



Lea Valley Karate Academy

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

Updated July 2026



Section 1	LVKA Policy Statement
Section 2	Our Responsibilities - What instructors/coaches at Lea Valley Karate Academy should know and do
Section 3	What is Child Abuse and what are the signs • Child Abuse • Children with Disabilities • Children from Ethnic Minority Groups • General signs of Abuse • Physical abuse • Emotional abuse • Sexual abuse • Neglect • Specific safeguarding issues • Other forms of harm
Section 4	What to do if concerned Responding to Concerns Statutory assessment
Section 5	Whistle Blowing • What happens next • Who needs to know
Section 6	Karate in schools
Section 7	Safer Recruitment Supervision, support and training
Section 8	Key Summary Miscellaneous document links and contacts



“All children whatever their race, sex, beliefs and physical and mental abilities, have the right to grow up unharmed, to have the opportunity to develop fully and to have their basic needs met.”

Children’s Act 1989

LVKA acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018’ and complies with best practice as advised by the NSPCC Child Protection in sport Unit (CPSU) and English Karate Federation requirements. This includes sharing of information with relevant agencies and organisations if required for the protection of children and reporting concerns to the club safeguarding Officer and/or designated safeguarding lead of Khalsa Karate association.

This policy and its accompanying procedures provides a framework and guidance in respect of the duty of care to protect and safeguard children and young people under the age of eighteen. We expect everyone who works/volunteers within the club to share this commitment. All adults in our academy will take welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always act in the best interest of the child. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed immediately and may result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation



Safeguarding information for all instructor/coaches/volunteers

What instructors/coaches at Lea Valley Karate Academy should know and do.

A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

Organisations, Schools, colleges, and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in the statutory guidance, "Working Together to Safeguard Children."

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The role instructors/coaches

All instructors/coaches have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and train.

All instructors/coaches should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

Any instructor or club volunteer who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out.



Each organisation should have a club welfare officer / designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to the instructors / coaches to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care if required.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

What Lea Valley Karate Academy instructors/coaches need to know

All instructors/coaches members should be aware of systems within Lea Valley Karate Academy, which support safeguarding and these will be explained. This should include:

- the child protection policy;
- Policy for safe practice
- Code of conduct for instructors coaches and volunteers
- Code of conduct for students
- Code of conduct for Parents and Carers; and
- role of the designated safeguarding lead [including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies]

All instructors / coaches will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition all instructors / coaches will receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All instructors / coaches should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

All instructors / coaches will know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Instructors / coaches will know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead and children's social care. Instructors / coaches should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child



What Lea Valley Karate Academy instructors/coaches should look out for

Child abuse

A child is any person under the age of 18. **Abuse is a** form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Child abuse happens when a person, adult or child, harms a child in a way that can either be physical, sexual or emotional, but also involve a lack of love, care and attention. Neglect can be just as damaging to a child as physical or sexual abuse.

Children may be abused by:

- Family members
- Friends
- Peers
- People working or volunteering in an organisations or community settings (e.g. a coach of sport)
- People they know

OR

- Much less commonly, by strangers

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Children and young people with disabilities

Children and young people with disabilities are additionally vulnerable to abuse because they may:

- Have significant communication difficulties which may include very limited verbal communication, or they may use sign language or other forms of non-verbal communication.
- Be subject to prejudices and/or misconceptions of others
- Require personal intimate care
- Have medical needs that are used to explain abuse.
- Not be believed
- Depend on the abuser for their involvement in sport

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups are additionally vulnerable because they may be:

- Experiencing racism and racist attitudes
- Experience racism through being ignored by people in authority
- Wanting to fit in and not make a fuss

Any concerns should be discussed with the safeguarding lead.



General signs of Abuse

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. **All** instructors / coaches should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. If instructors / coaches are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

Children who suffer abuse may be afraid to tell anybody about the abuse. **All** instructors / coaches should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap one another.

