



Taoist Arts Organisation

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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A. CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. TERMINOLOGY

In this document:

- Children and young people refers to any person less than 18 years old.
- Vulnerable adults refers to any adult who needs care and protection for their general wellbeing.

2. INTRODUCTION

Participation in Chinese Martial Arts can and does provide valuable life experiences. Sporting activities offer significant opportunities for participants to develop social skills, self-esteem, confidence, teamwork and leadership qualities that develop a well-rounded individual.

The TAO has a duty to provide a safe space in which everyone can attend and participate and we accept that the welfare and safety of children and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of everyone involved in our organisation.

We also acknowledge that children and vulnerable adults may suffer neglect or abuse away from the TAO and need to be mindful of this and alert to signs that may show during their participation with TAO. **STATEMENT OF POLICY**

The TAO is committed to safeguarding all participants in our organisation.

The protection of children and vulnerable adults within the TAO is the responsibility of everyone within the organization, whether paid, helping as a volunteer, or a participant in the activities.

A key part of safeguarding is spreading the message about keeping children and vulnerable adults safe and building a culture of always acting in their best interest.

The TAO has created a safeguarding policy in line with the [BCCMA Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#). The BCCMA works with Sport England and the NSPCC on safeguarding.

Our policy encompasses training for instructors and assistants in safeguarding duties and procedures, including help with understanding what might constitute abuse or neglect and how to deal with it if concerns arise.

Certificated safeguarding training is done as required by the BCCMA, along with the need to be cleared through the DBS, and both updated at least every 3 years.

Instructors and assistants will be responsible for cascading safeguarding information down to all members of their groups.

Our aim to ensure that any form of neglect or abuse is not tolerated, and is appropriately challenged and addressed.

Key Safeguarding Principles

These are based on legislation, guidance and recognised good practice:

- Children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from neglect and all types of abuse, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse.
- TAO members have a responsibility for the protection of young people and vulnerable adults and for reporting concerns about their welfare or safety.
- If there is any conflict between the needs of the child or young person and those of the parents or carers, the needs of the young person are put first. A child or young person's welfare is the paramount consideration.
- Child and vulnerable adult protection must take account of the racial, linguistic, cultural and religious needs and differences of people and families.
- Children, young people and vulnerable adults are listened to and taken seriously, whatever their level of development or communication.
- Children, young people and vulnerable adults' wishes and feelings are taken into account and they are involved in decisions about their future in ways appropriate to their age and understanding.
- Work with the children, young people and vulnerable adults is sensitive to their particular needs and circumstances.
- All children, young people and vulnerable adults are treated with respect and accorded full civil and legal rights.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is defined as:

- Protecting them from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of their health or development
- Ensuring that they grow up and remain in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- Taking action to enable them all to have the best outcomes
- They must be protected from all forms of discrimination and abuse and treated equally, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation or ability

The main pieces of legislation and guidance documents to be aware of include:

- The Children Act 1989 (1994)
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

- The Care Act 2014
- The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, (DoLS) [added to MCA in 2009]
- Disclosing and Barring Checks (DBS)

Working Together to Safeguard Children is the statutory guidance that sets out the responsibilities that all organisations in England must fulfil to safeguard children and young people (which applies to anyone under the age of 18). It explains the need for local authorities (including the police and health services) and other relevant agencies to coordinate with each other, so they can appropriately respond to safeguarding concerns and promote children's welfare.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF INSTRUCTORS, ASSISTANTS and MEMBERS:

It is not the responsibility of a member to decide whether a child, young person or vulnerable adult is being or has been abused.

It is their personal responsibility, however, to take action to protect them by following the prescribed procedures as set out on page 10.

Non-action is not an option in the protection of children, young people or vulnerable adults and they do have a duty to act.

It is also their responsibility to ensure that only those who need to be informed are told and that confidentiality is respected at all times.

