

Karate & Dance Fed Ltd - 17150545

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SEND & Inclusive Participation Policy

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1. Policy Statement

Karate & Dance Federation Ltd (KDF) is committed to providing inclusive karate and dance provision in which students with special educational needs and disabilities are supported to participate meaningfully alongside their peers wherever this can be achieved safely and appropriately.

KDF believes that inclusion should be embedded within ordinary teaching rather than treated as an additional service provided only after a student experiences difficulty. Coaches are expected to adapt communication, lesson structure, sensory demands, behaviour support, equipment, pacing and expectations so that students can access the same broad learning opportunities in ways that reflect their individual needs.

KDF does not regard SEND as a reason automatically to separate students from mainstream provision. Where students require additional support, KDF will seek first to differentiate the session, adjust the environment and adapt teaching so that participation remains inclusive.

KDF's SEND approach reflects its values of Kindness, Diversity, Friendship and supports the KDF Promise: Every Student, Every Session, Every Time.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish KDF's expectations for SEND and inclusive practice across KDF Karate and KDF Dance.

It explains how KDF identifies and responds to additional needs, makes reasonable adjustments, adapts curriculum delivery, supports sensory and emotional regulation, works with families and ensures that students are not unnecessarily excluded because they learn, communicate or regulate differently.

The policy also establishes expectations around sensory stimulation warm-ups and warm-downs, the Tiger Retreat and Leopard Retreat, the Reward Station, values-based recognition and inclusive behaviour practice.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all KDF students whose participation may be affected by SEND, disability, developmental difference, communication need, sensory need, emotional-regulation difficulty or another additional learning need.

A formal diagnosis is not required before KDF can provide appropriate support.

The policy applies to all staff, coaches, assistant coaches, volunteers, junior coaches and senior leaders involved in planning or delivering KDF provision.

4. Inclusive Practice

Inclusive practice means adapting provision so that students can participate meaningfully within the wider KDF community.

It requires staff to consider barriers created by the environment, teaching method, communication style or activity rather than assuming that difficulty sits solely within the student.

The aim is not to make every student complete every activity in exactly the same way, but to provide meaningful access to the same broad curriculum and community.

5. High Expectations

KDF maintains high expectations for students with SEND.

High expectations do not mean expecting every student to achieve in the same way or at the same pace. They mean believing that every student can develop skills, confidence, independence and positive relationships when teaching is appropriately adapted.

SEND should not be used as a reason to offer a reduced-quality curriculum.

6. Equality and Reasonable Adjustment

KDF will consider reasonable adjustments where a disabled student would otherwise experience substantial disadvantage.

Adjustments may relate to communication, environment, equipment, activity structure, supervision, sensory demand, timing, behaviour support or another aspect of participation.

Reasonable adjustment does not mean removing all challenge. It means reducing unnecessary barriers while preserving meaningful learning and safety.

7. Diagnosis Is Not Required

KDF does not require a formal diagnosis before considering support.

Parents or guardians may identify emerging needs, and coaches may observe patterns that indicate a student would benefit from adaptation.

Support should be based on the student's presentation and needs rather than waiting unnecessarily for external assessment.

8. Person-Centred Practice

Students should be treated as individuals rather than according to diagnostic labels.

Two students with the same diagnosis may require very different approaches.

KDF should therefore seek to understand what helps each student communicate, regulate, learn and participate successfully.

9. Working With Families

Parents and guardians are important partners in understanding a student's needs.

Families may provide useful information about communication, sensory triggers, behaviour, successful strategies, medical needs and previous experiences.

KDF should listen carefully to this information while retaining responsibility for determining what can be implemented safely within its own environment.

10. Student Voice

Where age and understanding allow, students should be encouraged to express what helps them learn and regulate.

They may be able to identify activities, noises, environments or communication styles that they find difficult.

Student voice should inform support planning wherever reasonably practicable.

11. Inclusive Mainstream Provision

KDF's preferred model is inclusive participation within mainstream karate and dance classes.

Students with SEND should not automatically be separated simply because they require additional support.

Where adaptation enables safe and meaningful participation, the student should remain part of the wider class community.

12. Differentiated Teaching

Coaches are expected to differentiate teaching to reflect differing ability, communication and developmental needs.

