for gymnasts to move around them at a pace that suits their development.

The British Gymnastics Regional Pathway starts in the year that your child turns 9.

British Gymnastics / Regions / Counties will review and update the rules for competitions after each Olympic cycle. They may also make some minor changes every year and clarify the rules.

Competitions for YCG will be either:

Regional Level – Yorkshire events are held around the region

National Level - UK wide as part of your Club or Representing your Region (Yorkshire)

Gymnasts may also go to 'Invitationals' / ‘friendly’s’ which are privately organised competitions which do not qualify to any Regional or National competitions. These are great for experience and for learning to have fun competing with a bit less pressure.

How It Fits Together – Regional and National competitions

Most of our younger gymnasts in the Foundation Squad begin their journey with friendly events, such as the Kingston League. Once they reach the 9–10 age category, they typically move on to the Regional Pathway competitions.

As gymnasts build more difficulty into their routines and can perform at least six somersaults, they progress to the National League. This is usually the stage where gymnasts move into the Development Squad.

Gymnasts in the Performance Squad continue competing in the National League while working toward even higher skill levels. At this stage, they may also enter the English Series to qualify for the English Championships. For those working at an elite level, there is the National Pathway; this is the highest route in British Gymnastics and leads directly to qualification for the British Championships.

Which Level?

Your child’s coach will choose their level based on what they are achieving with consistency in the gym, and what fits the long-term plan for your child’s gymnastics. It is not unusual at all to repeat a level, sometimes several times. There will still be progression – a gymnast can compete harder routines the following year, and/or aim to beat their score. The levels framework allows for this flexibility, and there is no point moving up a level if they cannot fulfil all the requirements, which most of us view as the bare minimum.

Routines

Coaches construct your child's routine based on what they can do safely and cleanly. The most important thing you can bear in mind as a parent is that gymnastics is also judged on execution as well as difficulty, and coaches weigh up each skill against how it will be judged. They will often ask for the opinions of other members of the coaching team or qualified judges. Sometimes a seemingly simpler routine will score higher than a more difficult routine due to the execution. Your child may not compete a more difficult skill even if it seems they have mastered it; if the execution is not close to perfect and the skill is not a requirement then it is not always worth having it in the routine.

Competition prep is endless repetitions, and we want to focus on good technique and repeating skills that a gymnast is very capable of. It's never worth competing a skill before it's ready, to then spend the next few years struggling to upgrade that skill because the base skill is technically incorrect.

As ever, it is our philosophy that if you have questions about your Childs' level or routines to speak to your lead coach. Communication is key, and we can't always anticipate what you may be confused about. Letting resentment build up and letting yourself think the worst is never the solution to a productive relationship.

Useful Links

Trampoline League https://trampolineleague.com

English English Gymnastics

British Gymnastics Trampoline Gymnastics Technical Information

5. Payments/Fees

Our squad groups fees are charged based on the total number of hours they train which are to be paid by monthly direct debit.

Our hourly base rate is £9.88 per hour but is reduced incrementally for each hour that a gymnast trains. We charge for 48 weeks per year over 12 monthly payments. As an example, a gymnast that trains for 6 hours per week would pay £94.38 per month, which equates to £3.93 per hour.

Fees are collected via Direct Debit through our admin system, Join In by LoveAdmin. If you haven't set this up already, the office will guide you through how to set it up. Invoices are sent on the 28th of every month.

Please note that it is your responsibility to notify us as soon as possible in the unlikely event of any errors. We advise members to regularly check their statements both in their personal bank and Join In account to make sure payments are correct and being fully processed, as any insufficient funds or electronic interference can result in failed payments.

In addition, there will be occasional extra ad hoc charges for things such as events, competitions, club merchandise and compulsory club kit. Competition entries must be done by the club, and the cost charged includes standard competition entry plus a 20% competition expense fee to cover judging costs, coaches expenses and any other competition expenses. We will notify you in advance of these charges via email.

6. Attendance

We expect a minimum of 80% attendance across all squads per term. Any gymnast working towards the English/British pathways is expected to meet 90% attendance.

Obviously, gymnasts are not expected to attend if they are very unwell; please contact your lead coach if your child is going to miss their training session and if you expect they will be off for subsequent sessions.

Gymnasts are encouraged to still attend training when injured as sessions can be adjusted appropriately (more detail on injury below). If your gymnast has been advised by a medical professional to avoid gymnastics completely then please let us know when you expect them to return to training and if there is anything the gym can do to help.

Parents should ensure that gymnasts arrive on time for all sessions and are collected on time.

