



CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

The Alliance applies the safeguarding principles in this Policy consistently across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. All Alliance Associations and their Clubs must also comply with the safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance, procedures, and reporting and referral arrangements that apply in the country in which they operate. Where national requirements differ, the applicable requirements must be followed. This Policy sets minimum Alliance standards and does not replace any higher or additional legal or regulatory duty.

Aikido develops physical skills, self-esteem, and the ability to be a team player as well as the opportunity to achieve individual success. These opportunities can only be safeguarded if provided by people who place the welfare of all children first and adopt practices that support, protect and empower children in clubs that have a culture of openness and equality.

Everyone who participates in aikido is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. The Aikido Alliance has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that we provide children and young people with the highest possible standard of care.

To support this obligation, the Alliance is committed to implementing policies and procedures so that everyone involved in aikido accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children and young people from harm and abuse. This means following procedures to protect them and reporting any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

The Alliance believes that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. It should not be viewed as a standalone process to be done in isolation from the other activities in member organisations and clubs. Safeguarding will sit at the heart of everything we do.

The aim of this policy and the guidance which supports it, is to promote good practice, help Alliance Associations and their Clubs and volunteers to understand the issues involved, and implement the safeguarding measures necessary to provide children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst involved in the practice of aikido.

Furthermore, the Alliance believes that all children and young people (under the age of 18) involved in aikido have the right to stay safe and have fun regardless of their age, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, ability or disability. The Alliance also recognises that some children may be at increased risk of harm or face additional barriers to being heard (e.g. deaf and disabled young people) and expects Clubs to respond accordingly – implementing additional safeguarding measures where appropriate.

The Alliance is committed to ensuring that:

- the welfare of the child (anyone under the age of 18) is paramount
- under no circumstances should any staff member or volunteer inflict physical or psychological harm on a child
- all reasonable steps are taken to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment
- Children's views, wishes and feelings will be sought, heard and taken seriously
- all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- employees and volunteers who work with children are recruited in accordance with the Alliance Recruitment and DBS Guidance and are provided with appropriate safeguarding information, guidance and training
- all those within Alliance organisations (be they employees or volunteers) work in partnership with parents and children when creating our safeguarding culture
- all clubs with Junior members have an appointed Welfare Officer [WO] to ensure that appropriate safeguarding procedures are followed
- training and support is provided for WOs and coaches so they are aware of, and understand, best practice and how to manage any safeguarding issues
- all those in a position of responsibility throughout the organisation recognise it is not their responsibility to determine if abuse has occurred, but it is their responsibility to report and act on any concerns they have

The Alliance will:

- Appoint a Lead Safeguarding Officer
- Convene a Disciplinary Panel when necessary
- Ensure all safeguarding concerns and allegations are assessed promptly and referred, where required, to the appropriate statutory safeguarding agency. This may include local authority children's social care, the police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), or the equivalent body or designated officer in the relevant UK nation. The Alliance Case Management Group will manage any internal safeguarding or disciplinary process in liaison with the relevant agencies and without prejudicing any external investigation.
- Provide support, access to training and guidance for Instructors, Welfare Officers and other volunteers
- Provide support, guidance and training on safeguarding through the Alliance Coaching Programme
- Deal with the internal aspects of allegations and make decisions within the timescales set out in the relevant Alliance procedure, subject to any necessary statutory-agency or criminal process
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy