

Safeguarding Policy

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Introduction

All sporting organisations which make provision for children and vulnerable adults must ensure that:

- The welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount
- All children and adults at risk, regardless of age, culture, ability or disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All staff (paid/unpaid) working for NEXUS Martial Arts have a responsibility to report concerns to the Association's Designated Safeguarding Lead (Laura Williams, mobile number: 07480 800 242)

Policy Statement/Aims

Policy Statement

NEXUS Martial Arts has a duty of care to safeguard all children and adults at risk involved in NEXUS Martial Arts, from harm. All children have the right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. All Instructors, Assistant Instructors and volunteers, either paid or unpaid, will ensure the safety and protection of all children and adults at risk involved in the Association through adherence to the Safeguarding Policy guidelines adopted by NEXUS Martial Arts.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

Policy Aims

The aim of the NEXUS Martial Arts Safeguarding Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and adults at risk with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of NEXUS Martial Arts.
- Allow all Instructors, Assistant Instructors and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child/ /adults at risk protection issues.

Promoting Good Practice

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to be taken.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people or adults at risk in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people or adults at risk and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters the club activity having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem. In such instances, the NEXUS Martial Arts activity organiser must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

Good Practice Guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good Practice Means:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers 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 and according to guidelines provided by the Coach Education Programme. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people and their parents should always be consulted and their agreement gained.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children / adults at risk in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, teachers, coaches or officials work in pairs.

- Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.
- Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's / adults at risk's rooms or invite children / adults at risk into their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people / adults at risk.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and adults at risk - 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 administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport children / adults at risk in their cars.

Practices To Be Avoided

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge at NEXUS Martial Arts or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:

- Avoid spending time alone with children / adults at risk, away from others
- Avoid taking or dropping off a child / adult at risk to an event or activity

Practices Never To Be Sanctioned

The following should **never** be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Share a room with a child / adult at risk
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children / adults at risk to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child / adult at risk, even in fun
- Reduce a child / adult at risk to tears as a form of control
- Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child / adult at risk
- Do things of a personal nature for children or adults at risk, that they can do for themselves
- Invite or allow children / adults at risk to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

NOTE: It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children / adults at risk, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the Students involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, 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 or assisting a child / adult at risk to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Incidents That Must Be Reported/Recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- 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.

Use of Photographic/Filming Equipment

There is evidence that some people have used the training environment and sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. The Association should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to Laura Williams, Association Designation Safeguarding Lead.

There is no intention to prevent Instructors and Assistant Instructors using photos/videos as a legitimate coaching aid. However, Students and their parents/carers should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme and their consent obtained and such photos/videos will be stored safely.

Recruitment and Training of Staff and Volunteers

Recruitment

NEXUS Martial Arts recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children / adults at risk in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children / adults at risk. NEXUS Martial Arts has implemented the following criteria to ensure that all paid or unpaid personnel of NEXUS Martial Arts are suitable to work with children and adults at risk:

- All Instructors and Assistant Instructors will have progressed through the Association from beginner students through to their current qualification.
- All Instructors and Assistant Instructors over the age of 18, will be required to attend and complete a recognised Safeguarding training workshop which will be renewed every three years.
- All Instructors and Assistant Instructors over the age of 18, will complete a Sports First Aid course which will be renewed every three years.
- All Instructors and Assistant Instructors over the age of 18 years, will be DBS checked, which will be renewed every three years.
- All Instructors and Assistant Instructors will adhere to the NEXUS Martial Arts Safeguarding policy.

Training

Before working with children and adults at risk, all Instructors and Assistant Instructors will complete significant training enabling them to adhere to the guidelines set out in the NEXUS Martial Arts Safeguarding policy. As part of their 'Continued Personal Development' all Instructors and Assistant Instructors will be required to undergo additional training courses.