Instructors have a responsibility to attend the safeguarding courses as recommended by the TAO; update as required by the TAO; know how and where to report a concern.

Instructors have a responsibility to help all members of their group to be aware of safeguarding issues and how they should respond if there are concerns.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ORGANISATION:

It is the responsibility of the TAO through the Committee to:

- Ensure that it's instructors are trained in procedures for dealing with allegations or legitimate suspicions of child, young person and vulnerable adult abuse
- Implement such policies to ensure the prompt and proper handling of such situations
- Monitor it's policy and practice and make improvements where practicable
- Arrange for 1 member to serve as Safeguarding officer (SO) and provide them with adequate training, resources and support
- Support will be available via the BCCMA Safeguarding Lead
- Co-opt the Safeguarding officer onto the committee.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (S.O.)

The SO will be responsible for advising and guiding Instructors and Assistants in relation to child protection procedures and ensuring the reporting procedures are properly observed.

The SO will advise on the next actions to take including on referrals to relevant authorities. The SO should and can seek support from the BCCMA Safeguarding Officer on any Safeguarding concerns raised within the Organisation and how they should be handled.

The SO will carry a mobile telephone for use where there are concerns about child, young person and vulnerable adult protection and this will be switched on at all times.

There is a designated Safeguarding email address on the TAO website for use to report concerns or ask about safeguarding issue. This email is linked directly to the SO's email so they can be immediately alerted to a concern.

Where abuse or bullying is alleged against a member of the TAO the SO will ensure that, where appropriate, the Organisation's internal complaints procedure is initiated and progressed through to a proper conclusion. The SO will monitor the performance of the Organisation's Safeguarding, child and vulnerable adult protection policy and anti-bullying policy and will report regularly to the Committee including making recommendations for improvements where necessary.

B. Organisational requirements for Classes for Children & Vulnerable Adults

1. QUALIFICATION OF INSTRUCTORS

The Instructor must be 18 years or older and **must have:**

1. Minimum 1st Tengchi grade in the art they are teaching
2. Safeguarding and child protection learning and certification
3. Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) clearance (where applicable)
4. Martial Arts First Aid Training
5. Minimum BCCMA National Governing Body level 2 coaching qualification
6. The express approval of the Technical Director for running a children's class or class with vulnerable adults – this needs to be an addition to the 'Request to Teach a Class' Form

It is expected that TAO instructors will have undertaken the appropriate training to coach: children; children and adults with disabilities; and adults, including vulnerable adults, where applicable.

2. ASSISTANTS

The Instructor must have assistance from a member of the TAO at every class, or failing that a chaperone of the opposite gender. Ideally the assistant should have achieved a minimum of 3rd Pan and be of the opposite gender to the Instructor, however, where this is impractical, the Technical Director may authorise assistants with different training qualifications, provided the welfare of children or vulnerable adults is not compromised.

All TAO Instructor assistants must have DBS clearance and first aid certification [and be working towards the recommended safeguarding and coaching training]. They must be familiar with their responsibilities under this policy.

3. CLASS PARTICIPANT RATIOS

Ratios of adults to participants is determined by considering age of the participants, the type of activity and where the activity is taking place. For club training and external events the TAO adopts the BCCMA's recommended ratios (coach to participant ratios):

Participant Age Group:	Competitive Programs One coach to:	Recreational classes One coach to:
3-5 years old	Not Applicable	6-8 participants
6-11 years old	6-8 participants	8-10 participants
12-16 years old	6-8 participants	8-10 participants
old 17 + years old	8-10 participants	20 participants

4. DBS CHECKS

Both the Instructor and their Assistant must have passed the enhanced DBS check. Instructors must not work unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults until a satisfactory enhanced DBS check has been received.

5. FIRST AID

The Instructor and the assistant must both hold current first aid certification.

6. INSURANCE

The Instructor must hold the relevant insurance. No young person or vulnerable adult may participate in a class without current personal accident insurance.

