

ST MARTINS KARATE GROUP

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

A safe, positive and child-centred environment

Organisation	St Martins Karate Group
Clubs covered	St Martins Junior Karate Club and St Martins Karate Carnforth
Safeguarding contacts	Paul Turner (DSL) and Chris Haggan (Deputy DSL)
Safeguarding email	safeguarding@carnforthkarateclub.co.uk
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Approved by Paul Turner and Chris Haggan

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Policy information

This policy is owned by St Martins Karate Group and applies to both clubs, all sessions and all related activities. St Martins Karate Group is a member club of CMAA, its national supporting body. This policy should be read alongside relevant CMAA safeguarding guidance, codes of conduct and reporting arrangements. CMAA involvement does not replace direct referral to statutory agencies where required.

1. Purpose, scope and status

This policy explains how St Martins Karate Group safeguards children who take part in karate classes, gradings, competitions, demonstrations, courses, social activities, trips and online or digital activity connected with the Group.

It applies to:

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all instructors, assistant instructors, cadet leaders, volunteers and anyone acting on behalf of the Group;

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all children under 18, including 16- and 17-year-old assistant instructors and young people who may also hold leadership roles;

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parents, carers, visitors and contractors while participating in or attending Group activities;

and

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both St Martins Junior Karate Club and St Martins Karate Carnforth.

Compliance is mandatory. A failure to follow this policy may result in removal from duties, exclusion from activities, disciplinary action, referral to CMAA and/or referral to statutory agencies.

2. Safeguarding principles

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The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.

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Every child has the right to participate in a safe, positive, inclusive and child-centred environment.

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Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Concerns must never be ignored or assumed to be someone else's responsibility.

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Children will be listened to, taken seriously and treated with dignity and respect.

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No child will be treated less favourably because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic background or any other status.

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Some children may be more vulnerable because of disability, communication needs, previous trauma, family circumstances, discrimination or isolation. Reasonable and appropriate steps will be taken to protect and include them.

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Information will be shared lawfully and proportionately when necessary to protect a child.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Paul Turner is the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL leads the Group's safeguarding arrangements, receives concerns, ensures appropriate action and referrals, liaises with CMAA and statutory agencies, and oversees secure records and policy review.

3.2 Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Chris Haggan is the Deputy Safeguarding Lead. The Deputy acts when the DSL is unavailable, supports safeguarding administration and must act directly where delay could place a child at risk.

3.3 Everyone involved with the Group

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must recognise and report concerns promptly;

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must follow codes of conduct, safe-practice rules and role boundaries;

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must not investigate allegations or confront a person alleged to have caused harm;

- must complete required safeguarding learning and cooperate with safeguarding enquiries;
and
- may contact statutory agencies directly where a child is in immediate danger or where the DSL/Deputy cannot be reached.

4. Legal and guidance framework

This policy has regard to relevant law and guidance in England, including:

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Sexual Offences Act 2003, including positions of trust provisions applying to sport;
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Domestic Abuse Act 2021;

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Modern Slavery Act 2015;

- Serious Crime Act 2015, including female genital mutilation and coercive or controlling behaviour provisions;
- Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010;
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR;
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and relevant Disclosure and Barring Service requirements;
- CMAA safeguarding policy, codes and reporting arrangements; and
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the standards and guidance associated with the Safeguarding Code in Martial Arts.

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. A person's maturity, role, belt grade, employment status or apparent independence does not change this definition.

5. Definitions and forms of harm

Abuse is maltreatment of a child. It may involve inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. It may occur in a family, community, institution, sport setting or online, and may be caused by an adult or another child.

Physical abuse May include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. In karate, legitimate, safely managed training contact must never be used to disguise punishment, aggression or excessive force.

Emotional abuse Persistent emotional maltreatment that adversely affects a child's emotional development, including humiliation, intimidation, rejection, unreasonable expectations, discriminatory abuse, coercive control, serious bullying or repeatedly reducing a child to tears as a means of control.

Sexual abuse Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activity, whether contact or non-contact, including grooming, sexualised communication, sexual images and abuse facilitated by technology.

