

Quest Karate Club Safeguarding in the 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)

Please consider the following in designing your own safe practice policy:

1. Warm Ups

All classes should include a thorough warm up which is appropriate for the activity taking place. All Warm ups should include a heart rate raising activity followed by stretching with close attention being paid to the particular muscle groups that will be used during the later activity in order to reduce the risk of injury.

2. Martial Arts involving throwing, grappling and strangling

The risks include but are not limited to: falling on unsuitable surfaces; landing on the head and damage to the joints.

Safe practice should include, but is not limited to:

- Performed on matted area which has been checked for suitability, particularly where the mats join.
- No hard surfaces or hard/sharp objects around the matted area.
- Performed under the supervision of an experience instructor who will ensure the techniques are taught/performed safely and which will not cause injury

3. Martial Arts involving strikes, punches and kicks

During practice of striking, punching and kicking, particularly when sparring, an experienced instructor and first aider will be present in case of any injury who will administer first aid and note/monitor all injuries

To prevent injury occurring these techniques and sparring will be performed:

- With ZERO head contact for under 16 years of age, and with minimal/light-controlled head contact for over 16's.
- While wearing approved protective equipment on any part of the body that will be striking or struck e.g. gloves, foot/shin pads, mouthguard.
- Against a suitable opponent with similar skill/aged/weight/height/gender wherever possible.
- On a suitable area in which no hard/sharp objects are around
- In the case of head injury, the designated first aider will treat the participant and seek further medical assistance if necessary. In any case, the participant must be cleared by the first aider before continuing practice.

4. Stretching and other Exercises

Instructors will avoid any stretch or exercise that has the potential to cause any type of injury. This includes excessive or forced stretching and exercises that could potentially cause musculoskeletal injury