Version 0.2/21082018
Reviewed by SESMA 05/03/2026 Mark Wayne Baker

South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

1. Commitment to Safeguarding

At **South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA** we are committed to safeguarding children and young people under the age of eighteen and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. Adults in our school/club take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always act in the best interest of the child.

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2. Principles

South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and complies with best practice [if affiliated insert name of regulatory body] requirements.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe and child centred environment.

- are protected from abuse whilst participating in activity organised within South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA premises or outside.

South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA acknowledges that some children, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare. As part of our safeguarding policy South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA will

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people.
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern.
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals.
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

3. Legislation & Statutory Guidance

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Data Protection Act 2018
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4. Definitions

In England, Northern Ireland and Wales a child is someone under the age of 18, whether living with their families, in state care, or living independently (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

This generally applies in Scotland but in some cases, for example for parts of the Scottish Child Protection Process it will be 16.

5. Types of Abuse and Neglect (according to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018)

All school/club staff and volunteers should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse:

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. 45.

Physical abuse:

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse:

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse:

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue.

Related issues

In addition to the above categories, there are other forms of harm or abuse that should involve the police and other organisations working together to protect children. These include:

- Bullying
- Child Sexual Exploitation

- Hate crimes
- Abuse in domestic settings
- Honour based violence
- Forced marriage
- Human trafficking
- Exploitation by radicalisers who promote violence
- Membership of gangs inclined to use violence.

Many of these areas are addressed in local multi-agency child or vulnerable adult safeguarding procedures. You may feel that these situations are so unlikely to arise that you would never be required to respond. However, it is as well to be aware of these other related areas, just in case your suspicions are raised.

Poor practice

Sometimes, your concerns may relate to poor practice, where an adult or another young person's behaviour is inappropriate and may be causing distress to a child or young person. In the application of this policy, poor practice includes any behaviour which contravenes the principles of this document or the relevant Club/School/Academy/NGB Code of Conduct or brings Martial Arts into disrepute, or which infringes an individual's rights. Where poor practice is serious or repeated this could also constitute abuse and should be reported immediately. Examples of poor practice towards students, which should never to be sanctioned include:

- use of excessive, physical or humiliating punishments;
- failure to act when you witness possible abuse or bullying;
- being unaware of, or breaching, any relevant policy such as the Code of Ethics and Conduct;
- spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others;
- inviting or allowing young people into your home where they will be alone with you;
- engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative activity;
- allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- making sexually suggestive comments even in fun;
- reducing a person to tears as a form of control;
- allowing allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
- doing things of a personal nature for young people that they can do for themselves; sharing a bedroom with a young person you are not related to, even with parental permission.

Some participants may require assistance with personal care due to being very young or disabled. If a young person needs this level of support it should be made clear to their parent/s that this can only be carried out by a designated carer and not by the instructor. Even if the instructor is trained in carrying out personal care tasks, this compromises their role as trainer and places them and the child in a vulnerable position. These support arrangements should clearly be in place and agreed to by all parties prior to the activities commencing.

6. Signs and Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

Indicators that a young person may be being abused may include the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries;
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent;

- the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her;
- someone else (a young person or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another;
- unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper);
- inappropriate sexual awareness;
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour;
- sudden or unusual distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected;
- having difficulty in making friends;
- being prevented from socialising with other young people;
- displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite;
- or a sudden weight change;
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. A good working relationship with parent/guardians will help to identify any other concerns that a young person may be experiencing. For example a family bereavement which could cause some of the changes listed above.

Remember it is not the responsibility of South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA to decide if child abuse is occurring but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them.

7. What to do if you have a concern or someone raises concerns with you.

South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA recognises '*everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action'* (page 11 para 16 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

Whilst accepting this duty it is recognised South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA is not responsible for deciding if abuse has occurred. It does however have a duty to respond and report concerns.

South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA will have an appropriately trained Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy.

All safeguarding concerns and poor practice occurrences, except if the issue concerns those individuals**, must** be reported to the DSL / Deputy. This includes issues raised concerning the activities of instructors or volunteers or, where there are concerns outside of South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA (for example at home, school or in the wider community). Where there is an allegation against an instructor or volunteer who works with children at South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA the DSL/Deputy must report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Instructors and volunteers must also report the following to the DSL / Deputy and make a written record of what they have done, seen or heard:

- They have accidentally hurt a child;
- a child seems distressed in any manner;
- a child appears to be sexually aroused by their actions;
- a child misunderstands or misinterprets something they have said or done.

If you think a child is in immediate danger or requires medical attention, you should call the emergency services on 999. You can also ring the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 to report immediate risks. This is an immediate responsibility and will take priority over informing the Designated Safeguard Lead or Deputy.

