



## **SQUAD HANDBOOK**



**Welcome to the journey!**

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# EQUIPMENT

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Certain expenses and equipment are required for our competitive squads. Your gymnast will need competition attire, handguards, chalk and gloves & loops for bars.

## Handguards

These are worn on the hands for bar work to help prevent blisters and to aid with gripping the bar when doing higher level skills. **Mini Squad** members will **not** need handguards until indicated by their Coach. All other squads will require handguards.

You are welcome to shop around, but handguards must have a dowel and 2 finger holes, as shown above. We prefer buckles as opposed to Velcro attachments, even for the younger gymnasts. Please ensure these are for the appropriate gender of your gymnast as men and women use different bars. You will also need to purchase wrist protectors (sweat bands) which are also available from the link below.



As a guideline we tend to recommend the following (measuring guides are available on these links):

- Beginner handguards - <https://gymnasticplanet.com/pixie-uneven-bar-dowel-guards-velcro-or-buckle>
- Experienced handguards - <https://gymnasticplanet.com/bailie-extreme-ladies-with-combi-fastening>

***Please check with your Coach first to ensure you purchase the correct handguards.***

## Gloves & Loops



Cotton gloves will be required for the strap bar, they are designed to slide around a polished metal surface. When first starting, gymnasts may find strap bar work uncomfortable. We do recommend the long Gymnastics Planet gloves as these protect the wrists. We ease gently into this so that the gymnasts have a chance to get used to their loops.



We are finding that the padded loops are more comfortable for the girls so would particularly recommend these.

***Please check with your Coach for sizing as it is essential that these are tight on the bar.***

Here are our recommendations. Measuring guides are available on these links.

Gloves & loops pack - <https://gymnasticplanet.com/metal-bar-loops-and-superior-bar-gloves-offer> Padded loops - <https://gymnasticplanet.com/soft-padded-gymnastic-straps> (loops only)

Standard loops - <https://gymnasticplanet.com/gymnastic-metal-bar-loops> (loops only) Metal bar gloves - <https://gymnasticplanet.com/superior-metal-bar-gloves> (gloves only)

Wrist protector - <https://gymnasticplanet.com/neoprene-wrist-band-wrist-protector>

## Chalk

Chalk is essential for bar work and each gymnast must have their own block, kept in their own plastic container with their name on. This must be replenished regularly so that they always have access to this. Please do check with your gymnast regularly that they have enough rather than them borrowing others. You can purchase blocks of chalk either via Amazon or Gymnastics Planet:

<https://gymnasticplanet.com/products/training-accessories/chalk/professional-grade-chalk>



# UNIFORM

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## Competition Uniform

Competition leotards and Tracksuit tops must be purchased as part of your squad uniform as soon as possible. These are only to be worn at competition and special events where indicated from your Coach. Our competition leotard is a team design that we keep for 2-3 years and we try hard to keep the price around £100. Tracksuit Tops are £30 and these should be worn, when competing, with leggings. Both leotard and tracksuit top have to be ordered individually and can take 8 weeks to arrive. You can check with your Coach with regards to sizing and to raise an order.

Please follow the washing instructions on these carefully and only wear when needed.

## Training Uniform

Your gymnast is welcome to wear any leotard of their choice for training. However, it is imperative that leotards fit the gymnast properly. Sports shorts and leggings are acceptable for training, however, these should also be tight fitting and not loose. This ensures our Coaches are able to support the gymnasts safely and for them to be able to see body positioning/alignment throughout training. Loose clothing provides barriers to both of these aspects and can make supporting gymnast's unsafe.

## Hair

All squad gymnasts should arrive to their class in a well-fitting leotard with their hair tied back with **sufficient** hair bands to keep hair secure for the duration of their session. For longer hair this should be placed in a bun. Current regulations for training and competitions advise that hair should not touch the floor whilst gymnast is upside down in a handstand position as it can become entangled with their hands. Messy and loose hair makes supporting gymnasts very difficult and can obscure the gymnast's vision – ***your gymnast will be moving very fast whilst upside down so being able to see what they are doing and having a Coach able to catch them is vital!***

Earrings should not be worn at any time for training. Newly pierced ears must be taped up for the 6 weeks after piercing only. After this time, they should **always** be removed for training.

# TRAINING TIMES

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## Term Time:

Training times are different for each squad and can be found on our website and on your iClassPro account. Where these are subject to change, you will always be notified in sufficient time. Please ensure your child arrives promptly for their session start. Whilst we do understand that there may be occurrences where lateness cannot be helped, we do encourage this to be for exceptional circumstances only so as not to interfere with training plans. Each session is meticulously planned in advance, for each gymnast and with allocated time set on each apparatus. Where gymnasts are late they can miss vital aspects of their training programme which can have a detrimental effect on their progress.