- Regular flinching in response to sudden but harmless actions, for example someone raising a hand quickly or shouting out instructions.
- Showing an inexplicable fear or particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people.
- Knowledge of 'adult issues', for example alcohol, drugs and / or sexual behaviour which is inappropriate for their age or stage of development.
- Angry outbursts or behaving aggressively towards other children, adults, animals etc
- Becoming withdrawn or appearing anxious, clingy or depressed
- In older children, risky behaviour such as substance misuse or criminal activity
- Not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries.

Please note that these signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused. There may well be other reasons for changes in a child's behaviour. In assessing whether signs are related to abuse or not they need to be considered in the context of the child's development and situation.

Indicators of abuse and neglect

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

If a child is frequently injured and the bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not match the injury, the information should be passed to the designated safeguarding lead who may then share the information with the local authority.

In a karate Dojo situation physical abuse may also occur due to:

- Demonstrating techniques too hard or repeatedly where the intention is to hurt or intimidate the person
- Over training and inappropriate training which disregards the capacity of the participants immature and growing body. This also applies to over competing.
- Forcing (or suggesting) that a child loses weight to make a weight category for competition. It is safe to say that a child should eat a health and well balanced diet and to train as appropriate to the capacity of their immature and growing body.
- Inappropriate levels of physical exercises as a punishment can send mixed messages, as children and young people want to train and exercise to have fun and stay healthy.



Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

In a Karate Dojo situation emotional abuse may occur when coaches, volunteers or parents:

- Provide repeated negative feedback in public or private
- Over-emphasise the winning ethic
- Making a young person feel worthless, unvalued.
- Mocking a child for failure to grasp a punch/kick or exercise.
- Pushing a child to hard or not recognising their limitations.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

In a Karate Dojo situation sexual abuse may be:

- An adult using the context of a training session to touch young people in an appropriate sexual way e.g stretching/adjustment of their karate suit.
- Coaches implying better progression of the participant in return for sexual favours
- Coaches/Volunteers using their position of power and authority to coerce young participants into a sexual relationship.
- Children and young people being required to weigh-in naked or in underwear, or to share photographs of themselves in underwear to show their weight.



Neglect: is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

In a Karate DoJo situation, neglect may occur when:

- Young participants are left alone without proper supervision
- A young person is not provided with necessary fluids for rehydration
- A young person is exposed to an acceptable risk of injury
- Exposing children to the lack of medical care
- A young person is exposed to unnecessary heat or cold.
- Non-intervention in incidents of bullying or taunting.

Bullying and cyberbullying: is the behaviour that hurts someone else. It usually happens over a lengthy period of time and can harm a child both physically and emotionally. It is not always an adult abusing a young person; often it is child on child. Although bullying often takes place in schools, it does and can occur anywhere where there is poor or inadequate supervision: on the way to/from school, at a sporting event, in the playground, in changing rooms or online. Bullying includes verbal abuse such as name-calling; non verbal abuse such as threatening intimidating or humiliating someone. Undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumours. Racial, sexual or homophobic bullying. Physical assaults such as hitting and pushing.

In a Karate DoJo situation, neglect may occur when:

- A parent/coach pushes too hard
- A coach adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy
- A participant intimidates others instead of encouraging and supporting their fellow participants
- An official places unfair pressure on a person

Coaches hold a position of power in the relationship with their athlete and must not abuse this position to bully children/vulnerable young adults in their care.



Specific safeguarding issues

All instructors / coaches should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting [also known as youth produced sexual imagery] put children in danger.

Related issues

In addition to the above categories, there are other forms of harm or abuse that should involve the police and other organisations working together to protect children. These include:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Hate crimes
- Abuse in domestic settings
- Honour based violence
- Forced Marriage
- Human trafficking
- Female Genital Mutilations (FGM)
- Exploitation by radicalisers who promote violence
- Members of gangs inclined to use violence

Drug/Alcohol Abusing Parents

Drug and alcohol abuse by parents can have a serious effect on their children. 70% of children taken into care have parents who are suspected of substance abuse. Not all parents who abuse drugs or alcohol mistreat or neglect their children, but sometimes they can be put at considerable risk.