8. How to respond to a concern

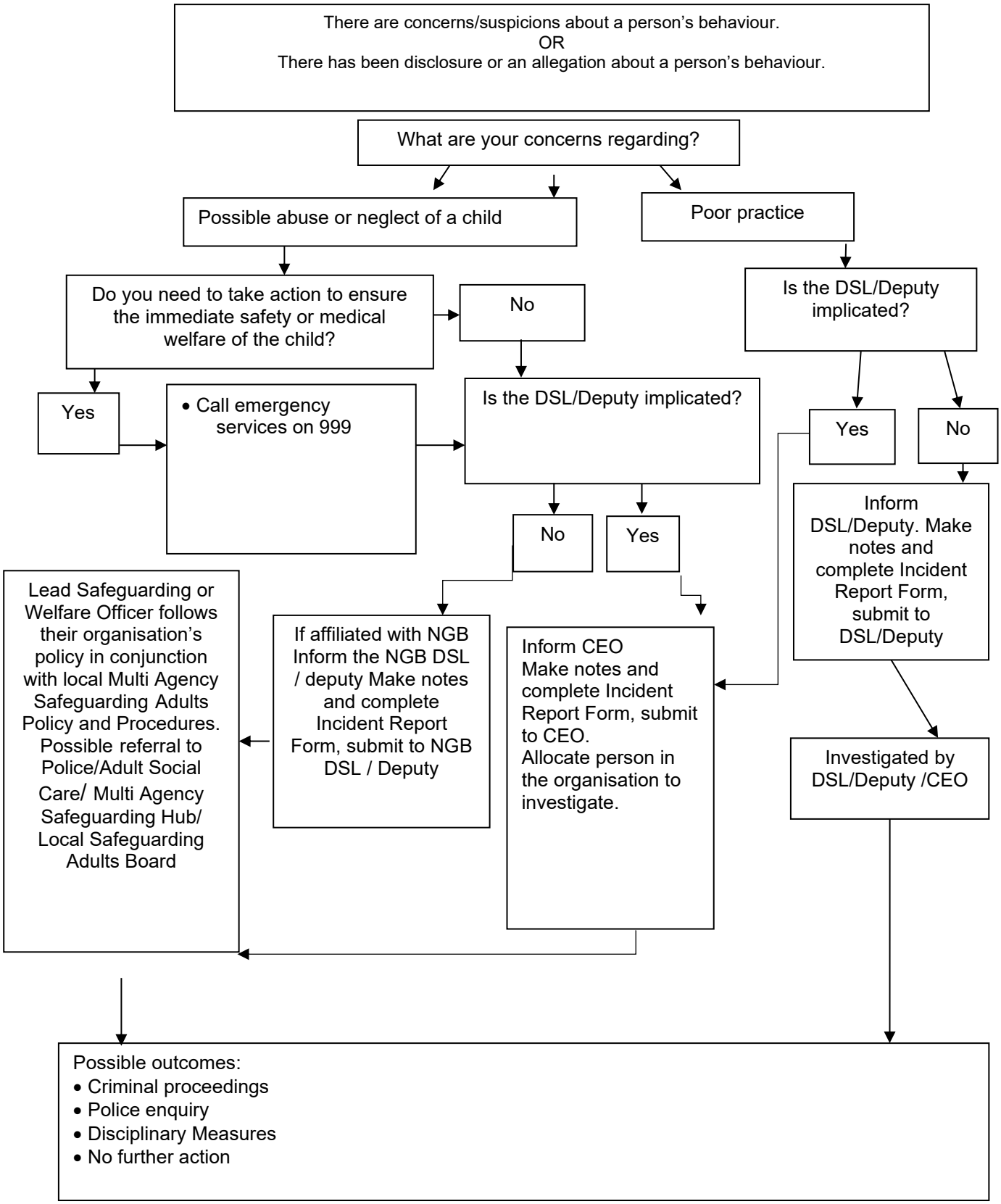
It is always difficult to hear about or witness harm or abuse experienced by a child or young person. The following points will be helpful for both you and the child should they choose to disclose abuse to you:

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said and try not to interrupt.
- Find an appropriate point early on to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- Allow them to continue at their own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and avoid asking questions that suggest an answer (leading questions).
- Reassure them that they are not to blame and have done the right thing in telling you. If the concern is serious explain that you will need to get support from other trained people to help keep the child safe. This must be shared even if the child doesn't want you to tell anyone else.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared. If they are adamant that they do not wish the information to be shared, explain that you will have to tell your Designated Safeguarding Lead and that it will be discussed further with them.
- Be aware of the possibility of forensic evidence if the disclosure relates to a recent incident of physical harm or injury and try to protect any supporting materials e.g. bedding or clothing.
- Contact your Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Where you are unable to contact your Designated Person, advice can be sought from statutory agencies or the NSPCC Helpline.
- All serious concerns must be referred to statutory agencies.
- Where the concern or allegation is about a member of staff or a volunteer, this must like all other concerns be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy. The DSL if they consider the concern to be serious, for example potentially child abuse or a crime they must report the incident to the Local Authority Designated Officer or the Police.

