Karate & Dance Fed Ltd - 17150545

Chief Executive Officer: Mr. J Byrne

KARATE & Dance FEDERATION

Safeguarding Roles, Reporting & Responding to Concerns Policy

Kindness – Diversity - Friendship

Document Reference Number	SCL03
Title	Safeguarding Roles, Reporting & Responding to Concerns
Policy Owner	Mr. Jake Byrne
Version	1.0
Date Written	14.09.2026
Date Ratified	September 2026
Next Review Date	September 2027

Version Control

Version	Last Modified	Modified By	Document Changes

1. Policy Statement

Karate & Dance Federation Ltd (KDF) is committed to maintaining clear, accessible and effective safeguarding arrangements so that every person working within the organisation understands their role, knows how to report a concern and is confident about what should happen after a safeguarding concern is raised.

Safeguarding depends not only upon recognising abuse but upon concerns reaching the right person quickly, being recorded accurately and being escalated to external agencies when necessary. KDF will therefore maintain straightforward reporting routes and will not create unnecessary internal barriers that delay protective action.

KDF's safeguarding arrangements reflect its values of Kindness, Diversity, Friendship and support the KDF Promise: Every Student, Every Session, Every Time. Every child and adult at risk should be able to expect that concerns about their safety will be listened to, recorded, assessed and responded to appropriately.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define safeguarding roles across KDF and establish the organisation's procedures for reporting, recording, escalating and responding to safeguarding concerns involving children or adults.

It provides a practical framework covering concerns arising from observation, disclosure, third-party information, accidents, behaviour, online activity, family circumstances, staff conduct and other sources.

The policy also explains when staff must bypass ordinary internal reporting arrangements and contact children's social care, adult safeguarding services, the Local Authority Designated Officer, police or emergency services directly.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, directors, coaches, assistant coaches, administrators, volunteers, junior coaches, young leaders and others acting on behalf of KDF.

Relevant provisions apply to concerns involving students, adult participants, staff, parents, carers, visitors, spectators, hirers, contractors and any person whose conduct or circumstances may create a safeguarding concern connected to KDF.

The policy applies at KDF premises, external venues, performances, competitions, demonstrations, online environments, transport arrangements and any other setting in which KDF has a relevant safeguarding responsibility.

4. Safeguarding Framework

KDF will have regard to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, which applies to organisations with functions relating to children, including voluntary, private and sports organisations. The guidance emphasises shared responsibility, early help, appropriate information sharing and timely multi-agency action.

KDF will also follow the Care Act 2014 framework for adult safeguarding and relevant Warwickshire procedures for children, adults and persons in positions of trust.

Where KDF operates outside Warwickshire, the equivalent safeguarding arrangements of the relevant local authority will be used.

5. Safeguarding Structure

KDF will maintain a clearly identified Safeguarding Lead with responsibility for coordinating safeguarding activity and ensuring that concerns are responded to appropriately.

Where practicable, KDF will also maintain deputy or alternative safeguarding arrangements so that safeguarding action does not depend entirely upon one person being available.

The safeguarding structure should be visible to staff and sufficiently simple that no employee or volunteer is uncertain about whom they should contact.

6. Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring that effective safeguarding governance exists across KDF.

This includes ensuring that appropriate policies, training, safer recruitment, safeguarding leadership, record keeping, reporting arrangements and external-agency relationships are maintained.

The CEO must ensure that the Safeguarding Lead has sufficient authority and organisational support to act when concerns arise.

7. Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or organisational Safeguarding Lead is the principal point of coordination for safeguarding concerns within KDF.

The role includes receiving concerns, advising staff, assessing immediate risk, maintaining safeguarding records, deciding whether external consultation or referral is required, liaising with statutory agencies and ensuring agreed safeguarding actions are implemented.

The Safeguarding Lead is a coordinator and decision-maker within KDF, but is not a replacement for children's social care, police, healthcare professionals or adult safeguarding services.

8. Deputy or Alternative Safeguarding Arrangements

Where the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, safeguarding concerns must be directed to the nominated deputy, CEO or another appropriately authorised senior person.

