



The Academy of Shotokan Karate

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

This Policy has been developed by the Academy of Shotokan Karate to give the instructors, assistant instructors and members of all Academy of Shotokan Karate affiliated clubs best practice guidelines on Safeguarding and Child Protection.

The Academy of Shotokan Karate recognises that Safeguarding children is a concept that reaches beyond Child Protection, the aims of which are to protect children from abuse of any kind, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse. Safeguarding incorporates the additional precepts of preventing the harm of children's health and development, ensuring children are training in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Throughout the rest of this document the Academy of Shotokan Karate is referred to as **The A.S.K.**

Legal Framework

This Policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children within England. A summary of the key legislation is available from nspcc.org.uk.

The Children's Act 1989 defines a child as a person under the age of 18 and The A.S.K. has accepted this definition. However, it must be stressed that common sense should prevail; the duty of care and associated concerns for a 17 year old may not be the same as those for an 8 year old child.

Throughout this Policy those under the age of 18 are referred to as 'children' and also 'young people'.

Purpose and Aim of this Policy

The purpose of this Policy is

- to safeguard and protect children and young people involved in all types of Karate within The A.S.K.;
- to provide parents, instructors and assistant instructors with the principles, guidelines and precepts that form our approach to child safeguarding and protection.

The A.S.K. acknowledges that it has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to operate in a way that protects them.

The A.S.K. believes that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.

The A.S.K. recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount and that all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

The A.S.K. recognises that some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues and that working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies may be necessary to promote their welfare.

Safeguarding / Child Protection Officer

The A.S.K. has a designated Safeguarding / Child Protection Officer ('SCPO') who has the responsibility to ensure that this Policy is implemented and operated effectively. Her contact details are:

Juli Pops

East House, Middle Newham Farm

Milbourne, Ponteland

Northumberland NE20 0DJ

Tel: 07950 627263

morpethandblythkarateclubs@hotmail.com

Good Teaching Practice Guidelines

These guidelines for good practice are intended to protect children from harm and to ensure that A.S.K. instructors and assistant instructors are protected from accusations of bad practice, and also to assure parents and carers that the highest standards of teaching children and young people are being followed within the organisation.

The term 'instructor' refers to any Sensei teaching, and 'assistant instructor' refers to any Sempai teaching at that Sensei's behest.

Good Teaching Guidelines

Instructors should always ensure that children are fit to train, e.g. are not too tired or have an injury.

Instructors need to understand the added responsibilities of teaching children and also the basic principles of growth and development through childhood to adolescence.

Exercises and drills should be appropriate to age and build and the instructors should not simply treat children as small adults with small adult bodies.

Pre-adolescent children have a metabolic rate that is not naturally suited to generating anaerobic power, and therefore they exercise better aerobically, that is at a steadily maintained rate. However, they can soon become conditioned to tolerate exercise in the short, explosive bursts that more suit traditional Karate training.

Some children have difficulty in concentrating for given lengths of time and care should be taken that distracted children are not at risk of injury from those around them.

Children should be matched, where possible for size and weight as well as grade for any Kumite practices.

Care should be taken, especially where children train in the proximity of adults, to avoid collision injury.

Children should not be allowed to perform certain conditioning exercise, especially those that are heavy load-bearing, for example knuckle push-ups.

Children should not do assisted stretching – they generally don't need to and there is a risk of damage with an inconsiderate or over-enthusiastic partner

Good practice for children is to concentrate them on developing speed, mobility, skill and general fitness.

Instructors must:

- Do everything within their power to ensure that their teaching practices are beyond reproach and in the best interest of their students.
- Examine their own teaching methods and practices and remember the basic principal that they must be in the best interest of the child.
- Place the well-being and safety of the child or young person above the development of performance.
- Ensure that skills are taught in a safe, secure manner paying due regard to the physical development of young students.

Instructors should:

- Always work in an open environment and avoid private locations.
- Maintain an appropriate distance with younger students.
- Involve parents and or guardians wherever possible.

Physical Contact in Karate

Physical contact is seen as a necessary and positive part of learning Karate and is acceptable practice as long as it is appropriate and done in a safe and open manner. Instructors might manually adjust a student's technique – for example straightening a wrist or moving a block to a more effective position. They may test the strength of a child's technique or their balance by applying pressure. They may need to move a child for safety, e.g. to avoid collision or prevent them falling. Physical contact may also be used to re-assure or reward – for example, a light pat on the back or shoulder. Students working in pairs or groups will also almost inevitably be making physical contact with one another.

