THREE POINTS MARTIAL ARTS SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN POLICY

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**Three Points Martial Arts takes child protection and safeguarding seriously. Our child protection officer Martin Saunders can be contacted at** [**contact@threepointsmartialarts.com**](mailto:contact@threepointsmartialarts.com)**.**

# POLICY STATEMENT

Three Points Martial Arts Ltd has a duty of care to safeguard all children and young people involved in martial arts and fitness related activities from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be considered. Three Points Martial Arts will promote the safety and protection of all children involved in martial arts activities through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines.

# Who is responsible for safeguarding children?

Working Together 2006 says, “Safeguarding and Promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of the local authority (LA) working in partnership with other public organisations, the voluntary sector, children and young people, parents and carers, and the wider community.” We are all responsible.

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. Therefore, everyone who works with young people and children has responsibility to keep them safe. It is also important to recognise that some children and young people are more vulnerable than others. This may include children with specialist behavioural, physical and mental needs. Three Points Martial Arts’ goal is to create an environment where all children can achieve and be happy. All Three Points Martial Arts staff have a duty of care when working with children.

## DEFINITIONS

**A CHILD** A child is anyone who has not yet reached his or her 18th birthday. ‘Children’ therefore means children and young people throughout. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age is living independently or is in further education, does not change their status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989. The word child/children will be used throughout this policy.

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN** The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life changes and enter adulthood successfully.

**CHILD PROTECTION** Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. Effective child protection is imperative as part of the wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should proactively work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children through good practice so that need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

**VULNERABLE ADULT** The Department of Health defines a vulnerable adult as a person who is aged 18 or over that is or may need community care services because of a disability (mental or other), age or illness and is someone who could be unable to look after themselves, or protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

# WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

A child is defined as anyone who is under the age of 18 years. It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health, Home Office, Department of Education and Employment 1999)

## 1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse 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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child. Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

## 2. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

## 3. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. Sexual abuse may also include non-contract activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from different walks of life.

## 4. Neglect

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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide Page 3 of 7 adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

# LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

There is a considerable body of legislation, government guidance and standards, which are designed to ensure that children are protected from harm.

## The Children Act 1989

This Act legislates for children in England & Wales. The intention of the Children Act 1989 is to ensure that the welfare and developmental needs of children are met, including their need to be protected from harm.

## Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000

Part II of this Act relates to ‘public bodies’ responsibilities within child protection and is integral to child protection systems in the UK designed to prevent unsuitable people from working with children.

It links to other laws including Protection of Children Act 1999 and The Police Act 1997 that together build a system that makes it a criminal offence if an employer does not take sufficient steps to check an employee working with children and/or knowingly gives someone a job who is inappropriate to work with children.

## Protection of Children Act 1999 and The Police Act 1997

These Acts change the routes by which employers can check whether a potential or actual employee has criminal offences against children or whether there has been any reason for that person to be considered inappropriate to work with children.

The Police Act 1997 contains the provision to set up the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) for England and Wales to improve access to criminal record checks for employment-related purposes. It is aimed at providing protection for children and other vulnerable people against those who might wish to do them harm.

## Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (NI Order) 1974 (UK wide)

People who are involved in situations where they have prolonged or sustained access to children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders legislation.

## Sexual Offenders Amendments Act 2000

This Act reduces the age at which, or certain circumstances in which, sexual acts are lawful. It introduces a new offence of abuse of trust, which covers ostensibly consensual behaviour within certain relationships of trust. It is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to engage in sexual intercourse or other Page 4 of 7 sexual activity with someone under that age where they are in a ‘position of trust’ in relation to the younger person.

# RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Three Points Martial Arts to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities. Three Points 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.

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.

# RECORDING ALLEGATIONS AND SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

In all cases where an allegation of abuse is made, or someone has concerns about the wellbeing of a child, a record of the incident must be made, using the Safeguarding Concern Report form. Once completed it should be given to the Child Protection Officer/s who will record it in the Incident Record Book. The Child Protection Officer should then consult with the appropriate agencies (Child Protection section of Social Work or Police). They will decide if further action is required.

