

BRITISH COMBAT KARATE ASSOCIATION

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

October 2011

INTRODUCTION

Throughout this document the British Combat Karate Association is referred to as the BCKA

The BCKA has developed this policy for implementation throughout its member clubs within England.

The BCKA recognises the need to make provision for children and young persons.

The BCKA acknowledges it's 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), volunteers, Instructors, members, parents within our Association 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.

The BCKA is committed to working in partnership with all agencies to ensure best practice when working with children and young people.

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.

Policy statement

The BCKA 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 the BCKA 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 the BCKA and approved by the English Karate Federation, Sport England and the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit.

The Policy should be implemented by member clubs and is applicable to all within the BCKA.

Policy aims

The aim of the Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:
Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Associations, clubs and instructors affiliated to the BCKA
Allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

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 your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

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

Good practice guidelines

All those involved in karate 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 with no secrets).
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Placing the welfare of each young person first above the development of performance or competition.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with students (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers 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/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and in accordance with the English Karate Federation club guidelines.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in karate.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, teachers, coaches or officials work in pairs.
- Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that 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.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act *in loco parentis*, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

Within BCKA coaching manuals, particular reference is made to the development and training of children and young people. Instructors need to understand the added responsibilities of teaching children and also basic principles of growth and development through childhood to adolescence. For example, exercises and drills should be appropriate to age and build. Instructors should not simply treat children as small adults, with small adult

bodies. Additionally, the younger child has in general, a shorter attention span – the younger the child, the shorter period of time in which you will have their attention. Lessons need to be tailored based on the general age of a child. Children between the ages of 5 & 7 years cope with lessons which are broken down into short segments, for example, an instructor teaching kata to this age group is likely to lose the students focus after more than 8 – 10 minutes and should therefore move on to something completely different such as padwork.

Practices to be avoided

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be 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 time alone with children away from others
- avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event or activity.

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
- fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child
- 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.

N.B. It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the students involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. 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 or assisting a child 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 the

appropriate officer and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

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

Use of photographic/filming equipment at sporting events

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. All clubs should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the Club Child Protection Officer.

Videoing as a coaching aid: there is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme and their consent obtained, and such films should be stored safely.

Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers

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

Pre-selection checks must include the following:

- All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau.
- Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children. These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo).

Interview and induction

All employees (and volunteers) will be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive an induction, during which:

- A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures).
- Their qualifications should be substantiated.
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
- Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.

Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- Work safely effectively with children.

It is a requirement of all clubs to ensure their instructors, assistants or volunteers have been suitably CRB checked.

It is advised that:

- All Coaching staff to attend a recognised 3-hour good practice and child protection awareness training workshop, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards good practice and child protection.
- Non-coaching staff and volunteers to complete a recognised awareness training on child protection.
- Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person.
- Relevant personnel to gain a national first aid training (where necessary).

Defining Child Abuse

Child abuse is when an adult harms a child or young person. There are four main types of abuse:

• **Physical Abuse**

This includes being hit, kicked, shaken or punched, or given harmful drugs or alcohol.

• **Emotional Abuse (and bullying)**

Includes name calling, being threatened or shouted at, being made to feel small, taking their things, insulting them, making them do things they do not want to do, deliberately humiliating or ignoring them.

• **Sexual Abuse**

This includes being touched in an inappropriate way, being forced to have sex, or being made to look at sexual pictures or videos.

• **Neglect**

This 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 not giving the child access to medical care

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 ages, 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, 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 that 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 or withdrawn, or unexpectedly aggressive.
- 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.

Responding to allegations or suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in the BCKA 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 by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.

The BCKA 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 all available information will be used to reach a decision.

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 BCKA Child Protection 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 Club 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 who may involve the police.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- The Child Protection Officer should also notify the BCKA Child Protection Officer who in turn will inform the EFK Lead Child Protection Officer who will deal with any media enquiries.
- If the Child Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate Manager or in his/her absence the EKF Lead Child Protection Officer who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

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
 - The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
 - The person making the allegation
 - Social services/police
 - The EKF Disciplinary & Legal Commission (DLC) and Lead Child Protection officer
 - The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child)
- 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).

Internal enquiries and suspension

The Child Protection Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the Disciplinary Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated 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 Disciplinary Committee must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. 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, E-mail: 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.

Create an open environment.

- 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 Club 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'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.

Most 'low level' incidents will be dealt with at the time by coaches and volunteers. However, if the bullying is severe (e.g. a serious assault), or if it persists despite efforts to deal with it, incidents should be referred to the designated/Club Child Protection Officer as in "responding to suspicions or allegations" above.

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 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.
- The Child Protection Officer should also report the incident to the EKF Governing Body. The Governing Body should ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident play a role in EKF DLC and act accordingly.
- 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 Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111.

Clubs need to have a club child protection officer or a point of contact listed for students / children / parents to express concerns. If you do not have your own CPO you must list the BCKA CPO. The BCKA Child Protection Officer will inform the EKF Lead Child Protection Officer within 24 hours.

Children who are being abused will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe. As a coach you will often share a close relationship with the students and may therefore be the sort of person in whom a child might place their trust. **Children want the abuse to stop.** By listening and taking what a child is telling you seriously, you will already be helping to protect them.

It is useful to think in advance about how you might respond to this situation in such a way as to avoid putting yourself at risk.

Confiding – Timing and Location

It is understandable that the child may want to see you alone, away from others. The child may therefore approach you at the end of a session when everyone else is going home, or may arrive deliberately early at a time when they think you will not be busy. However, a disclosure is not just a quick chat, it will take time and usually has further consequences. Bare in mind that you may also need to attend to other students / children, check equipment or set up an activity – you cannot simply leave a session unattended. Therefore try to arrange to speak to the child at any appropriate time.

Location is very important. Although it is important to respect the child's need for privacy, you also need to protect yourself against potential allegations. Do not listen to the child's disclosure in a completely private place – try to ensure that other members of staff are present or at least nearby.

Reponding to a child

- Do not panic – react calmly as not to frighten the child
- Acknowledge that what the child is doing 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 to 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 (ie questions which invite yes or no answers)
- Do not probe for more information than is offered
- Encourage the child to use their 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

All records should:

- Be written as soon as possible, signed and dated
- Clearly distinguished between fact, observation, allegation and opinion
- Note the name, date, the event, a record of what was said, any action taken in cases of suspected abuse
- Be held separately from main records

- Be exempt from open access

RECORD OF DISCLOSURE

DATE:

Your Name:

Position Held:

Contact Details:

Name of Child:

Age: D.O.B:

Child's Address:

Postcode:

Tel:

Race / Ethnic Origin:

Relevant Special Needs:

Name & Address of Person Reporting (if different from above)

Disclosure Details Date:

Time:

Place:

WHAT THE CHILD SAID:

YOUR OWN OBSERVATIONS:

Any actions or advice given that you have decided to take: (parent/ Social Services/Local Authority/Other)

Your Name:

Signature: