



# SUPPORTING HANDBOOK

Prepared for

**Virtue  
movement co.**

March 18

**2024**

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## IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY

**SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY AND AT VIRTUE THIS IS THE ETHOS WE USE - ENSURING EVERYONE IS TRAINED AND READY TO ADDRESS CONCERNS, FROM OUR YOUNG VOLUNTEERS ALL THE WAY UP TO THE CLUB COACHES.**

When physically supporting gymnastics or parkour, it is vital that the safety of our participants is a top priority. The safety and welfare of our members is a top consideration for Virtue, especially as the nature of our sports can be dangerous. As a club, it is our duty to keep not only our athletes safe but also our coaching team. Our policies cover many aspects including the health, safety, and welfare of athletes, coaches, and our environment. Safe environments are always provided to ensure that both the athlete and coach will remain safe when practising our sports. We work alongside our governing body to provide correct and relevant information to our staff and members and keep everyone regularly up to date with the duty of care information.



# COACHES ROLE

All Virtue coaches have a responsibility to ensure participants, other coaches and themselves remain safe. In order to fulfil this responsibility, it is important to fully understand aspects of safety within the sport.

To ensure safety for all Virtue members:

- Clear instructions are given to all members before they are going to be supported.
- The gym is risk assessed weekly to ensure it is a safe environment.
- All coaches have the correct coaching qualifications, safeguarding training and other relevant qualifications.
- Coaches only support skills that they are capable of supporting.
- Before carrying out a coaching session all coaches are prepared and have an understanding of the session plan.



# SUPPORTING

Supporting refers to the physical assistance of an athlete through a movement or skill. Supporting can also be referred to as spotting.

The main goal of supporting a Virtue member is ultimately to keep them safe and it should allow the athletes to feel safe. In order for our members to progress, coaches will need to provide physical support.

Our coaches are fully trained and understand when a participant may need supporting through a skill. If a participant is worried about trying a new skill, our coaches will step in to provide support. If a participant is carrying out a skill or if technique is not yet mastered, providing support will be a priority for our coaches in order to keep our members safe.



## POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS



Supporting is in place to keep members safe but our coaches are all aware that supporting does not go to plan all of time. Although supporting an athlete is crucial in progress and development, it is important to be aware of the possible dangers of supporting. Due to the complexity of supporting, it cannot be carried out effectively 100% of the time. Supporting is ultimately down to human judgement and precision, which puts a lot of pressure on coaches to support perfectly all of time.

**Fact: Gymnastics is now one of the least taught sports within school physical education due to the complexity of supporting.**

To keep our members and coaches safe when supporting all our staff have the appropriate coaching qualifications.

Any accidents or injuries including those due to supporting are logged in an accident book and any accidental welfare incidents due to supporting is logged with our welfare team. Keeping report logs keeps all Virtue members safe.



## RESCUE SPOTTING



**Rescue spotting/supporting refers to a supporting technique where a coach must step in to catch a falling athlete in order to prevent injury.**

### **Why is Rescue Spotting Important?**

This type of supporting technique enables participants to gain trust in their coaches. Rescue spotting is crucial in the sports we offer at Virtue as athletes can often fall from skills or equipment. Therefore, it is a coaches jobs is to attempt to catch the athlete. This type of supporting enables participants to reduce their fear of attempting new skills. They will gain confidence in their coaches, trusting that they will be there to step in and provide support if needed.

The rescue spot technique is an unplanned support. Therefore, no signal or instruction can be given prior to supporting.

All supporting (including rescue spotting) is solely down to human judgement on when to step in, injury of the athlete may still occur. To prevent injuries or welfare concerns our coaches regularly gain knowledge around supporting techniques and keep up to date with all policies.

## SAFEGUARDING



In order to coach efficiently our coaches must physically, hands on support our members. All staff at Virtue are fully qualified and trained and maintain a professional coaching style. Supporting is a key part of progression, without support an athlete will struggle to learn new skills and have confidence.

Our coaches are never alone in the gym with participants, we always have at least 2 coaches present.

We have an open training policy which enables parents to spectate a session via our parents viewing room.

We have full CCTV coverage of all areas of our gym to maintain safety for all.

**If you have any concerns about behaviour of a member of staff, coach, volunteer or another member of Virtue please report your concern as soon as possible to our welfare team.**