## Holiday Time:

During the school holidays we offer a different timetable. All squad members are expected to be present for each session, with the exception of where families are away for holidays and other events. The Holiday training timetable can be found below. You will need to sign your gymnast up on the Customer Portal for each session they will be attending. These are usually available for booking after each half/full term.

## Competitions:

On some occasions, our Sunday training sessions may be cancelled or timings altered due to coaches having to attend competitions. We do try to keep this disruption to a minimum and appreciate the understanding of our squad members.

DAY	TIME	SQUAD
Monday	9am-1pm	Development
	12pm-4pm	Elite
Tuesday	9am-1pm	Development & Elite
	12pm-4pm	Club Squad
Wednesday	9am-1pm	Club Squad
	1pm-3.15pm	Mini Squad
	12pm-3.30pm	Pathway Squad
Thursday	9am-1pm	Elite
	12pm-4pm	Development
Friday	9am-11.15am	Mini Squad
	12pm-2.15pm	Pathway Squad
	9am-4pm	Elite
	12pm-4pm	Club Squad

# FEES

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## Training Fees

Squad fees are payable on a monthly basis, continuously, and are due at the beginning of each month. Current fees are outlined in the table below. Fees cover all training throughout the year and include for all holiday training sessions. If you wish to book onto additional Camps during school holidays these will be charged in addition to squad training sessions.

We ask all Squad parents to store their card details on their account on our Customer Portal so that we can run your payments through on the first day of each month without the need for you to do anything. As stated in our Code of Conduct, we require one month's notice of squad members leaving therefore refunds will not apply.

SQUAD NAME	MONTHLY FEES
Elite Squad (Juniors & Seniors)	£125
Development Squad	£110
Mini Squad	£75
Club Squad	£110
Pathway Squad	£90

## Competition Fees

Competitions incur additional fees and have typically been around £30-£40 per gymnast, though these have recently been increasing. You will be notified of all relevant competition dates in plenty of good time to ensure availability. We also add an additional minimal fee onto the competition entry to help us pay for coach and judge expenses as competitions are costly events for the club.

## External Training Fees

Where Squad members have been selected for County/Regional/National training and/or competitions, there may be additional fees to pay to cover training costs and uniform hire. These will be confirmed to you, where relevant, as soon as we are able to and payment should be made via your account in the usual way.

# NUTRITIONAL ADVICE

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## Water

Gymnastics is thirsty work! Please ensure your gymnast has a named water bottle with them at each and every session. These can be refilled as necessary throughout their session. If your gymnast doesn't have a water bottle with them they will be supplied one from the club. A £1 fee will be added to your account to cover the cost of providing this on each occasion. We follow British Gymnastics Hydration Policy to ensure all gymnast's have access to drinking water. You can find more about this below:

[Hydration policy](#)

## Snacks

For long training sessions the gymnast's will have a 20 minute break for a snack. Elite and Development Squads have snack breaks during all of their normal term time training sessions. All holiday training sessions provide a snack break as well as a lunch break where training is a full day.

The **GB Gymnastics Nutrition Team** has developed a pamphlet outlining their best advice for gymnasts' nutrition for our Squad parents. You can even find some recipes here you may find useful. We hope you will find this a valuable source of information for ensuring your gymnast is always fully fuelled for successful training!

[Nutrition.pdf](#)



# INJURIES

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If a gymnast is affected by an injury that causes a 'loss of time' i.e.; they need to rest or ice, or a bruise becomes visible during their session, a First Aider will write an accident report slip that will be sent home with the gymnast to inform you of the nature of the injury and the first aid measures that were applied. Some smaller injuries and/or bumps may occur due to the nature of training for competitive gymnastics that will not require injury slips.

Examples of these are:

- Rubbing/marks on wrists from loops on metal bar
- Bumps on shins from the bar
- Red marks/grazes from trampoline bed
- Rips and peeled skin (blisters) on hands from the bar
- Carpet burns due to floorwork

If a gymnast has experienced pain in a minor injury and has not communicated it with us, please let us know and encourage your athlete to share these feelings with their coaches.

## SQUAD PATHWAYS

We work really hard to ensure we are providing the best opportunities for all of our gymnasts and provide several different pathways to ensure we always have a session available that we feel caters best for each gymnast. Each pathway is always considered with the gymnast's best interests at heart and can change during their time with us. Where a Coach feels a gymnast would benefit from an alternative pathway, conversations will be held with parent/carers to outline this and trial periods considered so that transitions are smooth and beneficial to the gymnast. Our extensive experience has shown that having a fluid approach to pathways ensures the most positive outcome for gymnasts, helping ensure the gymnasts continue to thrive, develop and achieve at their pace.