Neglect

Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, including adequate supervision, medical attention, food, clothing, shelter or protection from danger.

Child-on-child abuse Abuse by another child, including bullying, physical assault, sexual violence, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, coercion, initiation-type behaviour, sharing sexual images and abuse within intimate relationships.

Exploitation

Includes child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, trafficking, modern slavery, county lines and situations where an imbalance of power is used to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child.

Domestic abuse Children may experience domestic abuse directly, may see or hear it, or may be affected by its consequences. A child who sees, hears or experiences the effects of domestic abuse is recognised as a victim in their own right.

Other safeguarding concerns Include forced marriage, female genital mutilation, so-called honour-based abuse, radicalisation, hate crime, online abuse, stalking, missing episodes, self-neglect linked to abuse, and fabricated or induced illness.

Poor practice Behaviour that breaches this policy or a code of conduct and places a child or adult at risk. Serious or repeated poor practice may amount to abuse and must be reported.

6. Recognising possible abuse or neglect

Indicators may include, but are not limited to:

- unexplained, suspicious or repeated injuries, or explanations that are inconsistent;
- a child describing an abusive act or another person expressing concern;
- a marked change in behaviour, attendance, confidence, mood, presentation or performance;
- fear of a particular person, reluctance to go home, unexplained absences or going missing;
- age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or sexualised behaviour;
- sudden distrust of adults or difficulty forming relationships;
- bullying, isolation, discrimination or being prevented from socialising;
- significant changes in eating, weight, hygiene or clothing;
- unexplained money, gifts, phones, travel or relationships;
- online secrecy, coercion, threats or distress; or
- a parent, carer, instructor or other adult behaving in a way that causes concern.

One indicator does not prove abuse, and some children show no obvious signs. Concerns should be recorded and passed on; staff and volunteers must not attempt to diagnose or investigate.

7. Responding to a disclosure or concern

Immediate danger Call 999 if a child is in immediate danger, a crime is in progress or urgent medical help is

required. Do not delay while trying to contact the DSL.

When a child discloses harm or raises a concern:

- stay calm and listen carefully without interrupting;
 - take the child seriously and acknowledge how difficult it may have been to speak;
 - reassure the child that they have done the right thing and are not to blame;
 - do not promise secrecy; explain that information will be shared only with people who need to help keep them safe;
 - allow the child to speak freely. Ask only open or clarifying questions needed to establish immediate safety, such as 'Tell me what happened' or 'Is there anything else you want to tell me?';
 - do not ask leading questions, press for details, investigate, confront the alleged person or discuss the matter widely;
 - explain what will happen next and consider the child's immediate safety;
 - make a written record as soon as possible using the child's own words; and
 - report promptly to the DSL or Deputy, or directly to statutory agencies if necessary.
- If the concern relates to a recent assault, preserve possible evidence where safe to do so. Do not wash clothing, ask the child to change unnecessarily or handle items more than required.

8. Reporting and referral procedures

8.1 Internal reporting All safeguarding concerns, allegations and significant poor-practice incidents must be reported promptly to the DSL or Deputy. This includes concerns arising outside karate, such as at home, school, online or in the community.

The shared safeguarding email is safeguarding@carnforthkarateclub.co.uk. It is monitored regularly and concerns will be passed promptly to the appropriate safeguarding lead. Urgent concerns should also be reported by telephone.

8.2 Referral to statutory agencies The DSL or Deputy will decide what safeguarding action is required, but no one needs permission to contact the police or Children's Social Care where a child may be at risk. The Group is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred.

- Immediate danger or urgent crime: call 999.
- Lancashire Children's Social Care: 0300 123 6720.
- Out of hours: 0300 123 6722.
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000.

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Where appropriate, the DSL will also notify or seek advice from CMAA.

Parents or carers will usually be informed unless doing so may place the child at greater risk, prejudice an investigation or conflict with advice from Children's Social Care or the police.

