

SAFEGUARDING IN MARTIAL ARTS

SAFE PRACTICE POLICY

NAME OF CLUB:- Satori – Do Shotokan Karate Club

Martial Arts are activities 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. (*also includes Adults at Risk)

1. Warmups

Before the session starts, a thorough warmup must take place, no less than 10 minutes to help reduce the risk of injury, paying specific attention to those muscular groups that will be used later in the session. Starting with head, arms, body and legs.

2. Martial Arts involving throwing, grappling and strangling

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:

- (a) Checking the matted area for suitability, particularly where the mats have been joined.
- (b) Checking that there are no hard surfaces or sharp/hard objects around the matted area.
- (c) Having an experienced instructor who will ensure that children are not taught to use locks, throws or strangles which will cause injury.
- (d) All takedowns and break falls MUST be performed on mats, unless under the supervision of an experienced instructor to prevent any injuries.
- (e) All locks, holds, grappling and potential strangles, MUST be explained by an experienced instructor to their fullest and the do's and don'ts pointed out to prevent any injuries. Full compliance by all students must be acknowledged before starting the exercise. Any queries are to be answered and shown and explained again until comfortable that the student/s are ok with the instructions given.

3. 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.

- No contact to the head permitted. No matter age or grade. Unless instructed by an experienced instructor and using the suitable equipment provided, whilst supervised.

- Contact to the body is acceptable but must be controlled and not used to injury the opponent.
 - All students from Orange belt and above must own a pair of mitts. No mitts equal no sparring. Leg pads and WKF approved mitts are provided by the club for competitions. Own mouth guards must be provided, not a requirement though for club sparring.
 - Age groups are separated for the duration of the class, so sparring is kept separate. Grade and experience considered when pairing up all individuals. High grade brown belts and black belts permitted to spar with low grades for the lower grade's development.
 - Height and weight do not play a part in club sparring, individuals are partnered off based on grade and experience. Competitions are based around height and weight.
 - Mixed gender sparring is encouraged so all can experience different fighting types.
 - All students are supervised when sparring and one on one work.
 - No mats are required when club sparring. Mats will be used for club competitions.
 - In the event of a head injury, first aiders Dave & Graham will be on hand to deal with any such scenario.
 - All sparring and one on one work are supervised and medical attention from first aiders Dave & Graham is on hand.
- (a) 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.

4. Martial Arts involving weapons

Safe practice should include but is not limited to:

- (a) No live blades (sharp or otherwise) permitted to train with. Only rubber knives are permitted whilst under supervision.
- (b) Wooden training weapons are occasionally used under supervision of an experienced instructor.
- (c) 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.