



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

SKIF-IRELAND POLICY DOCUMENT

SKIF Ireland Child Protection Policy



POLICY No: SKIFI/ CPP/01

Rev 1

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1. NATIONAL CHILD WELFARE OFFICER

The National Child Welfare officer is responsible for ensuring clubs have access to the latest revision of the Child Protection Policy.

The current National Child Protection Officer is:
Joanne Whitney-Noonan
Toureen, Cahir, Co. Tipperary, E21 EP23, Ireland
Tel 086 1787524
childwelfare@ski-ireland.com

Note

The guidelines in this document are based on the national guidelines as outlined in the following

Documents:

- Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Young People's Sport, Irish Sports Council and Sports Council
- Northern Ireland, 2000, (reviewed in 2006).
- Young people First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Young people, Dept. of Health &
- Young people 1999
- Our Duty to Care, Dept. of Health & Young people 2002
- For Northern Ireland Clubs and organisations reference should also be made to
- Young people (NI) Order, 1995
- Co-operating to Safeguard Young people, 2003
- Area Child Protection Committee Regional Policy and Procedures, 2005

2. DEFINITIONS

Organisation: for the purposes of this document, shall be taken to refer to Shotokan Karate International Federation Ireland (SKIF Ireland).

Club: for the purposes of this document, shall be taken to refer to any karate club affiliated to Shotokan Karate International Federation Ireland.

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Karate-ka: for the purposes of this document, shall be taken to refer to any person participating in karate.

Member: for the purposes of this document, shall be taken to refer to any karate-ka licensed by Shotokan Karate International Federation Ireland.

Instructor: for the purposes of this document, shall be taken to refer to any licensed member (instructor, assistant instructor, coach, manager, official, judge, organiser or any other adult) of Shotokan Karate International Federation Ireland who has been appointed by SKIF-Ireland or an affiliated club to work with young members and are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of child members of SKIF Ireland.

Club Instructor: for the purposes of this document, shall be taken to refer any licensed member who is the senior instructor of a club affiliated to Shotokan Karate International Federation Ireland.

Child/ Young / Young People: for the purposes this document, shall be taken to refer to any individual under the age of 18 years.

Volunteer: for the purposes of this document, shall be taken to refer to any individual who is **not** a licensed member of SKIF Ireland but who has been appointed by SKIF-Ireland or an affiliated club to work with young people and is therefore responsible for safeguarding the welfare of child members of SKIF-Ireland.

Parent: for the purposes of this document, shall be taken to refer to the child's parent, guardian or carer.

National Child Welfare Officer (NCWO): for the purposes of this document, shall be taken to refer to the Individual designated with the responsibility of dealing with matters concerning the protection and safeguarding of young people within the organization. The NCWO shall have the appropriate training for the role.

Child Welfare Officer (CWO): for the purposes of this document, shall be taken to refer to the individual designated with the responsibility of dealing with matters concerning the protection and safeguarding of young people within the club. All SKIF Ireland affiliated clubs shall have an appointed CWO, this individual cannot be the club instructor but may also fulfil the Designated Person role. The CWO shall have the appropriate training for the role.

Designated Person: for the purposes of this document, shall be taken to refer the person in a Club responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the Statutory Authorities. All SKIF Ireland affiliated clubs shall have an appointed Designated Person, this individual may also fulfil the CWO role. Ideally the club instructor should not be the designated person but in instances where this is unavoidable, the CWO role should be fulfilled by another individual. The Designated Person shall have the appropriate training for the role.

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3. POLICY STATEMENT

SKIF Ireland is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its young members. Every individual in SKIF Ireland should at all times, show respect and understanding for young members rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the organisation and the guidelines contained in SKIF Ireland Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct.

In SKIF Ireland our first priority is the welfare of young people and we are committed to providing an environment which will allow young people to perform to the best of their ability, free from bullying and intimidation.

SKIF Ireland will issue guidance to club instructors in relation to their responsibilities for the welfare of young people. This guidance (contained in but not limited to this policy) will be in relation to but not limited to codes of conduct, supervision of young people, safety, reporting procedures for child welfare and protection, appropriate training and Garda Vetting.

It is the responsibility of all club instructors to ensure that any individuals working with young people in their clubs have the appropriate training and Garda vetting. It is also the responsibility of club instructors to ensure an appropriately trained Child Welfare Officer and Designated Person are in place and that all club members and parents are aware of who these individuals are.

This policy is provided to give guidelines to club instructors and all members, individuals working with children, young people and parents. Clubs may develop their own Child Protection and Code of Ethics documents for issuing to members and parents, especially in relation to issues where written consents are required. Club documents should reference 'SKIF Ireland Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct'.

SKIF Ireland acknowledges that some affiliated clubs have a policy where individuals under the age of 18 are not permitted (e.g. some university clubs) and therefore have no requirement to adhere to this policy and are exempt from Garda Vetting

4. CORE VALUES IN KARATE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The work of SKIF Ireland is based on the following principles that will guide the development of karate for young people in this organisation. Young People's experience of karate should be guided by what is best for the young person. The stages of development and the ability of the young person should guide the types of activity provided within the group. Adults will need to have a basic understanding of the needs of young people, including physical, emotional and personal.

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Integrity in Relationships

Adults interacting with young people in karate should do so with integrity and respect for the child. There is a danger that karate contexts can be used to exploit or undermine young people. All adult actions in karate should be guided by what is best for the child and in the context of quality, open working relationships. Verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind is unacceptable within karate.

Quality Atmosphere and Ethos

Karate for young people should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. A child-centred ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialization are kept in their appropriate place.

Equality

All young people should be treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Young people with disability should be involved in karate's activities in an integrated way, thus allowing them to participate to their potential alongside other young people.

Fair Play

Fair play is the guiding principle of the *SKIF Ireland Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct*. All young people's karate should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. SKIF Ireland is committed to the European Code of Sports Ethics, which defines fair play as: "much more than playing within the rules". It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing with the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of opportunities, excessive commercialisation and corruption. (*European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe, 1993*).

Competition

A balanced approach to competition can make a significant contribution to the development of young people, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. However, often competitive demands are placed on young people too early, which results in excessive levels of pressure on them. Instructors will aim to put the welfare of the child first and competitive standards second. A child-centred approach will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place.

5. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR YOUNG KARATE-KA

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SKIF Ireland wishes to provide the best possible environment for all young people involved in karate. Young people deserve to be given enjoyable, safe sporting opportunities, free of abuse of any kind. These participants have rights, which must be respected, and responsibilities that they must accept. Young people should be encouraged to realise that they have responsibilities to treat other participants and karate instructors with fairness and respect.

Young karateka are entitled to:

- Be listened to.
- Be believed.
- Be safe and to feel safe.
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect.
- Participate on an equal basis.
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy karate.
- Experience competition at a level at which they feel comfortable.
- Make complaints and have them dealt with.
- Get help against bullies.
- Say No.
- To protect their own bodies.
- Confidentiality.

Young karateka should always:

- Treat karate instructors with respect, train and compete fairly at all times and do their best.
- Obey the rules of the dojo/competition hall.
- Respect team/club members, even when things go wrong.
- Respect opponents, be gracious in defeat.
- Obey the rules set down by team managers/coaches when travelling to away events.
- Behave in a manner that avoids bringing karate into disrepute.
- Talk to the Child Welfare Officer if they have any problems, experience or witness bullying behavior.

Young karateka should never:

- Cheat
- Use violence or physical contact that is not allowed within the rules
- Shout or argue with instructors, officials, team mates or opponents
- Harm club members, opponents or their property
- Bully or use bullying tactics to isolate another karateka
- Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage

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- Use karate skills outside of the dojo except for self defense
- Take banned substances
- Keep secrets, especially if they have been caused harm
- Tell lies about adults / young people
- Spread rumours

6. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS

SKIF Ireland believes that parents should:

- Be aware of and respect these guidelines and the complaints/grievance procedures.
- Be aware of who the club Child Welfare Officer (CWO) is and their role.
- Report inappropriate behaviour to the club instructor/coach/manager/CWO.
- Encourage their child to obey dojo rules.
- Respect their child's instructor and support his/her efforts.
- Encourage their child to treat their instructor and all other karateka with respect.
- Encourage their child to compete by the rules.
- Respect referees, coaches, organisers and karate instructors/volunteers and other karateka.
- Always recognise the value and importance of the karate instructors/ volunteers who provide karate opportunities for your child.
- Do not publicly question the judgement or honesty of referees, coaches, organisers or karate instructors/volunteers.
- Encourage mutual respect for club mates/teammates and opponents.
- Be a role model for their child and maintain the highest standards of conduct when interacting with young people, other parents, karate instructors/volunteers, coaches or organisers.
- Always behave responsibly and do not seek to unfairly affect a class or competition.
- Never intentionally expose any young participant to embarrassment or disparagement by the use of flippant or sarcastic remarks.
- Teach your child that honest endeavour is as important as winning and do all you can to encourage honest participation and good sportsmanship.
- Set a good example by applauding good endeavour on both sides.
- Never demonstrate threatening or abusive behaviour or use foul language.
- Parents should support all efforts to remove abusive behaviour and bullying behaviour in all its forms.
- Parents should read the bullying policy within the organisation's guidelines.
- Drop off and collect their child at the appropriate time.
- Only the official guardian should collect a child; if a guardian wishes to nominate another to collect their child, the relevant instructor must be advised.
- Confirm to the club instructor whether or not they will allow the use of the young karate-ka's image for the purposes of promoting the club/organisation. If a parent