7. WRITTEN CONSENT AND INFORMATION FROM PARENTS

No person under 16 years of age may participate without the written consent of an adult with parental responsibility. This will include authorisation to act in loco parentis in an emergency, relevant medical history and details of emergency contact numbers all of which should be kept to hand at every class. (See form provided in instructors pack)

8. INFORMATION TO BE HELD IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES

In addition to the information specified in the instructors' pack, those running classes for children and vulnerable adults should have the telephone number of the local social services and the local police to hand at every class.

9. SPECIAL CONSENTS for PHOTOS AND VIDEOS and THEIR USES

Specific written consent must be obtained from the child and an adult with parental responsibility before children may be photographed, videoed or images of them may be published on the website or elsewhere in the Organisation's publications, or other publications or Social Media.

Images may only be used for the purposes signed for. If they are to be used somewhere else later, additional written consent is required.

Similar written consent must be obtained before a child is taken on any trip to participate in activities at a venue other than their regular training hall.

When photographing / videoing an adult: seek specific consent from the adult, letting them know how exactly their image will be used. If they lack capacity to consent do not use their photo.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT FOR TRIPS

When planning health and safety measures for any proposed trip, the organisers must ensure that Safeguarding and child protection issues are considered fully. (See forms provided in instructors pack).

11. BEST PRACTICE

Instructors will:

- Inform participants of the Organisation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy in language they can understand
- Work to build relationships with children and vulnerable adults which encourage them to have confidence to bring any concerns to either the Instructor or the Assistant without fear of victimisation or reprisal
- Avoid situations where an adult is alone with a single child or vulnerable adult wherever possible
- Ensure parents and carers are aware of the Organisation's Policies, by directing them to the website.

C. CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTORS AND ASSISTANTS

1. UNDERSTANDING AND RECOGNISING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Abuse can and does occur in a wide range of settings, including sport. The effects of abuse can be so damaging, that they may follow a person into adulthood. For example, a person who has been abused as a young person may find it difficult or impossible to maintain stable, trusting relationships, become involved with drugs, experience mental health problems or self-harm. A child who has been neglected can experience serious impairment in their health and development.

2. PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

People with a disability or impairment may be vulnerable to abuse or poor practice, since they may not be suitably able to express their concerns or protect themselves or understand what is happening. Instructors must avoid discrimination against people with a disability and must be vigilant in caring for these vulnerable people.

3. SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

Any adult working in the provision of Chinese martial arts for young people and vulnerable adults, in either a paid or voluntary capacity, has a duty of care to the young people, vulnerable adults and themselves to provide a safe and caring environment. It is vital that any coach, Instructor, official or any other person assisting with young people and vulnerable adults' activities has the ability to provide patience, understanding and encouragement. Understanding of individuals' development and the ability to communicate with them is more important than knowledge of Chinese martial arts. Children, young people and vulnerable adults have a right to protection from the potential threat of abuse. They must be protected

from all forms of discrimination and abuse and treated equally, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation or ability. Public or private facility providers that engage the services of BCCMA members on a paid or voluntary basis, and the employee themselves must be aware of the dangers of abuse, the forms it can take and its recognition, and demonstrate good practice within their Chinese martial arts training sessions.

4. DEFINITION OF ABUSE

For the purposes of this document we will refer to the definitions used by the Department of Health in their guidance and the statutory regulations. The BCCMA recognises the definition of abuse to be:

'A violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons'

and that:

'Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented to or cannot consent. Abuse can happen in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.'

