

Safeguarding in Martial Arts: Safe Practice

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)

Please consider the following in designing your own safe practice policy as relevant to your martial arts style and craft your policy around these points:

1. Warm Ups

All students will follow the approved Gracie Barra warm up routine. This will be carried out in formal lines, with students standing on a designated marker, to provide a safe working space. The warm up includes a general heart rate riser, sports specific movements, and a stretching routine. Students are led by coach. The coach counts out exercise 1 to 5 and all students join in with the counting 6 to 10.

2. Martial Arts involving throwing, grappling and strangling

Students will be required to participate in grappling and throwing. Prior to training the mats will have been swept, disinfected, and checked before they are allowed to enter the mats. A single cover over the whole area will prevent gaps between the mats. Students will be reminded before they start to be aware of the space around them at busy times to prevent collisions.

3. Where striking techniques are involved:

Students will be paired up with an appropriate training partner and reminded of the importance of safe technique. There are no strikes or physical contact to the head. Students will mimic strikes at a very low impact to targets such as the hands. There will be no actual striking. Techniques that involve striking for children less than 6 years of age will always be performed with a trained coach and never with each other.

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 a Martial Art.