



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Designated Safeguarding Officer: Philip Higgins

January 2021



Policy Statement

Focus Martial Arts & Fitness Club is a sporting organisation which makes provision for adults, children and young people to learn recreational and competitive Martial Arts disciplines along with fitness classes.

We understand that giving safeguarding high priority will help ensure a safe, secure environment for all our students and help encourage wider participation in sport and physical activity.

Effective safeguarding practice acts as a preventative measure and will help to create a positive, safe and welcoming atmosphere for the community. All Focus Martial Arts and Fitness coaches recognise they have a duty of care to children involved in the club's activities and will receive regular training to enable them to make informed and confident responses to safeguarding issues.



GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Focus Martial Arts & Fitness aims to promote good practice so that children and young people (under 18s) are able to participate in club activities with appropriate safety and protection from harm. Staff are not required to investigate or decide whether abuse has taken place; however it is everyone's responsibility to act on any concerns by contacting the appropriate authorities.

All coaches should be exemplary role models to create a safe and positive culture for sporting activities. The following guidelines will help to ensure this and will also help to protect coaching staff from misunderstandings or false allegations:

- Work with young people in an open, visible environment
- Treat members of the club with equal respect
- Welfare of students and individual development must have high priority
- Maintain an appropriate personal distance and discourage intimate relationships between coaching staff and adult students
- When physical support is needed it should be open and with the student's full consent
- Build strong relationships within the club based upon trust and mutual respect
- Feedback to students and coaches must be constructive and developmental
- Focus upon making sport fun, enjoyable and promote fair play
- Coaching staff must keep up-to-date with technical skills, training and insurance
- Children must be encouraged to develop independence with equipment and if support from a coach is needed parents must be informed.
- Mixed groups on a residential activity must be accompanied by male and female adults with current DBS checks.
- Have parental consent to administer emergency first aid
- Keep a written record of any first aid treatment needed during club activities
- Have parental consent to transport young people by car

AVOID

- Spending time alone with children
- Giving a student preferential treatment (unless this is transparent and a justified strategy)
- Rough play with children
- Using, or allowing a student to use inappropriate language

- Humiliation of students
- Inaction when faced with a concern
- Meeting children or young people outside club activities

It must be acknowledged that the nature of martial arts will make it necessary for coaches to enable children's technical progress through physical support. This must always be respectful and have the full understanding and consent of both parents and the students.

USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES AND FILMING

Photographs and videos are a legitimate coaching aid and also a key element in advertising Focus Martial Arts & Fitness to the community. Consent for using images of members of the club is requested as part of the signing up procedure. Consent for using images for social media posts should be requested separately.

Sporting events may be used as an opportunity to take inappropriate images of young people. All coaches must remain vigilant and any concerns reported immediately.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF STAFF

Focus Martial Arts & Fitness knows that undesirable people will look for opportunities to have close contact with children. The following steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from involvement with club members:

- Recruitment of new staff involves an application form with personal details about the applicant
- Applicants must be interviewed by two senior club staff
- Consent should be obtained to seek information about past criminal activities
- Two confidential references must be given in writing and followed up verbally
- Evidence of identity must be given

TRAINING

All coaches will receive a 'Coach's Handbook and Code of Conduct' which will clarify roles, responsibilities and the club's expectations. In addition to this induction material, staff are expected to attend:

- Regular and frequent coaches meetings to improve teaching practice, share information and discuss safeguarding issues.
- Child Protection Awareness workshops to facilitate good practice
- First Aid training

PROCEDURES

Focus Martial Arts & Fitness have clear procedures to follow should there be a concern about practice or the safety of a child. Concerns should be reported confidentially to the DSO immediately so that appropriate action can be taken. The context of the concern will inform the next steps, which could be:

- Formal conduct meeting with the staff member concerned
- Specific training to enable improvement in practice
- Report to Social Services First Response 01296 383962
- Meeting with parents
- If abuse is suspected, contact police directly

If the concern involves the DSO, a senior member of the coaching staff should be consulted.

The procedure should be followed if an allegation of past abuse by a staff member is made.

BULLYING

Bullying is extremely damaging for both the victim and the perpetrator and should always be taken very seriously. Focus Martial Arts & Fitness works with the community to promote mutual respect, support and encouragement, personal growth and team cohesion. A restorative approach is used to enable positive relationships and resolve personal disputes. Parents will be kept informed and involved at all times and, if necessary, sanctions imposed.

USEFUL CONTACTS

NSPCC CHILD PROTECTION HELPLINE: 0808 800 5000

FIRST RESPONSE: 01296 383962

CHILDLINE: 0800 1111

Declaration:

As Designated Safeguarding Officer for Focus Martial Arts & Fitness Club, I will oversee the implementation of this Safeguarding Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Signed..... Date.....

Philip Higgins