There is an increased risk of violence in families where parents abuse substances. Children can suffer from lack of boundaries and discipline and live chaotic lives. This can seriously affect their psychological and emotional development and may cause problems with their relationships later on in life.

The children who are the most vulnerable are those whose parents are violent, aggressive, neglectful or rejecting. These children can remain “invisible” from the services intended to support them unless their behaviour attracts attention outside of the home.

Domestic Violence

The effect of domestic violence on the children is such that it must be considered as abuse. Either witnessing it or being the subject of it is not only traumatic in itself, but it is likely to adversely impact on a child and it should be treated as physical or emotional abuse as appropriate.

It is widely accepted that there are dramatic and serious effects of children witnessing domestic violence, which often result in behavioural issues, absenteeism, ill health, bullying, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse, self-harm and psychological impacts. Growing up in a violent household is also a major factor in predicting delinquency.



Moving from the former family home to new accommodation may mean that children have to change school. Any change of school can be a difficult time for a family, but the particular circumstances associated with escape from domestic violence can make it an even more difficult occasion, particularly if there is an appreciable delay before a school place can be found. If the mother changes her address often or enters a refuge to escape her violent partner, social isolation and loss of friends add to the child's insecurity.

Sexual Exploitation of Children

Children involved in prostitution and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation are victims of abuse and should be treated as such. Their needs will require careful assessment as this problem is often hidden from view.

Guidance about Children Involved In Prostitution issued jointly by the Home Office and the Department of Health in 1998, stresses that all agencies should treat the child primarily as a victim of abuse and should work together to provide them with strategies to exit prostitution.

Self-Harm

Self-harm is when a child or young person deliberately causes injury to them self in order to alleviate other anxieties in their lives. Although this situation can be shocking, coaches/instructors should remember that self-harming is often an outer manifestation of another issue. You cannot tackle this issue directly. A multi agency approach is required.

Sexting

Sexting is when a young person takes an indecent image of them self and sends this to their friends via mobile phones. The problem is that once taken and sent, the sender has lost control of these images and these images could end up anywhere. They could be seen by future employers, their friends or even by pedophiles.

By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else – young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law as these are offences

Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

When referring to sexual violence we mean rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault. Sexual harassment is "unwanted conduct of a sexual nature" This can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resource. Sexual harassment and sexual violence is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Especially important is not to pass off any sexual violence or sexual harassment as 'banter', 'part of growing up'



or 'having a laugh'. This includes brushing clothes, online images, jokes, taunting and sexual comments and where the young person is violated, feels degraded and is humiliated.

Child criminal exploitation: county lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the organisation and/or can occur between children outside the school. **All** instructors/coaches, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (or deputies) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors so it is important that you provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse. Additional information regarding contextual safeguarding is available here: [Contextual Safeguarding](#).

Additional Information and Support

Departmental advice What to Do If You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused-Advice for Practitioners provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential indicators of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout the advice and will be particularly helpful for staff. The [NSPCC](#) website also provides useful additional information on abuse and neglect and what to look for.

What Lea Valley Karate Academy instructors/coaches/volunteers should do if they have concerns about a child

All instructors/coaches working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, **All** instructors/coaches should always act in the **best** interests of the child.

If instructors/coaches have **any concerns** about a child, they should act on them immediately. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the designated safeguarding lead to agree a course of action.

At Lea Valley Karate Academy we expect an instructor with any concern to make a referral to Jennifer Williams, or if she is unavailable, Daniel Hollister after the concern has been raised. Under no



circumstances must an instructors/coaches gone home or allow the child/young person to leave for the day without making this referral, as this could expose a child to abuse or harm.