Because physical contact between teacher and student / adult and child is now mostly viewed as 'taboo' and is rare, instructors should ensure that parents and children are aware of that appropriate physical contact will occur between instructor and student and between student and student during Karate lessons.

Outside the Dojo

Parents or guardians should be advised when to deliver and collect children and not to leave children at the Dojo ('training hall') unless the instructor is present.

Children should be made aware that they cannot leave a class without first seeking permission from their instructor. If this does happen appropriate, discrete supervision should be provided, e.g. a responsible and appropriate person should accompany a child to toilet facilities and wait outside for the child's return and escort that child back to the Dojo.

In a mixed grade class, it may be that junior students and children are situated at the far side of the Dojo away from the exits. If this is the case, at the end of class children should be escorted safely past senior grades, who may still be working on some technique after the class has finished, to the exit.

Before and after the class begins, children are the responsibility of their parents. However, the instructor should always have parent or guardian contact details, i.e. mobile 'phone number, to hand, in case of emergency.

Courses and Competitions

Should A.S.K. students under the age of 18 wish to compete or attend courses or competitions, then their parents or guardians are responsible for all arrangements outside the Dojo, for example, travel and accommodation - A.S.K. instructors should not be involved in these arrangements. The student must be accompanied to the event by a parent or guardian

Protection from Abuse

The A.S.K. aims to keep children and young people who are its students safe from abuse and harm whilst those children and young people are within the A.S.K.'s jurisdiction.

The A.S.K. also seeks to recognise and act on other signs and symptoms of abuse or harm showing in its young students that have arisen from home, school or other areas of the child's life.

An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly or may be responsible for abuse by failing to prevent another person harming that child.

Defining Child Abuse

- Physical abuse

- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Bullying

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Examples of physical abuse in Karate include extreme physical punishments (e.g. press ups); forcing a child into training and competition that exceeds the capacity of his or her immature and growing body or limitations of a disability; assaulting a person; or where the child is given drugs to enhance performance.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing them from participating in normal social interaction.

Emotional abuse may involve a child seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another as well as serious bullying, causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may also occur alone.

Examples of emotional abuse in Karate would include subjecting children to constant criticism, name-calling, and sarcasm or bullying. It could also include their regular exclusion from an activity, non-selection for a team, failing to rotate training positions or more subtle actions such as staring at or ignoring a child. Putting Karate students under consistent pressure to perform to unrealistically high standards is also a form of emotional abuse.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing a child to take part in sexual activities, which may involve inappropriate touching, penetrative or non-penetrative sexual acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual photographic or online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect may involve a parent failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment), failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, or to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers) or to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Examples of neglect in Karate could include: not ensuring children are safe; exposing them to undue cold or heat or unsuitable weather conditions (e.g. outdoor training), or exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury.

Bullying

Bullying is often considered to be a fifth type of abuse but when it does occur it usually has elements of one or more of the four categories identified. The bully can be a parent who pushes too hard, an Instructor with a 'win at all costs' attitude or another intimidating child. It should also be recognised that bullying can take place in the virtual world of social networking sites, emails or text messages. If bullying does occur it should not be ignored and the victim should be supported through what can be a traumatic experience. Bullying will not just go away.

Bullying takes many forms but ultimately it is the perception of the victim that determines whether or not they are being bullied and not the intention of the bully.

How to Recognise Abuse

Physical signs of neglect and emotional abuse may include always being tired, no money, parents or guardians not being supportive, weight changes, lack of growth or development, inappropriate clothing for a child's age. Behavioural signs may include being unable to concentrate on the task in hand, being withdrawn, difficulty with speech.

Signs may be very obvious – a child may attend a Karate lesson and have burns or unexplained bruising, or a child may confide in an instructor or other student about being bullied or otherwise abused.

It is not your job to decide whether a child is being abused. It is your responsibility to share your concerns with The A.S.K.'s SCPO and, if appropriate, the local (e.g. school) Safeguarding Officer.

Reporting Procedures
Refer to Incident Flowchart, Appendix One to this Policy

Actions to be taken if Abuse is suspected

If you suspect that a child or young person is being abused by an instructor, student, parent or carer, you will have to report your concerns in order that the abuse is investigated and stopped.

