

# ATHERSTONE KARATE CLUB



## Safe Practice Policy

Karate is an activity 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)

### Warmups

All activities will 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.

### Martial Arts involving strikes, punches and kicks

The risks include 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.

#### Safe practice must include:

During sparring, only light contact is used, especially to the head (no head contact is permitted for anyone under the age of 16). (Light contact means the technique is targeted but controlled so that whilst the opponent is touched, the technique is not allowed to follow through) current expert advice from leading neurosurgeons is that the use of helmets, mitts and foot pads does not eliminate the risk of brain injury from full contact strikes.

Avoid 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.

### Weapons practice

No live blades (sharp or otherwise) in the training hall when children are present.  
Safe protocols for the use of training weapons by children  
Good supervision always 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.

**ALL ATHERSTONE KARATE CLUB INSTRUCTORS ARE QUALIFIED, INSURED, DBS CHECKED, FIRST AID RECOGNISED AND RECEIVE REGULAR CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING.**

Last updated by: (name and date)	Mr Mark Ridler, May 2024
Frequency of review:	Annually
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