



Title	SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
Cross Reference	The Children Act 1989 The Protection Of Children Act 1999 The Children Act 2004 (amended) Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups 2006 Working Together To Safeguard Children 2023 BMABA National Safeguarding Policy Whistle Blowing Policy
Date	January 2026
Review Due	December 2028

Foreward:

This policy is applicable to all instructors, assistant instructors and volunteers of Seido Karate South West and any of its dojos within the UK (whether licenced or not by World Seido Karate Organisation).

Introduction:

Seido Karate South West has developed a Safeguarding Children Policy for implementation throughout its dojos. Seido Karate South West a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount;
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection against abuse;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- All instructors, assistant instructors and volunteers (paid/unpaid) working/teaching in Seido Karate South West have to report concerns to the appropriate Welfare Officer.

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under 18.

Seido Karate South West is committed to working in partnership with all agencies to ensure that information and training opportunities are available to ensure best practice when working with children. Adopting best practice will help to safeguard those participants from potential abuse as well as protecting instructors, assistant instructors and volunteers in positions of responsibility from any potential allegation of abuse.

This policy document provides procedures and guidance to everyone in Seido Karate South West, whether working in a voluntary or professional capacity.

Policy Statement

Seido Karate South West has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in karate from harm. All children have a right to protection. Seido Karate South West will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in our sport through adherence to the Safeguarding Children policy guidelines adopted by Seido Karate South West.

This policy will be implemented by all instructors, assistant instructions and volunteers and officials of Seido Karate South West.



Policy Aims

The aim of Seido Karate South West's Safeguarding Children Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of its karate clubs and instructors, assistant instructors and volunteers of Seido Karate South West;
- Ensure that all incidents of poor practice or suspicions of poor practice and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- Allow all instructors, assistant instructors, volunteers and officials to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues;
- The policy recognises and builds on the legal and statutory definition of a child;
- The distinction between ages of consent, civil and criminal liability are recognised but in the pursuit of good practice in the delivery and management of Seido Karate South West, a child is recognised as being under the age 18 years (The Children Act 1989);
- Seido Karate South West recognises that young people above the age of 18 are vulnerable to undue influence by adults in positions of responsibility;
- Seido Karate South West has appointed a suitably experienced and qualified individual to act as the Seido Karate South West's Welfare Officer;
- Confidentiality will be upheld in line with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR) and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Promoting Good Practice With Children

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. It is a fact of life that some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with children in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer may have regular contact with children and have an important link in identifying cases where a child needs protection.

All cases of poor practice and suspected cases of abuse should be reported to Seido Karate South West's Welfare Officer, who in turn will liaise with Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer, BMABA and the relevant authorities following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters the club having experienced abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving their self-esteem. In such instances, the club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

Good Practice Guidelines

All those involved in Seido Karate South West should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to safeguard children and protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within Seido Karate South West.

Good practice means:

- always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations, and encouraging an open environment i.e. no secrets);
- treating all children equally, and with respect and dignity;
- placing the welfare and safety of the child above the development of performance or competition;



- maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with students (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them);
- building balanced relationships based on mutual trust, which empowers children to share in the decision making process;
- making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play;
- ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly;
- ensuring that children are protected from physical harm, especially from head injuries and ensuring that when they are engaging in sparring they are wearing the appropriate body protection including head guard;
- keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance in karate;
- ensuring your teaching practice reflects the high standards expected of karate;
- involving parents/carers wherever possible (for example for the responsibility of their children in the changing rooms);
- if groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents/teachers/instructors/officials work in pairs;
- being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children;
- ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children rooms or invite them into their rooms;
- giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children - avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will;
- securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment;
- having up to date records of students, including contact numbers and information about medical conditions and lesson plans;
- keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given;
- requesting written parental consent if instructors, assistant instructors or volunteers are required to transport children in their cars.

Guidance For Children Practising Together

Instructors, assistant instructors and volunteers need to understand the added responsibilities of teaching children, and also basic principles of growth and development through childhood to adolescence. Exercises should be appropriate to age and build. Instructors should not simply treat children as small adults, with small adult bodies. The nature of the class must be tailored to consider these factors.

