

# SAFE PRACTICE IN KARATE



## Safeguarding in Karate: Safe Practice

Karate is an oriental system of unarmed combat using the hands and feet to deliver and block blows to the body. It involves punching, kicking and blocking and can occasionally result in injury.

### Karate involves strikes, punches and kicks

Taking part in Karate can be risky and the risks include but are not limited to:

- Bruising;
- Injuries to the face such as nose bleeds or broken noses;
- Concussion is also a possibility from strikes to the head;
- Broken bones (fingers / toes especially); and
- Injury from inappropriate stretching and other exercises such as torn muscle or ligaments are also possible.

### **NB: However, the List is not exhaustive**

Children are particularly vulnerable as they are still developing mentally and physically, so training methods need to be modified as described below, and measures need to be in place at competitions to minimize such injury.

So to minimize the possibility of injury the following safe practice is encouraged in all UKA dojo's

The following is a guide to consider along side the health and safety assessment that must be completed before each training session and where appropriate each competition.

### **Safe Practice in the Dojo**

It is essential that a basic risk assessment is carried out by the lead trainer on arrival at the venue to ensure previous users have complied with the minimum health and safety requirement such as removal of litter, dangerous objects, spillage on floors etc.

Flooring must be dry and where necessary non-slip mats are laid down to prevent slipping and create more comfort when sparing.

If there are emergency exits and these are opened during hot weather care must be taken to ensure no one enters or leaves the building without prior authority from the lead coach.

Safeguarding all participants whilst in the Dojo is the responsibility of the lead Sensei.

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## Safe Practice in class

Warm up is essential and must be appropriate for the activity that will take place later that session

Monitoring limitations of participants is vital to reduce muscle or ligament injury so encouragement is key but at participants own pace and ability

Asking if anyone has an injury before class starts and then advise participant accordingly to take care is good practice.

Avoiding excessive stretching and exercises such as press-ups on the knuckles or hitting heavy bags; the joints of children are still developing and can be damaged by these exercises.

Water is readily available for each participant if they need it to prevent dehydration

## Safe Practice when sparing and in Kumite

**Contact in Karate must be controlled as best as possible to avoid serious injury.**

All participants when sparing must strictly adhere to the following or taking part in Kumite competition: -

- Wear hand mits
- Gum shield
- Foot pads are optional
- **In particular with children under the age of 16 contact to the face/head is NOT permitted.**

- height or weight of the participants are a consideration in competition
- Female participants are able to wear chest guards
  - Sparring in training must be supervised and monitored
  - Mats will always be laid for competition events
  - Any injury to the head the participant is advised to attend hospital

## **SAFE PRACTICE IN KARATE**

- All coaches are first aid trained and regularly updated every three years
- St Johns Ambulance or similar qualified first aiders are present at all competitions

Above all, safe practice means having a suitably qualified and experienced instructor who will ensure that children are not exposed to the above risks and who can make a training session enjoyable whilst maintaining the discipline essential to learning Karate.