

PHOENIX SCHOOL OF MARTIAL ARTS

SAFE PRACTICE POLICY

Safeguarding and Safe Training Procedures

1. Purpose and Scope

Phoenix School of Martial Arts is committed to providing a safe, supportive and enjoyable training environment for all students. Martial arts are physical activities where safe practice is essential to reduce the risk of injury. Particular care is required when working with children and adults at risk, whose training must be appropriate to their age, development, ability and needs.

This policy applies to all Phoenix School of Martial Arts classes, training sessions, gradings, demonstrations, competitions and other activities organised or supervised by the School.

2. Responsibilities of Instructors

- Instructors must be suitably qualified, competent and experienced for the activities they deliver.
- Instructors must plan sessions so that activities are appropriate to the age, experience, physical development and ability of participants.
- Instructors must maintain appropriate supervision throughout every session and must not knowingly expose students to unnecessary risk.
- Instructors must ensure that students understand the rules, boundaries and safety requirements before participating in higher-risk activities.
- Instructors must stop or modify an activity where they believe that a participant, another person or the training environment is unsafe.
- Any safeguarding or safety concern must be dealt with promptly in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures.

3. Training Environment and Equipment

- The training area must be checked before each session and kept free from unnecessary hazards.
- Mats and other floor coverings must be suitable, secure and correctly positioned, with particular attention paid to joins and edges.
- The training area must be free from sharp, hard or unnecessary objects that could cause injury.
- Equipment must be appropriate for the activity, age and ability of the participants and must be checked regularly for damage or excessive wear.
- Students must wear suitable clothing and appropriate protective equipment where required.
- Training equipment must be used only for its intended purpose and under suitable supervision.

4. Warm-Up and Physical Preparation

Every physical training session must begin with an appropriate warm-up. The warm-up should prepare the muscle groups and joints that will be used during the session and should take account of the age, ability and physical condition of the participants.

Instructors must avoid excessive stretching or exercises that are inappropriate for the age or physical development of the participant. Students must not be encouraged to train through significant pain or injury.

5. Striking, Punching and Kicking Activities

Phoenix School of Martial Arts delivers martial arts activities involving strikes, punches and kicks. These activities can carry risks including concussion or other head injury, injury to internal organs or joints, bruising and injury caused by inappropriate physical preparation.

- Techniques must be taught progressively and under appropriate supervision.
- Contact must be controlled and appropriate to the age, experience and ability of the participants.
- Students must never be encouraged to strike another participant with excessive force.
- Target areas must be clearly explained and inappropriate targets must not be used.
- Where pads, shields, bags or other equipment are used, the equipment must be suitable and correctly held or secured.
- Students must immediately report pain, dizziness, confusion, suspected injury or feeling unwell to an instructor.

6. Head Contact and Sparring

Phoenix School of Martial Arts takes the risk of head injury seriously. Sparring and contact activities must be risk assessed and supervised by an appropriately competent instructor.

- Head contact for under 18s should be avoided, section 12a of the CMAA Child Safeguarding Policy explains in full.
- Training activities for under-16s should focus on technique, control, movement, accuracy, distance and defensive skills without intentional head contact.
- Where sparring is undertaken, participants should be appropriately matched with consideration given to age, size, experience, ability and physical development.
- Appropriate protective equipment must be used where required by the activity, training rules or competition rules.
- Sparring must take place on a suitable, safe floor surface and within a properly controlled training area.
- A suitably qualified instructor must supervise sparring at all times.
- Mixed-gender training or sparring must be managed respectfully and appropriately, taking account of age, safeguarding, participant preference and the nature of the activity.
- Any suspected concussion or head injury requires the activity to stop immediately for the affected participant and the incident to be managed appropriately. The participant must not simply be returned to training because they say they feel better.

7. Throws, Grappling, Locks and Restraint Techniques

Where Phoenix School of Martial Arts teaches activities involving throwing, grappling, joint locks or similar techniques, these must be taught progressively and with particular care.

- The training surface must be suitable for the techniques being taught.
- Students must be taught safe falling and landing methods before being expected to perform or receive throws.
- Techniques must be demonstrated and supervised by an appropriately competent instructor.
- Joint locks, chokes or other techniques that could cause injury must be introduced only where appropriate to the student's age, ability, training level and the School's syllabus.
- Students must be taught to release or stop a technique immediately when instructed or when a partner indicates that they need to stop.
- Uncontrolled throws, locks, chokes or other techniques likely to cause injury are prohibited.

8. Children and Adults at Risk

Children and adults at risk require additional consideration because they may be more vulnerable to physical injury or may require adaptations to normal training activities.

- Training must be age- and ability-appropriate.
- Instructions must be clear, understandable and suitable for the participant.
- Children must be appropriately supervised and must not be left in situations where their safety cannot be reasonably maintained.
- Physical contact must be necessary for the activity, proportionate, appropriate and professionally managed.
- Instructors must remain alert to safeguarding concerns, changes in behaviour, distress or signs that a participant may be struggling.
- Parents or guardians should be informed of significant injuries, incidents or safeguarding concerns in accordance with the School's procedures.

9. Training Weapons

Where training weapons are used as part of an approved Phoenix School of Martial Arts activity, only suitable training equipment may be used.

- Live or sharpened blades must not be present in the training hall when children are present.
- Training weapons must be appropriate to the activity and participant.
- Weapons must be inspected before use and removed from service if damaged.
- Students must receive clear safety instructions before handling training weapons.
- Weapons activities must be directly supervised by a competent instructor.
- Training weapons must be stored and transported safely and securely.

10. Injury and Incident Management

- Any injury or suspected injury must be taken seriously and the activity stopped where appropriate.
- First aid must be provided within the level of competence of the person responding.
- Emergency medical assistance must be sought where the injury appears serious or where there is doubt about the participant's condition.
- A participant with a suspected concussion or significant head injury must not return to training during the same session.
- Significant accidents and injuries should be recorded in accordance with the School's incident-reporting arrangements.
- Parents or guardians should be informed promptly when a child sustains an injury that requires more than routine first aid or where further medical assessment is recommended.

11. Participant Conduct

- Students must follow reasonable safety instructions given by instructors.
- Students must behave respectfully towards training partners and must not deliberately use excessive force.
- Horseplay, unsafe behaviour and deliberate actions that place another person at risk are not permitted.
- Students must tell an instructor if they are injured, unwell or unable to safely participate.
- Students must not train under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs.

12. Review of Safe Practice

Safe practice at Phoenix School of Martial Arts will be kept under ongoing review. This policy should be reviewed periodically and whenever there is a significant change to the School's activities, training methods, equipment, premises, safeguarding arrangements or relevant guidance.

13. Policy Approval

Organisation: Phoenix School of Martial Arts

Policy: Safe Practice Policy

Effective date: 1st October 2026

Review date: 30th September 2029

Responsible person: MATTHEW MARSHALL