



## **Strike Kickboxing Safeguarding Policy**

Our organisation acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and local authority requirements.

### **1. Introduction**

We strive to provide a safe, fair, and welcoming environment for everyone.

Our instructors have a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that the highest possible standard of care is provided regarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Our lessons, therefore, incorporate the necessary procedures to protect children and/or vulnerable adults. These procedures include reporting any concerns about the welfare of individuals to the appropriate authorities without delay.

This policy aims to promote good practice during training and at competitions. Adopting this practice will enable our instructors to comply with their moral and legal safeguarding obligations. It also aims to demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding and assure our members and responsible persons of this.

### **2. Policy Statement**

Strike Kickboxing is committed to safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults. We are committed to the following priorities concerning safeguarding at all times:

- Prioritising the welfare of children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.
- Providing a safe environment for everyone regardless of age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, sexual identity.
- Ensuring that all members take reasonable steps to protect children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults from harm, discrimination, or degrading treatment.
- Ensuring that all members treat other students and visitors with respect, dignity and care at all times.
- Responding to and recording any suspicious behaviour, allegations of abuse, or poor practice.

- Ensuring that our instructors are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and reflect the content of this policy.
- Maintaining a positive, open, transparent and professional relationship with the parents, or guardians of any student.
- Promoting a positive culture and reinforcing our values of fitness, confidence, respect, and discipline.

### **3. Monitoring and Review**

The Club will continually monitor this safeguarding policy to ensure its currency with legislation and best practice. The Club will review the policy at least once every three years, and any occasion where there are fundamental changes made to the Club's structure.

### **4. Promoting Good Practice**

Strike Kickboxing expects all of its members and visitors to conduct themselves appropriately. All members and parents of members whilst training and at competitions will adhere to the following principles and actions regarding safeguarding children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults:

- Treating all children (anyone younger than 18 years), and all vulnerable adults with respect, dignity and courtesy.
- Valuing the diversity of all children and/or vulnerable adults.
- Prioritising the welfare of children and/or vulnerable adults.
- Maintaining an open environment and avoiding any isolation, or unobserved situations.
- Keeping physical contact to an absolute minimum.
- Never allowing individuals to be alone with a child and/or vulnerable adult.
- Ensuring that any physical contact only occurs when it is essential and as part of the safe and structured learning process.
- Ensuring that a minimum of two fully vetted and suitable adults present at all times where physical contact is deemed necessary.
  - Prohibiting anyone taking photographs, videos or sharing images of children and/or vulnerable adults without written consent from the parent, carer, or guardian.
- Ensuring that the safeguarding policy extends to any extra-curricular activities organised by the Club.
- Instructors and senior students must present themselves as good role models inside and outside of the club environment. This includes refraining from smoking, drinking alcohol, using any foul language, or any other inappropriate behaviour in the presence of any children and/or vulnerable adults.
- Recognising the strengths and weaknesses of everyone and making necessary adjustments during lessons.
- Keeping thorough records of any injuries or near misses together with details of any Treatment.

Please refer also to our codes of conduct.

### **5. Poor Practice**

The following are examples of what the Club deems poor practice regarding the safeguarding of children and/or vulnerable adults. All members must avoid such behaviour without exception:

- Spending an un-necessarily and/or excessive amount of time alone with a child and/or vulnerable adult.
- Making unnecessary physical contact with a child and/or vulnerable adult.
- Transporting or accompanying any children and/or vulnerable adults to any destination without the presence of another person.
- Engaging in physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay before, during, or following lessons.
- Allowing or engaging in any inappropriate physical contact.
- Making any sexually suggestive comments to children and/or vulnerable adults.
- Purposely excluding anyone from particular elements of a lesson without adequate justification.
- Allowing any allegations made by a child and/or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, and/or unrecorded.

## **6. Defining Abuse**

Abuse is any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment, or lack of care leading to injury or harm. Abuse commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a child or vulnerable adult regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

There are five main types of abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying/harassment and neglect. The abuser may be a family member, someone the child or vulnerable adult encounters in residential care or the community, including sports and leisure activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable adult directly or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person from harming the young person.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a child or vulnerable adult at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow the individual into adulthood.