The designated safeguarding lead or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Instructors/coaches should consider speaking to another instructor and/or take advice from local children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputies) as soon as is practically possible.

Instructors/coaches should not assume someone else will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision.

[Information sharing: Advice for practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation [GDPR]. If in any doubt about sharing information, Instructors/coaches should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fear about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote welfare and protect the safety of children. (see Appendix A)

Remember:

- You may be the only adult in the child's or young person's life that is in a position to notice the signs, or you may be the only adult in that child's life that they trust to tell.
- Never allow a child or young person's disability or cultural differences to explain away concerns. This is not a judgement for you to make. Try not to allow your own morals and beliefs interfere with your decision-making.
- Never assume that someone else has identified and acted on the concern.
- Always make an accurate written record of
 - What you saw
 - What you did
 - What you said
 - What the child said
 - What you did next; and
 - Who you told
- Not acting is NEVER an option

All safeguarding concerns and poor practice occurrences, except if the issue concerns those individuals, **must** be reported to the DSL. This includes issues raised concerning the activities of instructors or volunteers. Where there is an allegation against an instructor or volunteer who works with children at the club the DSL must report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Instructors/Coaches and volunteers must also report the following to the DSL / Deputy and make a written record of what they have done, seen or heard:

- They have accidentally hurt a child;
- A child seems distressed in any manner;
- A child appears to be sexually aroused by their actions;
- A child misunderstands or misinterprets something they have said or done.



If you think a child is in immediate danger or requires medical attention, you should call the emergency services on 999. You can also ring the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 to report immediate risks. This is an immediate responsibility and will take priority over informing the Designated Safeguard Lead.

The Process following a disclosure of abuse

Confidentiality with Students

There is no circumstance that any information from a student which is shared with a member of staff can be deemed to be confidential. The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration and should take precedence over the usual issues of confidentiality or maintaining good relations with families. **Instructors/coaches should not give a child a promise of confidentiality**, especially before they know what a child wants to say.

Information passed to others within the organisation should be on a “need to know” basis in order to help safeguard the child’s welfare.

Information about third parties should be treated with caution and efforts made to establish facts or concerns before referral is made.

Recording Information and Confidentiality of File Notes

All concerns should be reported and discussed with a member of the safeguarding team.

Access to records will be confined to members of the safeguarding team who require this information in order to help to safeguard the child’s welfare. It may be shared with appropriate agencies. All records must be kept securely and confidentially.

Under no circumstances should File Notes containing any personal information about a student be left in a room or any other public area.

Abuse of Trust

It is important to note that there can never be any circumstance when a coach/instructor can have a friendship/relationship with a child or young person with whom they have a professional relationship with through their employment within the club. This is viewed as an abuse of the power relationship which exists between a student and their instructor.

In particular, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over 18 (e.g. teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18, where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child.

There is never any circumstance that sexual contact between a professional and a child or young person can ever be deemed to be consensual. This applies where the child is in full-time education and the person works in the same establishment as the child, even if he/she does not teach the child.



Instructors/coaches must also be aware that there can never be a situation in which an adult working at the club can assume that they have a “special” relationship with a student.

- All relationships between students and staff must remain within professional boundaries.
- No favouritism can be shown – all students should be offered the same access to opportunities.
- Staff must abide by all school policies when making arrangements to accompany students off site.

If there is already a pre-existing friendship with a student’s family or a member of a instructors/coaches own children make friends with another student through the club or other social network, then it is the responsibility of the coach/instructor to be mindful of appropriate boundaries.

