**SAFEGUARDING IN MARTIAL ARTS**

**SAFE PRACTICE POLICY**

NAME OF CLUB:- Endeavour Taekwondo

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. **Check all students have no injuries prior to class commencing.** 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**

 Some examples are: Judo, Ju Jitsu and Aikido

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 – monitored and maintained throughout the training periods
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. Activities to be lead by qualified and appropriate instructors.
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. To mitigate and negate risk - Students are supervised by the lead instructor where any contact element is concerned. Students wear approved and appropriate protective equipment in all activities.

**There are some key points to consider in this section, particularly around head contact for under 16s. Please consider the following in your safe practice policy:**

* \*To what degree, if at all, is head contact allowed? Contact is permitted in sparring exercises at direct instruction of the instructor running the class. Students must adhere to wearing all appropriate equipment. This includes approved head guards, gum shields, ITF taekwondo approved semi-contact sparring gloves, foot guards, shin guards. Optional for females students chest protectors and groin guards – groin guards and compulsory for all male students. All contact is monitored, all contact should be semi-contact. No pulling back to punch, no excessive contact or other contact not permitted within ITF taekwondo competition rules and the rules at articulated to students at Endeavour Taekwondo.
* What type of head contact is permitted? (e.g. controlled, light contact, no follow through?) – light contact only permitted in any exercises where sparring equipment is worn. No punches to the rear of the helmet. In other activities no contact and no follow through is expected in any classes.

What safeguards are there to limit the risk of head injury? Gloves, head guards, gum shields and instructions are provided to all students at the commencement of any sparring actitivy. Additionally all activities involving physical contact are watched and supervised by appropriately trained umpires. All students are able to attend umpire courses which given specific guidance to students on the rules within the ITF for appropriate contact and what is and is not permitted. This is compulsory for those above “Blue Belt” but considered and encouraged with lower grade students.

* Is age a consideration regarding head contact? What ages should be considered? – No consideration for age, but the pairing of students is watched and managed carefully. All activities involving any students are supervised. All students get a safety briefing. All students wear appropriate safety equipment as listed above. All equipment should be checked prior to any exercise as fit for purpose. All students are aware of the contact and the rules in regards to any activity involving head contact. Students are aware of the clubs adherence to safety and the implications on them and their insurance should they not comply with the guidance and instruction at the start of each activity.
* Is equipment a consideration when sparring or in competition? What equipment should be considered? As above only ITF approved equipment can be used purchased from Endeavour Taekwondo or with the agreement of Endeavour Taekwondo.
* Is the age of the participants/athletes a consideration when sparring or in competition? What ages should be considered? All ages can access this element of the sport and will be in appropriate equipment and given appropriate training on each activity.
* Is height or weight of the participants/athletes a consideration when sparing or in competition? What heights and weights should be considered? Students are matched where possible in regards to their age, weight, size, height and grade competency. Where there are disparities students are given an appropriate safety briefing and monitored throughout the activity
* What floor covering (e.g. mats) is used when sparring or in competition? As appropriate
* What are the steps taken if head injury occurs? – First aid on scene, venues additionally have appropriately trained staff available. First aid equipment is available. Parents attend the venues or provide contact details for emergency contact should a head injury occur. Instructor to contact 111 or 999 as appropriate and gain appropriate advice.
* Is appropriate medical supervision available when sparring or in competition? – yes first aid trained staff on scene
* What considerations are taken with mixed gender sparring and competition? Safety briefing
* Is supervision of the participants/athletes considered when sparring or in competition? – always on hand and activities involving sparring are not permitted without a head instructor or appropriately identified person present and supervising.
1. 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.

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. Successive failure to follow the instructions of the instructor in sparring based activities may result in the student receiving a ban from sparring based activities. Potentially removal from the club, cancellation of membership and insurance should the student not follow safeguarding advice and standards within the activity.