9. Allegations concerning instructors, volunteers or other adults

Any concern that an instructor, assistant, volunteer, contractor or other adult working with children has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, committed an offence against a child, behaved in a way indicating they may pose a risk, or behaved in a way that may make them unsuitable to work with children must be reported immediately.

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- Report to the DSL, unless the allegation concerns the DSL, in which case report to the Deputy.
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- If the allegation concerns both safeguarding leads, or there is a conflict of interest, contact Lancashire's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) process and/or the police directly.
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- The DSL/Deputy will seek LADO advice promptly and before starting any internal investigation.
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- The Group may take neutral safeguarding measures, including changing duties or suspension, without implying guilt.
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- Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible, and support will be considered for the child, the person raising the concern and the person subject to the allegation.
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- CMAA will be informed where required or appropriate, without delaying statutory referral.
- Lancashire LADO information and referral route: Lancashire County Council - Local Authority

Designated Officer

10. Recording, information sharing and confidentiality

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- A factual written record must be made as soon as possible and signed and dated.
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- Record the date, time, place, people present, what was seen or heard, the child's exact words where possible, questions asked, visible injuries, actions taken and who received the information.
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- Clearly distinguish fact, observation, allegation and opinion. Do not speculate.
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- Records will be stored securely with restricted access and kept separately from general membership records.
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- Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis for safeguarding purposes. Data protection law does not prevent proportionate information sharing to protect a child.
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- Safeguarding records will be retained in line with legal, insurance, CMAA and safeguarding requirements. Disposal will be secure.
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- The DSL will maintain a chronology and record reasons for decisions, including decisions not to refer.

11. Safer recruitment, DBS checks, training and supervision

St Martins Karate Group will take reasonable steps to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. Safeguarding does not rely on a DBS certificate alone.

- All adult instructors and relevant regular adult volunteers working with children must hold the appropriate enhanced DBS check, including barred-list information where the role is eligible.
- Identity, role suitability, experience, qualifications and references will be checked as appropriate.

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- Appointments will include clear roles, codes of conduct, safeguarding expectations and a supervised induction or trial period.
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- DBS status and role eligibility will be kept under review, and individuals must disclose relevant changes or concerns.
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- Instructors regularly attend safeguarding and related training courses. Training will be appropriate to role and refreshed periodically or when guidance changes.
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- The DSL and Deputy will receive role-appropriate safeguarding training and keep their knowledge current.
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- Concerns about conduct, boundary breaches or suitability will be addressed promptly, including referral to the DBS where the legal referral conditions are met.

12. Safe practice in karate

12.1 Appropriate physical contact Karate involves demonstrations, partner work, controlled contact, posture correction, first aid and physical intervention to prevent injury. Any contact must be necessary, proportionate, appropriate to the child's age and understanding, and connected to a legitimate coaching or safety purpose.

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- Explain contact in advance where practical and respect a child's discomfort or wish not to be touched.
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- Use the minimum contact necessary, preferably in an open and observable setting.
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- Never use contact that is secretive, sexualised, humiliating, punitive, aggressive or intended to cause unnecessary pain.
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- Do not use excessive exercise, contact or physical punishment as discipline.
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- Follow the Group's safe-practice rules for sparring, head contact, weapons, protective equipment, first aid and return after injury.
- 12.2 One-to-one situations Avoid unnecessary one-to-one situations. Individual coaching must take place in an open, observable area with other people nearby. Doors should remain open where practical. No adult should invite a child to their home or meet them privately for a club purpose without an agreed safeguarding arrangement.
- 12.3 Personal care and first aid Instructors will not routinely provide intimate or personal care. Any child requiring personal care must have an agreed arrangement involving a parent, carer or designated support person. First aid may be given by an appropriate person, with another adult present where practical, and recorded in accordance with Group procedures.

13. Cadet leaders and assistant instructors

13.1 Cadet leaders Cadet leaders may be appointed from age 10. Their role is developmental: they may guide, encourage and model activities for younger students under direct adult supervision. They are children themselves and must be safeguarded accordingly.

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Cadet leaders are not staff and must never hold sole responsibility for a child or group.