Disclosure: Guidance for instructors/coaches – Quick Reminder

DO:

- Do reassure but never say that a matter is confidential
- Do find a quiet place to talk where you will not be interrupted
- Do listen and ascertain clearly what the child wants to disclose
- Do let the child know they have done the right thing to speak out
- Do refer to a designated person immediately after the disclosure

DO NOT:

- Do not promise confidentiality that you cannot keep
- Do not interrupt the child to inform the designated teacher
- Do not ask leading questions or sympathise inappropriately. Remember your role is to listen and pass information to the club welfare officer.
- Do not make any promises about outcomes
- **Do not go home without having referred the matter to Jennifer Williams / Daniel Hollister.**



Statutory assessments

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care [and if appropriate the police] is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local referral process.

The online tool [Report Child Abuse to Your Local Council](#) directs to the relevant local children's social care contact number.

Children's social care has a statutory duty under the Children's Act 1989 to respond and act on information sent to them about concerns.

What will the local authority do?

If a threshold of significant harm (section 31(2) Children's Act 1989) is met the children's social care have a legal duty to make inquiries and this includes talking to the child and family. If that threshold of significant harm or risk of significant harm is not met, they still have a duty to make inquiries to ensure the child is safe.

Whistle blowing

What Lea Valley Karate Academy staff should do if they have concerns about another Instructor/coach:

If an instructor has concerns about another instructor or volunteer then this should be referred to the club's designate safeguarding officer – Jennifer Williams or Sensei Daniel Hollister.

It's important that people within Lea Valley Karate Academy have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they're unhappy with anything.

Whistleblowing occurs when a person raises a concern over misconduct or malpractice within an organisation. The NSPCC has a whistleblowing advice line to support professionals who have concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation.

- General guidance can be found at- [Advice on whistleblowing](#)
- The [NSPCC's what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline](#) is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Instructors/Coaches/Volunteers/Parents can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Where the concern or allegation is about a member of staff or a volunteer, this must like all other concerns be reported to the club welfare officer or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL if they consider the concern to be serious, for example potentially child abuse or a crime they must report the incident to the Local Authority Designated Officer or the Police.

'Designated Officer' in local authorities (referred to as LADO) is a person that works within the local authority to support and at times investigate allegations of child abuse where the perpetrator is in a position of trust i.e. works with children. The role of the LADO is to capture and co-ordinate the



sharing of information relating to a case and will be providing advice and guidance to the employer or organisation and to monitor the progress of the case through to its conclusion.

When determining the outcome of allegation investigations the following definitions are used:

Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive

False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term does not imply guilt or innocence

Physical/Verbal Interaction with Students

At times instructors / coaches who work in organisations place themselves in vulnerable situations through their own actions and are later subject to allegations of child abuse.

It is not realistic to suggest that instructors / coaches should never touch students. However, the only situations when physical contact is acceptable are to prevent a child or young person hurting themselves or others. Instructors / coaches should **NEVER**:

- **Physically prevent a child/young person from leaving a room by physically placing themselves in front of a door, or holding the door**
- **Assume that they have a “special” relationship with a student/young person which will allow horseplay or other inappropriate physical actions**
- **Use inappropriate language to a child/young person which is intended to demean them**
- **Discuss their own personal lives/issues with a child or young person**
- **Make inappropriate remarks about a child or young person’s family**

The above list is by no means exhaustive, but is illustrative of issues that have been dealt with within this school and others in the Local Authority.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs [SEN] and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s disability without further exploration;
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff will work together with all agencies and prompt action will be taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.



Karate in Schools

It is the responsibility of the club safeguarding officer / lead person of any sports club/organisation linking with a school to ensure that they have the name and contact details of the schools designated person/teacher for child protection and the designated officer in the local authority responsible for providing advice and monitoring cases.

It is the responsibility of the school, which is contracting/ inviting the club to undertake karate on their behalf to ensure that the club/organisation meets minimum child protection standards.

All schools and local authorities will have a policy and procedure in place regarding managing allegations against people working in schools.

Supervision, training and support

Lea Valley Karate Academy is committed to working collaboratively with outside agencies to protect our students in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

It is a matter for the club and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any activities.