If a child or young person tells you about someone's behaviour (e.g. an adult or another child) which he or she finds disturbing:

- Stay calm and reassure.
- Listen carefully.
- Be honest and explain you may have to escalate the matter, possibly to authorities.
- Make notes of what was said as soon as you can, during the conversation if possible and if it does not alarm the child who is confiding in you, if not as soon as possible afterwards.
- Maintain confidentiality.

If it is readily available, the A.S.K. **Safeguarding Referral Form, Appendix Two to this Policy**, should be used for the purpose of gathering and recording information by the person to whom the complaint of abuse is made (i.e. confided in) or by the person who suspects the abuse (i.e. has not been confided in but has witnessed symptoms of abuse). Whether this form is or is not used (i.e. is not readily available at the time) the following should be recorded as a minimum:

- Child's name, age and date of birth.
- Child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation(s), including dates, time and any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between fact and hearsay.
- Description of any visible bruising or other injuries, and indirect signs such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to incidents referred to.
- The child's account of what happened.
- Have the parents been contacted, if so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted, if so record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to and if so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser, if so record details.

Abuse suspected from within The A.S.K.

1. Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either an instructor or assistant instructor or any other club member, should be reported to the SCPO who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
2. The SCPO will oversee the completion of a Safeguarding Referral Form and will refer the allegations to the local Child Protection ('Social') Services department, which may involve the Police, or the SCPO will go directly to the Police if out of hours for Child Protection Services. Referral to the police or Child Protection Services should be confirmed in writing by the SCPO within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.
3. The parents / guardians / carers of the child must be contacted as soon as possible.
4. The SCPO will also notify the Chief Instructor as soon as possible.
5. If the SCPO is the subject of the suspicion or allegation, a Safeguarding Referral Form must be completed by the person raising the suspicion or allegation and the report must be forwarded as soon as possible to the Chief Instructor who will refer the allegation to the local Child Protection Services and / or the Police as 2. above.
6. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.

Poor Practice within The A.S.K.

In some cases it is hard to distinguish between poor teaching practice and abuse. As previously stated, it is the responsibility of the instructor is to do everything within his or her power to ensure that their teaching practice is beyond reproach.

1. If, following investigation and consideration the allegation is clearly about poor practice, and providing the person raising the issue, e.g. a parent, does not feel the issue needs to be raised with any external organisations but can be dealt with simply by change of practice within The A.S.K. framework (i.e. the A.S.K. club concerned), then the SCPO will refer the matter to the Chief Instructor to deal with as a poor practice issue.
2. If the allegation is about poor practice by the SCPO, the person raising the concern will take the matter directly to the Chief Instructor to deal with as a misconduct issue.

Abuse suspected from outside The A.S.K.

1. Bullying or abuse – within the child’s school:
 - should be reported to the child’s parents / guardians/ carers and the school’s Safeguarding Team to action and The A.S.K.’s SCPO should be informed.

2. Abuse – at home (e.g. a parent, guardian or carer):
 - should be reported to the local Child Protection Services and/or the Police as soon as possible and The A.S.K.’s SCPO should be informed.

In all events a Safeguarding Referral Form must be completed for the authorities and copied to the ASK’s SCPO who will inform the Chief Instructor.

**Policy initially prepared and signed off by Chief Instructor, Sensei D F Hazard
22nd March 2019**

Policy Reviewed and approved 23rd April 2023

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D F Hazard, Chairman

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J Lavender, Chief Instructor

Additional Information

Emergency: If a child is in immediate danger you should contact the police and/or call an ambulance on 999.

It is the responsibility of all A.S.K. Club Instructors to ensure that they know the contact details, if available, for the Safeguarding/Child Protection Officers/Teams of the premises at which they train, for example schools and sports halls.

My premises Safeguarding contact details are:

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N.S.P.C.C. Child Protection Lines
0808 800 5000
0800 1111

Brighton & Hove Child Protection Services
01273 290400
01273 335905 out of hours number

West Sussex Child Protection Services
01403 229900

Northumberland Child Protection Services
020 7404 6609

Kent Child Protection Services
03000 41 11 11
03000 41 91 91 out of hours number

Northern Ireland Child Protection Services (Derry Gateway Team)
028 71314090
028 950 49999 out of hours number

Welsh Child Protection Services (Vale of Glamorgan)
01446 725202
029 20 788570 out of hours number