In general, the younger the child, the shorter the attention span. One hour is generally considered sufficient training time for the average 12 year old or below. Pre-adolescent children have a metabolism that is not naturally suited to generating anaerobic power, and therefore they exercise better aerobically, that is, at a steadily maintained rate. However, they can soon become conditioned to tolerate exercise in the short explosive bursts that more suit karate training.

Children should not do assisted stretching - they generally don't need to, and there is a real risk of damage with an inconsiderate or over-enthusiastic partner. Children should be carefully matched for size and weight for sparring practice. Great care must be taken, especially where children train in the proximity of adults, to avoid collision injury.

Children should not do certain conditioning exercises, especially those which are heavy load bearing, for example weight training or knuckle push-ups. Children should not do any heavy or impact work but should concentrate on the development of speed, mobility, skill and general fitness.



Practice Never To Be Sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others;
- take children to your home where they will be alone with you;
- share a room with a child;
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun;
- reduce a child to tears as a form of control;
- allow allegations made by a child to go unrecorded or not acted upon;
- do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves;
- invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised

N.B. It may sometimes be necessary for instructors, assistant instructors or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, for example if they are particularly young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents. If a person is fully dependant on, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting/assisting to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are told:

- if you accidentally hurt a student
- if he/she seems distressed in any manner
- if a student appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- if a student misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

Guidelines For Use Of Photographic Filming

There is no intention to stop people photographing their children, club mates, or photography and video being used as an educational tool but this is in the context of appropriate safeguards being in place. There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children in vulnerable positions. It is advisable that all clubs be vigilant with any concerns to be reported to the Seido Karate South West Welfare Officer. Any parent who wishes to photograph their child must seek permission from the instructor.

There is no intention to prevent instructors using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and care should be taken in the storing of such film.



Seido Karate South West also follows closely the guidance issued by the NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit advising that:

- models or illustrations are used in promotional material
- avoid using the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph
- if the student is named, we do not use their photograph
- if the photograph is used, we do not name the individual
- seek parental permission to use an image of a young participant.

Recruitment & Selecting Staff & Volunteers

Seido Karate South West recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. It is essential that the same procedures are used consistently for all posts whether staff are paid or voluntary, full or part time.

Under the Protection of Children Act 1999, all individuals working on behalf, or otherwise representing, an organisation are treated as employees whether working in a paid or voluntary capacity.

New Staff/Volunteers

All staff/volunteers involved in Seido Karate South West will complete an enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) application form, returning to Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer. Where staff/volunteers are already registered with the DBS Update Service, staff/volunteers should make their DBS number available for it to be checked and for the original form to be seen by Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer. This information will then need to be shared with BMABA on the online portal which details assistant instructors, instructors and volunteers.

Where staff/volunteers are not registered as part of the DBS Update Service, evidence of identity will need to complete the BMABA DBS application form.

Existing Staff/Volunteers

All current Seido Karate South West instructors, assistant instructors and volunteers have had a DBS check and are all fully qualified and insured instructors. DBS checks are to be renewed automatically every 3 years in advance of when the certificate expires. Where staff/volunteers are registered on the DBS Update Service, DBS checks should be checked yearly for any changes.

Types Of Abuse

Abuse is defined as a form of mistreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or institutionalised or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (for example via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

The categories of abuse are:

- **Physical abuse**
This includes being hit, kicked, shaken or punched, or given harmful drugs or alcohol.



- **Emotional abuse**

This includes being called names all the time, being threatened or being shouted at or made to feel small.

- **Sexual abuse**

This includes being touched in a way you don't like by an adult or young person, being forced to have sex, or being made to look at sexual pictures or videos. For some disabled children, it includes if a person helping them to use the toilet touched them more than was needed.

- **Neglect**

Is when a child is not looked after properly, including having no place to stay, or not enough food to eat, or clothes to keep them warm. It also includes if the child is not given medical care when they need it, including medication. For some disabled children, it could include if their carer took away the things they needed for everyday life - like their wheelchair or communication board. Or not helping a disabled child who needed help using the toilet.

