



Safe Practice Policy

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Executive Summary

Chelmsford Karate are committed to upholding the very best standards of safeguarding for all its members and staff. This document forms part of the clubs safeguarding policies and procedures.

Note: Where this document refers to 'parents' we mean parents and carers inclusively. The term 'children' or 'child' describes any person under the age of 18.

Purpose of This Document

This document serves as a guide to how martial arts should be practised safely by all members of Chelmsford Karate Club

Safe Practice Policy

Chelmsford Karate Club is a Martial Arts activity where safe practice is essential to help prevent injury. Children* are particularly vulnerable as they are still developing mentally and physically, so training methods need to be modified as described below.

Warmups

All activities should first include a thorough warm up which is appropriate for the activity taking place. To help reduce the risk of injury, specific attention should be paid to those muscle groups that will be used during later activity.

Martial Arts involving throwing, grappling, and strangling

Some examples are Judo, Ju Jitsu and Aikido

The risks include but are not limited to: falling on unsuitable surfaces; landing on the head; damage to the joints from locks; strangulation.

Safe practice should include, but is not limited to:

- Checking the matted area for suitability, particularly where the mats have been joined.
- Checking that there are no hard surfaces or sharp/hard objects around the matted area.
- Having an experience instructor who will ensure that children are not taught to use locks, throws, or strangles which will cause injury.

Martial Arts involving strikes, punches, and kicks

The risks include but are not limited to concussion (brain injury) from heavy blows to the head; damage to internal organs and joints from heavy blows; injury from inappropriate stretching and other exercises.

- Is age a consideration regarding head contact? Best practice recommended by the Martial Arts Safeguarding Group is to consider the complete removal of any head contact from training and competition for U16s. There is a 'no contact' rule for under 16.
- To what degree, if at all, is head contact allowed e.g., CONTROLLED LIGHT CONTACT, NO FOLLOW THROUGH)? As above.
- Is equipment a consideration when sparring or in competition? Hand Mitts, shin shields are used in protection of hands and lower legs. Control and no contact rule exist for under 16.
- Is the age of the participants/athletes a consideration when sparring or in competition.
- Participants are placed within their age range and level of grade to enable fair play.
- Is height or weight of the participants/athletes a consideration when sparring or in competition? No. Age and grade is considered.
- What considerations are taken with mixed gender sparring and competition? Under 16 mixed genders. 'No contact rule'. Over 18 no mixed gender rule.
- Is supervision of the athletes considered when sparring or in competition? High levels of supervision. A senior instructor sits on each four corners of the spa area. With additional judges' panel to the front.
- What floor covering (e.g., mats) is considered when sparring or in competition? Full matted area is used for sparring.
- What are the steps taken if head injury occurs? Sparring called to immediate close. No neck movement is encouraged until first aider or paramedics are on site.
- Is appropriate medical supervision considered when sparring or in competition? Yes, first aiders are on site.
- Avoiding excessive stretching and exercises such as press-ups on the knuckles or hitting heavy bags; the joints of children are still developing and can be damaged by these exercises.

Martial Arts involving weapons

Some examples are Kendo, Kubudo, Laido and Freestyle Forms Karate

Safe practice should include but is not limited to:

- No live blades (sharp or otherwise) in the training hall when children are present.
- Safe protocols for the use of training weapons by children.
- Good supervision at all times by Instructors.

Above all, safe practice means having a suitably qualified and experienced instructor who will ensure that children are not exposed to the above risks and who can make a training session enjoyable whilst maintaining the discipline essential to learning a Martial Art.