If a gymnast misses a session they will not be offered a replacement. Occasionally the club may need to cancel sessions. In these circumstances we will aim to provide a replacement session.

7. Training Sessions

Training sessions are focused on the following components:

Body preparation – Conditioning & flexibility: A fundamental and vital aspect of gymnastics. Conditioning and flexibility enable you to perform the skills required and reduce risk of injury. Skills will only be achievable with appropriate body prep.

Drills: Many skills have appropriate drills which help a gymnast learn components of a skill and start to get the motor coordination required.

Skills: Gymnasts will practise skills; starting at the learning phase where a coach will support and gradual progressions through to perfecting a skill so that it is competition ready (ie performed safely and with minimum deductions).

Routines: Leading up to a competition, training is often centred around routines, either doing part routines where some skills are pieced together, or whole routines that they will be competing. Repetition is really important here to ensure the gymnast is confident for competition day.

8. Gymnasts' responsibilities

- Joining the competition team requires gymnasts' commitment and dedication. Gymnasts are making a commitment to themselves, the club, their teammates and coaches.
- To wear appropriate training attire (see below).
- To discuss openly, honestly and respectfully with coaches any concerns about any aspect of their training.
- To inform coaches immediately of any injuries or pain.
- To listen and respect their coaches and try their best to always follow instruction
- To be attentive, polite and cooperative to coaching staff and to other team members.
- To give your best **effort** in every activity. (*Some activities will be harder than others and a different difficulty for every gymnast depending on their strengths - we encourage **effort over ability)***.
- To complete all training given prior to leaving the gym.
- To assist, cooperate and respect fellow team members.
- To participate in competitions, shows and displays as determined by the coaching staff.
- To respect the gym and assist in tidying up mats, putting away equipment safely and leaving the gym tidy for the next group.
- To be safety conscious and spatially aware for themselves and their teammates.
- No use of electronics in the gym/ during training times except with prior permission from coaching staff.
- No photographs or video footage to be taken in the gym using gymnasts' personal phones, unless authorised by coaches for learning related reasoning
- To have respect and confidence in their coaches' decisions - whether this is in training programmes, choice of skills performed, changes to routines, training/competition levels or selecting who is ready to enter particular competitions.

9. Uniform

- During training, all competition squad athletes are required to wear leotards and if they wish to, shorts. Failure to do so may lead to the inability to take part in certain activities if it is deemed unsafe to do so. *(leggings can be worn but must be removed if the skill requires it - so please also provide shorts when wearing leggings if the gymnast is less comfortable training in just their leotard)*.
- Gymnasts training in just crop tops/bra and shorts is not acceptable
- Hoodies, zips, tracksuit bottoms and other loose clothing should be removed after warm up is complete. This is due to the nature of skills and support for safety.
- Hair should be tied up properly for training and out of the gymnasts' face. Long hair is best placed into a bun, to avoid it flicking into gymnasts' eyes during skills. If they can put their hair on their hands in a handstand, it needs to be in something other than a ponytail.
- Socks or trampoline shoes must be worn to be able to bounce
- All competitive athletes are required to have a current club competition leotard. If the gymnast chooses to compete in shorts these need to be the official club shorts that match the leotard to adhere to the current code of points (please get in touch with the head coach for details - these can be ordered through the club on LoveAdmin). This kit is needed for competitions to represent the team at club events and competitions. Other club kit such as tracksuit jackets and leggings can be worn for competitions with backpacks being optional.
- Official competition leotards are **not** to be worn at any other times, besides competitions to maintain its quality. Tracksuits **are** allowed to be worn to and from training and for warmups within training sessions when appropriate.
- NO jewellery to be worn including earrings, necklaces or rings or any thread jewellery/anklets etc.
- NO false acrylic nail extensions past appropriate length to be worn.

10. Nutrition During training sessions gymnasts will have opportunities throughout to have drinks and snacks if needed. For longer sessions (over 4 hours) there will be dedicated breaks for eating larger snacks/small meals.

We encourage all parents to read and follow the **British Gymnastics' Good Practices on Nutrition**. There are ideas for good snacks during training, such as bananas, dried fruit and oat-based bars. There are also good ideas for fuelling recovery after sessions.

11. Behaviour and training rules

Improper behaviours displayed during training, outside of training or at competition will result in reduced practice time, suspension or immediate removal from the competitive squad. This includes:

- Disrespect to either coaches or fellow gymnasts.
- Not adhering to the gymnast code of conduct
- Unwillingness to participate in activities set by coaches. Negative attitude or comments regarding training set by coaches. Negative attitude or comments towards teammates.
- Inappropriate language or behaviour in any way.
- Bullying of any form.

