

Seitou Ryu Karate Child Protection Policy

A Child Protection Policy should contain;

Measures to prevent abuse

Seitou Ryu Karate Child Protection Policy

The aims of the Child Protection Policy are to;

- Promote good practice throughout the Association and its members
- Protect and safeguard the safety and welfare of children training in clubs affiliated to Seitou Ryu Karate

The Child Protection Co-ordinators for Seitou Ryu Karate will be:

- Richard Hang Hong
- Caroline Hang Hong

Their duties will be to;

- act as the Child Protection Officer for Seitou Ryu Karate
- provide training material and advice for Seitou Ryu Karate
- encourage any affiliated Associations / Clubs to appoint Child Protection Officers and
- implement the various procedures contained within this document
- provide access to Enhanced Criminal Record Disclosures and decide on the suitability of instructors based on these checks
- set up and hold a register of all instructors and assistant instructors including their qualifications.
- seek agreement from each instructor / assistant instructor for an Enhanced Criminal Record disclosure and pass this to the Child Protection Co-ordinator for processing
- deal appropriately with the results of Disclosure ensuring confidentiality
- produce and distribute the policy and procedure for child protection throughout their Association / Club
- provide training for Association / Club members
- deal with enquiries and concerns raised about any child protection issue within their Association / Club
- liaise with relevant statutory / voluntary organisations such as the police, social services, NSPCC etc.
- deal with and keep records of allegations or disclosures of child abuse
- monitor and review the policy and procedure

Training material

Example of training material

1. The Coach's responsibilities to children

UK law defines a child as under 16yrs old (or under 18 if in full-time education). The responsibilities include;

- To be aware of the legal Duty of Care (which is greater towards children than towards adults)

See details of the Affutu-Nartey v Clarke & Anor Case below

- To follow the guidelines offered by Governing Bodies and/or Associations and ensure that they are qualified to provide the services they offer (what qualifications do you have to coach children?)
- To safeguard children from all forms of abuse
- To follow guidelines of good practice to reduce the possibility of allegations of inappropriate behaviour to children
- To warn participants thoroughly, repeatedly and clearly of the inherent risks of the activity
- To carry adequate and appropriate insurance cover
- To be aware of and use strategies to prevent injury to children
- To protect the confidentiality of all parties involved

THE AFFUTU-NARTEY V CLARKE & ANOR CASE

The defendant was a qualified PE teacher coaching rugby to a group of 15 year olds. He was supervising, refereeing and then also joined in the game to even up the numbers.

The teacher tackled one of the 15 year old players who fell and seriously injured his spine. The court found that the teacher was negligent and in breach of his duty of care. The judge said that “..... it is wrong and a breach of the duty of care owed to schoolboys for a master taking part in the game to have any intentional physical contact with the boys....”. The judge also said that there was no problem with the teacher taking part in the game, the act of negligence was in the intentional physical contact. Intentional physical contact was accepted as a normal course of events in rugby but this still did not prevent the teacher from being negligent.

This case has obvious similarities with situations in the Martial Arts - most of which have an element of contact involved and accepted as part of the activity.

The coach's duty of care also extends to controlling the behaviour and practice of participants and giving them sufficient instructions to prevent injury (for example when using equipment).

2. What is child abuse?

Maltreatment or neglect of a child resulting in injury or harm. It could be;

Physical	Shaking, beating, burning or failure to provide the necessities of life (eg food). This could also include the nature and intensity of training if it exceeds the child's capacity.
Verbal	Belittling, excessive shouting or teasing.
Emotional	Failure to provide warmth, attention, supervision or normal living experiences. Also, subjecting the child to unreasonable expectations for performance.
Sexual	Incest or other indecent sexual activity. Involving the child in pornography, either as an observer or as a participant.

It can happen anywhere – there are no specific “types” of background or people and it happens often – there are more than 5,000 cases of abuse reported each year.

3. Recognising child abuse

It is not easy to identify abuse. No one sign will indicate that it is occurring. There are some general guidelines, but even these are not 100% certain.

If you think that a child is being abused - get advice quickly.

Abuse could produce any of these types of behaviour;

Sudden mood changes, self-mutilation, regression (baby-like behaviour), over compliance, aggression, difficulties in mixing / playing with other children.

