

ACTIVE
TAMESIDE

gymnastics

performance pathway



helping you to
live your best life



activetameside.com

introduction

Welcome to our parent's guide to gymnastics lessons. Here you will find all you need to know about your child's lessons and our gymnastics performance pathway in one place. Gymnastics is a great sport – it improves fitness, strength, co-ordination, flexibility and balance – all of which are foundations for a great sporting start.



Our Active Tameside gymnastics performance pathway has been specially developed to offer opportunities for all, from crawling babies entering the gymnasium for the first time, to young gymnasts perfecting their skills and technique.

We use the National Gymnastics award programme to reward progress. We have recently changed the scheme of work that we use to track, monitor and reward our gymnasts. We have done this because our coaches found the new scheme to be more centred around artistic gymnastics, where we now offer a separate scheme of awards for boys' apparatus and girls' apparatus.

The scheme is challenging, yet achievable for all, and once each section has been achieved, a medal can be purchased. Training booklets may also be purchased as a way for your gymnast to track their own progress and our Home Portal has also been updated with the new scheme.



Gymnastics is a great life skill

Like all sports, gymnastics has both unique and general benefits. The progressive nature of the sport means that skills are developed gradually, and more difficult skills are a product of the basic skills learned – so skills taught in the early stages of gymnastics develop into flicks and somersaults further down the line – this takes both dedication and determination. We also find that whilst gymnastics is an individual

sport, it often relies on teamwork and fair play – so whilst your child develops sporting skills, social skills come as a great bonus too. It's a sport that requires concentration, mental focus and patience – all essential skills for every day. On top of all this, it's great fun too! Somersaulting, swinging, leaping and jumping mean that everyone can enjoy some self-powered flight, even if it is for seconds at a time.



Gymnastics is a great way to stay fit and healthy

All of the impressive skills that you see gymnasts performing on television are physically demanding and require lots of strength and flexibility training. Even better, in artistic gymnastics men perform on 6 pieces of apparatus and women on 4 – so all

gymnastics skills require different levels of input from different parts of the body when different skills are performed – meaning that whatever level of gymnastics you're working at, you're using all of the muscle groups in your body.



Gymnastics comes in many varieties

The most popular style of gymnastics, and the one that we coach at Active Tameside, is artistic gymnastics. For women, the apparatus used in artistic gymnastics are the beam, asymmetric bars, floor and vault; you'll find all of these at Active Tameside's gymnastics facilities. In artistic gymnastics, the men use 6 pieces of apparatus: the rings, the high bar, parallel bars, pommel vault, floor and vault. We have

four of these apparatus at our facilities.

Other styles of gymnastics include: rhythmic gymnastics, trampolining, tumbling and team gym. These varieties of gymnastics have many similar characteristics, but they're also very different too.

If you'd like to learn more about these styles of gymnastics, please visit the British Gymnastics website: www.british-gymnastics.org



in summary:

the gymnastics structure

gym tots:

0-3 years

A great way to introduce little ones to the gymnastics environment, as they can learn from you as you both share the excitement and experience of exploring the great range of gymnastics and play equipment together.

mini tumblers:

2-4 years

These great sessions bring parents and children together for a 30-minute structured gymnastics lesson, led by one of our British Gymnastics qualified coaches. After this, you and your child can enjoy 15 minutes of free play on the equipment and toys on offer.

junior gem preschool:

3-4 years

Your child will enjoy the opportunity to independently attend one of our pre-school orientated sessions. Along with a group of other children, your child will partake in a structured gymnastics session consisting of a warm up and apparatus work.

mixed sessions:

5+ years

These are structured sessions for children who attend full time school; they combine the teaching of skills to help gymnasts gain their NATgap awards, using all of the equipment to achieve them.

gymnasts will progress through the different stages:



emerald



sapphire



ruby



diamond

Each level has eight different sections of apparatus, with twelve skills to complete in each (10 out of 12 to pass). Therefore, the four levels consist of 96 skills each, forming a comprehensive learning programme for gymnasts and coaches. The Coaching Guides provide illustrations of all of the skills listed.

The girls' sections are: Vault, Bars, Beam Gym, Beam Acro, Floor Gym, Floor Shapes, Floor Acro and Body Prep.

The boys' sections are: Vault, Bar, Parallel Bars, Mixed App (Rings and Pommel), Upper Body & Gym, Floor Shapes, Floor Acro and Body Prep.

advanced

The skills learned in these sessions follow on from those learned during previous sessions. Gymnasts will work on body preparation to ensure that they are physically and mentally ready to achieve harder gymnastics skills.



further opportunities

active tameside recreational level competition groups

Gymnastics that partake in our 45 minute gymnastics sessions may be invited by their coach to our 1 hour 45 minute sessions, if their coach thinks they would be beneficial. From here your child will learn routines and new skills and partake in recreational level competitions.

tameside school of gymnastics (British Affiliated Club)

Tameside School of Gymnastics is an independent club who use our facility for training purposes. Tameside School of Gymnastics specialises in women's artistic gymnastics and their gymnasts compete in a range of levels, from club through to national level. We work closely with Tameside School of Gymnastics and regularly offer our gymnasts trials for places in the club.

adult gymnastics

If you'd always thought you could give Beth Tweddle a run for her money, but you'd missed your chance, worry not. Our adult gymnastics classes cater for ex-gymnasts wanting another go, as well as those who are new to the sport. These sessions are for those aged 16+ but anyone under 18 will need parent/guardian permission.



frequently asked questions

1. where do I wait?