A concern must never be left until the Safeguarding Lead next attends work where delay could increase risk.

All safeguarding staff should understand how to access external referral services without waiting for another internal decision-maker.

9. Responsibilities of Lead Coaches

Lead Karate and Dance Coaches are responsible for helping ensure that safeguarding procedures are understood and followed within their respective departments.

They should maintain awareness of changes in student behaviour, attendance, injuries, communication or relationships that may indicate safeguarding concerns and should ensure concerns raised by coaching staff reach the Safeguarding Lead promptly.

Lead Coaches must not investigate safeguarding allegations themselves simply because they manage the staff member or student concerned.

10. Administration Staff

Administration staff may receive safeguarding information through telephone calls, attendance follow-up, emails, parent contact, registration information or face-to-face conversations.

They must know that safeguarding information should be escalated promptly and should not remain solely within ordinary customer-service or administrative correspondence.

Where administration staff receive a disclosure or concerning message, the original information should be preserved accurately and shared with the Safeguarding Lead.

11. Coaches and Assistant Coaches

Coaches are often in a strong position to notice changes in behaviour, confidence, emotional presentation, attendance, injuries or interactions with parents and peers.

They are responsible for recognising concerns, responding appropriately in the moment, making an accurate record and passing the concern to the Safeguarding Lead.

They are not responsible for deciding whether abuse definitely occurred or for obtaining evidence before reporting.

12. Volunteers

Volunteers hold the same fundamental duty to report safeguarding concerns as paid staff.

Their level of safeguarding decision-making may differ according to role and experience, but they must know whom to contact immediately where a concern arises.

A volunteer should never be instructed to ignore a concern because a paid member of staff believes it is probably unimportant.

13. Junior Coaches and Young Leaders

Junior coaches and young leaders who are themselves under eighteen remain children for safeguarding purposes.

They should know that their responsibility is to tell an appropriate adult if they see, hear or experience something concerning. They must not be expected to manage disclosures, investigate incidents or make referral decisions independently.

Where another child discloses something serious to a junior coach or young leader, an adult safeguarding lead must take over promptly while ensuring the young leader is also supported.

14. Every Adult's Responsibility

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and no adult may assume that somebody else will make the report.

Where a person personally witnesses or receives a significant safeguarding concern, they should ensure it has actually reached the appropriate safeguarding route.

Telling a colleague casually does not discharge safeguarding responsibility if there is no reasonable basis to believe the concern has been escalated.

15. Sources of Safeguarding Concerns

A safeguarding concern may arise from a direct disclosure, staff observation, unexplained injury, significant behavioural change, attendance pattern, information from another organisation, social-media content, parental behaviour, another student, a visitor or information about staff conduct.

Concerns may also arise from apparently unrelated incidents which, when viewed together, form a pattern.

Staff should therefore report relevant facts even where they do not understand the full significance themselves.

16. Responding to a Direct Disclosure

Where a child or adult discloses abuse, neglect or exploitation, the person receiving the disclosure should remain calm and listen carefully.

They should allow the person to speak in their own words and should avoid leading, interrogative or repetitive questions. Only sufficient clarification should be sought to establish what the person is saying and whether immediate danger exists.

The person should be reassured that speaking up was appropriate, but staff must not promise complete confidentiality.

17. Explaining What Happens Next

Where appropriate, staff should explain that the information will need to be shared with somebody responsible for helping keep people safe.

This should be communicated in language suited to the individual's age, communication needs and understanding.

Staff should avoid making promises about exactly what will happen next because external safeguarding agencies may determine the subsequent response.

18. Immediate Danger

If any person is in immediate danger, seriously injured or requires urgent medical assistance, the priority is emergency action.

Police should be contacted on 999 where a child or adult is at immediate risk of serious harm or where urgent police intervention is required. Warwickshire's current child

safeguarding procedure expressly directs professionals to contact police immediately where a child is at immediate risk.

No staff member requires management permission before calling emergency services.