Children or vulnerable adult with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

**Physical Abuse:** where adults physically hurt or injure a child or vulnerable adult e.g., hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, and drowning. Giving a child or vulnerable adult alcohol or drugs also constitutes abuse. In a sports situation, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capability of children or vulnerable adults.

**Emotional Abuse:** the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or vulnerable adult, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects. This includes telling a child or vulnerable adult they are useless, worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of a child or vulnerable adult that are not appropriate to their age, development or ability. It may

cause a child or vulnerable adult to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the young person frightened or withdrawn.

Emotional abuse in sport may occur when the child or vulnerable adult is constantly criticised, only provided with negative feedback, or expecting to perform at levels that are above their capability. Bullying & Harassment: may come from another young person or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves.

There are four main types of bullying: **physical** (e.g., hitting, kicking, slapping), **verbal** (e.g., racist or homophobic remarks, name-calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages), emotional (e.g., tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or **sexual** (e.g., unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

In sport, bullying may arise when a parent or coach pushes the child or vulnerable adult too hard to succeed or threatening or intimidating behaviour from a rival athlete or official.

**Neglect:** occurs when an adult fails to meet the child or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs. This may be to the extent where it is likely to result in serious impairment of the child or vulnerable adult's health or development. For example:

- Failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing.
- Failing to protect from physical harm/danger.
- failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- refusing to give love, affection and attention is also a form of neglect.

Neglect in sport includes failing to keep children or vulnerable adult safe or exposing them to undue cold/heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

**Sexual Abuse:** occurs when adults (male and female) use children or vulnerable adults to meet their own sexual needs. Showing a child or vulnerable adult pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner also constitutes sexual abuse.

Physical contact during sport could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. It is therefore essential for instructors to closely monitor the behaviour of participants during lessons to ensure that inappropriate contact does not take place.

## 7. Indicators of Abuse

It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse is occurring or identify the results of abuse. The following are examples of conditions that may indicate abuse of a child or vulnerable adult:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the given explanation is inconsistent.
- The child or vulnerable adult describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them.
- Information from another a third-party expressing concern about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult.
- Unexplained changes in a child or vulnerable adult's behaviour e.g., becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Sexual awareness is inappropriate for a child's age.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of adult's, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Individuals who are prohibited from socialising with others.
- Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Losing weight for no apparent reason.
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

### **Signs of bullying include:**

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go training or competitions.
- An unexplained drop off in performance.
- physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g., on food, alcohol or cigarettes.
- A shortage of money or frequents loss of possessions.

The above list is not exhaustive, and also may not necessarily be proof that abuse is taking place. It is not the responsibility of the club or its instructor to determine if abuse is occurring. It is however our responsibility to act on any concerns.

It is essential to recognise that practising martial arts and contact sports may result in certain injuries due to their nature. Signs of abuse should not be dismissed though on the assumption that they are the result of a training-related injury.

## **8. Photographic/Filming Equipment at Sporting Events or Within Lesson Venues**

Unfortunately, some people exploit sporting events and use them as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children or vulnerable adults. Strike Kickboxing and its instructors will challenge any suspicious behaviour and report this accordingly to the relevant authorities.

The Club will only use photos or video footage of people on its website if prior permission to do so has been given by parents, guardians, or carers.

## **9. Responding to Possible Abuse Cases**

Our instructors and members are not qualified to decide whether or not child abuse or the abuse of a vulnerable adult has taken place. Everyone has a responsibility though to act on any concerns and refer these to the appropriate authorities. This applies to allegations/suspicions of abuse occurring during any of our training sessions, and to those relating to events elsewhere.

Instructors may become aware of abuse in various ways. The instructor may see it happening, may suspect of because of symptoms or signs or it may be reported to the instructor by the child or vulnerable adult or another third party. In all cases, the instructor must take immediate action to record and report the events. In the event of a child or vulnerable adult confiding directly with an instructor, they must take immediate steps to safeguard that person effectively.

