



Sei-Bu-Kan Kokusai Kyokai

Safe Practice Policy

Martial Arts are activities where safe practice is essential to help prevent injury. Although the principles of safe practice apply to all students, children are particularly vulnerable as they are still developing mentally and physically, so training methods need to be modified as described below. There may also be vulnerable adults in classes whose tuition needs extra thought and care.

For the purposes of this policy children are those students who are aged 15 years and under.

1. Oversight of individual sessions

All training sessions must be led by a designated Sei-Bu-Kan (SBK) instructor who is registered with the Federation of English Karate Organisations (FEKO) as an instructor. There must be an instructor with a first aid qualification at all sessions.

2. Preparing the dojo (training hall) for training

- Organisations responsible for hall hire will be asked to ensure that the floor is clean and without debris prior to the club starting.
- Before each training session club instructors should do a visual check of the floor and also of the general area, removing anything that is likely to cause injury to students and ensuring that fire exits are unimpeded.
- Dojos should be heated appropriately and there should be ventilation available in hotter weather.
- Equipment should be clean fit for purpose.

3. Warm Ups

All sessions 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. Children should not do assisted stretching.

4. Physical Contact

Karate is a contact activity and students are encouraged to learn how to defend themselves against physical assault, which involves the practice of physical attack and defence. This will be undertaken with the utmost care and caution and the following principles should be observed in any situation of this type of physical contact:

- Opponents should be roughly the same size and/or ability. If this is not possible specific instructions should be given about control prior to activity and the activity should be continually monitored by an instructor.
- Any physical interaction between students should take place only under the direct supervision of an instructor.
- Instructors may interact physically with students to give them safe practice. Any interaction will be tailored to the size, experience and developmental level of the students.

5. Risks associated with karate-specific techniques

Throwing, grappling and strangling will only be taught by an experienced instructor who will ensure that children are not taught to strangle and are only taught a specific range of locks and throws with close supervision.

Strikes, punches and kicks are techniques come with risks associated with potential blunt force trauma. Injuries may be treated by the first aider but there may be occasions when further referral is needed. If a child is involved consent for this further treatment should be sought from their parent/carer except in cases of emergency when services may be called prior to seeking consent.

For children:

- No contact to the head is permitted.
- Gloves should be worn to protect the hands when striking a pad.

Specific care should be taken regarding head injuries (see appendix 1).

6. Students' (or parent/carers') responsibilities

Students (or their parents/carers if they are a child) should be made aware of their responsibility to ensure their own health and safety. This responsibility will be fulfilled by the following:

- If any student has a health condition that may be a problem during training the instructor should be informed about this. Appropriate medications/treatments must be brought to the session.
- There must be a truthful declaration on the health form completed on commencing training and instructors must be updated about anything which affects the health status of the student.
- There will be a record kept of contact details of all parents/guardian for all students in case they are needed during a session.
- Drinking water may be available in a venue, however, this cannot be guaranteed. Consequently, all students should bring drinking water with them to training sessions.
- Students should buy their own personal protective equipment to prevent cross contamination. This should be brought to every session. They will be advised on what equipment is needed by instructors.
- Students must not have physical contact without the direction of an instructor. Children in particular may become over-excited and physical contact may occur spontaneously without an instructor asking for it. This must be stopped immediately and constant reminders about this issue should be given.
- All students should have an up-to-date licence which includes insurance indemnified by SBK's governing body, the Federation of English Karate Organisations (FEKO). Students will be reminded about renewal dates but it is the student's responsibility (or that of their parent/carer if they are a child) to renew their licence appropriately.

7. Behaviour in class

Instructors are keen to encourage all individuals to take part in karate but if the behaviour of any student puts other students at risk they may be asked to cease attending classes. This includes students who need a disproportionate amount of supervision. No child student will be excluded without first discussing any problems with their parent/guardian.

8. Competitions

- Children's competition groupings will be of mixed gender but will be organized with the size and experience of the children in mind.
- Practice for competitions will involve instruction on levels of contact and rules associated with safety (ie stopping immediately when 'yame' is called).
- Competition bouts will be held on a fully matted area.
- All bouts will be supervised by experienced referees.
- There is no head contact allowed in children's bouts.
- A first aider will be present at all competitions.
- All competitors in a competition must hold a current FEKO licence.

9. Martial Arts involving weapons

No live blades (sharp or otherwise) are allowed in the training hall when children are present. Children may use blunt weapons (for example a jo) under the supervision of a suitably qualified experienced instructor.

Appendix 1

Concussion

Karate is a contact sport and there is a risk of concussion occurring during a training session. If a student suffers a blow to the head instructors must be especially vigilant for signs below which may indicate concussion and the need for expert medical attention.

- Looking dazed or 'blank'
- Laying motionless on the ground/slow to get up/unsteady on feet
- Clutching the head
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Confusion/feeling 'slow'
- Nausea/vomiting
- Fatigue
- Drowsiness
- Difficulty concentrating/ feeling 'like they are in a fog'
- Feeling 'pressure in the head'
- Sensitivity to light or noise

If there are any of these symptoms present the student should be rested immediately and they should have a review by a medical professional. If the student is a child their parent/carer should be asked to organise this, and a note should be kept of the advice given in the accident book.

Additionally, an ambulance should be called for the following symptoms:

- Seizures
- Double vision
- Weakness, tingling or burning in arms or legs
- Severe or increasing headache
- Loss of or deteriorating consciousness and not responding
- Repeated vomiting
- Increasing confusion or irritability
- Unusual behaviour change