## Kennylands Squad Pathways



# BEING A SQUAD PARENT

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Parents often ask what is the best way to support their gymnasts' progress. We have vast experience of working in lots of other gyms and have always found that the gymnasts who stay in the sport the longest and find the most success, are those that have parents that are supportive of their gymnastics, but allow them to leave it at the door and give them a space away from it at home. If they want to talk about or do gymnastics at home, that is great, but just going home and forgetting about it and being a kid is great too!

If we have moments where we feel a parent intervention would be useful, we'll definitely reach out. Likewise, if you'd like to have a chat with us, please arrange a meeting and we'd be happy to talk things through. Otherwise, you can take a deep breath and relax knowing everything is going to plan.

To help you on your journey as a Squad Parent, we've compiled some Top Tips from our Coaching Team and some of our current Squad Parents to help manage expectations and support your journey as a parent. There's also a link at the end to a website you may find helpful for further advice and tips.

Above all, remember, as a parent your goal should be that they are having fun and love what they do!

## Top Tips from your Coaching Team:

**What should you expect from your gymnast?** Gymnastics can be extremely tough and challenging at times and each gymnast will manage their emotions and behaviours differently. Try not to put expectations on their performances or results. A great gymnast who tries their hardest, is a supportive team member and respectful towards everyone, should be all you ask for.

**Watch how much you watch!** It's great to watch your kids training from time to time (and when they are smaller, sticking around for the session can be much easier than racing home & heading back). But, remember to give your gymnast some space to do it on their own as well. This is their journey.

**Remember, they have a Coach** - The Coaches at Kennylands are really experienced and skilled at unlocking each gymnasts' potential. When you're chatting with you child, ask what they have achieved and what they enjoyed about training. Try not to focus on things which may not have gone to plan. We have extensive plans for each individual gymnast so there's a good chance they're already working on this in the gym.

**Trust the process and don't compare your gymnast to anyone else** - Our Coaches are professionals and know all the fundamentals that are needed to upgrade skills, choose competitive pathways and work on areas where gymnasts struggle. While sometimes it may seem unfair that another child has moved on and yours hasn't yet, there may be a good reason behind it. Coaches want children to feel and be successful. Trust the process and don't compare your gymnast to anyone else.

**Children hear everything!** We all know children can have selective hearing, but when you talk about something quietly, their ears prick up! If you have a problem, concern or question, please speak directly to your child's Coach. Don't let your child hear you talking about their Coach or other squad members as it can potentially weaken those bonds and relationships.

**Let them set their own goals!** Let your child and their Coach set their goals; development of elite gymnastics is a complicated process and is best left to the Coach to manage.

**Encourage your child to talk to their Coaches** - Encourage your children to talk to their Coach if they have questions, goals or concerns. Being able to speak to adults is a great ability to have and it gives them ownership of their gymnastics experience.

## Top Tips from Squad Parents:

- ❖ Gymnasts get very hungry!! They are using lots of energy at training and this combined with a full day at school requires lots of calories to keep them going. I was advised that my daughter should be having about 3000 calories a day. A good breakfast and lunch plus suitable snacks for before and during training are essential to keep your gymnast fuelled for training.
- ❖ Gymnasts need lots of rest!! A good night's sleep and rest days are really important. With long training hours it can sometimes feel difficult to achieve. My tip for evening training sessions is to have dinner in a flask that your gymnast can eat in the car on the way home, that way they can get to bed sooner. Rest days are also really important so that they can recover and be ready for the next training session.
- ❖ We always get the gym bag ready in the morning before school so that we can get to training on time in the afternoon.
- ❖ Try and be organised with school work so it can be done on days when your gymnast isn't training.
- ❖ Trust the Coaches - the decisions they make are to ensure your gymnast trains safely and progresses to reach their potential.
- ❖ Just enjoy the journey, it's amazing what they can achieve! Other interests/hobbies/clubs can help take the pressure off gym so it's not so intense or focused all on one thing.
- ❖ Don't let little things become big things - talk the Coaches if there's an issue or the gymnast has worries. They're very friendly and you can all work together to find solutions.
- ❖ Audio books/decent car music/hot drinks, flask all come in useful! There's a local park/cafe/library/local clubs for younger siblings so they don't have to sit and wait during squad training times. The Chinese and Chip shop up the road have also become useful on the odd occasion! 🟡
- ❖ We have little rituals we do the evening before each competition so our gymnast goes to bed relaxed for a full night of sleep then wakes up excited and ready to go.
- ❖ A positive mindset helps loads for competing and trying new skills!
- ❖ This website has lots of information available that you may find helpful too - <https://www.parentsinsport.co.uk/>

# HOW TO CONTACT US

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Should you have any concerns or queries, please go through the appropriate channels to discuss these concerns and give us the opportunity to help alleviate/answer them. We will always make time to listen. This is best communicated to us via email in the first instance. Please don't direct any concerns to your Coach at the time of your child's class as it's very difficult for our Coaches to be able to give you their time and attention during this period. You can find more about our Policies on our website under About/Policies.