19. Internal Reporting

Safeguarding concerns should normally be reported to the KDF Safeguarding Lead as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where the concern is serious, verbal or telephone escalation should take place immediately rather than relying solely on an email or written form that may not be seen promptly.

Written recording should then follow without unnecessary delay.

20. Bypassing the Normal Reporting Route

Staff may bypass ordinary internal reporting routes where the Safeguarding Lead or CEO is implicated, where no appropriate safeguarding leader is available, where delay would place somebody at risk or where the staff member reasonably believes the organisation is failing to act.

In such circumstances, staff may contact children's social care, adult safeguarding services, the LADO or police directly.

No KDF policy requires a staff member to remain silent while waiting for internal permission to protect a person from serious harm.

21. Recording a Safeguarding Concern

Safeguarding records should be made as soon as reasonably practicable and should be factual, clear and proportionate.

The record should identify who was involved, what was seen, heard or disclosed, when and where it occurred and what immediate action was taken.

Where direct speech is significant, the child or adult's own words should be recorded as accurately as possible.

22. Fact, Observation and Opinion

Safeguarding records must distinguish factual information from interpretation.

A staff member may record that a student appeared tearful, avoided eye contact and said particular words. They should avoid recording an unsupported conclusion that the child was definitely abused unless this has been established through an appropriate process.

Professional observations may be included but should be identified as such.

23. Original Records

Original notes, messages, emails or other relevant information should be preserved where they may be important to a safeguarding enquiry.

Staff should not rewrite a record later in order to make it appear more professional if doing so risks changing the original meaning.

Any clarification or additional note should be dated and added transparently.

24. Safeguarding Record Security

Safeguarding information must be stored securely and access should be restricted to those with a legitimate safeguarding need.

Safeguarding concerns should not be left within ordinary open staff notes, casual WhatsApp conversations or publicly accessible administrative files.

Where digital systems are used, permissions should reflect the sensitivity of the information.

25. Initial Safeguarding Assessment

After receiving a concern, the Safeguarding Lead should consider the immediate safety of the person concerned, the nature and seriousness of the information, previous relevant concerns and whether external advice or referral is needed.

This assessment is not an investigation into whether abuse occurred.

Its purpose is to determine the safest and most appropriate next action.

26. Child Safeguarding Consultation

Where KDF is uncertain about the appropriate level of response for a child, it may seek safeguarding consultation from Warwickshire children's social care.

Warwickshire advises professionals to seek support within their own agency first where appropriate and provides safeguarding consultation through Family Connect where additional advice is required.

Consultation should not be used to delay an urgent referral where there is already sufficient concern about significant harm.

27. Referring Child Safeguarding Concerns

For children in Warwickshire, urgent and non-urgent child protection concerns may be referred through Family Connect on 01926 414144. Warwickshire currently accepts most professional referrals through a telephone conversation rather than requiring a written referral.

Outside normal hours, Warwickshire's Emergency Duty Team is currently available on 01926 886922 for emergencies. Where immediate danger exists, police should be contacted on 999.

Current contact details should always be checked before use because local authority arrangements may change.

28. Early Support and Lower-Level Need

Not every concern requires statutory child-protection intervention. Some concerns may indicate that a child or family requires additional or early support.

Warwickshire's current approach encourages professionals to consider whether existing services or early support can meet the child's needs before escalating unnecessarily, while still referring where safeguarding thresholds require it.

KDF should not allow the language of "early help" or "lower-level concern" to minimise risk where concerns are persistent, escalating or cumulative.

29. Adult Safeguarding Referrals

Where an adult with care and support needs is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect and may be unable to protect themselves, KDF should consider referral to adult safeguarding services.

Warwickshire currently receives adult safeguarding concerns on 01926 412080, with the Emergency Duty Team available on 01926 886922 outside ordinary hours. Criminal concerns should be reported to Warwickshire Police through 101, or 999 in an emergency.

The adult's views and wishes should normally be considered when deciding next steps, subject to circumstances where information must be shared to protect them or others.