It could be physical;

Showing injuries such as bruising, scratching, burns, fractures with a dubious explanation. Or involve neglect for example failing to provide sufficient food, clothing, health and hygiene.

Emotional;

Involving disapproval, threats or humiliation

Or Sexual

Leading to Injuries in genital / rectal areas, Itching, soreness, difficulty in walking, recurrent stomach ache, headaches, fainting and / or high levels of sexual references in speech.

As you can see, at least some of these signs could be caused by things other than abuse.

There are some points to remember;

Bruising is a difficult area. All active children get bruises in the course of normal movement or play. Grabbing or striking bruises to the arms a body are different to those from general childhood “knocks” to shins and arms. But, most children who are seriously injured or die have recurrent bruising often for months or years. Bruises are present in 9 out of 10 cases of physical injury.

Burns. 10% of abused children have had burns and many have had multiple burns

Falls. Falls down stairs or out of bed very rarely cause fractures. Accidental fractures rarely involve the skull and are usually single line fractures of long bones

4. The law on child abuse

Mainly found within the Children Act 1989 which places a series of responsibilities on a range of people including the Courts and Local Authorities. It is most likely that any involvement that you have will be with a Local Authority. Amongst the things they are required to do are;

To safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need
To investigate where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found in the area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm

5. Who is involved

Local Authority Social Services have a statutory duty to investigate if;

They have reason to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm
The child is subject to an emergency protection order
The child is in police protection

They can offer voluntary help and support to families and can apply for a range of protection orders, some of which could result in the child being taken into care

The Courts consider applications for protection orders

They can appoint a "Reporting Officer" who is not part of the Local Authority Social Services Department to investigate and act as an independent adviser to the court to help it act in the child's best interest

The Police have a responsibility to investigate criminal action, identify persons responsible and collect evidence for a prosecution. They must take the welfare of the child as a priority.

Health Care Staff can be involved in identifying possible abuse. They are involved in the investigation, particularly where there has been physical or psychological injury

Schools are often involved in identifying abuse

Charitable Bodies like the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) or CHILDLINE frequently receive reports of abuse from the public

6. What should you do if you suspect abuse?

Decisions about whether to contact Social Services or any other Authority when the evidence of abuse is ambiguous or vague can be difficult.

Allegations of child abuse are dealt with by a range of people who are in contact with the child. They might each have a partial view of what is happening to the child, but together a more complete picture can be obtained. Therefore even concerns about minor injuries may have an unexpected significance when combined with information from other people who might know the child.

If you have concerns you should discuss them with the nominated Child Protection Officer in your Association / Club. He / she will advise you whether a report should be made to Social Services or another Body.

When a child wants to confide in you, there are some important points to remember;

Be accessible and receptive

Listen carefully and take it seriously

Reassure the child he/she is right to tell

Make careful records of what was said – as soon as possible after speaking to the child

Get help and advice quickly (advice is available from your Association or Club nominated Child Protection Officer, the facility staff, the NSPCC Helpline 0800 800 500, or Childline 0800 1111)

Don't jump to conclusions, lead the child or try to push them into disclosing information

Don't speculate or accuse anyone

Don't make promises that you cannot keep
Don't over react or show too much shock to the child
Do advise the child that you will need to speak to someone else about what they have said

7. Parents / guardians right to know

The parent(s) or guardian(s) of a child have a right to know that an allegation of abuse has been made, someone else (probably Social Services **but definitely not you**) will advise them if they decide to investigate.

Many parents will understand the need for the investigation when they realise that the referral was motivated by genuine concern for the child. There are no perfect solutions when dealing with child abuse. Inevitably, some suspicions will prove to be unfounded and it is possible that parents will be angry and distressed.

But, the consequences of not reporting your suspicions could be far more serious. Your concerns/observations may play a vital role in protecting the child by contributing to the pool of information about the family, and by possibly starting a professional response which can establish whether or not the child is at risk. This could end with legal action to protect the child. Failure to report your concerns may mean that this does not happen, and the child may be further abused.