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decides that it does not want a young persons photo taken, the instructor can police this request in their own dojo but it is the responsibility of the parent to attend other events (competitions/gradings etc...) and manage their child's visibility to cameras.

- Ensure their child is clean and wearing a clean, white dogi and wearing the correct belt.
- For safety reasons, no jewellery of any description, straps or bangles are permitted.
- A plain, white, tee-shirt **only** may be worn inside the child's dogi.
- Toe and finger nails should be clean and short.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR KARATE INSTRUCTORS

SKIF Ireland recognises the importance of the role instructors play in the lives of young people. All instructors have an opportunity to be a positive influence and help build self esteem in the individual. All instructors should strive to create a positive environment for the young people in their care. They have an overall responsibility to take the necessary steps to ensure that positive and healthy experiences are provided.

All instructors/volunteers should have as their first priority the young people's safety and enjoyment of karate and should adhere to the guidelines and regulations set out in SKIF-Ireland's Constitution and policy's, especially *SKIF Ireland Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct*.

The following provides guidance to instructors/volunteers in relation to how they should behave around young people, instructors/volunteers:

- Will be expected to go through appropriate vetting and approval procedures, this applies to all persons with substantial access to young people.
- Review and agree to abide by the SKIF Ireland Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct and to the other policies and codes of the organisation. Sign the relevant Disclosure form confirming same.
- Agree to approval/recruiting procedures (including Garda Vetting)
- Must act as a role model and promote the positive aspects of karate and maintain the highest standards of personal conduct.
- Must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child and must treat everyone equally, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.
- Encourage the development of respect for other karateka, opponents, instructors and coaches and never openly criticise other instructors.
- Should not involve young karateka in their personal life i.e. visits to instructors home or overnight stays.
- Must ensure any confidential information of a personal or medical nature is kept strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information.

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- Must not train alone with a child and must ensure there is adequate supervision for all activities.
- Should be suitably and appropriately trained.
- Should be generous with praise.
- Should make young people feel safe.
- Should be reliable, encouraging and a good role model.
- Never condones bullying or abusive language.
- Should work and train in an open environment.
- Should ensure that the young people in their care have fun.
- Must never ridicule or shout at karate-ka for making mistakes or for losing a contest.
- Must recognise that all young people are entitled to respect.
- Should not show favouritism, each child deserves equal time and attention.
- Take care not to expose a child to embarrassment or disparagement by use of sarcastic or flippant remarks about the child or his/her family.
- Must never punish a mistake by verbal means, physical means, or exclusion.
- Must insist that karate-ka in their care respect the rules.
- Must insist on fair play and ensure karate-ka are aware that cheating or bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Discourage the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco as being incompatible with a healthy approach to karate activity.
- Should themselves avoid the use of alcohol, before coaching, during events or on trips with young karate-ka.
- Set realistic goals for the participants and do not push young karate-ka.
- Must get agreement from parent when a young karate-ka is to be invited into adult training sessions/squads, be aware that boundaries of behaviour in adult groups are normally different from the boundaries that apply to junior sessions/squads.
- Should take care not to act in a manner which is likely to be interpreted as being inappropriate, either by the young person or by another adult
- Should in as much as is reasonably possible ensure that when approached to take on a new young karate-ka, that any previous coach-student relationship has been ended by the student/others in a professional manner.
- Should keep a brief record of injury(s) and action taken.
- Should keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes, if behavioural problems arise.
- Should recognise developmental needs.
- Should not spend excessive amounts of time with young people away from others.
- Should not take young people on journeys alone in their car.
- Should not use any form of punishment or physical force on a child
- Should not exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward
- Should not engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and /or make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a child.

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- Should not take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adults.
- Should not undertake any form of therapy in the training of young people
- Ensure there is appropriate insurance in place to cover all club activities

8. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

Applicants, who are existing, licensed, SKIF-Ireland members or instructors must submit to the formal vetting procedure.