- **Staff training** - Staff must undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. Induction and training should be in line with advice from the LSCB. 77. In addition, all staff should receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates.

The designated safeguarding lead and deputies will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training should be updated every two years.

The designated safeguarding lead and deputies in addition to their formal training will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually, will keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Staff Training

Lea Valley Karate Academy will ensure coaches/instructors will undergo safeguarding and child protection at induction and through the completion of online training through the Child Protection Company.

In addition, all coaches/instructors should receive regular and child protection updates as required [for example, via email, staff meetings] as required and at least annually.



Safer recruitment

Safer recruitment is a set of practices to help make sure the coaches/instructors and volunteers are suitable to work with children and young people. It's a vital part of creating a safe and positive environment and making a commitment to keep children safe from harm.

Safer recruitment should be a continuing process of improvement for every club, business or organisation whose work or services involve contact with children.

Recruitment, selection and pre-employment vetting of staff

At Lea Valley Karate Academy, all coaches/instructors are DBS checked in line with safer recruitment guidance, to prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working in the club. This involves following all statutory checks and ensuring any volunteer to the club is properly supervised at all times.

Key Summary

If you have concerns about a child's welfare

Where there are concerns about a child's welfare relevant agencies need to be involved at an early stage. If an instructor/coach or a volunteer has concerns about a child's welfare, or if a child discloses that s/he is suffering abuse or reveals information that gives grounds for concern, the instructor/coach should speak to the designated person as outlined in this policy with a view to passing on the information.

Abuse or neglect can have a damaging effect on a child's health, educational attainment and emotional well-being. An Instructor/coach may see changes of behaviour or attendance patterns in existing students, which are likely to adversely impact on a child's performance at the club. Such changes may not necessarily indicate that a child is suffering abuse or neglect. In some cases those changes may be the symptoms of a hidden disability, or undiagnosed medical condition, and the need to distinguish those cases reinforces the need for a careful and thorough assessment of the child and his/her needs when concerns are passed on.

Do not ignore your instinct. Discuss all concerns with the designated colleagues.

Parental Involvement

It is not your responsibility to discuss your concerns directly with parents/carers.

All parents need to understand that the club has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are their students, and that this responsibility necessitates a safeguarding/child protection policy and procedures, and that an organisation may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare.

Where there are any doubts or reservations about involving the child's family, the designated person should clarify with the statutory agencies, whether, and if so when and by whom, the parents should be told about the referral. That may also be important in cases where the police may need to conduct



a criminal investigation. Where appropriate, they should help parents understand that a referral is in the interests of the child and that the school will be involved in the section 47 enquiry as per the Children Act 1989, or a police investigation. This is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Principal, and cannot be delegated. The school will keep the parents informed of the educational progress of the child.



Miscellaneous documents links and contacts

The Legal Framework

- The Children Act 1989
- Section 17 Duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are “in need”
- Section 47 Duty to investigate whether a child is at risk of serious harm
- Local Government Act 2000
- Effective joint working across local authority sectors
- Children Act 2004
- Established Local Safeguarding Children Boards

Useful Publications

- Statutory Guidance
- Working Together to Safeguard Child (2019)
Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Non-Statutory Guidance
- What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused (2015)
Information Sharing (2015)

