

# English Karate Organisation

## Child Protection Policy

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## **Introduction**

The English Karate Organisation shall henceforth be termed as the E.K.O. and the use and implementation of this E.K.O. Child Protection Policy for Club Instructors is mandatory. Club Instructor, as termed in this policy also includes any assistant instructors or other persons the Club Instructor may use in the operating of their club for no matter how short a period of time. Parents, as termed in this policy also includes guardians, carers or anyone acting in loco parentis. Children as termed in this policy includes all children and young people.

All Club Instructors have a moral and legal responsibility to ensure the following ;  
That the welfare of children is paramount.

All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and 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 Club Instructors have a responsibility to report concerns in confidence to the E.K.O. and / or any other authority, following the guidelines in this policy, as they consider appropriate to safeguard the well being of the child they have concerns about.

The law defines a child as a person under 18.

The E.K.O. is committed to adopting and implementing information and guidelines from authorities, bodies and agencies that will have a beneficial effect on the safety and well being of children.

Adopting correct procedures will help to safeguard children and young people from potential abuse as well as protecting Club Instructors from any potential false allegation of abuse.

This document is binding for all E.K.O. Club Instructors and provides procedures to be adopted by them, whether they be working in a voluntary or professional capacity.

## **Part 1**

### **Policy statement**

Karate as a martial art, sport and pastime has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved from harm. All children have a right to protection and in particular the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

This policy is to be implemented by all E.K.O. Club Instructors and any assistant instructors or persons they may make use of in the operating of their club.

All Club Instructors have an obligation to ensure all children (and indeed any person they are teaching) are valid members of the E.K.O. and that they, Club Instructors and indeed anyone who has any responsibility whatsoever in instructing in any form, has an Instructors Indemnity Insurance policy valid at all times. Club Instructors and anyone placed in a position to instruct or have a child or children placed in their care for no matter how short a time, must have an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau issued every 2 years and this must be made available to the E.K.O. Chairman upon request.

Sport can and does have a very powerful and positive influence on people of all ages and especially children.

Not only can it provide opportunities for future employment and achievement; it helps to develop and enhance valuable qualities such as self-esteem, leadership and teamwork. Club Instructors have to ensure that these positive experiences are developed correctly by having the welfare of all children uppermost in their minds and that there are proper procedures and practices in place to support and empower them.

### **Policy aims**

The aim of the E.K.O.'s Child Protection Policy is to promote good practise and provide children with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Club Instructors.

To ensure that all incidents of poor practise or suspicions of poor practise and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

To ensure informed and confident responses are made to specific child protection issues.

The distinction between ages of consent, civil and criminal liability are recognised but in the pursuit of good practise children are recognised as being under the age of 18 years (Children's Act 1989).

The E. K. O. additionally recognises that young people above the age of 18 are vulnerable to undue influence by adults in positions of responsibility.

Confidentiality will be upheld in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 2000.

## **Part 2**

### **Promoting good practise with children**

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. 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 children in order to harm them.

A Club Instructor will have regular contact with children and be an important link in identifying cases where they may need protection.

All suspicious cases of abuse and / or poor practise should be reported to the E.K.O. and / or any other authority following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters a 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 Instructor must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

### **Good practise criteria**

All those involved in Karate should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to safeguard children and protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within a Karate club; Always work in an open environment by avoiding private or unobserved situations, involving parents and having no openly favourite students.

Treating all children equally and with respect and dignity.

Placing the welfare and safety of children above the development of performance or competition.

Always maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with students both emotionally or physically.

Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust and respect.

Making Karate fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.

Ensuring that if any form of physical support is required it is provided openly and in full view of other class members.

Ensuring your teaching practise reflects the high standards expected of the E.K.O.

If groups of children have to be supervised, for example in the changing rooms or taken away to courses or championships, always ensure assistant instructors or any other adults approved by the Club Instructor, work in pairs and are of the same sex as the children being supervised. However it is to be noted that same gender abuse can also occur.

