



SAFE PRACTICE POLICY

English Karate National Governing Body (EKNGB)

Effective Date: 15 February 2026

Next Review Date: 15 February 2027

1. Purpose

The English Karate National Governing Body (EKNGB) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and positive environment for all participants involved in Karate across England.

This policy aligns with the Safeguarding Code in Martial Arts, Sport England governance requirements, and all existing EKNGB governance, safeguarding and disciplinary policies.

The EKNGB recognises that safeguarding and safe practice are fundamental to athlete welfare, performance development and organisational integrity.

2. Policy Statement

The welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount.

Safe practice principles underpin governance and leadership, coaching delivery, club environments, national squad programmes, events and competitions, online engagement, recruitment and workforce management.

All members share collective responsibility to promote safety and challenge poor practice.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all affiliated clubs, licensed coaches and assistant coaches, volunteers and officials, board members, national team staff and athletes, and event organisers operating under EKNGB sanction.

Compliance with this policy is a condition of affiliation and licensing.

4. Safeguarding Framework

In line with the Safeguarding Code in Martial Arts, the EKNGB ensures:

- A designated Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)
- Club-level Safeguarding Officers (CSOs)
- Clear reporting pathways
- Safer recruitment procedures
- Mandatory safeguarding training
- Appropriate insurance cover
- A published Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing procedures
- Disciplinary regulations

All safeguarding concerns are managed proportionately, confidentially and in accordance with statutory guidance.

5. Safe Recruitment

All clubs must operate safer recruitment procedures including:

- Enhanced DBS checks where required
- Two references for new coaches
- Verification of coaching qualifications
- Safeguarding training (minimum Level 1 recognised course)
- Clear role descriptions
- Signed Codes of Conduct

Individuals who fail to meet safeguarding standards will not be licensed or permitted to operate under EKNGB affiliation.

6. Safe Coaching Environment

6.1 Risk Assessment

All training venues must be risk assessed annually and maintain suitable flooring, safe training space, lighting, ventilation, emergency procedures, and first aid provision.

6.2 Supervision & Ratios

Appropriate coach-to-student ratios must be maintained. Children must never be left unsupervised.

6.3 Professional Boundaries

Coaches must avoid unnecessary physical contact, explain and gain consent before corrective contact, never be alone with a child in changing areas, and avoid transporting children alone unless agreed in writing with parents.

7. Concussion & Head Injury Management

7.1 Recognition of Concussion

Participants must be removed immediately if they display symptoms such as loss of consciousness, confusion, headache, dizziness, nausea, blurred vision, sensitivity to light/noise, unsteady balance, or behavioural change.

When in doubt, sit them out.

7.2 Immediate Action

Stop participation immediately. No same-day return. Inform parent/guardian if under 18. Record the incident and advise medical assessment.

7.3 Return to Play

A graduated return-to-training protocol must be followed with minimum 24-hour symptom-free progression between stages. Medical clearance is required before return to contact training for children or adults at risk.

7.4 Event Requirements

All sanctioned competitions must include on-site medical provision, a clear concussion protocol, referee authority to stop contests, and an incident reporting mechanism.

8. Online Safety

All communication must follow EKNGB online safety guidance and UK GDPR compliance.

No private one-to-one messaging with children via social media. Communication must include parents or official platforms. Images and videos require written consent.

Cyberbullying or inappropriate conduct will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

9. Anti-Bullying, Harassment & Respect

The EKNGB operates a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment, discrimination, emotional abuse, physical abuse, and sexual misconduct.

All participants must uphold the EKNGB Code of Conduct.

Concerns will be managed under formal disciplinary procedures and may be referred to statutory agencies.

10. Inclusion & Equality

Karate must be accessible to all.

Reasonable adjustments must be made in alignment with the EKNGB Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy.

Discrimination based on protected characteristics will not be tolerated.

11. Physical Safety Standards in Training

Protective equipment must be worn as required. Contact levels must match age and grading. Conditioning drills must be age-appropriate. Warm-ups and cool-downs are mandatory. Hydration breaks must be provided.

Children under 10 must not participate in excessive head contact drills.

12. Competition Safety

All sanctioned events must include medical cover, safeguarding officer presence, risk assessment, qualified referees and judges, clear emergency procedures, and secure changing areas.

No event may proceed without these minimum standards.

13. Reporting Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the Club Safeguarding Officer, the Association lead safeguarding officer or the EKNGB Lead Safeguarding Officer.

Serious matters may be referred to Police, Children's Social Care, or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Whistleblowers will be protected from victimisation.

14. Monitoring, Compliance & Sanctions

Failure to comply with this policy may result in suspension of licence, club affiliation withdrawal, disciplinary investigation, or referral to statutory authorities.

The EKNGB Board will monitor compliance through annual club renewal checks, spot audits, event inspections, and safeguarding reporting reviews.

15. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the EKNGB Board to ensure continued alignment with the Safeguarding Code in Martial Arts, national safeguarding legislation, Sport England governance requirements, and emerging medical guidance.