

BRIDGNORTH TAE KWON-DO



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Safeguarding in the Martial Arts: Safe Practice

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.

2. 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 includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Checking the matted area for suitability, particularly where the mats have been joined.
- (b) Checking that there are no hard surfaces or sharp/hard objects around the matted area.
- (c) Having an experience instructor who will ensure that children are not taught to use locks, throws or strangles which will cause injury.

3. 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.

- (a) Head contact for under 16s:
 - No contact at all without protective sparring kit
 - Very light contact with protective sparring kit
 - Contact to be controlled at all times (a tap) and not followed through
 - Area to be clear and without obstruction
 - Students are advised to compete only in conditions they consider safe: for example matted areas without obstructions
 - Students are advised to compete only if their competitor is well matched

by height or weight

- Self control is a key skill in taekwondo and something we look for when performing mixed gender sparring in the club. Regardless of gender allow any student you are sparring; who you may consider less able than you; to grow and develop without 'proving a point'. As a club we do not currently attend any mixed gender sparring competitions and would ask students to discuss this with us if it becomes an option
 - Students are observed at all times during sparring activity
 - We do not have a permanent matted area for sparring in the club but instead focus on good quality sparring equipment (to be worn at all times during the sparring activity) combined with light contact sparring. Heavy sparring is never condoned or welcomed in our club.
 - If a head injury occurs the student will receive first aid from one of our club first aiders; and will be taken or advised to visit hospital for a check up
 - First aiders are always present during every class and students are advised to ensure they know who is available for medical assistance at any competitions they attend.
- (b) 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 exercises.

4. Weapons

Safe practice should include but is not limited to:

- (a) Rubber knives to be used for adult training purposes.
- (b) Children are not encouraged to use the weapons, even though they are rubber. Only junior black belt students are invited to use the rubber knives - which have no sharp sides.
- (c) 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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