Common Signs Of Abuse

Every child is unique, so behavioural signs of abuse will vary from individual to individual. In addition, the impact of abuse is likely to be influenced by their age, the nature and extent of the abuse, and the help and support the child receives. However, there are some behaviours that are commonly seen in children who have been abused:

- The child appears distrustful of a particular adult, or a parent or a coach with whom you would expect there to be a close relationship
- He or she has unexplained injuries such as bruising, bites or burns - particularly if these are on part of the body where you would not expect them
- If he or she has an injury which is not explained satisfactorily or properly treated
- Deterioration in his or her physical appearance or a rapid weight gain or loss
- Pains, itching, bruising or bleeding in or near the genital area
- A change in the child general behaviour. For example, they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn, or unexpectedly aggressive. Such changes can be sudden or gradual.
- If he or she refuses to remove clothing for normal activities or wants to keep covered up in warm weather
- If he or she shows inappropriate sexual awareness or behaviour for their age
- Some disabled children may not be able to communicate verbally about abuse they may be experiencing or have witnessed. It is therefore important to observe these children for signs other than "telling".

The above signs should be seen as a possible indication of abuse and not as a confirmation. Changes in a child behaviour can be the result of a wide range of factors. Visible signs such as bruising or other injuries cannot be taken as proof of abuse. For example some disabled children may show extreme changes in behaviour, or be more accident prone, as a result of their impairment.



Responding To Suspicions Or Allegations

It is not the responsibility of anyone within Seido Karate South West, in a paid or unpaid capacity to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. This is the role of the child protection agencies. However, there is a responsibility for all involved in Seido Karate South West to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

Any concerns raised must be shared with BMABA. This information must be passed to Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer who in turn will share the information with BMABA. Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer will liaise with the Local Safeguarding Children/Adults Board, details of which can be found on each local authority's website for safeguarding concerns to be shared.

Where the concern raised is about any of the Seido Karate South West's Welfare Officers, then Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Office must be informed. Where the concern raised is about Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer, then the Lead Instructor will need to be informed and to share the concerns with BMABA. Notwithstanding the hierarchy within Seido Karate UK, the concerns raised must be shared also with the UK Branch Chief of Seido Karate UK.

If you are unsure, advice and information is available from the local Children's Social Care department and/or the Local Safeguarding Children Board (also can be known as Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub or MASH).

Seido Karate South West assures all instructors, assistant instructors and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child. Where there is a complaint against a member of Seido Karate South West there may be three types of investigation

- A child protection investigation
- A criminal investigation
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily. Following the submission of the concern to the Local Safeguarding Children Board, recommendations may be made regarding whether an instructor, assistant instructor or volunteer should remain teaching children. Decisions may be made to temporarily suspend individuals from teaching whilst investigations are carried out. Where the Local Safeguarding Children Board conclude No Further Action (NFA), it will be down to Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer to determine whether disciplinary or misconduct investigation should be undertaken. This may need to involve the Chief Instructor of Seido Karate UK.

Action If There Are Concerns

The following action should be taken if there are concerns:

Are you concerned about the behaviour of a parent or carer? If yes;

- Report your concerns to Seido Karate South West's Welfare Officer. If this person is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer or the Local Safeguarding Children Board or the police immediately. Local Safeguarding Children Board and/or the police will advise on how best to involve parents/carers and deal with the situation.



- Record what has been said, or what has been seen and share with BMABA. Include dates and times. Send a copy to the Local Safeguarding Children Board within 24 hours and a copy to either Seido Karate South West's Welfare Officer, Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer (or both), who in turn will share the information with BMABA.

Poor Practice

If the Local Safeguarding Children Board do not take any action and have confirmed No Further Action (NFA), and the allegation is clearly about poor practice; Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue.

Suspected Abuse

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either an instructor, assistant instructor or volunteer should be reported to Seido Karate South West's Welfare Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. Information will be shared with Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer.

Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer will refer the allegation to the Local Safeguarding Children Board who may involve the police, or go directly to the police or social care out-of-hours duty service. The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social care department (in cases of suspected abuse within the family, social care department/police must give advice on who should be contacted and when).

