**Kuk Sool Won™ of Yeovil Martial Arts**

**SAFE PRACTICE POLICY**

*Policy Owner: Kuk Sool Won™ of Yeovil martial arts*

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*Designated Safeguarding Lead: PKJN Sally Runnacles*

**SAFE PRACTICE POLICY**

KUK SOOL WON™ OF YEOVIL 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. To help reduce the risk of injury, specific attention should be paid to those muscle groups that will be used during later activity.

1. **Martial Arts involving throwing, grappling and strangling**

The risks include but are not limited to:

falling on unsuitable surfaces; landing on the head; damage to the joints from locks; strangulation.

Safe practice should include, but is not limited to:

1. Checking the matted area for suitability, particularly where the mats have been joined.
2. Checking that there are no hard surfaces or sharp/hard objects around the matted area.
3. Having an experience instructor who will ensure that children are not taught to use locks, throws or strangles which will cause injury.
4. **Martial Arts involving strikes, punches and kicks**

The risks 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 and other exercises.

Safe practice must include:

1. Light contact only, especially to the head where there should be no contact. (Light contact means the technique is targeted but controlled so that whilst the opponent is touched the technique is not followed through). Expert advice from a neurosurgeon is that the use of helmets, mitts or foot pads does not eliminate the risk of brain injury from full contact strikes.
2. Avoiding excessive stretching and exercises such as press-ups on the knuckles or hitting heavy bags; the joints of children are still developing and can be damaged by these exercise
3. To limit risk of head injury, students are required to wear appropriate protective sparring gear/to maintain reasonable distance as set by the instructor whether sparring in class or in tournaments.
4. Appropriate medical supervision to be available when sparring or in competition.
5. Instructors to supervise participants when sparring or in competition.
6. Striking the face is not permitted.  If a head injury occurs or there is excessive contact to the head a Head Injury Assessment must be carried out by the instructor and or another first aid qualified assistant and immediate First Aid should be administered with the opportunity and ability to call for an ambulance if necessary.
7. Practitioners must be closely monitored and checks must be carried out on their physical and mental state. Particular attention must be paid to the following:

* hydration
* Rate of perceived exertion
* infection control – bleeding
* health related conditions or illnesses

1. ***The Sparring Area***

* Because there is no throwing or groundwork in sparring floor matting is not essential, however, the sparring area should be suitable for sparring:
* flat
* even
* Free of clutter – bags, drinks, shoes, chairs etc
* The main instructor must be present at all times.
* Excessive contact is prohibited and must be monitored by the instructor and assistant/s.
* Guided sparring drills require less space depending on the nature of the drills.
* Above all else sparring must be safe to carry out, which will be determined by a comprehensive, dynamic, ongoing risk analysis / assessment, and at the discretion of the instructor.

1. **Physical and mental Considerations**

* Height, weight, age, gender and grade of the participants must be taken into consideration along with the mental and physical state of participants (including background history).
* when sparing – partners should be monitored and selected by the instructor accordingly.
* ***Injured students should not take part in sparring – prescribe an alternative activity.***

1. **Martial Arts involving weapons**

Safe practice should include but is not limited to:

1. No live blades (sharp or otherwise) in the training hall when children are

present

1. Safe protocols for the use of training weapons by children
2. Good supervision at all times by Instructors

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.

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3. **Martial Arts involving techniques (physical contact – COVID 19)**

We pride ourselves that we have a safe and healthy martial arts training environment.

We provide hand sanitisers at the entrance/exit of building. All students are required to sanitise their hands before practising techniques on a partner. Hand washing facilities available with paper towels and foot operated pedal bin for disposal. We have daily cleaning system of the mats and toilet facilities with a weekly deep clean of the dojang.

Martial arts can result in a wide array of injuries. The injury type is often dependent on the particular form of martial art being performed. Many forms of martial arts are actually non-contact and these tend to result in overuse injuries. Contact martial arts vary widely in their techniques, rules, and protective equipment and these factors affect the injuries and injury rates.

**Concussion**

Common symptoms of concussion include headache, dizziness, nausea, balance problems, difficulties with concentration, and memory problems. Symptoms can last from several minutes to days, weeks, months, or even longer in some cases. Martial arts that emphasise striking and throwing are more likely to result in concussions. Any athlete with symptoms of concussion should be removed from play and evaluated by a health professional. They should not be allowed to return to play until cleared by a qualified health care professional.

**Head/Eyes/Ear/Nose**

Striking and grappling can result in minor injuries such as cuts, bruises and lacerations. More serious injuries, such as fractures of the nose, face, or skull as well as significant injuries of the eyes mouth or teeth can result. These injuries may be minimised by selection of martial arts style, proper training and coaching, and use of protective equipment.

**Neck**

Minor injuries to the neck, such as bruising and abrasions, are most common. It’s important to understand the risks of different forms of martial arts and to learn them under appropriate supervision.

**Extremities**

Injuries to the extremities include cuts, bruises, sprains, and strains. Fractures and joint dislocations are less common, but can occur, particularly in styles that use throws and joint locking techniques. Injuries can be minimised with proper supervision and the use of appropriate technique.

**Skin**

Cuts are fairly common injuries in martial arts. Athletes participating in contact sports, such as wrestling and martial arts, can be more prone to developing certain skin infections. These injuries should be evaluated and treated by an appropriate health care professional.

**SAFE PRACTICE SUMMARY**

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.