

SAFEGUARDING IN MARTIAL ARTS

SAFE PRACTICE POLICY



NAME OF CLUB: **Woodlane Ishinryu Karate**

Definition of terms used in the following notes:

- **British Ishinryu Karate (BIK)** is the Association that *Woodlane Ishinryu* belongs to.
- **EKNGB** is the *English Karate National Governing Body* – the governing body for our Association.
- **WKF** is the *World Karate Federation*, of which the EKNGB is a member.
- The **Dojo** is the place where we train.
- **Kumite** is free fighting which only occurs under close Instructor supervision.
- **Pair-work** is where two students work together to practice and improve technique.
- **Contact** is defined as any force used against an opponent during *Kumite* or *Pair-work*. The amount of force used must always be safe in regard to the age and size of the student, as well as to the body area being attacked.
- **Child** is defined here as any student under the age of 16. Restrictions and precautions imposed on children also apply to *Vulnerable Adults*.

Karate is an activity where safe practice is essential to prevent injury. Children are particularly vulnerable because they are still developing mentally and physically. At *Woodlane Ishinryu* our training methods are adapted and managed to avoid injury.

1. Our instructors

All training includes at least one experienced Dan grade black belt instructor to supervise the session. There are currently two instructors at *Woodlane* at 5th Dan and 4th Dan, respectively.

Our instructors hold the following certification as a minimum:

- Enhanced DBS cover
- EKNGB approved Karate Instructor insurance.

2. Before a lesson

Students are not permitted to enter the Dojo until an instructor is present.

The Dojo is checked before every lesson to ensure the training area is safe and clean and free from obstacles.

All students are checked-in and registered for the lesson to follow. Only students with a valid licence issued by our association are allowed to train in our Dojo. An exception is made for new students, who may train for up to 30 days before becoming licensed.

Because a licence includes insurance cover, new students are excluded from certain Dojo activities until they gain a license – this includes pair work and kumite.

Each named license is associated with that member's Insurance. When a licence expires, so does the third-party insurance for that student. This is why unlicensed students are forbidden to train in our Dojo.

Students must bring their current licence and licence book to every training session. For students under 14, we expect a parent or carer to take full responsibility for the licence.

3. Warm-ups

A thorough warm-up is completed before each training session. This warm-up is organized to be appropriate to the activity planned for the lesson to follow. For example, to reduce the risk of injury specific attention is paid to those muscle groups that will be most used during the session to follow.

Excessive stretching is avoided, and all warm-up exercises are appropriate to the age and physical ability of the students they relate to. We fully understand that younger students are still developing, and as such we avoid any excessive exercise that could damage joints or any other body part. For example, we would never permit children to perform push-ups on their knuckles.

4. Techniques that involve throwing and/or grappling

The use of throwing and/or grappling techniques is minimal in Karate but may be taught and practiced from time to time. Throwing or grappling is only taught and practiced when WKF approved Karate mats are in place.

We are very aware of the dangers of falling onto an unsuitable surface, especially in relation to head or joint injury. Students are monitored closely while performing these techniques.

A Dan grade instructor always inspects mat areas before training commences to ensure they are laid evenly, joined together correctly, and are free from obstacles.

A Dan grade instructor is present throughout all training and maintains close supervision of all students – especially children.

5. Techniques involving Strikes, Punches and Kicks

The importance of control is taught as an essential component to all Karate techniques. A Dan Grade instructor will always supervise pair work and kumite (free fighting).

For children 14 years and younger, no contact is allowed to the head or face.

From age 14 to 18 a light (skin touch) contact is allowed to the head using feet only. Hand contact to the head is not permitted.

Light body contact is allowed, but only to scoring areas (as defined and documented by the WKF in their competition rules). Arms, legs, and especially joints must never be directly attacked. All contact is judged with respect to the body area being attacked.

For kumite (free fighting) full protective equipment is worn in line with WKF rules. This includes hand mitts, and for those under 14, a head guard. Body protectors and shin/instep guards are optionally used (but these are not enforced while training within our Dojo).

When free fighting occurs within our Dojo, we always follow WKF competition rules relating to the contact level allowed and protective gear worn.

In competition kumite, we follow WKF guidelines relating to the age, height, and weight of sparring partners. These rules are more relaxed within our club because we recognize the value that older, and more experienced, fighters can bring in coaching younger students during pair work and light kumite.

Despite all best efforts, we recognise that accidents can happen. For this reason, our Dan Grade instructors hold a current First Aid certificate, and a basic First Aid kit is available in our Dojo at all times.

We allow boys and girls to engage in free fighting together under close supervision and while wearing WKF approved protection. Free fighting between boys and girls is minimal, because this does not occur within the EKNGB supported competitions we attend.

6. Competition Fighting

From time to time our students are encouraged to enter open competitions. The only competitions we join are those supported by the EKNGB where WKF rules apply.

This ensures the following:

- Full protective equipment is always used in line with WKF rules
- Medical staff are always on-site during competitions
- Boys and girls are segregated in regard to Kumite bouts

7. Use of Weapons

Our style of Karate does not involve the use of any weapons.

8. Spectators in the Dojo

We allow Parents and Carers to remain in the Dojo while their children train. Parents and Carers are not required to stay, and most are happy to leave their children in our care for the duration of each class.

All spectators must be a Parent, family member, or a Carer of a student training in the Dojo. The only exception is when potential students (and their parents) are allowed to observe a lesson before joining our club. Random members of the public are not allowed to watch a lesson under any circumstances.

Spectators must sit quietly and never interfere in the training in any way. Dojo rules apply whereby spectators may NOT use mobile phones, talk loudly, or consume food during training. We retain the right to eject any spectator who poses a distraction.

9. After a Lesson

At the end of each lesson a Dan Grade instructor will remain until all students have left the Dojo.

[Christopher Vant](#)

5th Dan Ishinryu Instructor

[Chris Fennessy](#)

4th Dan Ishinryu Instructor