



WADOKAI WORCESTER
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

WadoKai Worcester recognises the need to make provision for children and young persons, and acknowledges its moral and legal responsibility to ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All staff (paid /unpaid) working within our sport have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer

The Children's Act 1989 defines a child as a person under the age of 18.

Adopting best practice will help to safeguard those participants from potential abuse as well as protecting coaches and other adults in positions of responsibility from any potential allegation of abuse.

This document is binding and provides procedures and guidance to everyone within WadoKai Worcester Karate, whether working in a voluntary or professional capacity.

Policy Statement

WadoKai Worcester has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in all forms of Karate from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. As such WadoKai Worcester will strive to ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in our sport through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines ratified and adopted by WadoKai Worcester and approved by Sport England and the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit.

Sport can and does have a very powerful and positive influence on people especially young people. Not only can it provide opportunities for enjoyment and achievement; it helps to develop and enhance valuable qualities such as self-esteem, leadership and teamwork. WadoKai Worcester have to ensure that for those positive experiences to take place that sport in the hands of those who have the welfare of young people uppermost in their mind and that we have proper procedures and practices to support and empower them.

Policy aims

The aim of the Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and young persons with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of WadoKai Worcester Karate
- Ensure that all incidents of poor practice and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
- The policy recognises and builds on the legal and statutory definition of a child.
- The distinction between ages of consent, civil and criminal liability are recognised but in the pursuit of good in the delivery and management of WadoKai Worcester, a young person is recognised as being under the age of 18 years [Children's Act 1989].
- Confidentiality will be upheld in line with the Data Protection Act 1984, the Human Rights Act 2000 and the WadoKai Worcester Whistle Blower's Policy

Promoting Good Practice

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with a judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. It is a fact of life that some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them.

A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs protection. All cases of poor practice should be reported to following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters the club having experienced abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self esteem. In such instances the club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

Good Practice Guidelines

All those involved in Martial Arts should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to safeguard children and young people and protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within Martial Arts:

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication).
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Placing the welfare and safety of the child or young person first above the development of performance or competition.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them)
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust, which empowers children to share in the decision-making process
- Making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play
- Where any form of manual or physical support is required, it should be provided openly and in accordance with WadoKai Worcester Guidelines
- Keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance within Karate.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children in the changing rooms). If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents/teachers/coaches/officials work in pairs.
- Ensuring when mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by male and female member of staff (NB however, same gender abuse can also occur).
- Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.

Martial Arts Instructors need to understand the added responsibilities of teaching children and also basic principles of growth and development through childhood to adolescence. Exercises should be appropriate to age and build. Instructors should not simply treat children as small adults, with small adult bodies.

- There is no minimum age for a child beginning Martial Arts, as the build and maturity of individuals varies so much. However the nature of the class must be tailored to consider these factors
- In general, the younger the child, the shorter the attentions span. One hour is generally considered sufficient training time for the average 12 year old or below. Pre-adolescent children have a metabolism 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 Karate training.

- Children should not do assisted stretching - they generally don't need to, and there is a real risk of damage with an inconsiderate or over-enthusiastic partner.
- Children should be carefully matched for size and weight for sparring practice
- Great care must be taken, especially where children train in the proximity of adults, to avoid collision injury
- Children should not do certain conditioning exercises; especially those, which are heavy, load bearing, for example weight training or knuckle push-ups. Children should not do any heavy or impact work but should concentrate on the development of speed, mobility, skill and general fitness.

Practices to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If a case arises where these situations are unavoidable (e.g. the child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session), it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents.

Otherwise, avoid:

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Taking or dropping off a child to an event.

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session.

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Avoid taking children to your home where they will be alone with you.

Practices never to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Share a room with a child
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults that they can do for themselves
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised

NB. It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, e.g. if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the players. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting/assisting to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Incidents that must be reported / recorded:

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are told if:

- You accidentally hurt a child or young person
- He/she seems distressed in any manner.
- A student appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- A child or young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

Defining Child Abuse

Child abuse is when a child or young person is harmed by another person. There are five main type of abuse:

- **Physical abuse:** This includes being hit, kicked, shaken or punched, or given harmful drugs or alcohol
- **Emotional abuse:** This includes being called names all the time, being threatened or being shouted at or made to feel small.
- **Sexual abuse:** This includes being touched in a way you don't like by an adult or young person, being forced to have sex, or being made to look at sexual pictures or videos. For some disabled children, it includes if a person helping them to use the toilet touched them more than was needed.
- **Neglect:** Is when a child is not looked after properly, including having no place to stay, or not enough food to eat, or clothes to keep them warm. It also includes if the child is not given medical care when they need it, including medication. For some disabled children, it could include if their carer took away the things they needed for everyday life - like their wheelchair or communication board. Or not helping a disabled child who needed help using the toilet.
- **Bullying:** Is also a form of abuse. Bullying includes hitting or threatening a child with violence, taking their things, calling them names or insulting them, making them do things they won't want to do, and deliberately humiliating or ignoring them.