Applicants, who are seeking to affiliate to SKIF-Ireland for the first time:

- Should complete the application form which includes a self-declaration section.
- Be able to provide references to be verified by the organisation, references must be given by individual/individuals known to the organisation to be reliable and of good character.
- Must submit and cover the costs of the formal vetting procedure.

All efforts will be made to support newly approved club Instructors, assistant club instructors and volunteers.

A newly appointed assistant club instructor/volunteer should initially not have to work alone; adequate, appropriate supervision should be provided. The decision to appoint a new assistant club instructor/volunteer is the responsibility of the club instructor.

The decision to affiliate a new club is the responsibility of the organisation and not of any one individual within it. The organisation's committee should ratify all recommendations of approval.

When storing information in relation to any applicant's information it will be treated as sensitive and confidential. It will be kept in a secure place that is only accessible to nominated officers.

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9. ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Anti-Bullying Policy Statement

A primary aim of SKIF Ireland is to prevent bullying in all its forms. Bullying is unacceptable and SKIF Ireland has no tolerance for bullying behavior.

All members are expected to behave in accordance with SKIF Ireland's codes of conduct to ensure every member, especially young people are safe and secure.

It is the responsibility of every member to report bullying behavior as soon as they become aware of it.

What is Bullying?

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others.

It is behaviour that is aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly in social environments such as schools, clubs and other organisations working with young people. It includes behaviours by one or more young people against a victim such as hitting and extortional behavior, or teasing, taunting or threatening, which can take place via on-line contact such as social media or through text or other message services.

How would you know if a child is being bullied?

Bullies often operate in a secretive manner, wishing to conceal their actions. Bullying can therefore only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in an environment in which it is not safe to do so.

The following indicators are warning signs that a young person might be getting bullied:

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities
- Physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings)
- Stress-caused illness – headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained
- Fearful behaviour (fear of walking to a meeting, going different routes, asking to be driven)
- Frequent loss of, or shortage of, money with vague explanations
- Having few friends
- Changes in behaviour (withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed)
- Not eating
- Attempting suicide or hinting at suicide
- Anxiety (shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics)

There are of course other possible reasons for many of the above.

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Who should deal with bullying?

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reported to the health board or An Garda Síochana, dealing with bullying behaviour is normally the responsibility of all Instructors within the club / organisation.

How can it be prevented?

Bullying can be prevented by:

- Ensuring that all members follow the code of conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member.
- Dealing with any incidents as they arise.
- Using a whole group policy or 'no-blame approach' (see Section 14.2 for details) , i.e., not 'bullying the bully' but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a 'shared concern' of the group, (see 'no blame approach')
- Reinforcing that there is 'a permission to tell' culture rather than a 'might is right'
- Encouraging young people to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new or different young people
- Offering the victim immediate support and put the 'no blame approach' into operation
- Never telling a young person to ignore bullying; they can't ignore it, it hurts too much
- Never encouraging a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game
- Telling the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault

Using the NO BLAME approach

The No BLAME approach (see Section 14 – appendix for more details) is only one method of dealing with bullying behaviour and is put forward as guidance, other approaches may be considered. This approach may help to restore or repair a previously positive relationship. This also allows the young people involved to consider their feelings, their behaviour and the effects of bullying behaviour on everyone.

The NO BLAME approach seeks to find a resolution for the young people involved in the bullying behaviour whilst maintaining their relationship within the club or the group. This is important for young people who often simply want the behaviour to stop, without a need for punishments to be imposed.

The NO BLAME approach encourages young people to recognise the impact of their behaviour and then to take responsibility for changing it. By using this approach, a previous relationship between or within a team can often be re-established; this is often a preferred option for the young people involved.

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The ethos behind the NO BLAME approach is to:

- EXPLAIN the problem, i.e. that someone seems to be unhappy in the club, seems to be picked on etc. and explain how that person is feeling; this should not accuse anyone.
- ASK for ideas as to how to help this person
- LEAVE the individual/group to put their ideas into practice
- MEET with the individuals involved to check how the behaviour has changed
- SHARE the responsibility of changing the behaviour and encouraging everyone to speak to a trusted adult if there is bullying behaviour in the club

The NO BLAME approach does not attempt to get 'confessions'; it seeks to get an acknowledgment of behaviour and provides an opportunity for young people to change hurtful behaviour.