This may involve simplifying language, reducing the number of instructions given at once, changing task difficulty, using visual demonstration, adjusting repetition or providing alternative ways to complete the same learning objective.

Differentiation should be considered an ordinary part of good coaching rather than an exceptional measure.

13. Adapted Session Structure

Students with SEND may benefit from an adapted session structure.

This may include shorter activity blocks, more predictable transitions, additional regulation opportunities, visual sequencing or reduced waiting.

Adaptation should aim to keep the student engaged with the main session rather than creating a completely separate curriculum unless individual circumstances genuinely require this.

14. Predictable Routines

Predictable routines can support students who experience anxiety, communication difficulty or difficulty with transitions.

Coaches should aim to maintain a recognisable structure while still allowing normal variation within the lesson.

Where significant changes are expected, students may benefit from advance warning.

15. Visual Support

Visual schedules, picture cues, written prompts, demonstrations and simple symbols may be used where these improve understanding.

Visual support can be particularly useful for students who process spoken information slowly or experience anxiety when expectations are unclear.

Staff should ensure that visual systems remain accessible and are not unnecessarily complicated.

16. Communication

Staff should adapt communication to the student.

This may include using fewer words, allowing more processing time, using demonstration, repeating instructions, avoiding figurative language or checking understanding before moving on.

Where Makaton, symbols or other communication methods are known to support a student, KDF may incorporate these where staff competence allows.

17. Processing Time

Some students require additional time to process instructions.

Staff should avoid interpreting delayed response automatically as refusal.

Where appropriate, coaches should give the instruction, pause and allow the student time to understand before repeating or escalating.

18. Sensory Needs

KDF recognises that students may experience sensory input differently.

Noise, lighting, touch, crowded environments, music, textures, movement and proximity to others may affect participation.

Coaches should observe responses and make proportionate adjustments where sensory demands are creating unnecessary barriers.

19. Sensory Stimulation Warm-Up

Where appropriate, SEND-inclusive sessions should incorporate a sensory stimulation warm-up to support readiness for learning.

This may include controlled movement, balance work, proprioceptive activity, rhythm, coordination or structured sensory input.

The warm-up should prepare students physically and emotionally without creating unnecessary overstimulation.

20. Sensory Warm-Down

A sensory warm-down may be used at the end of the session to support regulation before collection.

This may involve slower movement, stretching, breathing, calming sensory activity or other appropriate regulation techniques.

The purpose is to support transition from physical activity into a calmer state.

21. Sensory Regulation Throughout the Session

Sensory support should not be limited to the beginning and end of a class.

Some students may require brief movement or regulation breaks during the session.

These should be used purposefully and should support return to learning rather than becoming an automatic exclusion from activity.

22. Tiger Retreat and Leopard Retreat

The Tiger Retreat within karate and Leopard Retreat within dance provide dedicated regulation spaces for students who require a temporary lower-stimulation environment.

The Retreats are not punishment areas and must not be presented as places where a student is sent for being “naughty”.

Students may use them voluntarily or following a supportive suggestion from staff.

23. Purpose of the Retreats

The Retreats provide a safe space for emotional or sensory regulation.

A student may use the space because they feel overwhelmed, frustrated, anxious or unable to continue safely with the main activity.

The objective should normally be regulation followed by supported reintegration.

24. Supervision of the Retreats

Students using a Retreat remain under KDF supervision.

Staff should maintain appropriate visibility and awareness without unnecessarily intruding on the student's regulation.

The Retreat must not create an unsupervised or hidden one-to-one situation.

25. Return From the Retreat

Students should be supported to return when they appear ready.

Reintegration should be calm and should not involve public commentary or embarrassment.

The student should not be required to complete a public apology simply because they needed time away from the main activity.

26. Regulation Is Not Avoidance

Some students may seek to use a Retreat repeatedly to avoid tasks they find difficult.

Staff should consider whether the task requires adaptation while also supporting the student gradually to tolerate appropriate challenge.

Regulation support should enable participation rather than unintentionally remove all learning expectations.

27. Behaviour as Communication

KDF recognises that behaviour may communicate sensory overload, anxiety, frustration, communication difficulty, pain, fatigue or uncertainty.

Staff should consider what may be driving behaviour before assuming deliberate non-compliance.

Understanding the cause does not remove safety boundaries but should influence the response.

28. Demand Avoidance

Some students may experience significant distress in response to demands.