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- Seido Karate South West's Welfare Officer
- Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer
- Seido Karate UK's Chief Instructor
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- Social care/police
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child) *

*seek social care advice on who should approach alleged abuser, especially if it is a parent.

Information will be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated and secure).

If you do not know who to turn to for advice or are worried about sharing your concerns with a senior colleague, you should contact the Local Safeguarding Children Board or the NSPCC on 0800 800 5000 for advice.

Information passed to the Local Safeguarding Children Board or the police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. Information should include the following:

- Name of child
- Details of child (age and date of birth, ethnic group, any relevant disability or special need)



- Home address and telephone number
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or those of someone else
- The nature of the allegation (date, time, place, special factors and other relevant information)
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, fiction and hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or possible injuries (including behavioural and indirect signs)
- Witnesses to the incident(s)
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred
- Parental contact (what has been said)
- Has anybody else been consulted, if so record details
- If it is not the child making the report, has the child concerned been spoken to and if so what was said
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser (record details)

Allegations Of Previous Abuse

Allegations of previous abuse may be made sometime after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made, the instructor, assistant instructor or volunteer should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the Local Safeguarding Children Board or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside the sport, may be at risk from this person.

Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

Managing Concerns

A child person may also try to tell a person directly about abuse. It is very important to listen carefully and respond sensibly.

- Do not panic - react calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Acknowledge that what the child is doing is difficult, but that they are right to confide in you
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame
- Make sure that, from the outset, you can understand what the child is saying
- Be honest straight away and tell the child you cannot make promises that you will not be able to keep
- Do not promise that you keep the conversation secret. Explain that you will need to involve other people and that you will need to write things down
- Listen to and believe the child; take them seriously
- Do not allow your shock or distaste to show
- Keep any questions to a minimum, but do clarify any facts or words that you do not understand.
 - Do not:
 - speculate or make assumptions
 - use closed questions (i.e. questions which invite yes or no answers)
 - probe for more information than is offered (this is classed as asking leading questions)
 - discourage the child to use their own words by putting words in their mouth
 - make negative comments about the alleged abuser
 - end the disclosure and allow the child to be collected or go home if they are going to go home to their abuser
 - do not approach the alleged abuser



False allegations of abuse do occur, but they are rare. You should always take immediate action if a child says or indicates that he or she is being abused, or you have reason to suspect that this is the case. This may involve dealing with the child, his or her parent or carer, colleagues at your club/organisation, teachers, external agencies or the media.

Children who are being abused will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe. As an instructor, assistant instructor or volunteer you will often share a close relationship with students and may therefore be the sort of person in whom a child might place their trust. Children want abuse to stop. By listening and taking what a child is telling you seriously, you will already be helping to protect them.

Timing and Location

It is understandable that the child may want to see you alone, away from others. The child may therefore approach you at the end of a session when everyone is going home, or may arrive deliberately early at a time when they think you will not be busy. However, a disclosure is not just a quick chat, it will take time and usually has further consequences. Bear in mind that you may also need to attend to other students, check equipment or set up an activity - you cannot simply leave a session unattended. Therefore, try to arrange to speak to the child at an appropriate time.

Location is very important. Although it is important to respect the child's need for privacy, you also need to protect yourself against potential allegation. So do not listen to the child disclosure in a completely private place - try to ensure that other instructors are present or at least nearby.

All records should:

- Be written as soon as possible, signed and dated
- Clearly distinguished between fact, observation, allegation and opinion
- Note the name, date, the event, a record of what was said, and any action taken in cases of suspected abuse
- Be held separately from main records
- Be exempt from open access

Internal Enquiries & Suspension

Seido Karate South West's Lead Welfare Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and Local Safeguarding Children Board inquiries. Irrespective of the findings, Seido Karate South West will convene a Disciplinary Committee, and will assess all individual cases to decide whether an instructor, assistant instructor or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled.

This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police or the Local Safeguarding Children Board. In such cases, Seido Karate South West's Disciplinary Committee will reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true.



The welfare of children shall always remain paramount.

Seido Karate South West's Welfare Officers:

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Flowchart



