

British Karate Guild

Safeguarding and Child / Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

Code of Practice and Procedures

Dated April 2022

(Updated **May 2023** by M Da Costa. BKG Chairperson).



British Karate Guild

This Policy and Guidance should be observed by Coaches and Staff of the British Karate Guild

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Code of Practice and Procedures

This policy and guidance is specifically focused on children. For the purposes of this policy and guidance, a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

British Karate Guild acknowledges that it has a responsibility to promote best practice and the highest standards of conduct among its members and coaching staff in relation to the safety of children. It also recognises that good safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are also of benefit to our coaching staff, as they can help protect them from misunderstandings or erroneous allegations.

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1.00 Background

All coaching staff must:

- Recognise and accept they have a responsibility to protect any children within their sphere of work and care;
- Develop awareness of the issues which can cause children harm and have knowledge of and be able to recognise signs of the four most common types of abuse (emotional, physical, sexual, neglect);
- Be aware of 'grooming' behaviour (the befriending of children as a precursor to abuse); and
- Immediately report any concerns using BKG procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns.

British Karate Guild in turn will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Adopting a Safeguarding Code of Practice for all coaching staff.
- Adopting a procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns; and
- Reporting concerns to the relevant authorities.

2.00 The Policy

It is British Karate Guild policy that:

- All coaching staff accept responsibility for the welfare of children with whom they come into contact in the course of their work, and that they will report any concerns about a child or somebody else's behaviour, using the procedures laid down.
- There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) within the BKG, who will act following any expression of concern and the lines of responsibility in respect of child protection are clear.
- The DSL knows how to make appropriate referrals to statutory child protection agencies.
- All coaching staff who come into contact with children in the course of their professional activities must adhere to the Safeguarding Code of Practice and the procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Information relating to any allegation or disclosure must be clearly recorded as soon as possible, and there is a procedure setting out who should record information and the time-scales for passing it on.
- The Children Act 1989 states that the 'welfare of the child is paramount'. This means that considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations should not be allowed to over-ride the right of children to be protected from harm. However, every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.
- This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be referred to or included in recruitment, training and policy materials, where appropriate.
- It is part of the BKG's acceptance of its responsibility of duty of care towards children that coaches who encounter child protection concerns in the context of their work will be supported when they report their concerns in good faith.

3.00 Our Code of Practice

1. Inappropriate physical contact with children must be avoided. Physical contact is only appropriate in very limited circumstances. For more detailed advice please see the **Guidance for Coaches** set out in the Code of Conduct.

2. Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted. Inappropriate remarks include innuendo, swearing, and discussing their or your own intimate relationships.
3. Other than in exceptional circumstances, do not communicate directly with children by email or text messages and only then with the prior consent of the child's parent or guardian. If electronic communication is necessary, best practice would be to communicate directly with parents or guardians.
4. Never communicate with children via Twitter, Facebook, or other social media platforms.
5. Do not engage in behaviour that could be construed as 'grooming' a child (for example giving a child money, presents or favours or talking or behaving in an inappropriate or unprofessional manner towards children).
6. Do take a disclosure of abuse from a child seriously. It is important not to deter children from making a 'disclosure' of abuse through fear of not being believed, and to listen to what they have to say. If the allegation gives rise to a child protection concern it is important to follow the procedure for reporting such concerns, and not to attempt to investigate the concern yourself.
7. Always report any concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead regarding the conduct of another coach/member in relation to children.
8. Remember that those who abuse children can be of any age (even other children), gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action from taking place.
9. Good practice includes valuing and respecting children as individuals, and the adult modelling of appropriate conduct - which will always exclude bullying, shouting, racism, sectarianism, or sexism.

4.00 Guidance on responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

1. Stay calm.
2. Listen carefully to what is said and show that you are taking it seriously.
3. Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
4. Tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
5. Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace.
6. Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.

7. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
8. Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared (if this is in a school it will need to be the designated person within that school).
9. Make no judgment about what you have heard.
10. Record in writing what was said, using the child's own words as soon as possible - note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
11. Remember that whilst you may have been the first person encountering an allegation of abuse it is not your responsibility to decide whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the organisation.

5.00 How to report your concerns - Reporting procedures

Coaching staff could have their suspicion or concern raised in a number of ways, the most likely of which are:

1. The conduct of another member/coach or other adult;
2. A child 'disclosing' abuse;
3. Bruising or evidence of physical hurt;
4. Unusual behaviour by a child.
5. If a coach has such concerns, they should report them immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) within the BKG. This principle applies regardless of whether the coach is working in an employed or self-employed capacity.

If a child in your care has suffered a serious injury as a result of abuse, seek medical attention immediately and then inform your Local Authority Children's Social Care Department. If you have a concern outside of BKG hours you can seek advice from the NSPCC free 24-hour Child Protection Helpline (**0808 800 5000**).

Coaches are always able to contact the BKG's Designated Safeguarding Person if they wish to discuss any safeguarding concerns, however they arise. Coaches must report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately any concerns they may have about the conduct of another coach in relation to children.

The most common examples of the types of concerns that must be reported immediately are:

- Someone has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Someone has possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Someone has behaved towards a child in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The DSL will consider the concerns raised and refer them immediately. The matter will be immediately considered and then, if appropriate, the matter will be reported. After taking appropriate advice (which may include discussing the circumstances on a confidential basis with professional advisers), decide either to deal with the matter internally or not to take any further action.

If you think a child is in immediate danger

Don't delay – call the police on 999, or call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000, straight away.

6.00 Reporting Procedure for British Karate Guild Staff

There may be circumstances in which concerns about the safety of a child, or about the conduct of an adult in relation to children, are brought to the attention of a member of BKG non-coaching staff. Any such concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL. The DSL will then follow the procedure for considering child protection concerns as appropriate.

7.00 Designated Safeguarding Lead

The BKG's Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Mr Bryn Hughes MBE**

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