There may be issues that are not resolved through the NO BLAME approach, where behaviour continues. Bullying behaviour is a breach of a code of conduct and may have to be dealt with through a disciplinary process. However the outcome for young people is far better when issues can be resolved through the NO BLAME approach.

Use of sanctions

If bullying behaviour is not resolved the CWO should discuss the issue with the club instructor (at club level) or the Chairperson at national level in order to decide how to formally reach a resolution. The outcome of this process may impose sanctions on those involved. Sanctions can include time out from events, suspension or expulsion.

10. GUIDELINES ON GENERAL ISSUES

Transport

SKIF Ireland recommends that young people should be transported to events by their parent/guardian.

Where this is not possible, instructors should receive permission directly from the young persons parent/guardian, preferably in writing. There is extra responsibility on instructors/volunteers when they transport young people to events.

Instructors/volunteers should:

- Ensure that there is adequate insurance cover on their car, they follow the rules of the road, including legal use of seat belts.
- Not carry more than the permitted number of passengers.

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- Avoid being alone with one young person, put young person in the back seat, have central drop off locations or seek parental permission to transport an individual young person on a regular basis and clearly state times of pick- up and drop off.
- Ensure that parents have checked with young people about the plans and are happy with the transport arrangements.
- Travel
- When overnight travel is involved, the parent should accompany the young person. Where this is not practical, the instructor/volunteers travelling with the young person/people must sign a separate agreement. Parents and participants will also be asked to sign permission forms in these instances.
- For all foreign travel, the parent should accompany the young person.

General Supervision

- Make sure there is an adequate adult: child ratio.
- Instructors should try to have more than one adult present. The number of adults needed will depend on the nature of the activity, the age of the young people and any special needs of the group. As a guide a ratio of 1:8 for under 12 years of age and 1:10 for participants over 12 years of age. This is only a guide and will change depending on the circumstances, e.g. karate-ka with special needs or away trips.
- Where there are mixed groups, ideally there should be instructors of both genders. It is acknowledged that this is not always achievable.
- Avoid being alone with one young person. If you need to talk separately do so in an open environment, in view of others.
- In changing rooms, ask parents to take responsibility and supervise in pairs of appropriate gender.
- Instructors should not need to enter the changing room at the same time as young people unless young people need special assistance, supervision should be in pairs of appropriate gender.
- Clearly state time for start and end of training sessions or competitions, instructors should not be left alone with young people at the end of sessions. If there are late collections instructors should remain in pairs until participants have left.
- Keep attendance records and record of any incidents / injuries that arise.

Safety

SKIF Ireland recommends that the club/organisation will:

- Ensure activities are suitable for age and stage of development of participants.
- Keep a record of any specific medical conditions of the participants.
- Keep a record of emergency contact numbers for parents / guardians.
- Ensure any necessary protective gear is used.
- Ensure First Aid kit is close at hand with access to a qualified first-aider.
- Know the contact numbers of emergency services.
- Keep first aid kit stocked up.

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If an incident occurs, make a brief record of injury and action taken. Make a brief record of the problem/action/outcome. Contact the young persons parents and keep them informed of all details.

At competitions and gradings, it is the responsibility of the organiser to ensure:

- Instructors, officials (judges, referees, etc.) know the rules and appropriately conduct the contests.
- The safeguarding of young people is the primary concern.
- Karate-ka should know and keep the rules of their karate, keeping in mind that many rules are there for safety.
- Instructors hold the appropriate qualifications required by SKIF-Ireland.
- There is adequate insurance cover for all activities.

Physical Contact

Physical contact during karate should always be intended to meet the child's needs, NOT the adult's. The adult shall only use appropriate physical contact when the aim is to assist in development of the skill or activity or for safety reasons, e.g. to prevent or treat an injury. This should be in an open environment with the permission and understanding of the young person.

In general:

- Contact should be determined by the age and developmental stage of the participant - Don't do something that a child can do for themselves.
- Never engage in inappropriate touching such as touching of groin, genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment.

11. USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC AND MOBILE EQUIPMENT

Photography

SKIF-Ireland wishes to reduce the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside of karate. Group photographs where the club is identified rather than individuals are good for publicity without creating a risk to those in the photographs.

Remember the following:

- If the karate-ka is named, avoid using their photograph.
- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the karate-ka.