Under no circumstance should a CPO interrogate a child or parent/carer of a child regarding a suspicion unless they are the ones making the allegation. In which case ensure the information is recorded is exactly what was said. If you need to ask questions make sure they are open and not leading e.g. “Can you tell me what happened next?” would be appropriate whereas “Did the person do this?” would not. It is also important to stress to anyone making a disclosure that you must pass the information on and can’t keep it secret.

Upon receipt of any concern, the Child Protection Officer should seek to consult with the relevant agencies. If it is a concern by a coach, team manager or helper as to the possible abuse of a child then they will report the concerns to the Child Protection Officer/s, on the Child Protection Report form. The CPO will consult with Social Services and other agencies who will decide what further action should be taken given the information provided.

Full documentation will be kept. All information will be treated as confidential and held securely by the Child Protection Officer/s.

# CONCERNS OUTSIDE THE IMMEDIATE SPORTING ENVIRONMENT (E.G. A PARENT OR CARER)

Report your concerns to the Gym Child Protection Officer, who should contact social services or police or the Three Points Martial Arts head office as soon as possible.

# COACHES AND STAFF

Three Points Martial Arts must ensure that:

* All staff and coaches working with children and vulnerable adults have received relevant safeguarding training
* All staff and coaches working with children have a DBS check
* Receive first aid training if coaching

# THREE POINTS MARTIAL ARTS GOOD PRACTISE GUIDELINES

* Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
* Treating all young people/disable adults equally and with respect and dignity
* Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
* 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 in relation 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.
* Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing room.
* Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
* Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults and 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

**Coaches and Helpers should not:**

* Leave a child alone with someone else.
* Be alone with a child in the changing room.
* Treat a child for an injury alone and away from others.
* Allow children to use inappropriate language or behaviour unchallenged.
* Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded.
* Encourage children or adults to bully vulnerable children or adults verbally, racially or physically
* Allow allegations to go on and be unrecorded
* Text or use social networking sites with children or parents
* Coaches must not provide intimate care i.e. toileting, assisting with changing.

# USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC/FILMING EQUIPMENT AT THREE POINTS MARTIAL ARTS

There is research that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children. All gyms should be vigilant and any concerns should to be reported to the Child Protection Officer.

With regards to using filming as a coaching aid there is no intent to prevent coaches using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, children and their parents/carers should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme and their consent obtained, and such films should be stored safely.

If the Gym is commissioning a professional photographer or inviting the press to an event, it is important that they understand your expectations of them in relation to child protection. They must have identification which they wear throughout. Permission must be obtained by parents to take photos and videos.

All parents must sign a relevant photography disclaimer on joining Gym Juniors. It should be noted that some parents do not want their child to be photographed or are not allowed (adopted /fostered children for example). Coaches and staff should take care to ensure this is adhered to at all times

Three Points Martial Arts – Safeguarding Concern Report Form

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of the child: |  |
| Member number: |  |
| Age of child: |  |
| Parents name: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Nature of your concern.   * Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or passing on those of someone else? * What has prompted the concerns? Give dates and times of specific incidents. Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs? * Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so record details. * Has anyone else been consulted?   *Continue on reverse if necessary. Include and statement from the child in their words and do not ask leading questions.* |  |
| Completed by: |  |
| Date: |  |

Three Points Martial Arts – Photography consent form

We would be grateful if you would fill in this form to give us permission to take photos of your child and use these in our printed and online publicity.

I give Three Points Martial Arts Ltd permission to take photographs and / or video of my child.

I grant Three Points Martial Arts Ltd full rights to use the images resulting from the photography/video filming, and any reproductions or adaptations of the images for fundraising, publicity or other purposes. This might include (but is not limited to), the right to use them in their printed and online publicity, social media, press releases and funding applications.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of child: |  |
| Child member number: |  |
| Name of parent / guardian: |  |
| Signature of parent / guardian: |  |
| Date: |  |