This depends on the session you've come to. For Gym Tots and Mini Tumblers, we ask parents to be actively involved in the sessions, so you'll be in the gymnasium. For advanced preschool and younger gymnasts, we ask that you wait in the waiting area so we know where to reach you, should you be needed (usually for a toilet break). For all other sessions, we prefer that you wait in the waiting area, but it is not a necessity.

2. how can I find out how my child is progressing?

You will have the chance to speak with your child's gymnastics coach at the end of every session. The coaches have a small gap in between each session, so if you have any questions, please approach them when they bring the gymnasts out at the end.

3. what should I expect from each lesson?

The structure of the lesson depends on the level of the session itself, however sessions will begin with a register and warm up, before moving onto the equipment. All of the coaches work to a lesson plan and the busier classes are timetabled so that all groups have equal access to equipment. The children in each group will all work towards similar skills, but the tasks given to each child may vary as these will be suited to individual ability.

4. how long will it take for a gymnast to achieve their award?

This completely depends on the gymnast; some will achieve sooner than others, some will achieve quickly at first but need more time as the awards get harder.

The coaches will also look for consistency in the skills performed, requiring the gymnast to do the skill at a certain standard several times before giving an award.

5. why has my child been working on the same skills for a while?

By its very nature, gymnastics may seem like a repetitive sport, as some skills may be practised over and over again. However, it is important that certain skills are perfected as these form the basis of more difficult moves further down the line. For example, skills like jumping on a springboard may sound simple but it is important to do these a certain way, as it will impact on every vault that the gymnast does.

helping to prepare for gymnastics lessons

We appreciate that, for many children, starting a new class is a big step, especially as a gymnastics centre is an environment that your child may not be used to. It would be beneficial to arrive to the centre with plenty of time before your child's first lesson so that your child has time to familiarise themselves with the centre and see the waiting area where you'll be sat.

Before entering the gymnasium, you should head to reception, where a member of staff will point you in the direction that you need to go. You may also find it beneficial to chat to your child about what will happen in the lesson, so your child will feel prepared.

what to bring

We recommend that gymnasts wear appropriate clothing to allow them to move freely without restricting them. Clothes should be fitted; as baggy clothes may get caught in the equipment. T-shirt and shorts, leggings or leotards are all suitable gymnastics wear. Those with longer hair should have it tied up, and those with really long hair should choose a style which will stop the hair from getting caught in equipment (such as plaits). You may want to pack a few extra bits too. Here are our suggestions:

- Hair clips/hair bands
- Locker money/token (if needed)
- A drink of water to take into the session
- Socks (for the trampoline)

When you visit us for lessons, please make sure you arrive in plenty of time to get ready, so that your child is prepared in time and doesn't miss the start of the lesson.

eating before gymnastics

We don't advise doing gymnastics on a full stomach, so try to avoid eating less than an hour before the session, to reduce the risk of feeling ill during the lesson. We do understand that some children may come straight from school, in which case a light snack would be best.

medical conditions

When you enrol your child, please let us know of any medical conditions, injuries or special needs that your child has. This could include asthma, epilepsy, sight or hearing impairment or learning disabilities. Just let us know when you contact the centre.



do's and dont's:

how to support your child at their gymnastics classes



- ✓ Read and understand our centre rules.
- ✓ If you're unsure about what you need to bring with you, how to use Home Portal, or any aspect of the lesson, speak to us in centre.
- ✓ Use the changing and locker facilities in centre.
- ✓ Wait for the coaches to announce the beginning of the session and invite children into the gymnasium.
- ✓ Watch your child from our waiting areas so you can offer praise and support.
- ✓ Give your child a bottle of water to bring into the session with them and store in trays provided.
- ✓ Be patient. Not all gymnasts will develop at the same rate and some will need more support and encouragement. So celebrate every landmark development, from the first forward roll to their first front somersault.





- ✘ Assume that because your child has completed a skill once that this is enough. The coaches will be looking for consistency and the move should be completed to a certain standard several times.
- ✘ Criticise the coaches in front of your child. If you don't respect the staff, your child won't respect the staff either, meaning that the lesson progression will be affected. Any concerns that you do have should be raised with the centre's Assistant Service Manager (ASM) away from your child.
- ✘ Allow your child to wear jewellery to the session. If your child has recently had their ears pierced and is unable to remove them for a period of time, please complete one of our Earring Permission slips which are available at reception. Your child will have to wear plaster/tape over the earring/s.
- ✘ Take photos or videos of the gymnasium. If you would like to take a photo of your child in the gymnasium, please speak to the ASM on duty.
- ✘ Obstruct the doors to the gymnasium; please wait in the waiting area during the session.