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They must not independently discipline children, supervise changing or toilets, transport children, manage safeguarding disclosures or communicate privately with younger members.

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Their role must be age-appropriate, clearly explained and agreed with their parent or carer.

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They must remain visible to and under the direction of an authorised adult instructor.

13.2 Assistant instructors Assistant instructors must be at least 16 and hold a minimum grade of 3rd kyu. They may support demonstrations, warm-ups, small-group practice and supervised teaching.

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No person under 18 may run a class unsupervised or have sole responsibility for a child.

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Work with children must remain open and observable, with an authorised adult instructor present and responsible.

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Under-18 assistant instructors must not supervise changing, transport children for the Group or privately message younger members.

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Adult assistant instructors are subject to the Group's normal safer-recruitment, DBS, conduct and training requirements.

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The supervising adult instructor retains overall responsibility for safety, conduct and safeguarding at all times.

14. Photography, video, social media and electronic communication

14.1 Consent and publication

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Parents or carers provide photography and publicity consent through the membership process and may amend or withdraw consent.

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Only a child's first name will normally be used in public posts. A full name or additional identifying information requires a clear, specific reason and additional consent.

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Images must be appropriate, respectful and connected to legitimate club activity. Children must not be portrayed in a degrading, sexualised or unsafe manner.

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No photography or recording is permitted in toilets or any area being used for changing.

14.2 Parents and spectators Parents and carers may photograph their own child at ordinary club activities unless a venue or event rule says otherwise. They should avoid deliberately focusing on other children and must respect any privacy instruction issued for safeguarding reasons. Where an event organiser imposes a photography system or registration requirement, it must be followed.

14.3 Personal devices Instructors may use a personal phone or camera for authorised club images. Images must be uploaded promptly to the approved club destination and deleted from the device once no longer required, including from recently deleted or cloud-synchronised locations where practical. They must not remain indefinitely in personal photo libraries or be used for personal purposes.

14.4 Communication

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Routine communication with children should go through a parent or carer.

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Adults must not privately message children through personal social-media accounts.

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Where direct communication with an older teenager is genuinely necessary, use an approved club channel and include a parent/carers or another club official where practical.

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Messages must be professional, relevant, sent at reasonable times and capable of scrutiny.

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Do not use disappearing messages, sexualised content, coercive language or secret accounts for club communication.

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Any concerning online contact, image or message must be preserved where safe and reported promptly.

15. Changing, toilets, transport, events and collection

15.1 Changing and toilets Students normally arrive and leave wearing their karate uniform. Where changing is necessary, a lockable accessible toilet may be used by one person at a time. It is not a communal changing room.

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Adults and children must not share a changing or toilet space.

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Cadet leaders and under-18 assistant instructors must not supervise another child changing.

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An adult should enter only in an emergency or under a pre-agreed personal-care arrangement, with another adult aware and present where possible.

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No photography, filming or phone use is permitted in toilets or while anyone is changing.

15.2 Transport

Parents and carers are normally responsible for transport. Children may leave independently where prior written permission has been provided by a parent or carer. Members leaving independently must tell an instructor before they leave. Instructors should not routinely transport a child alone. Any exceptional arrangement must be agreed in advance with the parent/carers and, where practical, involve another adult or more than one child, with clear collection and destination details.

15.3 Competitions, trips and events

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Parents/carers will receive clear information about supervision, travel, timings, emergency contacts, medical needs and collection arrangements.

- Risk assessments and suitable supervision will be used for Group-organised activities.
- No adult will share a bedroom with an unrelated child. Overnight arrangements require a separate plan and written parental consent.

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The Group's responsibility begins and ends at the agreed times. Late collection will be managed in an open area by at least two responsible people where possible, and repeated concerns will be addressed with the parent/carer.

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A child will not be released to an unauthorised person where a collection arrangement is in place.

16. Bullying, child-on-child abuse and online harm

Bullying and child-on-child abuse are not dismissed as banter, part of growing up or normal martial arts behaviour. They may be physical, verbal, emotional, discriminatory, sexual or online.