Ensuring that adults do not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms unless as a safety issue.

Being an excellent role model, especially not smoking, drinking alcohol or using bad language in the company of children.

Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.

Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children and disabled adults by avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.

Securing prior parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and / or other medical treatment.

Having up to date records of members, including contact numbers and information about medical conditions.

Keeping an accurate written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

Requesting written parental consent if the Club Instructor or anyone they designate is required to transport children or young people in their cars.

Club Instructors need to understand the added responsibilities of teaching children and also the basic principles of growth and development through childhood to adolescence. Exercises should be appropriate to age and build.

Club Instructors should not simply treat children as small adults, with small adult bodies.

The minimum age for a child beginning Karate is 5 years old, however as the build and maturity of individuals varies so much the nature of the class must be tailored to consider catering for the individuals needs.

In general, the younger the child, the shorter the attention 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 is more suited to Karate training.

Children should not do assisted stretching. They generally do not need to and there is a real risk of damage with an inconsiderate or over-enthusiastic partner.

No one under 18 years of age should be partnered with anyone who has a height difference of 6 inches or more or weight difference greater than 8 pounds in weight.

Children who participate in Kumite must use recommended protective equipment consisting of a minimum of gum shields, groin guards and hand mitts.

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 impact work but should concentrate on the development of speed mobility, skill and general fitness.

You should never ;

Engage in any rough, physical or what could appear to be sexually provocative games.

Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.

Take children to your home where they will be alone with you.

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.

However it may sometimes be necessary for the Club Instructor to do things of a personal nature for children especially if they are young or disabled. These tasks should only be

carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parents and the person concerned. If a person is fully dependant on you, talk with them 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 or you may be lifting or assisting them to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

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 as soon as possible ;

If you accidentally hurt a student.

If he or she seems distressed in any manner.

If a student appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.

If a student appears to misunderstand or misinterpret something you have done.

### **Part 3**

#### **Criteria for photographic, filming or any imaging equipment use**

Some people may use sporting events or weekly classes as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs, film footage or images of children and disabled people in vulnerable or compromising positions. It is imperative that Club Instructors be vigilant and any concerns they may have should be reported to the E.K.O. and / or any authority following the guidelines in this policy.

Any parent, guardian or indeed anyone who wishes to photograph, film or use any form of imaging equipment to 'film' a child when any other children may be included in the 'film' must first seek permission from the parents or guardians of these other children. There may be personal and / or legal reasons why a parent or guardian does not want their child's picture taken. For example it may have the potential for the child's location to be traced.

If any photographing, filming or the use of any other form of imaging equipment at any time and at any event or class appears in any Club Instructors or the E.K.O.'s opinion to constitute a breach of the ethics and integrity of which it was intended, the person will be required to stop photographing, filming or using the imaging equipment at once. They may be asked to leave the premises and may also be reported to the relevant authority in accordance with the guidelines in this policy.

Videoring can be a coaching aid and there is no intention to prevent Club Instructors using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, children and their parents must have granted prior consent and should be aware that this is part of an aid to assist in the development of the students performance and care should be taken in the storing of such films.

Students used in illustrations or promotional material must have given their consent along with their parents.

Using the names of children in a photograph should be avoided if possible by ensuring that if a student is named, you do not use their photograph or if a photograph is used, you do not name the student.

Parents permission to use an image of any kind should be sought if in any doubt.

## **Part 4**

### **Selecting assistants in any form to the Club Instructor**

The E.K.O. recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps should be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

It is essential that the same procedures are used consistently for all positions within the Club Instructors domain.

All Club Instructors should endeavour to seek as much evidence of a persons suitability to be given a position of any kind within their club, their identity must be verified and a Criminal Records Bureau enhanced disclosure must be provided.

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.