LVKA Safeguarding Contacts

LVKA Club welfare officer / Safeguarding Officer

Jennifer Williams

Email: - jwilliams.lvka@outlook.com

Chairman / Safeguarding Officer

Daniel Hollister

Email: - info@lvka.co.uk

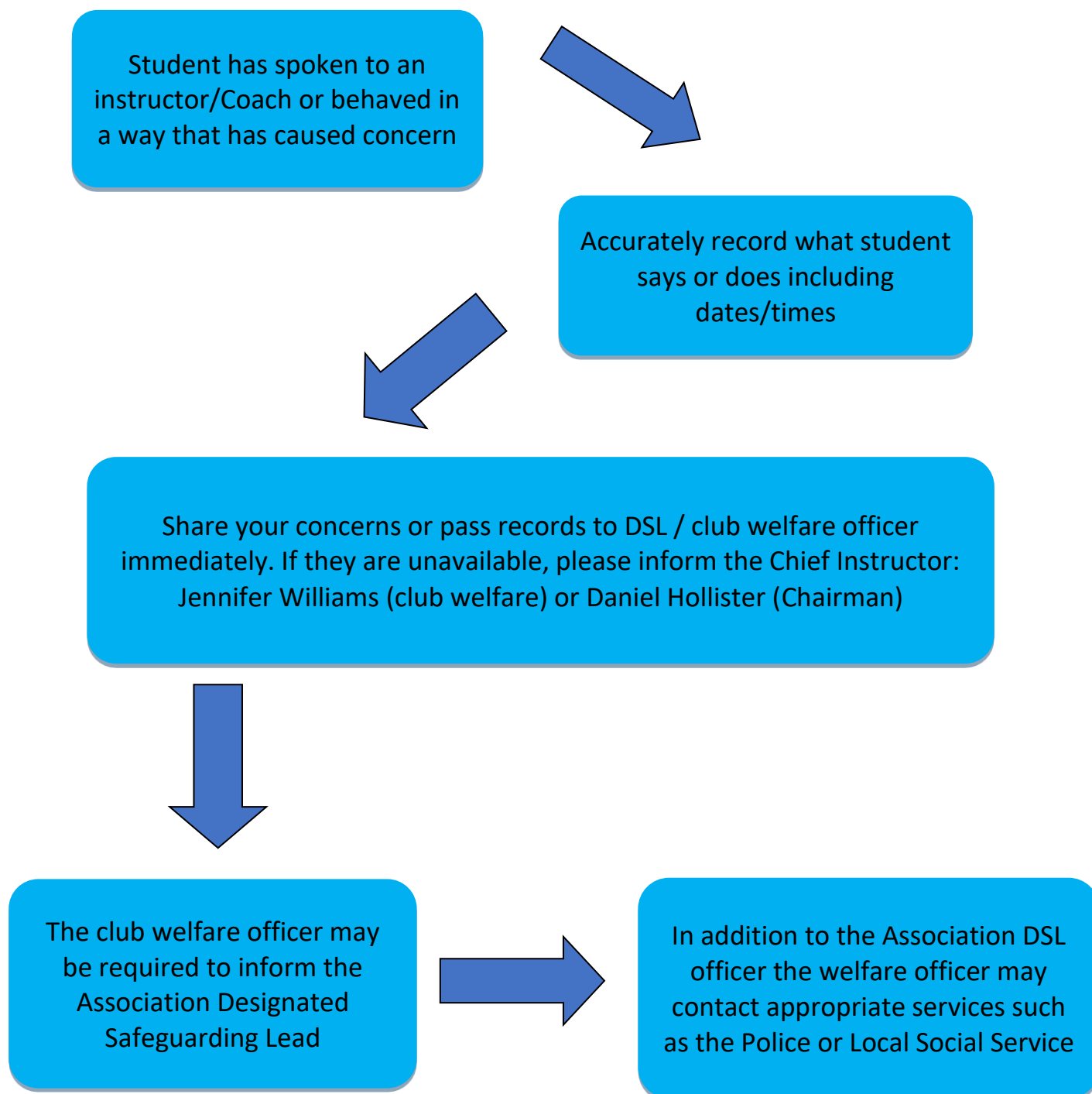
Useful External safeguarding and child protection contacts

- Childline <https://www.childline.org.uk>
- NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk>
- What to do if worried about a child <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk>



Appendix A:

Lea Valley Karate Academy – Procedure for reporting Concerns



It is not the responsibility of anyone within Lea Valley Karate Academy to investigate or decide whether child abuse has taken place.

Lea Valley Karate Academy will fully support and protect anyone who reports a concern.