



SAFEGUARDING IN MARTIAL ARTS

SAFE PRACTICE POLICY

NAME OF CLUB: Driffield Karate Academy

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. Warm Ups

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.

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 experience instructor who will ensure that children are not taught to use locks, throws or strangles which will cause injury.

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.

- (a)
 - Age is a consideration in regard to head contact.
 - Controlled light head contact is allowed.
 - Compulsory equipment must be used when sparring or in competition.

- Is the age and ability of the athletes is considered when sparring or in competition.
 - Height and weight of the athletes is considered when sparring or in competition.
 - No mixed gender kumite competition is allowed. In a sparring situation this is taken into consideration.
 - Athletes are supervised when sparring or in competition.
 - Mats are used in competition. During sparring, the floor surface is taken into account.
 - A qualified first aider deals with any injuries immediately.
 - Appropriate medical supervision is essential in competition. During sparring a qualified first aider is present.
- (b) Avoid 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) in the training hall when children are present.
- (b) Safe protocols for the use of training weapons by children.
- (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.