



POLICY TITLE: Safeguarding Children	Date of Next Review: Jan 2027
Date of Issue: July 2019- Reviewed Jan 2024	Company Director: Alex Campbell
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Associated Policies: Photographs and Videos Policy	

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT *Sprint Martial Arts* is committed to the fair treatment of all in accordance with the [Equality Act 2010](#). This Policy can be implemented consistently regardless of any protected characteristics and all will be treated with dignity and respect.

All children of any age, gender, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity or religion have equal rights to protection, safeguarding and opportunities. We recognise that all instructors have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.

Policy Aim:

- To ensure that children are effectively safeguarded whilst engaged and participating in the *Sprint Martial Arts* Programme.
- To provide an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident to, and know how to approach instructors if they need to discuss concerns and have confidence they will be effectively listened to.
- To raise the awareness of all instructors of the need to safeguard children, and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication and information sharing between all instructors and the relevant external agencies i.e. police and social care
- To develop a structured procedure within the organisation to deal with safeguarding concerns and respond to disclosures
- To ensure that all instructors working for *Sprint Martial Arts* who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity and a satisfactory DBS check.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the author (Anna Hopkins) and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is the *Sprint Martial Arts* Director Alex Campbell. This policy may also be reviewed in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation or government guidance (including Working Together as revised within each nation, relevant legislative changes and nation specific child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures)
- Where new learning has been identified by the Local Safeguarding Partners
- As a result of any other significant change or event



A person is considered a 'Child' until their 18th birthday

The Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of children and young people (hereafter referred to as children) is paramount. This includes their right to be safeguarded against all forms of abuse, including sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation (FGM). Staff and volunteers should be alert to indications of possible child abuse/exploitation and understand procedures to be taken to raise their concerns.

Child Abuse

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. And it can increasingly happen online.

Categories of child abuse

- Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing injuries such as cuts, bruises and broken bones. It can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, slapping or suffocating. It is also physical abuse when a parent or carer fabricates, or induces, the symptoms of an illness in a child. For further information on physical abuse on [Physical Abuse](#)
- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. It does not necessarily involve violence and the child may or may not be aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse includes: grooming a child with the intention of sexually abusing them; all forms of penetrative and non-penetrative sex; sexually exploiting a child in return for gifts, money or affection; and making, looking at and distributing indecent images of a child. For more information on [Sexual Abuse](#)
- Neglect is persistently failing to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs resulting in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect is difficult to define as it is hard to describe the absence of something such as love or attention. In practical terms, neglect may involve a parent's or carer's failure to; provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, protect the child from physical and emotional harm or danger, supervise the child properly, make sure the child receives appropriate medical care or treatment. Neglect often happens at the same time as other types of abuse. For further information on [Neglect](#)
- Emotional abuse is persistent and, over time, it severely damages a child's emotional development. Active emotional abuse involves deliberately trying to scare, humiliate or verbally abuse a child. Passive emotional abuse happens



when a parent or carer denies the child the love and care they need in order to be healthy and happy. Such adults might be emotionally unavailable; fail to offer their child praise and encouragement; interact with them in an age-inappropriate way; be over-protective, limiting their opportunities to explore, learn and make friends; or expect the child to meet the parent's own emotional needs. For more information on [Emotional Abuse](#)

What is child sexual exploitation (CSE)?

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023)

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. For further information on [Child Sexual Exploitation](#)

What is Female Genital Mutilation?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines female genital mutilation (FGM) as 'all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons (WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, 1997).

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a violation of a girl's rights as a child and her entitlement to her bodily integrity. FGM is not simply an exotic or 'cultural' ritual that girls need to undergo, but a practice which has intolerable long-term physical and emotional consequences for the survivors. FGM causes death, disability; physical and psychological harm for millions of women every year worldwide, as in many instances it is done under non-sterile conditions and with no anaesthesia. For further information on [Female Genital Mutilation](#)

Radicalisation

Children or adults who are vulnerable and who may be experiencing a personal crisis, be socially isolated, feel socially rejected by others or have a low economic status or have little or no access to employment or education are particularly prone to being exploited and adopting an extremist agenda. The UK government's [Prevent Strategy](#) (2011), which is a key aspect of safeguarding, outlines the commitment necessary for organisations who come into contact with vulnerable adults and or children to recognise and report concerns.



Forced marriage and 'Honour-based' violence

Forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. The terms 'honour crime', 'honour-based violence' or 'izzat' embrace a variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against girls/women), including assault, imprisonment and murder, where the person is being punished by their family or their community. They are being punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour. In transgressing this correct code of behaviour, the person shows that they have not been properly controlled to conform by their family and this is to the 'shame' or 'dishonour' of the family. For further information on [Forced Marriage](#)

Child-on Child-Abuse

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers.