**If a child or vulnerable adults indicate that they are being abused, the instructor responsible person should:**

- Take all necessary steps to safeguard the individual. This may include calling the emergency services. The Police should be called using 999 if there is an immediate threat to an individual.
- Stay calm so as not to frighten the child or vulnerable adult.
- Reassure the child or vulnerable adult that they are not to blame and that it was right to inform them.
- Listen to the child or vulnerable adult and reassure them that their story is being taken seriously.
- Keep questions to a minimum so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Refrain from using leading questions.
- Point out that the events will be reported to other people and that this is to prevent further abuse.
- Safety of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount.
- Record all information accurately and report the incident to the club welfare officer. This will be a verbatim recording of what has been said completed at the, or as near to the time or initial disclosure as possible.

The instructor or responsible person will complete detailed documentation following an allegation, report, or evidence of abuse. This will help to support any subsequent police or local authority investigation. On all occasions, written copies of any documentation will be provided to the governing body in the first instance. All documentation will exclude any personal opinions and will focus on the facts, including:

- The child's or vulnerable adult's name, age and date of birth.
- The child's or vulnerable adult's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's.
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information.
- A description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size etc.
- Any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.

- The child's or vulnerable adult's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred.
- Whether the parents, carers, guardians etc. have been contacted.

## **10. Reporting Concerns**

All suspicions and allegations must be reported appropriately without delay. Allegations and complaints may result in three types of investigation:

- Criminal: in which case the police are immediately involved.
- Child protection: in which case the social services and possibly the Police will be involved.
- Disciplinary or misconduct that the Club will deal with.

All suspicions and allegations will be shared with the professional agencies responsible for child protection. Social Services have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the Police.

Any suspicions of instructors, members, or visitors abusing children or vulnerable adults should be reported to the Club's safeguarding officer. The Officer will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the child or vulnerable adult in question and anyone else at risk.

All cases will result in referral to the Social Services department. Parents/carers of any children or vulnerable adults will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Social Services department. All cases will also be referred to the governing bodies safeguarding officer and the Club will take advice regarding further actions. Any allegations made sometime after an alleged event will trigger the same procedure. This is to protect and safeguard others from a potential/alleged abuser.

All information must be kept confidential, and any evidence maintained in a secure place. Information should only be shared where necessary or under the guidance of the police or other relevant authority.

## **11. Safeguarding Allegations against Club Members**

Any allegation against Strike Kickboxing Club members, and/or instructors may result in the following action:

- Immediate suspension from lessons and other events organised by the Club.
- Notification of events to the Police and Social Services.
- Notification of events to the governing body.
- Continued suspension from lessons and other events organised by the Club, until the conclusion of any investigation by the Police and/or Social Services.
- Liaison between the Club and the governing body regarding the viability of continued membership.
- Exclusion from the Club if any allegations are proven.

## 12. Preventative Checks and Controls

The Club recognises the importance of taking all reasonable steps to prevent unsuitable people from coming into contact with children or vulnerable adults. The Club, therefore, uses the following checks and controls to help prevent this from happening:

- Assessing the suitability of all individuals that assist with our lessons and training sessions.
- Insisting that our instructors obtain and maintain an enhanced DBS check.
- Ensuring that our instructors receive appropriate safeguarding training.
- Ensuring that all persons must be suitably graded/certified and are registered with a recognised martial arts association.
- Ensuring that everyone associated with the Club complies with the safeguarding policy.
- Ensuring that the Club policy complements that of the governing body.
- Providing suitable training and/or development opportunities to ensure good practice.
- Follow up on any concerns or complaints in line with this safeguarding policy.
- Exclude, or and bar any individual that fails to meet the requirements of this policy.

## 13. Safeguarding Contacts and Local Guidance

- **Hampshire Children's Services** To report concerns or abuse to children, you can call 0300 555 1384

**Hampshire Adult Services:** To report concerns or abuse about adults, you can call 0300 555 1386

### NSPCC

- Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

### Refer any concerns about an adult to:

- The Police via 999, if there is an immediate risk of harm.

**The Club Safeguarding Officer is:** Aaron Atkins

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