There should be a period of induction, on going training, support plus continual monitoring and appraisal of anyone given any role of duty under the Club Instructor.

## **Part 5**

### **Responding to suspicions or allegations**

It is not the responsibility of the Club Instructor whether in a paid or unpaid capacity to take responsibility or 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 them and all involved in Karate to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities. Advice and information is available from the E.K.O., local Social Services Department, the Police or the NSPCC 24-hour Help line 0808 800 5000.

The E.K.O. will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a person is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against someone 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.

## **Part 6**

### **Suspected abuse**

Any suspicions that a child has been abused should be reported. This will ensure such steps as considered necessary will be taken to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

The person receiving the allegation will refer them to the E.K.O. and / or Social Services who may involve the Police, or go directly to the Police if out-of-hours.

The parents of the child should be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Social Services department or Police.

### **Action if bullying is suspected**

The same procedures should be followed as set out above and in the previous sections relating to responding to suspicions or allegations, if bullying is suspected. All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies in place.

Remember that as in all Child Protection issues it is imperative to maintain confidentiality and a strict need to know basis adhered to.

## **Part 7**

### **What to do if there are concerns**

Are you concerned about the behaviour of someone or that a child may be being abused ?

Then report your concerns to the E.K.O. and / or Social Services and / or the Police immediately following the guidelines in this policy. These bodies will then liaise with each other as deemed appropriate and the person making the allegations to ensure the safety of the child and any other children.

Record what the child may have said if applicable, or what has been seen and include dates and times.

Information passed to the E.K.O., Social Services or Police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the allegation or concern. Information should include the following ;

Name of the child.

Age of the child.

Home address and telephone number.

Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or those of someone else ?

What is 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 physical bruising, other injuries and are there any behavioural signs ?

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 it is not a child making the report, has the child concerned been spoken to? If so what was said.

Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

Allegations of abuse made some time after the event for example by an adult who was abused as a child.

Where such an allegation is made, the Club Instructor should follow the procedures as detailed in this policy and report the matter to the E.K.O., Social Services or the Police. This is because other children, either within or outside the Club Instructors environment may be at risk.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is to be maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people but not in any order of priority ;

The E.K.O.

The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused.

The person making the allegation.

Social Services and / or Police.

The alleged abuser and parents if the alleged abuser is a child. **However Social Services advise should be sought on who should approach alleged abuser if at all.**

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

If you do not know who to turn to for advice or are worried about sharing your concerns, you should contact the Social Services direct, the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 or Child line on 0800 1111.

## **Part 8**

### **Poor practise**

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practise, the E.K.O. will deal with it as a misconduct issue.

### **Internal inquiries and suspension**

The E.K.O. will make a decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further Social Services and / or Police inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the Social Services or Police inquiries, the E.K.O. will assess all individual cases to decide whether a Club Instructor can be reinstated if so suspended and how this can be sensitively handled.

This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the Police. In such cases, the E.K.O. will reach a decision based upon the available information and which they consider will be in the best interests of the E.K.O. and members of the club were the alleged incident has taken place but first and foremost considering that the welfare of children will always remain paramount.

## Part 9

### Concern or Allegation Record Requirements

The following should be the minimum details kept if you have a concern, have received a concern or have received an allegation that relates to abuse, behaviour or actions towards a child or young person.

At all stages the E.K.O. must be informed immediately and kept fully informed of the progress of the report

Date

Your Name

Your address

A telephone contact number

Your position

Name of Child or young person

Address

Date of birth

#### Actions taken on receipt of Allegation/Concern

Date of receipt of allegation or concern

Action and response

#### Who contacted

##### E.K.O

YES/NO

Date

Time

Name and contact number

Details of advice received

##### Social Services

YES/NO

Date

Time

Name and contact number

Details of advice received

##### Police

YES/NO

Date

Time

Name and contact number

Details of advice received

##### Local Authority

YES/NO

Date

Time

Name and contact number

Details of advice received