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All concerns will be taken seriously, recorded and assessed for immediate safety.

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Both the child harmed and the child alleged to have caused harm will be safeguarded and supported appropriately.

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Responses will be proportionate and may include supervision changes, parent/carer involvement, behaviour measures, risk assessment and referral to statutory agencies.

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Restorative or informal approaches will not be used where they could pressure a child, minimise sexual or violent harm, or replace a required referral.

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Children will be encouraged to report bullying, sexual harassment, coercion, image sharing and online threats.

17. Whistleblowing and complaints

Everyone should feel able to raise concerns about unsafe, unlawful or improper practice. A person who believes safeguarding concerns are being ignored or mishandled should report to the DSL, Deputy, CMAA, Lancashire Children's Social Care, the LADO, the police or the NSPCC as appropriate.

Safeguarding concerns are not handled solely as ordinary complaints. The Group's complaints process may address service issues, but it must not delay protective action or statutory referral. No one will suffer retaliation for raising a genuine concern in good faith.

18. Policy approval, monitoring and review

This policy is approved jointly by Paul Turner and Chris Haggan on behalf of St Martins Karate Group.

It will be formally reviewed at least every three years. It will be reviewed sooner following:

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a safeguarding incident, complaint or learning review;

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a significant change in law, statutory guidance, local procedures or CMAA requirements;

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a change to the Group's activities, venues, staffing or safeguarding arrangements;

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feedback from children, parents, instructors or partner organisations; or

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a requirement associated with the Safeguarding Code in Martial Arts.

Safeguarding practice, training, DBS arrangements, contacts and implementation will be monitored between formal policy reviews.

Appendix A - Immediate action guide

Situation**Action**

Immediate danger, serious injury or crime in progress Call 999. Provide first aid if competent and safe. Then inform the DSL/Deputy.

A child discloses abuse Listen, reassure, do not promise secrecy, ask only minimal open questions, record exact words and report promptly.

Concern about home, school, online activity or another child Record and report to the DSL/Deputy. Do not investigate.

Concern or allegation about an instructor, volunteer or adult Report immediately to the DSL; if it concerns the DSL, report to the Deputy. Seek LADO advice before internal investigation.

DSL and Deputy unavailable Do not wait if a child may be at risk. Contact Children's Social Care, police or NSPCC directly.

Concern about how the Group is handling safeguarding Use whistleblowing routes: Deputy/DSL, CMAA, LADO, Children's Social Care, police or NSPCC.

Appendix B - Safeguarding concern record form Complete as soon as possible. Use the child's own words. Do not investigate. Continue on additional secure pages if required.

Name of child / young person

Date of birth / age (if known)

Date, time and place of concern or disclosure

Name and
role of person completing this record

People
present

What
was seen, heard or disclosed (use exact words where possible)

Questions
asked and answers given

_____	Visible
injuries or immediate safety issues	

_____	Action taken,
including emergency action	

_____	Who was
informed, date and time	

_____	Advice
received and decisions made	

Signature: _____	Date/time: _____

Appendix C - Key contacts

Contact

Name

Telephone

Email / purpose

Designated

Safeguarding Lead

Paul Turner

07984 912668 safeguarding@carforthkarateclub.co.uk

Deputy Designated

Safeguarding Lead

Chris Haggan

07739 669326 safeguarding@carforthkarateclub.co.uk Lancashire Children's

Social Care

0300 123 6720 Urgent safeguarding referrals and advice Lancashire out-of- hours service 0300 123 6722 Outside normal office hours Emergency services Immediate danger, serious injury or crime in progress NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 help@nspcc.org.uk CMAA Designated

Safeguarding Lead

Andrew Morrell

07909 673894 cmaauk@hotmail.com Useful online information

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Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

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Lancashire - tell us if you are worried about a child

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Lancashire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

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Safeguarding Code in Martial Arts

Approval

Approved by Paul Turner and Chris Haggan Approval date

Version

1.0 Next scheduled review

Document control

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General enquiries	info@carnforthkarateclub.co.uk