



FIGHTING FALCONS SCHOOL OF MARTIAL ARTS

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Safeguarding: Safe Practise Policy

Martial arts are activities where safe practise is essential to help prevent injury. Children (and at risk adults) are particularly vulnerable as they are still developing mentally and physically, so training methods need to be modified as described below:

Warm Ups

All activities should first include a through warm up which is appropriate for the activity taking place. To help reduce the risk of injury, specific attention should be paid to those muscle groups that will be used during later activity.

Training Area

Prior to practise instructors will check the training area to ensure it is safe and free of sharp/hard objects around the matted area.

When strength & conditioning equipment is used on the mats, instructors must ensure all students are briefed on the safe use of each piece of equipment prior to the session starting e.g. in the case of circuits the instructor will go around each station demonstrating safe use and technique at each station.

Safe Training Practises

The following guidelines must be followed when teaching a class. All classes will only run in the presence of a suitably qualified and experienced instructor whose responsibility it is to ensure the guidelines are followed:

- All contact training must be performed with adequate protection e.g. gloves must be worn for heavy bag work.
- All sparring is performed with controlled light contact relevant to the discipline being used. There can be no follow through on shots. Regulation safety equipment as defined by WAKO rules must be worn.
- No head contact will be allowed for novice athletes doing continuous sparring during training. Head contact must be touch contact for all other sparring.
- No kicks to the head for intermediate athletes doing continuous sparring during training. Head contact must be touch contact for advanced athletes.



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- There will be no sparring for 48 hours after attending a competition.
- There will be a 24-48 hour recovery period between sparring sessions that involve head contact. 48 hours is compulsory following competition or test fights (competition intensity).
- Sparring across gender and age group is only allowed in non-competitive formats i.e. when contact is touch only and the emphasis is on learning technical skills, not winning and losing.
- In training encourage cleaner sparring with mandatory breaks for novice and intermediate athletes (e.g. step back after every three strikes).
- Age, size and gender must be considered when sparring is competitive in nature. As a rule, classes should be separated into the age groups as defined by WAKO competition rules.
- The club will not enter under 18 athletes into light contact competition until they have reached an advanced level of sparring.
- The club will limit the number of divisions athletes may enter to reduce the number of rounds being fought. This will depend on number of athletes entered in a division. and the type of discipline, but our aim is to limit competitive contests in continuous formats to 6 rounds per day.
- Head contact must be light at all times and only with protective equipment as defined by WAKO rules. Whilst head contact is allowed within competition and therefore it is recognised that athletes training must prepare them for the eventuality of contact, it is highly recommended that head contact is kept to a minimum at all times.
- Test Fights (competitive intensity) must follow the rules of the governing body and will be limited to 6 rounds per day i.e. two three round fights. 48 hours mandatory rest period must be enforced after a test fight.



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- In the event of head injury the [UK concussion guidelines for grassroots sports](#) must be followed. First aiders must be sure to communicate concussion protocols with guardians and athletes during handover. All head injuries must be recorded in the accident book.
- During weapons training there will be good supervision by instructors at all times. All junior and intermediate grades will use safety training weapons only.
- Live weapons will only be used by senior grades in a separate class. Live training must not take place in the presence of junior grades.
- During self defence training, content of what is taught must be appropriate to the age group. Self defence for children of school age will focus primarily on school yard bullying and stranger awareness.
- Under 18yrs cannot compete in senior divisions (18+ years)

Warm Downs

All activities should first include a warm down period which is appropriate for the activity taking place. To help reduce the risk of injury, specific attention should be paid to stretching those muscle groups that have been stressed.

(Last reviewed July 2025)