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- Get parental permission to allow use of the young karate-ka's image or confirmation of a parents decision to opt out of allowing use of their child's image. This should form part of the parental consents when a young person joins a club.
- If a parent decides that they do not want a young person's photo taken, it is the responsibility of the parent to attend events and manage their child's visibility to cameras.
- To reduce the risk of inappropriate use, only use images of karate-ka's in suitable dress. The content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child.
- Talk to CWO if you are worried about use of images.
- Photographs, when used with personal information, can be used as a means of identifying young people. This practice can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to cause them harm.
- Anyone with any particular concerns about photography taking place at events or training sessions should contact the young people's officer/ designated person with said concerns.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are often given to young people for security, enabling parents to keep in touch and make sure they are safe. Young people value their phones highly as it offers them a sense of independence. In addition mobile phones allow quick and easy contact, which can make a safe and efficient way to carry out club business. However such technology has also allowed an increase in direct personal contact with young people, in some cases used to cross personal boundaries and cause harm to young people.

Within clubs there is a need to encourage responsible and secure use of mobile phones by adults and young people.

As a young person remember:

- If you receive an offensive photo, email or message, do not reply, save it, make a note of times and dates and tell a parent or CWO/designated person within the club.
- Be careful about who you give your phone number to and don't respond to unfamiliar numbers.
- That in cases of bullying or harassment, block the number of the harasser.
- Don't use the phone in certain locations; inappropriate use of your camera phone may cause upset or offence to another person, e.g. changing rooms.
- Treat you phone as you would any other valuable item so that you guard against theft.

As an instructor/volunteer remember:

- Use group texts for communication.

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- It is not appropriate to have the direct contact details of young members, all communication to young people should be via their guardian and never directly to the young person themselves.
- It is not appropriate to have constant communication with individual karate-ka.
- Don't use the phone in certain locations; inappropriate use of your camera phone may cause upset or offence to another person, e.g. changing rooms

12. CHILD WELFARE AND PROTECTION PROCEDURES

SKIF Ireland is conscious that organisations, which include young people among its members, are vulnerable to the occurrence of child abuse. Below are the procedures for dealing with any welfare or protection issue that may arise. Child welfare and the protection of young people is the concern of all adults at all times, irrespective of their role within the organisation.

If there are grounds for concern (as set out below), about the safety or welfare of a young person you should react to the concern. Persons unsure about whether or not certain behaviours are abusive and therefore reportable, should contact the duty social worker in the local health service executive or social services department where they will receive advice.

A report may be made by any member in the organisation but should be passed on to the Designated Person/ club CWO who may in turn have to pass the concern to the local Statutory Authorities.

It is not the responsibility of any member of SKIF Ireland or its affiliated clubs, to take responsibility or decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. That is the job of the local statutory authorities. However, there is a responsibility to protect young people by assisting the appropriate agencies so that they can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person.

Everyone should follow both procedures outlined below, firstly the procedure for responding to a child in distress and secondly the procedure for reporting the concern.

Reasonable Ground for Concern

The statutory authorities should always be informed if reasonable grounds for concern exist that a child may have been abused, or is being abused or is at risk. Even if the suspected abuse or risk is happening outside of the club/organization (eg. in the child's home or school or at another activity) the responsibility to report remains. A suspicion that is not supported by any objective indicator of abuse or negligence would not constitute reasonable grounds.

Reasonable grounds for concern include:

- A specific indication or complaint from a young person if she/he has been abused.

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- A report or an account by a person who saw the young person being abused.
- Evidence, such as injury or behavioural changes which are consistent with abuse and that it is unlikely that the injuries and or behavioural changes could have been caused in any other way.
- An injury or injuries and /or behavioural changes which are consistent with abuse and which are being explained away by an innocent excuse or explanation, but where there is evidence and indications to support the concern that it may be the result of abuse. For example: A pattern of injuries, an implausible excuse or explanation, other evidence or indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour.
- Consistent evidence or indications, over a period of time that a child is suffering from physical and or emotional abuse/neglect.

Procedure for Responding to a Child Disclosing Abuse

When a young person discloses information of suspected abuse you should:

1. Deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent way through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem. Do not interview the child about details of what happened.
2. Stay calm and not show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately, and take what the child is saying seriously.
3. Understand that the child has decided to tell something very important and has taken a risk to do so. The experience of telling should be a positive one so that the child will not mind talking to those involved in the investigation.
4. Be honest with the child and tell them that it is not possible to keep such information a secret.
5. Make no judgmental statements against the person about whom the allegation is made.
6. Not question the child unless the nature of what he/she is saying is unclear. Leading questions should be avoided. Open, non-specific questions should be used such as "Can you explain to me what you mean by that".
7. Check out the concerns with the parents/guardians before making a report unless doing so would endanger the child or compromise an investigation (if in doubt consult with Statutory Authorities first).
8. Give the child some indication of what would happen next, such as informing parents/guardians, health service executive or social services. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage.
9. Carefully record the details.
10. Pass on this information to the club's Designated Person.
11. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.

