

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Applies To: All instructors, assistant instructors, volunteers, students, parents/guardians, and visitors

Effective Date: Feb 2013

Review Date: Jan 2026

1. Policy Statement

SKMA Hapkido School is committed to providing a safe, respectful, inclusive, and positive environment for all children, young people, and vulnerable adults participating in martial arts activities.

The welfare of children and vulnerable individuals is always our primary concern. We believe every student has the right to:

- Train in a safe and supportive environment
- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Feel protected from abuse, neglect, bullying, discrimination, intimidation, and exploitation
- Be listened to and taken seriously
- Enjoy martial arts free from fear or harm

All instructors, staff members, volunteers, and assistants at SKMA Hapkido School share responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

2. Purpose of This Policy

This policy aims to:

- Protect children and vulnerable individuals who participate in SKMA Hapkido School activities

- Provide staff and volunteers with safeguarding guidance and procedures
- Promote good practice and appropriate conduct
- Ensure concerns are reported and handled appropriately
- Create a culture of safety, respect, and accountability

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All SKMA Hapkido School classes and activities
- Competitions, demonstrations, seminars, camps, grading events, and social events
- Online classes, messaging groups, and digital communication
- All instructors, assistant instructors, volunteers, contractors, parents, and students

4. Definitions

Child

Any person under the age of 18.

Vulnerable Adult

Any adult who may require additional protection due to disability, illness, age, or other circumstances.

Safeguarding

Protecting the health, wellbeing, and rights of children and vulnerable individuals and enabling them to live free from abuse, harm, and neglect.

5. Types of Abuse

Staff and volunteers should be aware of the following forms of abuse:

Physical Abuse

Deliberately causing physical harm.

Emotional Abuse

Persistent emotional mistreatment that affects emotional development or wellbeing.

Sexual Abuse

Any sexual activity or behaviour involving a child or vulnerable person.

Neglect

Failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs.

Bullying

Repeated behaviour intended to hurt, intimidate, humiliate, or exclude another person.

Online Abuse

Harassment, grooming, exploitation, or inappropriate communication through digital platforms.

6. Safeguarding Principles

SKMA Hapkido School will:

- Put the welfare of children first
- Maintain a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and bullying
- Treat all students fairly and equally
- Promote inclusion and respect for diversity
- Ensure all instructors model professional behaviour
- Listen to concerns raised by students or parents
- Respond promptly and appropriately to safeguarding concerns
- Maintain confidentiality appropriately

7. Recruitment and Instructor Standards

SKMA Hapkido School will take reasonable steps to ensure suitable individuals work with children.

This may include:

- Interviews and suitability checks
- Reference checks where appropriate
- Criminal record checks where required by local regulations
- Safeguarding awareness training
- Clear codes of conduct

All instructors and assistants are expected to:

- Behave professionally at all times
- Use appropriate language and conduct
- Treat all students equally and respectfully
- Avoid favouritism or inappropriate relationships
- Never engage in abusive, humiliating, discriminatory, or sexual behaviour toward students
- Report concerns immediately

8. Code of Conduct for Instructors and Volunteers

Instructors and volunteers must:

- Prioritise student safety and wellbeing
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- Use positive and constructive discipline
- Obtain consent before physical correction where possible

- Ensure physical contact is appropriate, necessary, and related to instruction
- Avoid being alone with a child where possible
- Use group communication channels when communicating with minors
- Ensure changing areas and facilities are supervised appropriately
- Lead by example in behaviour and respect

Instructors and volunteers must never:

- Use physical punishment
- Humiliate, shame, threaten, or intimidate students
- Engage in inappropriate physical contact
- Send inappropriate messages or images
- Develop secretive relationships with students
- Consume alcohol or illegal substances during activities
- Discriminate against any student

9. Physical Contact in Martial Arts

Martial arts training may require supervised physical contact for:

- Demonstrations
- Safety instruction
- Technique correction
- First aid

All physical contact must:

- Be appropriate and necessary
- Be explained clearly where possible
- Respect personal boundaries
- Never be intrusive, excessive, or inappropriate

Students may decline non-essential contact whenever possible.

10. Photography and Video Recording

SKMA Hapkido School recognises the need to protect children when using photography or video.

The school will:

- Obtain parental/guardian consent where appropriate
- Use images respectfully and appropriately
- Avoid identifying children by full name alongside images
- Monitor photography during events where necessary

Parents and visitors must respect any restrictions on photography or filming.

11. Online Safety and Communication

All online communication involving minors should remain professional and transparent.

Guidelines include:

- Using official school communication channels where possible
- Including parents/guardians in communication when appropriate
- Avoiding private or secretive messaging
- Never sharing inappropriate content
- Maintaining respectful online behaviour

Cyberbullying or inappropriate online conduct may result in disciplinary action.

12. Anti-Bullying Commitment

SKMA Hapkido School does not tolerate bullying in any form.

Bullying may include:

- Verbal abuse
- Physical intimidation
- Exclusion
- Harassment
- Online bullying
- Discrimination

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and addressed promptly.

13. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Any instructor, volunteer, parent, or student who becomes aware of a safeguarding concern should report it immediately to the designated safeguarding lead or school management.

If a Child Discloses Abuse

The adult receiving the disclosure should:

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully
- Take the child seriously
- Reassure the child they did the right thing by speaking up
- Avoid making promises of secrecy
- Record the facts accurately
- Report the concern immediately

The adult should not:

- Investigate the matter themselves
- Ask leading questions
- Confront the alleged individual

- Share information unnecessarily

14. Reporting Procedure

Safeguarding concerns should be documented and include:

- Date and time
- Name of the person reporting
- Details of the concern
- Names of witnesses if applicable
- Actions taken

Where appropriate, concerns may be referred to:

- Local safeguarding authorities
- Police
- Child protection services
- Emergency services

If a child is believed to be in immediate danger, emergency services should be contacted immediately.

15. Confidentiality

Safeguarding information will be handled sensitively and shared only on a need-to-know basis.

However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where safety concerns exist.

16. Health and Safety

SKMA Hapkido School will maintain a safe training environment by:

- Conducting regular risk assessments
- Maintaining safe equipment and training areas

- Providing appropriate supervision
- Ensuring first aid provisions are available
- Keeping emergency contact information accessible

Students and parents are expected to report injuries, medical conditions, or safety concerns.

17. Equality and Inclusion

SKMA Hapkido School welcomes students from all backgrounds.

Discrimination based on race, religion, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, or cultural background will not be tolerated.

We are committed to creating an inclusive and respectful environment for all participants.

18. Responsibilities of Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- Support the school's safeguarding policies
- Encourage respectful behaviour
- Inform instructors of medical or welfare concerns
- Ensure children are collected promptly where applicable
- Treat instructors, volunteers, and students respectfully

19. Breaches of This Policy

Failure to follow this safeguarding policy may result in:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Suspension from activities

- Removal from SKMA Hapkido School
- Referral to relevant authorities where necessary

20. Policy Review

This safeguarding policy will be reviewed regularly and updated where necessary to reflect legal requirements and best practice.