Where appropriate, coaches may use collaborative language, controlled choices, reduced confrontation and flexible sequencing.

The aim should be to maintain learning while reducing unnecessary power struggles.

29. Positive Behaviour Support

SEND students should be supported through the same positive behaviour principles that apply across KDF.

This includes clear expectations, predictable routines, descriptive praise, regulation support and restorative practice.

Behaviour management should not become more punitive simply because a student requires additional support.

30. Restorative Practice

Restorative practice may be adapted for students with SEND.

Some students may need simplified questions, visual prompts, additional processing time or a shorter conversation.

The aim remains to help the student understand what happened, how others were affected and what may help next time.

31. Reward Station

KDF's Reward Station is inclusive of students with SEND.

Students should be recognised for meaningful demonstration of Kindness, Diversity and Friendship, regardless of whether their communication, behaviour or participation looks different from that of other students.

Recognition should focus on progress and contribution rather than technical performance alone.

32. Three Values Recognition

Where the full Reward Station model is used, three students are recognised during the session: one for Kindness, one for Diversity, and one for Friendship.

SEND students should have equitable opportunity to be selected.

Staff should recognise that a significant achievement may include returning from dysregulation, including another student, trying a difficult activity or using a new communication strategy successfully.

33. Reward Systems and PDA

Reward systems can create pressure for some students, including students with demand-avoidant profiles.

The Reward Station should therefore remain celebratory rather than transactional.

Staff should not repeatedly use rewards as leverage to force compliance or threaten to remove a reward already earned.

34. Praise and Recognition

Staff should use descriptive praise that explains what the student did successfully.

For example, recognising that a student waited, asked for a break, helped someone or returned to the group can reinforce useful skills.

Praise should remain genuine and adapted to students who may dislike public attention.

35. Physical Contact

Some SEND students may seek physical reassurance while others may be highly sensitive to touch.

Staff should follow KDF's Physical Contact & Appropriate Touch Policy and respect known preferences wherever possible.

Touch should never be assumed to be calming simply because the student has SEND.

36. Personal Space and Proximity

Students may have differing needs around personal space.

Coaches should avoid unnecessary crowding and should consider positioning within the class.

Where proximity to other students causes distress, reasonable spacing adjustments may be appropriate.

37. Movement and Motor Skills

Some students may experience difficulties with coordination, balance, motor planning or spatial awareness.

Coaches should break complex movements into manageable parts and allow sufficient repetition.

Success should be measured against individual development rather than comparison with peers.

38. Equipment Adaptation

Equipment may be adapted where this improves safe access.

This may include lighter pads, different-sized equipment, visual markers, reduced-height targets or simplified props.

Adaptations should preserve the purpose of the activity while making participation more achievable.

39. Reduced Instructions and Task Breakdown

Complex activities should be broken into smaller steps where required.

A coach may teach one stage, allow the student to practise, then add the next stage.

This can reduce cognitive load and improve confidence.

40. Transitions

Transitions can be difficult for some SEND students.

Staff may use countdowns, visual warnings, consistent language or predictable transition routines to reduce uncertainty.

Where possible, abrupt and unnecessary changes should be avoided.

41. Breaks

Students may require additional sensory, movement or regulation breaks as a reasonable adjustment.

Such breaks should not be treated as a reward or punishment.

Food, water and toilet access should never be withheld because of behaviour.

42. Arrival and Handover

Some students may benefit from a consistent arrival routine.

Parents should communicate any relevant changes in the student's presentation where these may affect participation, such as poor sleep, significant anxiety, medication changes or recent distress.

KDF may agree individual handover arrangements where these improve regulation and safety.

43. KDF Strong Start

The KDF Strong Start may be adapted for SEND students.

Activities should be familiar, accessible and structured enough to allow the student to settle without requiring intensive verbal instruction.

Visual prompts, simple choices or a preferred starting activity may be used where appropriate.

44. Attendance

SEND-related barriers may affect attendance.

Where a student misses two consecutive weeks, KDF's normal supportive attendance check-in process applies.

The purpose should be to understand whether any reasonable adjustment may support return rather than criticise the family for absence.

45. Medical Needs

SEND and medical needs may overlap.

Staff should understand any relevant healthcare plan and avoid assuming that changes in behaviour are solely behavioural where pain, medication or another medical factor may be involved.

The Medical Needs, Medication & Individual Healthcare Support Policy should be followed where appropriate.

46. Safeguarding and SEND

Children with SEND may experience increased vulnerability to abuse, bullying or exploitation and may face additional barriers to communicating concerns.

Staff should not automatically attribute changes in behaviour, communication or emotional presentation to disability.

Safeguarding concerns must be considered on their own merits and reported appropriately.

47. Bullying and Peer Inclusion

KDF will challenge bullying, exclusion or mocking connected to SEND.

Students should be taught that different adjustments exist because different people need different support.

Confidential medical or diagnostic information should not be disclosed to other students or parents in order to justify an adjustment.

48. Personal Care and Toileting

Where a student requires additional support with toileting or personal care, this should be agreed with the family and managed with dignity.

KDF should encourage independence wherever appropriate while ensuring the student is not denied participation because support needs exist.

Any intimate-care arrangement should follow safeguarding and professional-boundary expectations.

49. Individual SEND Support Plans

Where a student has significant or recurring support needs, KDF may develop an individual SEND support plan.

The plan may include communication methods, sensory triggers, regulation strategies, Retreat use, behaviour support, supervision requirements, medical information and successful coaching approaches.

Plans should remain practical and accessible to staff who genuinely need the information.

50. Reviewing Support Plans

Support plans should not become static documents.

They should be reviewed following significant incidents, changes in need or evidence that existing strategies are no longer effective.

Families and students should contribute where appropriate.

51. Working With External Professionals

Where families provide information from school, healthcare or specialist professionals, KDF may consider relevant recommendations.

KDF is not automatically required to replicate school provision because its staffing, environment and purpose are different.

Any recommendation should be translated into realistic and safe KDF practice.

52. Confidentiality

SEND information should be treated confidentially and shared only where staff need it to support the student safely.

Coaches may need to know practical strategies without necessarily receiving the student's entire medical or educational history.

Information should be handled in accordance with KDF's data-protection arrangements.

53. Parent Expectations

Parents and guardians should provide accurate information and work constructively with KDF when support needs change.

KDF expects families to understand that reasonable adjustments operate within the realities of a community sport and performing-arts environment.

KDF will be open about what it can safely provide and where additional planning is required.

54. Staffing and Capacity

Some students may require significant adult support.

KDF must consider the needs of the entire group when determining whether a particular support arrangement can be provided safely.

Where one student's needs require sustained one-to-one attention, staffing and supervision arrangements should be reviewed so the remainder of the class remains safe.

55. Junior Coaches and Young Leaders

Junior coaches may assist with ordinary inclusive strategies, demonstrations and encouragement under adult supervision.

They should not hold sole responsibility for complex SEND support, aggressive behaviour, personal care, medical needs or safeguarding decisions.

An adult coach remains responsible for the session.

56. Aggressive or High-Risk Behaviour

SEND may explain or contribute to aggressive or volatile behaviour, but it does not remove KDF's responsibility to protect other students and staff.

KDF will consider reasonable adjustments, known triggers and regulation strategies while applying its Aggressive, Volatile & Challenging Behaviour Policy.

Where risks cannot currently be managed safely, additional planning or temporary restrictions may be required.

57. Elopement

Some SEND students may have increased elopement or running risk.

Individual arrangements should identify triggers, supervision requirements and safe response strategies.

The Missing Child, Elopement & Uncollected Child Policy should be followed where a student leaves or attempts to leave the supervised environment unexpectedly.

58. Suspension and Restriction

KDF will not suspend or restrict participation simply because a student has SEND.

Where temporary restriction is necessary because of significant safety risk, KDF should consider what reasonable adjustments have been attempted and what may enable safe return.

Any restriction should be proportionate and reviewed.

59. Ending Membership

In rare circumstances, KDF may conclude that it cannot safely meet a student's needs within the staffing, environment or expertise available.

Before reaching this decision, KDF should consider reasonable adjustments, family engagement, risk-management strategies and whether participation can be adapted.

Ending membership should not be based solely on diagnosis or difference.

60. Inclusion Does Not Mean Identical Treatment

Inclusive practice does not require every student to receive exactly the same instruction, activity or consequence.

Equality may require different approaches to achieve meaningful participation and comparable safety.

