



SAFE PRACTICE POLICY

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)

- **Warm Ups**

Prior to each session there must be a suitable warm-up. To help reduce the risk of injury, specific attention should be paid to those muscle groups that will be used during later activity. The warm-up takes 'cold' students and gradually brings them to a 'warm' state by gently escalating a series of exercises.

- **Cool Downs**

It is very important that a cool down is done at the end of every practice session. It is essential that the session ends with general stretching of the muscles and slow activity. Whether it is walking around the room, some tai chi type activity or kata in slow motion.

- **Classes involving throwing, locks 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:

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.

- **Classes 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.

- The Instructor must remain with the class throughout the lesson. Close attention must be given at all times, especially where there are young people. Care must be taken to avoid mismatching training partners.

- Students must be instructed upon first visit to never attempt any move or technique until a Club Instructor has deemed them competent enough to carry them out. Competence can be granted verbally or via a belt grading system.

- No Instructors or Students should be allowed to teach or practise any martial arts or combat sport with out adequate insurance cover.

- 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.



- The training area must not be overcrowded. Large classes must be split time wise, or only one half be allowed to practise in any one period.
- The floor area must be uncluttered and pillars, radiators, shelves etc must be well back from the practice area or well padded.
- **Classes involving weapons**
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
- **Sparring Classes**
Safe practice should include but is not limited to:
 - Students must always be supervised during sparring of any kind. This applies to both children and adults without exception.
 - The correct safety equipment must always be worn during sparring of any kind. No safety equipment - no sparring
 - All gloves must cover every knuckle and fingertip.
 - Sparring classes are semi contact only, no heavy contact at all.
 - Semi contact sparring must be kept in target zones, (front of head guard and above belt) No Uppercuts, spinning or jumping techniques.
 - Qualified first aiders should be present in all classes.

Head Contact in Sparring

- No Head Contact for Under 11 years old.
- Semi contact (no heavy hits) for 12 to 16 year olds only to the front of head guard, no uppercuts, spinning or jumping techniques to head.
- 16 and older, semi contact sparring only. Unless the experience, level and it has been agreed by the Chief Instructor for full contact, full protection must be worn and Instructor supervising at all times.

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.