When a safeguarding concern or poor practice has been identified concerning a specific child the parents/guardians/carers of that child should be notified. Where the DSL/Deputy has

reported the incident to the statutory authorities, advice should be sought from them regarding this duty before notifying the parents/guardians/carers.

Safeguarding Children Flowchart



9. Recording

Should a child make a disclosure a record in writing must be made as soon as possible, using their words as closely as possible and where relevant, using the school/club report form [if your school/club is affiliated to a NGB insert a link here]. Note the date, time, any names mentioned, names and addresses to whom the information was given and who else is aware of the allegation. Note or describe clearly any visible injury.

Take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. It is important that the information you have is accurate.

Recording of any incident, including possible abuse or poor practice incidents, should also follow this procedure. In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises either from a disclosure of abuse or from suspicion of abuse, it is vitally important to record the details, regardless of whether they are shared with a statutory agency, as soon as possible using the Incident Referral Form

The record should be clear and factual as it may be needed by child or adult protection agencies and may, in the future, be used as evidence in court. Records should be kept securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident.

Throughout the process of any safeguarding cases, accurate records should be made and maintained.

Codes of Conduct and Ethics

The codes of conduct and ethics for all those involved at South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA can be found as a separate guidance sheet. It is essential these are followed in so the highest possible standards of behaviour and conduct in Martial Arts activities are maintained. The principles must be adhered to at all times so that Martial Arts can be enjoyed by all. All those involved at South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA will show their understanding and commitment to the codes of conduct and ethics by signing a copy of the relevant guidance sheet.

Safer Recruiting

At South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA we take all reasonable steps to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Whilst there may be some reservations that volunteers could be put off by having to go through a recruitment process, it is important to ensure reasonable steps have been taken to identify unsuitable individuals. A guidance sheet can be found which outlines safer recruiting in further detail.

Supervision, support and training

Once recruited, all staff and volunteers at South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA will be well informed, trained, supervised and supported to ensure that they effectively safeguard children and know how to respond to any concerns.

South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA will ensure that training and resources are available to encourage the development of staff and volunteers. This will include:

- an induction to the work and the school/club
- a trial period in which to develop skills whilst supervised
- ongoing support and monitoring

There are currently no formal qualifications specifically for safeguarding and protecting children in sport. However, training developed by sports and other organisations is available to strengthen the skills and knowledge of the sporting children's workforce to safeguard children and young people. Training plays an important role in equipping staff and volunteers to do their job safely and effectively. Different safeguarding training is available depending on the person's role.

Whistleblowing

It's important that people within South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they're unhappy with anything.

Whistleblowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrongdoing within their sports organisation. The NSPCC has a whistleblowing advice line to support professionals who have concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation.

More detail can be found on the Whistleblowing Guidance Sheet - www.nspcc.org.uk

Complaints

In order to ensure we develop an open culture where children and staff feel able to express any concerns, we have a procedure for dealing with complaints from a child, worker, volunteer, parent or carer.

This should be linked to the organisation's complaints procedures, ensuring the provision of support and advocacy for the people involved.

Links to other organisational procedures
It's useful to cross-reference other relevant organisational policies, including your:

- equity policy
- complaints and grievance procedures
- disciplinary procedures
- health and safety policy
- Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy

Useful contacts
Below is a list of organisations, websites and policies that can provide further information on some of the issues discussed in this policy.

South Eastern School of Martial Arts SESMA
Child Protection Officer: Wayne Baker
Email: info@sesma.co.uk
Telephone: 01603 528689
Mobile: 07739 914 684

Children's Advice and Duty Service – 0344 800 8021 (Professionals only)
Norfolk MASH – 0344 800 8020 or mash@norfolk.gcsx.gov.uk
Central Early Help – 01603 223161 or nehffdatateam@norfolk.gcsx.gov.uk
Broadland Early Help Team – 01603 430120
Norfolk Constabulary non-emergency number – 101
Suffolk Constabulary non-emergency number - 01473 613500
NSPCC - 0808 800 5000 - help@nspcc.org.uk
Local Safeguarding Children Board - nscb@norfolk.gov.uk