30. Concerns About Adults Working With Children

Concerns that an adult working or volunteering with children has harmed or may have harmed a child, committed an offence against or relating to a child, or behaved in a way suggesting that they may pose a risk of harm must be considered under KDF's Allegations & Low-Level Concerns About Adults Policy.

Warwickshire currently requires relevant Position of Trust concerns to be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer through its Position of Trust process and provides a LADO advice route on 01926 745376.

KDF should obtain LADO advice before conducting a substantive internal investigation where the allegation threshold may be met.

31. Concerns Involving the Safeguarding Lead or CEO

Where a safeguarding concern relates to the Safeguarding Lead, it must be reported to the CEO or another independent authorised person.

Where the concern involves the CEO, it must be reported to another appropriate senior person and external safeguarding advice obtained directly where required.

No person may investigate or determine the outcome of a safeguarding concern concerning themselves.

32. Parent and Carer Communication

Parents or carers should normally be involved in safeguarding decisions concerning their child where doing so is safe and appropriate.

However, staff should not automatically contact a parent before referral where this could increase risk, alert an alleged perpetrator, lead to destruction of evidence or prejudice a police or social-care investigation.

Where uncertainty exists, KDF should seek advice from children's social care before contacting the family.

33. Adult Consent and Safeguarding

Adults with capacity should normally be involved in decisions about referrals and information sharing.

Where an adult refuses consent, KDF should consider the seriousness of the harm, risk to other people, coercion, public interest and whether there is another lawful basis for sharing information.

Adult safeguarding should not automatically replicate child-protection procedures because adults retain rights to autonomy and decision-making.

34. Information Sharing

Safeguarding information should be shared when necessary, proportionate and lawful to protect a child or adult from harm.

Staff should not use data protection as a blanket reason to withhold necessary safeguarding information.

Information should normally be shared with those who need it for safeguarding purposes and should not be circulated more widely than required.

35. Information Sharing Without Consent

There are circumstances in which safeguarding information may need to be shared without consent, particularly where a child may be at risk of harm, an adult is unable to protect themselves, there is a serious crime, risk to others or obtaining consent would itself increase danger.

The reason for sharing without consent should be recorded where reasonably practicable.

Staff should seek safeguarding advice where they remain uncertain.

36. Following Up Referrals

The Safeguarding Lead should record when a referral was made, who received it, what advice was provided and what KDF has been asked to do.

Safeguarding responsibility does not necessarily end when information is passed externally.

Where KDF believes a child or adult remains at significant risk and no adequate response appears to have occurred, the Safeguarding Lead should follow up and escalate appropriately.

37. Professional Disagreement and Escalation

KDF may sometimes disagree with an external agency's assessment of a safeguarding concern.

Professional disagreement should be managed respectfully, but KDF should escalate where it continues to believe a person is at serious risk.

Staff must not simply close a concern because one initial contact does not lead to statutory intervention.

38. Ongoing Monitoring

Where a concern remains below the threshold for external referral, relevant staff may need to monitor the individual's welfare and report further changes.

Monitoring must not become covert investigation. Staff should continue ordinary professional observation and report new factual concerns.

Repeated concerns should be reviewed cumulatively rather than treated as unrelated events.

39. Safeguarding Handover Between Staff

Where safeguarding information is relevant to a change in coach, class or staffing arrangement, appropriate information should be handed over securely.

Only information necessary for safe support should be shared.

Safeguarding information should never depend entirely upon one employee's personal memory.

40. Safeguarding During Staff Absence

Safeguarding arrangements must remain operational when the Safeguarding Lead, CEO or another senior person is absent.

Staff should know the alternative route before an emergency occurs.

An organisation cannot safely operate a system in which serious concerns wait several days for one individual to return.

41. External Venues and Events

KDF's safeguarding reporting procedures continue to apply at performances, gradings, competitions and external events.

Staff should know who holds safeguarding responsibility on the day and how external venue safeguarding staff can be contacted where necessary.