Bullying inside or outside of the gym is **NOT** tolerated and any reported bullying will be investigated immediately.

Safety outside of supervised practice times

- YCG is not responsible for any gymnastics activity undertaken outside of approved and supervised practice times.
- Coaches are not insured to set home-based training outside conditioning activities

12. Injuries, and muscle soreness

Gymnastics is an active sport and it is highly likely that gymnasts will experience some form of injury, as well as aches and pains from their training at one point or

another. Coaches are well trained to handle all varieties of situations whether minor or major, with first aiders present on the gym floor.

Muscle soreness

Muscle soreness is common and expected during certain cycles of training. During the season, training is adapted to focus on advancing a gymnasts strength and flexibility for a period of time; the intensity of this type of training varies throughout the year and you may notice an upscale in strength and flexibility training for a period of time followed by a period of time where this level is only maintained, this giving gymnasts time to focus on other things in their gymnastics training. A new cycle will begin later in the season with another advance on strength and flexibility training.

- When muscle soreness occurs (which coaches will be expecting and will be accommodating in following sessions). Gymnasts should let coaches know and can give an indication of how sore it feels for them.
- Gymnasts should still attend training sessions despite muscle soreness; keeping muscles moving and warm is ideal for faster muscle recovery. Sessions are adapted for recovery time and gymnasts are encouraged to listen to their limitations during training.
- As mentioned under “Nutrition” section, we encourage considering post training session nutrition to aid muscle growth and repair

Injury

Injuries can happen at any time inside or outside of the gym and coaches are well trained to manage and adapt training for gymnasts as needed.

If a gymnast encounters an injury within or outside of the gym, coaches should be informed of the injury and any specific details or requirements given by a medical professional. Injuries obtained during training sessions will be dealt with in accordance with our medical policy.

Gymnasts should still attend training sessions despite an injury. Coaches will provide adaptive training that they can do around the injury - this is so that gymnasts do not lose strength or fitness in other aspects of their training during their recovery time.

Not training at all for prolonged periods of time will cause a regression in other parts of their training meaning they will not be able to continue where they left off. Continuing to train the rest of their body will allow them to only regress in the affected area.

Low level but chronic injuries (a consistent ache or pain that does not go away but is not deemed necessary for a visit to A & E or similar) should not be left unseen and trained on. The gymnast and parent will need to get it seen by a professional, this may be a doctor, physio or similar to identify the cause and a recovery programme put in place that they can also add to their training practice.

All gymnasts require up to date British Gymnastics membership which ensures they are insured to participate.

13. Mental Fitness

Mental Fitness is the combination of Mental Health and Physical Fitness. It is widely recognised that good mental fitness will boost confidence and performance and allow your child to flourish in their home and sporting lives.

York City Gymnastics strives to create a positive and supportive training environment that considers the whole gymnast and aims to develop gymnasts as people and not solely as performers.

If you notice or feel your child maybe struggling with their Mental Fitness please discuss this with your child's coach. Alternatively speak to the head coach regarding the counselling services offered by British Gymnastics. The club also has dedicated Welfare Officers that are happy to chat to gymnasts and their parents/carers (welfare@ycgf.org.uk)

Additional support and advice can also be found on the following websites:

https://www.youngminds.org.uk/

https://www.mind.org.uk/for-young-people/

https://www.childline.org.uk/

https://www.papyrus-uk.org

https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

https://giveusashout.org

14. Competition specific

- If the gymnast misses several sessions of training prior to a competition, without coaches agreement, coaches retain the right to withdraw the gymnast from the competition. (except in extenuating circumstances, such as severe illness/family emergency etc).
- Gymnasts training groups and hours will be determined at the discretion of the coaching team. This will be established by mental and physical readiness as well as attendance and commitment shown in training sessions.
- Gymnasts' training programme, competition levels/grades and final approved skills for routines will be determined at the discretion of the coaching team. This will be established by a number of factors including mental and physical readiness, and the safety of skills at any given point.
- During competitions, team members are expected to remember they represent the club at all times. Appropriate behaviour and respect for other clubs, parents and officials is expected.

- During competitions, team members are expected to stay with their coach or in the designated areas when required and only to leave once confirmed with their coach.
- During competitions gymnasts are responsible for keeping track of their own belongings and keeping their items safe at all times
- Coaches reserve the right to remove gymnasts from competition at any time, especially if competing may inhibit their ability to perform safely and/or hinder their personal progress or safety and that of their fellow athletes.
- During competition, team members are not allowed to use the warm up or waiting areas for unsupervised gymnastics at any time.

