

Ninja Tots and Kids

Safe Practice Policy in Martial Arts

Martial Arts are activities where safe practice is essential to help prevent injury. Children* are particularly vulnerable as they are still developing mentally and physically, so training methods need to be modified as described below. (*also includes Adults at Risk)

1. Warm Ups

All activities should first include a thorough 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.

2. Martial Arts involving throwing, grappling and strangling

Ninja Tots and Kids syllabus includes some elements of contact between students. It does not include full contact but is limited to minimal force.

The risks include but are not limited to: falling on unsuitable surfaces; landing on the head; damage to the joints from locks; strangulation.

Safe practice should include, but is not limited to:

- (a) Checking the matted area for suitability, particularly where the mats have been joined.
- (b) Checking that there are no hard surfaces or sharp/hard objects around the matted area.
- (c) Having an experience instructor who will ensure that children are not taught to use locks, throws or strangles which will cause injury.
- (d) Ensuring students are fully supervised during this time.
- (e) Ensuring the level of contact/force is minimal so the risk is very low.

3. Martial Arts involving strikes, punches and kicks

Ninja Tots and Kids syllabus includes some contact between students in sparring sessions.

The risks include but are not limited to: concussion (brain injury) from heavy blows to the head; damage to internal organs and joints from heavy blows; injury from inappropriate stretching and other exercises.

- Light contact only is allowed between students, especially to the head. (Light contact means the technique is targeted but controlled so that whilst the opponent is touched the technique is not followed through).

- Expert advice from a neurosurgeon is that the use of helmets, hand or foot pads does not eliminate the risk of brain injury from full contact strikes.
 - To help reduce the risk students aged 10 years and over are permitted to light contact. Children under this age are not allowed to participate in this activity.
 - Students must wear appropriate and approved sparring equipment. (approved by Ninja Tots and Kids and their insurers). The equipment must be in a good state.
 - Sparring partners must be supervised by the class Instructors to ensure the level of contact is minimal
 - The floor should free from obstruction, in good condition, not slippy.
 - Supervising Instructors must hold a valid first aid certificate and have the ability to contact emergency services ion required.
- (b) Avoiding excessive stretching and exercises such as press-ups on the knuckles or hitting heavy bags; the joints of children are still developing and can be damaged by these exercises.

4.Martial Arts involving weapons

Ninja Tots and Kids does not teach any weapon techniques in our syllabus but if we did we would use this safe practice

Safe practice should include but is not limited to:

- (a) No live blades (sharp or otherwise) in the training hall when children are present
- (b) Safe protocols for the use of training weapons by children
- (c) Good supervision at all times by Instructors

Above all, safe practice means having a suitably qualified and experienced instructor who will ensure that children are not exposed to the above risks and who can make a training session enjoyable whilst maintaining the discipline essential to learning a Martial Art.

All Ninja Tots and Kids Instructors and Volunteers undergo DBS checks, First Aid Certification and ongoing Instructor Training.

Within all location's throughout Ninja Tots and Kids, care and safeguarding is paramount. The duty of care and instruction is constantly monitored and adhered to by all our instructing and volunteers.