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Procedure for Reporting Suspected or Disclosed Child Abuse

The following steps should be taken in reporting child abuse to the statutory authorities:

- A. Observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information.
- B. Report the matter as soon as possible to the club's Designated Person with responsibility for reporting abuse. If the Designated Person has reasonable grounds for believing that the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, he/she will make a report to the health service executive/social services who have statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse.
- C. In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Designated Person is unable to contact a duty social worker, the police authorities should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities.
- D. If the Designated Person is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exists he/she can informally consult with the local health board/social services, (see Appendix for contact details). He/she will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report.
- E. Designated Person reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities will first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation
- F. The designated person should inform the club instructor of:
 - G. Any reports being made to Statutory Authorities.
 - H. The name of any member being asked to step aside
 - I. Details of the case.
- J. If the individual being reported is the club instructor, the designated person should inform the organisations CWO.
- K. If at any stage in the proceedings the club's designated person feels that he/she cannot for any reason deal appropriately with any issue, they should contact the organization's Senior Child Welfare Officer.

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to the Health Service Executive or the Gardai (See 5.13.1 – ISC. Code). The act also covers the offence of 'false reporting'. The main provisions of the Act are:

1. The provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to designated officers of Health Service Executive or any member of An Garda Síochána;
2. The provision of significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to and including, dismissal;

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3. The creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities “knowing that statement to be false”. This is a new criminal offence designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

13. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST KARATE INSTRUCTORS / VOLUNTEERS

SKIF Ireland has agreed procedures to be followed in cases of alleged child abuse against Karate Instructors/Volunteers (see Section 11). If such an allegation is made against a Karate Instructor/Volunteer working within the organisation, the following procedures should be followed:

1. The Reporting Procedure in respect of suspected child abuse as outlined in Section 11 ‘Procedure for Reporting Suspected or Disclosed Child Abuse’ should be adhered to if the designated person has reasonable grounds for concern in accordance with Section 11, ‘Reasonable Ground for Concern’.
2. The procedure for dealing with the Karate Instructor/Volunteer as set out below and carried out by the clubs Designated Person/SKIF Irelands Senior CWO, unless they are already involved with the child protection concern.

The safety of the child making the allegation should be considered and the safety of any other young people who may be at risk. The club should take any necessary steps that may be required to protect young people in its care

The issue of confidentiality is important. Information is on a need to know basis and the Karate Instructor should be treated with respect and fairness.

Procedure for dealing with the the Karate Instructor/Volunteer

While the designated officer makes the report to the local health board, SKIF Irelands Senior CWO should deal with the karate instructor/volunteer about whom the allegation has been made.

SKIF Irelands Senior CWO should privately inform the instructor/volunteer:

1. That an allegation has been made against him / her.
2. Of the nature of the allegation.

He/she should be afforded an opportunity to respond. His/her response should be noted and passed on to the health board / social services.

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The instructor/volunteer should be asked to step aside pending the outcome of the investigation. When a person is asked to step aside it should be made clear that it is only a precautionary measure and will not prejudice any later disciplinary proceedings.

It is important that the club considers the outcome of the investigation and any implications it might have. The club can consider disciplinary action on the instructor/volunteer but should ensure that this does not interfere with the investigation of the Statutory Authorities.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in cases of abuse, welfare or bad practice. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected.

The following points should be kept in mind:

- A guarantee of confidentiality or undertakings regarding secrecy cannot be given, as the welfare of the child will supersede all other considerations.
- All information should be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and should be discussed only with those who need to know.
- Information should be conveyed to the parents / guardians of the child in a sensitive way.
- Giving information to others on a 'need to know' basis for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality.
- All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his/her parents/guardians, the alleged offender, his/her family, Karates Instructors) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.
- Information should be stored in a secure place, with limited access only to designated people.
- The requirements of the Data Protection laws should be adhered to.
- Breach of confidentiality is a serious manner.

Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/young person is paramount. Any such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the appropriate Designated Person. The information should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner.

Rumours

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Rumours should **not** be allowed to hang in the air. Any rumours relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the club CWO/SKIF Irelands Senior CWO , and checked out without delay.