If you are new to competitive gymnastics and feel you need any further guidance of how a gymnastics competition runs, entries, registration on the day, the release of competition timetables, results or anything else then please get in touch with your gymnast's lead coach.

15. Communication with Coaches

We ask that should you need to speak to your gymnasts coach that you do not attempt to do so whilst they are on the floor coaching. This can cause a dangerous situation where you distract the coach from their primary role of supervising the children participating in that gymnastics class.

The squad WhatsApp group chats have been created for quick communications regarding training times/changes to training, competition information and for you to inform us of any lateness or absences. They are also often used to celebrate and share successes within the gym. Please do not use these chats to source coaches' personal numbers and contact them privately outside of their working hours.

For queries related to coaching and gymnast's progression, please contact the lead coach for your gymnast. Other coaches should not be approached. For management or additional queries, please contact the office@ycgf.org.uk. For complaints, please

follow our complaints procedure, available to see on the website or on the notice boards.

Under no circumstances do we accept abusive behaviour or comments towards any member of our staff.

16. Parent/Guardian Expectations

- Parents should encourage their child to follow the gymnasts responsibilities, code of conduct and British Gymnastics rules and regulations.
- Parents are not to attempt to coach their child/children in any way that they are not trained to do so.
- Parents can assist children with any home conditioning set by coaches where safe to do so but MUST make conscious use of encouraging wording or phrases within their attempts.
- Parents must abide by our photography policy, available on LoveAdmin
- Ensure your child is on time for training sessions and if your child will be absent notify the club before the session starts.
- Parents must drop off their children at the gym club entrance when attending sessions, to ensure they their coaches are in attendance, and the child makes it to their respective class.
- Parents must also collect their children from the door/inside the gym promptly at the end of each training session. If other arrangements have been made, such as lift shares with other members please make your child's personal coach aware of this prior to the session.
- Parents should always inform the coach of any medical conditions, illness, injury or medication or changes which might affect their child's performance.
- Always ensure your child is appropriately dressed, removed all jewellery and has appropriate water for training and events.
- Fees for your child's training sessions or competitions must be paid promptly. Non-payment will result in removal from the squad and competitions – please speak to us with any issues that arise.

- Parents should keep coaches informed of any personal circumstances or changes going on at home or within close proximity that may affect a child's training physically or emotionally in the long or short term – coaches will treat delicate matters with complete respect, discretion and without judgement.
- Parents should share any concerns about any aspect of the club via the appropriate channels, either by approaching the lead coach directly or if more appropriate by contacting the club welfare officers on welfare@ycgf.org.uk
- Parents should not approach other coaches about extra training sessions without approval from the Lead Coach
- Parents should never challenge/argue with coaches' judgements in their decisions regarding squads, groupings or competition level/entries. Respectful discussions can be requested and arranged with their lead coach
- Parents are responsible for the travel arrangements and costs of their child to and from any training, competition sessions or club activities.
- Parents must not take/use any photography/video equipment during training sessions.
- If competition rules permit, parents may video their own children's routines but must NOT use flash photography.
- Parents attending competitions must NOT enter the competition arena but remain in the spectator's designated area.
- Parents should never challenge/argue with officials at competitions. It is against BG and York City Gymnastics rules for parents to approach any officials; this includes the judging panel. Any concerns should be shared with club coaches not event organisers.
- Always use appropriate language, never belittle or punish children for poor performances or for making mistakes.
- Help your child to recognise performance, not just results.
- Always recognise and demonstrate high standards of sportsmanship and applaud the good performance of all.

- Never force your child to take part in sport.
- Support your child's involvement and help them enjoy their sport.

17. Club Community and Charity Fundraising

As a charitable organisation the club has always benefited and thrived because of fundraising at events and the much-appreciated support of the wider club community. As squad benefit greatly in their gymnastics from the club's facility, it is not unusual for us to request the assistance of squad parents for a variety of tasks. This could be offering up raffle prizes, baking cakes, running stalls, being on the door for competitions, putting out chairs and much, much more!

The club will continue to encourage a thriving club community through offering a variety of extra-curricular activities such as sleepovers, family days, displays and friendly competitions with other clubs. These activities are a huge part of your gymnast's yearly programme and contribute hugely to the child's enjoyment of the sport, their team spirit and injects the Trampolining programme with as much fun as possible! Any support that you can give to the club to the smooth running of these events is greatly appreciated and ensures we can continue to offer them to our members. The head coach will aim to provide dates for these events as early in the year as possible to aid you in planning your calendar.

Thank you for taking the time to read the Trampoline Squad Handbook thoroughly and share the information with your gymnasts.