We aim to reduce the likelihood of child-on-child abuse using the following measures:

- The established ethos of respect, friendship, courtesy and kindness
- High expectations of behaviour
- Clear consequences for unacceptable behaviour
- Systems for any child to raise concerns with instructors, knowing that they will be listened to, valued and believed

Any concerns, disclosures or allegations of child-on-child abuse in any form should be referred to the DSL. Where a concern regarding child-on-child abuse has been disclosed to the DSL, advice and guidance will be sought from Children's Social Care and where it is clear a crime has been committed or there is a risk of crime being committed the Police will be contacted.

Responsibility

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; however, *Sprint Martial Arts* has a named Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- (a) Holds additional responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the organisation and to support the company director to meet safeguarding requirements
- (b) Acts as a source of support and expertise in carrying out safeguarding duties for the organisation and acts as a focal point for instructors to discuss concerns
- (c) On receiving safeguarding concerns will liaise with and refer to the appropriate agencies including children's social care.



- (d) Is appropriately trained with updates every two years and will refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals but at least annually
- (e) Encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- (f) Will keep detailed, accurate records of all concerns about a child and actions taken on the [Designated Safeguarding Lead Concern Form](#)
- (g) Will ensure that all such records are kept confidential and stored securely.
- (h) Will liaise with local children's social care and work with other agencies and professionals in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- (I) Will support the company director to ensure that all instructors sign to say they have read, understood and agree to work within the organisations child/adult safeguarding policies
- (j) Will help ensure the organisations policies and procedures are clearly advertised on the organisations website and accessible for all.

All Instructors

- (a) Understand that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that they have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action
- (b) Consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child
- (c) Know how to respond to a child who discloses abuse through delivery of guidance; 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and Gov.UK [what to do if you are worried a child is being abused \(2015\)](#)
- (d) Will refer any safeguarding or child protection concerns to the DSL or if necessary where the child is at immediate risk to the police or children's social care;
- (e) Will record these concerns on a [Safeguarding Concerns Form](#) and pass it to the DSL. They may also discuss their concerns in person with the DSL but the details of the concern should be recorded in writing
- (f) Will sign to say they have read, understood and agree to work within the organisations safeguarding policies.

Disclosures

We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose they are being or have been abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in others or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. A child who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on a number of subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers.



Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

During their conversation with the child instructors will:

- ❖ Listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely
- ❖ Remain calm and not overact or act shocked or disgusted – the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener
- ❖ Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling someone
- ❖ Not be afraid of silences – instructors must remember how difficult it is for the child and allow them time to talk
- ❖ Take what the child is disclosing seriously
- ❖ Ask open questions and avoid asking leading questions
- ❖ Avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations
- ❖ Not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has suffered abuse.
- ❖ Tell the child what will happen next and that you will need to act to protect them and possibly others
- ❖ Consider immediate safety and wellbeing of child
- ❖ Write up their conversation as soon as possible on the [Safeguarding Concern Form](#) in the child's own words. (Instructors should do this as soon as practically possible).
- ❖ The record should be signed and dated, the instructors name should be printed and it should also detail where the disclosure was made and who else was present. The record should be handed to the DSL.

If instructors are worried about a child's behaviour but they haven't actually disclosed any abuse or you are not sure if it is due to abuse, they should still share concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will support and advise on what actions to take.

Allegations Against Instructors

All instructors should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child.

We understand that a child may make an allegation against instructors, or that instructors may have concerns about another member of the team. If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children as an instructor this should immediately be passed on to the DSL

The DSL on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the earliest opportunity and before taking any further action. If the allegation made to an instructor concerns the DSL, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Company Director.

Whistleblowing



All instructors should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of instructors, poor or unsafe teaching and potential failures in the organisations safeguarding arrangements. If it becomes necessary to raise concerns to somebody independent of the organisation, they should report to The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline which is available to those who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All instructors must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with the DSL or other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPRUK) is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm. All instructors must be aware that they cannot promise a child they will maintain confidentiality when it might compromise the child or others safety or wellbeing. However, we also recognise that all matters relating to child protection are personal to children, families and carers. Therefore, the DSL will only disclose information about a child to other professionals on a need-to-know basis. The DSL will always undertake to share an intention to refer to child to social care with their knowledge and inform parents /carers unless to do so would put them or others at risk.

ANTI BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING *Sprint Martial Arts* acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms e.g. cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying. A record of known bullying incidents will be made and any actions taken.

Recruitment

All instructors are recruited with ID checks, a valid DBS and with reference checks

Training

All instructors have to attend the appropriate level of safeguarding training (see training matrix).