

Safeguarding at Cornwall Special Needs Taekwondo

Safe Practice



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Taekwondo 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 traditional training methods are modified as described below. (*also includes Adults at Risk)

1. Warm Ups

All activities should include a thorough warm up, and head to toe stretching and gradual cardiovascular activity with press ups, sit-ups, squats and burpees. To help reduce injury, specific attention is paid to those muscle groups that will be used during later activity.

- Press-ups, warm up the upper body, chest, shoulders and arms.
- Sit-ups, warm-up the core muscles in the hips, abdomen and lower back.
- Squats (own body weight) engage the leg muscles and joints for kicking
- Burpees are an overall body warm-up that engages all muscle groups and gets the heart & lungs ready for training.

2. Taekwondo primarily involves strikes, punches and kicks

The risks are: 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 includes:

(a) **Sparring** light contact only, especially to the head. (Light contact means the technique is targeted but controlled so that whilst the opponent is touched the technique is not followed through). Padded gloves and head protection are to be worn when sparring at all times. (Expert advice from a neurosurgeon is that the use of helmets, mitts or foot pads does not eliminate the risk of brain injury from full contact strikes.) **No equipment means NO CONTACT**

(b) **Drills** in all other children's classes are light contact only and contact to the head is forbidden.

(c) We avoid excessive stretching and exercises such as press-ups on the knuckles or hitting heavy bags as the joints of children are still developing and can be damaged by these exercises.

3. Taekwondo and the practice of grappling and strangling

The risks include: falling on unsuitable surfaces: landing on the head: damage to the joints from locks: strangulation.

Safe practice must include:

(a) Checking the matted area for suitability, particularly where the mats have been joined.

(b) Checking that there are no hard surfaces or sharp/hard objects around the matted area.

(c) Having an experience instructor who will ensure that children are not taught to use locks, throws or strangles which will injure their training partner.

4. Taekwondo and it's use of weapons

The children's training syllabus does not extend to the use of weapons

Safe practice includes:

(a) No live blades (sharp or otherwise) in the training hall when children are present

(b) Good supervision at all times 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.

5. No Special needs students will take part in any sparring or full contact activity's.