Parent meetings with your gymnast's squad coach will be arranged 2-3 times per year to discuss their progress.

## Contact Information

For any questions regarding billing, admin or further concerns after contacting your coach, please contact Rebecca or Tricia at [enquiries@kennylandsgymnastics.com](mailto:enquiries@kennylandsgymnastics.com)

For any concerns regarding your gymnast's training, please first email your child's Coach. They can be reached at:

- [Squad@kennylandsgymnastics.com](mailto:Squad@kennylandsgymnastics.com) – Elite Squad & Head of Artistic
- [Becca@kennylandsgymnastics.com](mailto:Becca@kennylandsgymnastics.com) – Development & Mini Squad
- [Jodie@kennylandsgymnastics.com](mailto:Jodie@kennylandsgymnastics.com) – Club Squad & Pathway Squad

For any competition and squad related queries, please contact [squad@kennylandsgymnastics.com](mailto:squad@kennylandsgymnastics.com)

For any welfare related concerns, please contact the club's welfare officer, Fiona, at [welfare@kennylandsgymnastics.com](mailto:welfare@kennylandsgymnastics.com)

*Please be aware that whilst the gym is open Monday-Sunday, all of our Staff have different timetables. All emails will be responded to during the relevant parties' working hours. Please do not contact staff members by text or phone unless in case of emergency.*

# CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SQUAD PARENTS

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## Expectations and Rules for Squad Members and their Guardians

### Squad Expectations

- All members must participate within the rules and respect Coaches and other members of the club
- Gymnasts must wear suitable attire for training. Long hair is to be tied back before arrival.
- All body jewellery must be removed in line with British Gymnastics policy. Newly pierced ears should be taped prior to arrival and for a maximum of 6 weeks.
- Members should treat all equipment and facilities with respect.
- Members should not eat or chew gum during a session or use bad language.
- Members must inform their Coach of any injuries or illness they may have prior to the warm-up.
- All members understand that a gymnast's place in the squad is constantly monitored and re-evaluated. Good attendance to training and participation in competitions are both important factors considered in this.
- If you are deciding to leave the squad, a notice period of one month must be given, unless otherwise agreed upon by the coaching team and parents.
- Always ensure your child is provided with a bottle of water which can be refilled from the drinking water tap in the toilets when necessary. Crockery in the kitchen is not to be used by gymnasts during their class.
- Due to the nature of the activity some physical contact between Coaches and gymnasts is required. Kennylands Gymnastics takes every measure in ensuring that only appropriate and non-invasive techniques are used. Any concerns should be raised with the Club Welfare Officer.
- Keep the club informed if your child is ill or injured and unable to attend a training session. Use the Customer Portal to notify us of all absences.
- Gymnasts should not be reprimanded at home for not succeeding with a skill or goal within training or competitions and offering rewards in advance for achieving certain skills in training is highly discouraged.

### General Expectations

- Encourage your child to learn the rules and participate within them.
- Endeavour to establish good communications with the Club, Coaches and Staff for the benefit of all and discourage challenging / arguing with officials. Please discuss any grievances or complaints directly with the club as these are often solved very easily. These will be responded to in working office hours.
- Help your child recognise good effort and not compare themselves to other gymnasts.
- Set a good example by recognising good sportsmanship and applauding the performances of all.
- Support your child's involvement to help them to enjoy their sport; never force your child to take part.
- Ensure your child arrives promptly for their class and endeavour to arrive at least 5 minutes before the end of your child's class to ensure prompt collection of your child and remember that Kennylands Gymnastics are not responsible for your child before or after their session. Persistent lateness is not desirable or acceptable. Kennylands Gymnastics reserve the right to charge a £10 fee for any parent/carer who is more than 10 minutes late to collect their gymnast.
- Members must not smoke, consume alcohol or take drugs of any kind whilst on the premises or representing the club at competitions or other events.

### At Competitions / External Training

- All members must respect Coaches, Opponents, Officials and Judges and their decisions during competitions.
- Gymnasts should behave appropriately at competitions or events and remember they are representing the club at all times.
- Gymnasts will only be entered in to competition if the Coach deems them physically and mentally prepared. Gaining a necessary skill last minute or going on holiday just before the competition may result in the Coach removing the gymnast's entry for their safety. There will be no refunds for withdrawal from competition.