Currently the Department of Health identifies six categories of abuse: Physical; sexual; psychological/emotional; financial or material; neglect and acts of omission; and discriminatory. Definitions are follows:

- 1) Neglect:** Where adults fail to meet a young person or vulnerable adult's basic needs like food or warm clothing or fail or refuse to give young people and vulnerable adults love, affection and attention. Young people and vulnerable adults might also be constantly left alone or unsupervised. Neglect in a sporting situation could include an instructor not engaging with them at the same level as anyone else in the group, not ensuring that young people and vulnerable adults were safe, exposing them to undue heat or cold, or to unnecessary risk of injury.
- 2) Physical:** Where someone physically hurts or injures young people and vulnerable adults, for example by hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting, restraint, inappropriate sanctions or by giving young people and vulnerable adults alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poisonous substances. In sports situations, physical abuse might occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the immature and growing body of the child, or exceeds their understanding.
- 3) Sexual:** Girls and boys are abused when adults use them or other young people (both male and female) to meet the adult's own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. The display of pornographic material (books, videos or pictures) to young people and vulnerable adults is also a form of abuse. Coaching or activities that involve physical contact with young people and vulnerable adults, e.g. stretching or supporting, could create potential situations where sexual abuse could go unnoticed. The power of the instructor over young people and vulnerable adults, if misused, could also lead to the development of situations in which abuse may occur.

- 4) Emotional:** Emotional abuse can be described as the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child, which can cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Persistent lack of love, affection, or attention; where a child or vulnerable adult may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted and become very nervous and withdrawn, would constitute emotional abuse. Emotional abuse could also occur when there is constant overprotection (which prevents a child or vulnerable adult from socialising), or there is neglect, physical or sexual abuse. Emotional abuse might occur in sport sessions if young people and vulnerable adults are subjected to repeatedly being isolated from or left out of the group; constant criticism or bullying; or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations.
- 5) Bullying:** It is important to recognise that in some cases of abuse, it may not always be an adult abusing a young person or vulnerable adult. It could be that the abuser is a young person or vulnerable adult themselves and this is recognised as bullying. It is important to be aware that adults can bully too. Bullying may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Although anyone can be the target of bullying, victims are often shy, sensitive and perhaps anxious or insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons – being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture. Bullying often takes place in schools or other environments where children meet, and research shows it can and does occur where there is inadequate supervision – on the way to and from school, at a sporting event, in the playground and changing rooms. It is important to remember that severe cases of bullying may amount to abuse. The SO will help Instructors decide on the appropriate procedures to adopt. (See TAO Anti- Bullying policy)

Abuse of Trust

The Sexual Offences Amendment Act 2000 makes it an offence for an adult to have a sexual relationship with a person less than 18 years of age where the young person has a relationship of trust with the adult by virtue of their residential or educational circumstances. While the Act does not cover the relationship between a sports coach and participant in organisations other than schools, the TAO considers that this relationship is one of trust. It therefore requires:

- All members engaged in instructing or assisting in the training of young people to avoid any sexual relationship with participants under 18 or vulnerable adults
- All those in the TAO to raise concerns about behaviour by those instructing or assisting in the training, which may be harmful to those in their care.

Poor Coaching Practice

Poor practice may be defined as any action or behaviour that contravenes the following:

- Best coaching practice as advocated in the most current version of the Taoist Arts Organisation Instructors' Manual
- Coaching guidelines as issued from time to time by the British Council for Chinese Martial Arts
- Taoist Arts Organisation Code of Conduct
- Taoist Arts Organisation Anti-Bullying Policy
- Taoist Arts Organisation Equal Opportunities Policy
- Taoist Arts Organisation Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

In its extreme form, poor coaching practice may amount to abuse. Again if there is any doubt you should consult the S.O.

Inequality & Discrimination

It is possible that people from any minority group within the organization may experience harassment and discrimination because of their difference. This may be because of e.g. race, faith or disability, but there are many others and discrimination on whatever ground clearly causes harm and could lead to abuse.

Through awareness of factors which may lead to discrimination and therefore possible abuse, plus adherence to the Taoist Arts Organisation Equal Opportunities Policy, problems arising from discrimination should be avoided.

5. INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Some indications that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused may include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent or for which multiple explanations are given.
- The child or vulnerable adult describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
- Someone else (a child or adult) expressing concern about the welfare of another child or vulnerable adult.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour over time eg becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden bursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in explicit sexual behaviour.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- An apparent difficulty in making friends.
- The prevention by an adult from socialising with other young people or adults.
- Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Weight loss for no apparent reason.
- An increasingly dirty or unkempt appearance.

This list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not proof that abuse has actually taken place.

It is not the responsibility of those working with young people and vulnerable adults to decide that child abuse has occurred, but it is their responsibility to recognise and act on any concerns by reporting any incident to the TAO Safeguarding Officer.

The TAO SO will advise on the appropriate actions and on any referrals to the appropriate authority.

D. GUIDELINES FOR INSTRUCTORS AND ASSISTANTS

These Guidelines for Instructors and Assistants have been developed not only to protect young people and vulnerable adults, but also to help them to identify practices which could be misinterpreted and perhaps lead to false allegations of abuse. All Instructors and Assistants should, therefore, follow this code.

1. WORKING OPENLY TO AVOID FALSE ALEGATIONS

Occasionally, false allegations of abuse are made about people. Anyone working with children or vulnerable groups should be mindful of this and make sure that they don't leave themselves open to it.

DO:

- Try not to work alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult
- Include your assistant instructor, other members of the group, parents or carers while working with children or other vulnerable people
- Work openly, where others can see what you are doing and be able to report on safe practice

- DO NOT:
- Work with a child or vulnerable person on your own.

- Take a child or vulnerable person away from the group, e.g. into another room for training

- Take children or vulnerable people to and from events unaccompanied e.g. in your car

2. IF A YOUNG PERSON TELLS YOU THAT THEY ARE BEING, OR HAVE BEEN, ABUSED

Young people will occasionally disclose abuse to an adult that they have come to trust. If they do tell you, they are doing so in the hope that you will stop it happening, even if they ask you not to do anything with the information. It takes great courage to disclose abuse and your response can be crucial – it is important that you react appropriately.

DO:

- Remain calm and receptive
- Listen without interrupting
- Only ask questions if you need clarification – leading questions should not be asked as they may cause legal difficulties if the matter proceeds to Court
- Make it clear to the young person that you are taking them seriously
- Acknowledge their courage in telling you
- Tell them they are not responsible
- Let them know that you will do all that you can to help them

DO NOT:

- Allow your shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information
- Make assumptions or speculate
- Make negative comments about the abuser
- Make promises that you can't keep
- Agree to keep the information secret
- Begin counseling them

YOU MUST:

- Make an immediate record of what the young person has said, using their own words as much as possible
- Follow the procedures for reporting as below

3. IF YOU THINK THAT A YOUNG PERSON MAY BE AT RISK OF ABUSE, IS BEING OR HAS BEEN ABUSED

- You must not wait, nor must you investigate or seek additional information
- You should inform the young person of your concerns - and the actions you will be taking
- You should contact the Safeguarding Officer within the hour, on the dedicated telephone number and / or email to report your concerns.
- The Safeguarding Officer will provide guidance as to the relevant agencies that are to be informed and if, for some reason, you are unable to inform those agencies, will be responsible for ensuring the information is promptly passed on.
- The Safeguarding Officer will continue to provide appropriate support and guidance to you during the course of any investigation.

The Committee has overall responsibility for monitoring the procedures and policies of the Organisation to ensure that they are working and to keep in line with current legislation.

As part of the ongoing support for Instructors, the TAO will:

- Ensure Instructors are aware of current policies
- Inform them of changes of policy within the TAO or new responsibilities arising from changes in equal opportunities legislation
- Provide information on sources of training necessary to their implementation.

Each Instructor has responsibility for ensuring that the policy principles are implemented in the clubs and any weekend courses that they run. The Committee has that responsibility in relation to residential courses.

Policy Date: 29.7.21

Policy review date: 28 July 2024 (sooner if required by legislative changes)