Staff should be able to explain adjustments in terms of need rather than favouritism.

61. Curriculum Progression

SEND students should have access to meaningful progression within karate and dance.

Progress may involve technical skills, communication, confidence, regulation, independence, physical development or social participation.

A student's progression should be considered against their own starting point and curriculum pathway.

62. Grading and Assessment

Where students participate in grading or assessment, reasonable adjustments may be made where these do not remove the essential purpose of the assessment.

This may include additional processing time, visual demonstration, reduced verbal demand or adapted sequencing.

Standards should remain meaningful while access methods can be flexible.

63. Transition Between Classes

Students moving between age groups or class structures may require additional transition support.

This may include visits, familiarisation, visual information or gradual exposure to different expectations.

Transition planning should reflect developmental readiness and individual need.

64. Environment

The environment should be considered as part of SEND practice.

Noise, clutter, crowding, lighting, waiting and unnecessary sensory stimulation can create barriers.

Staff should consider whether simple environmental changes could improve participation before assuming the student cannot cope with the class.

65. Quality Assurance

KDF will monitor SEND and inclusive practice through observations, curriculum review, incident learning, family feedback and leadership oversight.

Quality assurance should consider whether adaptations are meaningful, whether staff maintain high expectations and whether students remain included in the wider learning environment.

SEND practice should be evaluated as part of overall lesson quality rather than treated as an isolated specialist issue.

66. Staff Development

Staff should receive SEND and inclusive-practice development appropriate to their role.

Training may include communication, sensory processing, autism, ADHD, demand avoidance, behaviour as communication, reasonable adjustments and safeguarding.

KDF will continue to develop staff confidence so that differentiated teaching becomes an ordinary part of delivery.

67. Organisational Learning

Incidents involving dysregulation, exclusion, failed adjustments or repeated barriers should inform organisational improvement.

KDF should consider whether the issue arose from the student's needs, the environment, staff practice or a combination.

Learning should focus on improving future provision rather than allocating blame.

68. Kindness

The value of Kindness means responding to difference with patience, dignity and support.

It means recognising that a student may need additional time, explanation or regulation without treating them as a problem.

Kindness also means maintaining appropriate boundaries where behaviour places others at risk.

69. Diversity

The value of Diversity is central to this policy.

KDF recognises that students learn, communicate, regulate and participate differently and that these differences strengthen rather than weaken the community.

Inclusive practice means making those differences workable within high-quality karate and dance provision.

70. Friendship

The value of Friendship means creating a community in which students support rather than exclude one another.

Students should learn that friendship includes respecting sensory needs, communication differences and reasonable adjustments.

Peer inclusion should be actively modelled by staff.

71. The KDF Promise

This policy directly supports the KDF Promise: Every Student, Every Session, Every Time.

For students with SEND, the Promise means that every session should be considered through the lens of accessibility, regulation, participation and appropriate challenge.

Through differentiated teaching, adapted session structure, sensory warm-ups and warm-downs, Retreat access, the Reward Station and strong inclusive practice, KDF will seek to ensure that students are supported within the wider KDF community wherever this can be achieved safely.

72. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside KDF's Early Years Policy, Behaviour Management Policy, Aggressive, Volatile & Challenging Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying & Peer-on-Peer Behaviour Policy, Physical Contact & Appropriate Touch Policy, Missing Child, Elopement & Uncollected Child Policy, Student Arrival, Collection, Handover & Supervision Policy, Student Attendance & Absence Policy, Disability & Reasonable Adjustments Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Medical Needs, Medication & Individual Healthcare Support Policy, Allergy Awareness & Anaphylaxis Policy and First Aid & Emergency Medical Response Policy.

These policies should be applied together where SEND needs overlap with safeguarding, behaviour, regulation, attendance, medical support, physical contact, supervision or equality.

73. Policy Review

This policy will normally be reviewed annually, but earlier review may take place following significant curriculum change, safeguarding learning, SEND practice review, serious incident or evidence that current arrangements are not providing meaningful inclusion.

KDF will continue to develop a model in which SEND support is embedded within ordinary high-quality teaching rather than treated as separate from it.

The organisation will maintain high expectations while recognising that access, progress and participation may look different for different students, ensuring that inclusion remains rooted in Kindness, Diversity, Friendship and the KDF Promise: Every Student, Every Session, Every Time.