15. APPENDIX

CONTACT DETAILS

SKIF Ireland
SKIF Ireland National Child Welfare Officer
Joanne Whitney Noonan
Ph. +353 86 178 7524
childwelfare@ski-ireland.com

Irish Sports Council
Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport
Bernie Priestly
Ph. 01 8608800
bpriestly@irishsportsCouncil.ie

Eastern Region HSE – East Coast Area
(Ask for Duty Social Worker)

- Area 1, Dun- Laoghaire 01 2808403
- Area 2 Clonskeagh 01 2680320/0333
- Area 10 Wicklow 0404 60800
- Bray 01 2744100

Eastern Region HSE- Northern Area
(Ask for Duty Social Worker)

- Area 6 Dublin 11, 01 8567704
- Area 7 North Dublin 1, 01 8014620
- Area 8 Dublin 5 01 8164200.

Eastern Region HSE – south Western Area
(Ask for Duty Social Worker)

- Dublin South City District D2 01 6486555
- Dublin South West District D24 01 4520666
- Dublin West District D10 01 6206387
- Kildare/West Wicklow District 045 882400 (Naas)
- Athy 059 8633535
- Celbridge 01 6303155

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Southern Area HSE – Community Care Area
(Ask for Duty Social Worker)

- South Lee Cork 021 4923001
- North Lee Cork 021 4927055
- North Cork Mallow 022 30200
- West Cork Skibbereen 028 40580
- Kerry Tralee 066 7184887.

Mid Western HSE- Community Care Area
(Ask for Duty Social Worker)

- Limerick East 061 483 7111
- Limerick West 061 483996
- Clare 065 6863907/08
- North Tipperary Nenagh 067 41934
- North Tipperary Thurles 0504 23211.

South Eastern HSE- Ask For Duty Social Worker
(Ask for Duty Social Worker)

- Carlow 059 9136588/7
- Kilkenny 056 7784782
- Waterford 051 842827
- Wexford 053 23522 Ext 222
- South Tipperary 052 77306/02

Midland Area HSE– Community Care Area
(Ask for Duty Social Worker)

- Longford/Westmeath: Athlone 090 6493106
- Longford 043 50584
- Laois/Offaly:
- Offaly 0506 22488
- Laois 0502 92567

ISPCC

20 Molesworth St., D2 Ph. 01 6794944

ispcc@ispcc.ie

ISPCC Childline 1800 666666 (Freephone)

Volunteering Ireland

Coleraine house,

Coleraine St.,

Dublin 7

01 8722622

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info@volunteeringireland.com

16. ANTI-BULLYING “NO BLAME” APPROACH

Step 1 – Interview with the victim

If you find that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim. At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling. Try asking the following questions:

- Was it verbal or physical intimidation?
- How hurt is the victim
- Was it within his/her own peer group?
- Ensure the victim that his/her name will not come out in the investigation
- Actively listen

Step 2 – Meet with all involved

Arrange to meet with all those involved; this should include some bystanders, those who may have colluded, those who joined in and those who initiated the bullying.

- Have a maximum of six to eight in the group – keep the number controllable.
- Make a point of calling a ‘special’ meeting.
- Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by all.
- Speak only of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the victim.
- Play on the conscience of all – ask questions like: How would you feel? Would you like it done to you?

Step 3 – Explain the problem

The distress being suffered as a result of the bullying incident is explained. At this stage the details of the incident or the allocation of the blame is not discussed. Explain the feelings of loneliness, feeling left out, rejected, laughed at.

Try asking questions:

- Would they like it if it happened to them.
- “Someone here in this group was bullied by someone within the group, what could we do to see it does not happen again?”
- Listen, watch out for reactions, and pick up on any without isolating anyone.

Step 4 – Share the responsibility

Explain what steps / controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will loose out as a result.

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Step 5 – Ask the group for their ideas

At this stage the group is encouraged to suggest ways that would make the victim feel happier. All positive responses are noted. Use phrases “if it were you” to encourage a response. Listen to all suggestions and note them.

Step 6 – Leave it to them

Now the problem has been identified, solutions suggested, the problem is now handed over to the group to solve. Arrange to meet again in a week’s time. Pass responsibility over to the group and give a time frame within which something must be done.

Step 7 – Meet them again

Each member of the group, including the bully, discuss how things are going, who is doing what and have there been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process.

Again enforce the idea of the ‘team’ looking after each other at regular intervals to ensure it is known that bullying or intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated.

17. REVISIONS

REV NO	DATE	CHANGES
0	January 2018	Document Created
1	October 2019	Policy Number Updated Appendix: Updated SKIF Ireland Child Welfare Details Added Revisions Section