NEXUS Martial Arts Requires:

- All Instructors and Assistant Instructors to attend a recognised Safeguarding awareness training workshop, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards good practice and safeguarding.
- Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person.
- Relevant personnel to gain a National First Aid certificate.
- All Instructors and Assistant Instructors to update their training when necessary. Information about meeting training needs can be obtained from Sports Coach UK, the NSPCC, and UK Sport.

Responding To Allegations Or Suspicious

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in NEXUS Martial Arts, in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the Association's Designated Safeguarding Lead (Laura Williams) and if then required, to the appropriate authorities.

NEXUS Martial Arts will assure all staff/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 or adult at risk.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

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

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

Action If There Are Concerns

Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice the Association's Designated Safeguarding Lead will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the NEXUS Martial Arts Designated Safeguarding Lead, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to Anthony Claydon, Chief Instructor, who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

Concerns about suspected abuse:

- Any suspicion that a child or adult at risk has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the NEXUS Martial Arts Designated Safeguarding Lead (Laura Williams), who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child or adult at risk in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The NEXUS Martial Arts Designated Safeguarding Lead (Laura Williams) will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police. Contact numbers for local Social Services can be found at the end of this document.
- The parents or carers of the child / adult at risk will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Social Services department. Seek Social Services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser (or parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

- If the NEXUS Martial Arts Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to Anthony Claydon, Chief Instructor, who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

Confidentiality

Every effort should 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:

- The Association Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- Social Services/Police

Information should 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, relevant and secure).

Internal Enquiries And Possible Suspension

The NEXUS Martial Arts Designated Safeguarding Lead and Anthony Claydon will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further Police and Social Services inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the Social Services or Police inquiries, the NEXUS Martial Arts Disciplinary Committee, which consists of Senior Instructors and other appointed personnel, 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. In such cases, the NEXUS Martial Arts Disciplinary Committee must 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 the child / adult at risk should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, adults at risk, parents and members of staff may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process.

The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling, 15 St John's Business Park, Lutterworth, LE17 4HB, Tel: 01455 883300, Text: 01455 560606, E-mail: bacp@bacp.co.uk, Internet: www.bacp.co.uk.

Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time 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 Association should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the Social Services or the Police. This is because other children / adults at risk, either within or outside 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.

Bullying

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in sport:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children / adults at risk to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise not to tell anyone else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to Laura Williams, Designated Safeguarding Lead or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).

Action towards the bully(ies):

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully (ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully's parents.
- Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- Provide support for the victim's coach.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Inform all Association members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.
- Most 'low level' incidents will be dealt with at the time by coaches and volunteers. However, if the bullying is severe (e.g. a serious assault), or if it persists despite efforts to deal with it, incidents should be referred to Laura Williams, Designated Safeguarding Lead as in "responding to suspicions or allegations" above.

Concerns Outside The Immediate Sporting Environment (e.g. a parent or a carer)

- Report concerns to the Association Designated Safeguarding Lead, who should contact Social Services or the Police as soon as possible.

- If the Association Designated Safeguarding Lead is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact Anthony Claydon, Chief Instructor, who will inform the appropriate Social Services or the Police immediately.
- Social Services and the Association Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide how to involve the parents/carers.
- Maintain confidentiality.

Providing Information To Police Or Social Services

Information about suspected abuse must be accurate and a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. It should include the following:

- The child's / adult at risk's name, age and date of birth.
- The child's / adult at risk's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's / adult at risk's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If the child / adult at risk was not the person who reported the incident, has the child / adult at risk been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

Safeguarding Contact Details

West Sussex County Council LADO Contact Details

Miriam Williams and Donna Tomlinson
LADO Service Contact Number: 01403 229900
Out-of-hours service: 033 022 26664
LADO Service email address: LADO@WestSussex.gov.uk
Website: www.westsussex.gov.uk

If there are serious concerns about a child's/ adult at risk's immediate safety, always dial 999.

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) can be contacted on 0800 800 5000 or email help@NSPCC.org.uk if concerns about a child or young/vulnerable person are raised.

Or visit www.nspcc.org.uk for immediate advice.

ChildLine 0800 11 11

Or visit www.childline.org.uk