

Sports Karate Federation

SKF Crawley Cashman's Martial Arts Centre of Excellence.

Safeguarding in Martial Arts: Safe Practice

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).

Safe practice means having a suitably qualified and experienced instructor who will ensure that children are not exposed to any of the below risks and who can make a training session enjoyable whilst maintaining the discipline essential to learning a Martial Art.

A safe place to train; we will endeavour to ensure ALL students have a safe place to train, this include ensuring the Dojo, and all its equipment is frequently checked and upgraded when necessary to prevent risk or injury. Mats are checked for trip hazards. Equipment can be provided for use by students where necessary, please ask your Instructor.

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 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.

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- (a) Ensure the correct Safety equipment is WORN at all times - without exception. We recommend all students wear the correct protective head guard, (see our equipment code for specific guidelines), we also provide club 'loan' equipment to be worn during sparring if a student has yet to purchase their own.
- (b) For students under 16 years - Ensure light contact is made especially vigilant of contact to the head, strict guidance and technique to be adhered to all times. Sparring classes are split depending on Age, and ability to endure safe practice.
- (c) In addition gloves, shin pads, foot guards, mouthguard, and where necessary chest or groin guards. We adhere to strict guidelines on contact, which is kept "light" and respecting of size and weight.
- (d) A student may only take part in sparring if the relevant equipment is worn, as per guidelines.
- (e) Adhere to our Dojo Code of Conduct.
- (f) Respect all students, irrelevant of age, gender, race or religion.
- (g) Cool down: 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.
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4. Martial Arts involving weapons (during weapon specific training extra caution will be taken). i.e Freestyle Forms Karate, traditional weapons training Safe practice should include but is not limited to:

- (a) No live blades (sharp or otherwise) in the training hall at ANYTIME. present.
- (b) Safe protocols for the use of training weapons by children.
- (c) Good supervision at all times by Instructors.
- (d) ALL Weapons should be contained in the correct bag for travel to and from the place of training.

Above all, safe practice means having a suitably qualified and experienced instructor who will ensure that children and adults 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.