8. What might happen if you make a report

If you do report your concerns to Social Services or another agency, and they decide to investigate, you may be asked to attend part of a "case conference" where social workers and other people involved with the child (such as teachers) will discuss if there have been any other signs and make a decision about what to do. Don't worry that action will be taken to protect a child purely on what you have reported - "case conferences" are set up so that a range of people can compare what they know. **Professional Social Workers decide what to do**, after considering **all** the available evidence.

9. Preventing accusations of improper behaviour against the coach

Do

Welcome and encourage parents to stay and watch their children being taught
Avoid situations where you are alone with one or more children
Keep doors open when working in an enclosed environment
Arrange to meet children with parents present
Exercise extreme caution where physical contact with a child is needed

Don't

Personally take part in rough or physical games with children
Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of a child
Allow children to use inappropriate language
Let allegations made by a child go unchallenged or unrecorded
Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves

Opportunities for training and qualification

MASA recommends that coaches obtain a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in their

Martial Art where this is available or, as a minimum, obtain the MASA Coaching Programme Level 1 (or its equivalent) which covers Child Protection

A code of ethics and behaviour for coaches

See separate Code of Ethics document

Access to information

Clubs / Associations should use websites / newsletters etc to publish information and advice

Criminal record checks

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) has recently made a new version of the checking service available to employers and voluntary bodies. MASA strongly recommends that Associations request checks on all coaches and others having contact with children in the Association. There are three types of check;

Basic disclosure

Available for any member of the public to apply for directly. It shows all “non-spent” convictions, and is sent directly to the individual applying.

Standard disclosure

Needs to be dealt with by an Approved Body. Shows all convictions “on record”, cautions, reprimands and warnings plus information contained on Government lists of people considered unsuitable to work with children.

Enhanced disclosure

Needs to be dealt with by an Approved body. As Standard disclosure, but also containing police comments that will not be available to the individual. These could be details of impending arrest or child protection conference information.

Each individual must give consent before a disclosure can be requested. They will also receive copies of the Standard and Enhanced Disclosures so that there is an opportunity to challenge any details within them.

Government guidelines suggest that the Enhanced Disclosure is appropriate for Martial Arts Coaches.

All instructors should obtain a CRB check every 2 years. Clubs / Associations can become “Registered Bodies” with the Criminal Records Bureau, or can use the services of one of the Registered Bodies listed.

Measures to respond to allegations / disclosures of abuse

A complaints procedure

Seitou Ryu Karate Complaints procedure

It is not the responsibility of any Association or Club to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. There is, however, a responsibility to protect children in order that appropriate agencies can then make inquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child.

Local authority social services departments have a statutory duty under the Children Act 1989 to ensure the welfare of a child. When a child protection referral is made, social services staff have a legal responsibility to investigate. This may involve talking to the child and family and gathering information from other people who know the child. Inquiries may be carried out jointly with the police.

If a complaint or allegation of child abuse is made against a member of Seitou Ryu Karate, the following action should be taken;

1. A report by the parent / guardian or co-worker should be made to the Association / Club Chief Instructor or Child Protection Officer. If the complaint is about one of these people, it should be made to the other.
2. The Chief Instructor / Child Protection Officer will then contact the local social services or other organisation – NSPCC / CHILDLINE and discuss the complaint with them.
3. Under no circumstances should the Chief Instructor / Child Protection Officer try to deal with the matter personally.
4. The Association / Club will take an immediate decision (using its disciplinary procedure) as to whether the instructor / Assistant Instructor should be suspended.
5. Every effort will be made to protect the confidentiality of all parties involved.
6. Allegations of abuse may be made some period of time after the event. For example, by an adult who was abused as a child by a member of staff who is still currently working with children. Where such an allegation is made, the Association / Club should follow the procedures given above and report the matter to the social services department or the police.
7. The Association / Club disciplinary procedure should be used to decide upon reinstatement / expulsion. It may be appropriate to wait for the results of any social services / police investigations.

Measures to review how the association is performing

Confidential records should be kept of allegations / disclosures and the action taken

This should be kept by each Chief Instructor or a nominated, senior, person within that Association / Club. It is important that the person keeping these records should have undergone a criminal record check themselves.

Records of coaches, their qualifications and criminal record checks are kept

As above

An annual review takes place

This should be led by the Chief Instructor of the Association/ Club or the nominated person, and formally recorded.