



SAFEGUARDING IN MARTIAL ARTS

SAFE PRACTICE POLICY

NAME OF CLUB:- Ronin Budo Martial Arts

Martial Arts are activities where safe practice is essential to help prevent injury. Children* are particularly vulnerable as they are still developing mentally and physically, so training methods need to be modified as described below. (*also includes Adults at Risk)

1. Warm Ups

All activities should first include a thorough warm up which is appropriate for the activity taking place kickboxing, karate or weapons training. To help reduce the risk of injury, specific attention should be paid to those muscle groups that will be used during later activity. There should also be consideration of the make up of the group age, ability and size.

2. Martial Arts kickboxing and karate.

There are risks which include but are not limited to: concussion (brain injury) from heavy blows to the head; damage to internal organs and joints from heavy blows; injury from inappropriate stretching, bag-work and other exercises.

- Head contact. The club operates a semi contact policy with the head for adults and light contact for children, under 16's must wear head protectors when sparring and during any training that requires targeting the head. Adults in light sparring and semi contact sparring should and are recommended to wear head protection.
- When engaging in competitive sparring height and weight of opponent should be a consideration. Rules should be changed for under 16's if there is a mismatch, this includes no head contact.

- All martial artists need to consider size and ability of their opponent, coaches should closely monitor the action and take measures if students are not following protocol, the protection of the participants outweighs the notion of the activity.
 - Sparring takes place on the matted area, following the guidance in the risk assessment there are numbers and all risks are advised there.
 - If anyone appears to take an excessive head-shot they are monitored for a period after the event and should stop sparring, they are advised to seek medical advice; if they have gone unconscious we must make sure they are advised to go to hospital and not to drive if appropriate, parents must be informed in both instances if under 16. If an under 16 does have either of these situations occur we must understand why and an overview of our procedure will occur.
 - Bag-work and pad-work; hand-wraps and gloves should be worn when using the bags for heavy training, this indicates using power in the hand techniques. Light work is allowed so long as power is very light. Instructors or coaches must not allow children (under 16) to use the bags without gloves. When using the impact pads, for developing good form in karate gloves are not required unless there is a long period of pad-work, so a full lesson. For intermittent good form training gloves are not required, the karate hand pads should be used. Under 16's should wear hand pads at all times.
- (a) Exercises such as press-ups on the knuckles, overstretching or hitting heavy bags should be avoided with children under 16; the joints of children are still developing and can be damaged by these exercises. We have specific bags for these age groups and should be used.

3. Martial Arts involving weapons

All instructors and coaches at Ronin Budo only coach and perform weapons training appropriate to their understanding. The weapons in the dojo must only be used under the correct guidance and instructors should reprimand anyone who attempts to 'play' with the weapons they are to be respected and only used in the correct context.

Safe practice should include but is not limited to:

- (a) No live blades (sharp or otherwise) in the training hall when children are

present. We only use weapons for competition in forms and kata with the exception of sport sword. Sport sword practice will only use the respective foam covered weapons and all safety equipment must be worn.

- (b) Safe protocols for the use of training weapons by children; all children will start using the safety weapons, some of these are foam and others plastic. Once they are deemed capable of doing the required patterns; we can then proceed to using the heavier safety weapons. No under 16's will use any live weapon.
- (c) Good supervision at all times by Instructors and coaches must be in place, no under 16's practice alone.

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, Kickboxing and weapons training in martial arts.