Common Signs of Abuse

Every child is unique, so behavioural signs of abuse will vary from child to child. In addition, the impact of abuse is likely to be influenced by the child's age, the nature and extent of the abuse, and the help and support the child receives. However, there are some behaviours that are commonly seen in children and young people who have been abused:

- The child appears distrustful of a particular adult, or a parent or a coach with whom you would expect there to be a close relationship.
- He or she has unexplained injuries such as bruising, bites or burns - particularly if these are on a part of the body where you would not expect them.
- If he or she has an injury which is not explained satisfactorily or properly treated.
- Deterioration in his or her physical appearance or a rapid weight gain or loss.
- Pains, itching, bruising, or bleeding in or near the genital area
- A change in the child's general behaviour. For example, they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn, or unexpectedly aggressive. Such changes can be sudden or gradual.
- If he or she refuses to remove clothing for normal activities or wants to keep covered up in warm weather
- If he or she shows inappropriate sexual awareness or behaviour for their age.

- Some disabled children may not be able to communicate verbally about abuse that they may be experiencing or have witnessed. It is therefore important to observe these children for signs other than 'telling'

These signs should be seen as a possible indication of abuse and not as a confirmation. Changes in a child's behaviour can be the result of a wide range of factors.

Visible signs such as bruising or other injuries cannot be taken as proof of abuse. For example some disabled children may show extreme changes in behaviour, or be more accident prone, as a result of their impairment. A child or young person may also try to tell a person directly about abuse. It is very important to listen carefully and respond sensitively. WadoKai Worcester Karate has a responsibility to act on any concerns.

Responding to suspicions or allegations

It is not the responsibility of anyone working at WadoKai Worcester Karate, in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. This is the role of the child protection agencies. However there is a responsibility for all involved in Martial Arts to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities. Advice and information is available from the local Social Services Department, The Police or the NSPCC 24 hour Help line 0800800 5000

WadoKai Worcester Karate assures all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation

- A criminal investigation,
- A child protection investigation,
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the Police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Action

Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the Child Protection Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the Child Protection Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the relevant officer who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

Concerns about suspected abuse:

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Child Protection Officer, 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.
- The Child Protection Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department, which may involve the Police, or go directly to the Police if out-of-hours
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- If the Child Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the other Child protection officer at the club or to a Child protection Lead who will refer the allegation to social services if required.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.

Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

This includes the following people:

- The Child Protection Officer
- Lead Child Protection Officer
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- Social services/police
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Seek social services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser.

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Responding to the Child:

- Do not panic – react calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Acknowledge that what the child is saying is difficult, but that they are right to confide in you.
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame.
- Make sure that, from the outset, you can understand what the child is saying.
- Be honest straight away and tell the child you cannot make promises that you will not be able to keep.
- Do not promise that you keep the conversation secret. Explain that you will need to involve other people and that you will need to write things down.
- Listen to and believe the child; take them seriously.
- Do not allow your shock or distaste to show.
- Keep any questions to a minimum, but do clarify any facts or words that you do not understand – do not speculate or make assumptions.
- Avoid closed questions (i.e. questions which invite yes or no answers).
- Do not probe for more information than is offered.
- Encourage the child, to use its own words.
- Do not make negative comments about the alleged abuser.
- End the disclosure and ensure that the child is either being collected or is capable of going home alone.

- Do not approach the alleged abuser.

Internal Inquiries and suspension

All internal inquiries relating to Safeguarding will be overseen by the Lead Child Protection Officer of WadoKai Worcester Karate suspension/s will be addressed in accordance with, WadoKai Worcester Karate Discipline Policy

- The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, Tel: 01788 550899, Fax: 01788 562189, Email: bac@bacp.co.uk, Internet: www.bacp.co.uk

Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator

Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children).

Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

Action if bullying is suspected

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in sport:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully (ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the Child Protection Officer or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).

Action towards the bully (ies)

- Talk with the bully (ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully (ies)'s parents.

- Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully (ies) compensate the victim.
- Provide support for the victim's coach.
- Impose sanctions as necessary
- Encourage and support the bully (ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.

Concerns outside the immediate sporting environment (e.g. a parent or carer):

- Report your concerns to the Child Protection Officer, who should contact social services or the police as soon as possible.
- See 4. Below for the information social services or the police will need.
- If the Child Protection Officer is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social services or the police immediately.
- Social services and the Child Protection Officer will decide how to involve the parents/carers.
- Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis only.

Information for social services or the police about suspected abuse:

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth of the child
- The 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. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- 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? If so, what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact social services or the police direct, or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111.