Where an incident involves another organisation, KDF should coordinate information appropriately while retaining responsibility for concerns involving its own students or staff.

42. Hirers and Contractors

Where a safeguarding concern arises during a hirer's activity, the hirer should normally activate its own safeguarding procedure, but KDF must act where it becomes aware that a child or adult is at immediate or significant risk.

Concerns about contractors or hirer staff working with children may also require LADO referral.

KDF will not ignore a safeguarding concern simply because another organisation technically employs the individual concerned.

43. Safeguarding and Incident Reporting

Safeguarding incidents may overlap with accidents, medical emergencies, behavioural incidents or health and safety events.

Where this occurs, the relevant operational record should be completed, but safeguarding information should still be handled through the confidential safeguarding process.

A safeguarding concern should never disappear into an ordinary accident form or behaviour log without reaching safeguarding leadership.

44. Whistleblowing and Failure to Act

Where a member of staff believes a safeguarding concern has been ignored, suppressed or handled inappropriately, they should escalate internally or use KDF's Whistleblowing & Protected Disclosures Policy.

They may also contact the relevant statutory safeguarding agency directly where necessary.

A genuine concern raised in good faith should not result in retaliation merely because others disagree with the reporter's assessment.

45. Training, Review and Organisational Learning

All staff and volunteers should receive safeguarding information appropriate to their role, including the identity of the Safeguarding Lead, immediate emergency procedures and how to record and report concerns.

Safeguarding leads and senior leaders should receive more advanced training appropriate to decision-making, referrals, allegations, adult safeguarding and information sharing.

KDF will review significant safeguarding incidents, patterns of concerns and audit findings to identify improvements in training, communication, supervision, documentation or organisational practice. Learning should strengthen systems without replacing or interfering with external safeguarding investigations.

46. Kindness, Diversity and Friendship

The value of Kindness requires KDF to listen carefully, respond sensitively and take concerns seriously. Diversity requires KDF to recognise that abuse may affect any child or adult and that communication, disability, culture, identity and life experience may influence how concerns are expressed. Friendship requires everyone within KDF to look out for one

another while recognising that loyalty must never prevent legitimate safeguarding reporting.

These values support a safeguarding culture in which concerns can be raised without stigma and where the person reporting does not need to have all the answers before asking for help.

47. The KDF Promise

This policy supports the KDF Promise: Every Student, Every Session, Every Time. Every student should be supported by adults who understand exactly what to do when something does not appear safe.

The Promise requires KDF to move concerns from observation to action rather than allowing them to remain as informal conversations, assumptions or unresolved uncertainty.

Where there is doubt about whether a concern requires safeguarding attention, seeking advice is preferable to allowing potential harm to go unexamined.

48. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside KDF's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Adults Policy, Allegations & Low-Level Concerns About Adults Policy, Safer Recruitment, DBS & Pre-Employment Checks Policy, Staff Code of Conduct & Professional Standards, Professional Boundaries & Relationships Policy, Whistleblowing & Protected Disclosures Policy, Confidentiality, Data Protection, Conflicts, Leaving KDF & Personnel Records Policy, First Aid & Emergency Medical Response Policy, Medical Needs, Medication & Individual Healthcare Support Policy, Attendance Policy, SEND Policy, Early Years Policy, Visitors, Spectators, Hirers & Contractors Safety Policy and Hire of Premises & Facilities Policy.

These policies should be applied together where safeguarding concerns overlap with professional conduct, health, SEND, attendance, employment, external providers or information governance.

49. Policy Review

This policy will normally be reviewed annually, but an earlier review will take place following a serious safeguarding incident, significant referral issue, failure of internal reporting arrangements, safeguarding audit, change to local authority referral processes or updated statutory guidance.

KDF will also periodically confirm that safeguarding contact details, internal escalation routes and staff awareness remain current rather than waiting for the annual policy-review date.

KDF will maintain safeguarding arrangements that are simple enough to use quickly, robust enough to protect sensitive information and flexible enough to allow any staff member to act where immediate protection is required.