**Safe Practice Policy**

**Policy and Procedures**

Master Kindred Martial Arts (MKMA Karate)

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To Be Reviewed with Intervals No Greater Than 2 Years

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**Signature:**

Safe Practice Policy

Master Kindred Martial arts (MKMA Karate)

Martial Arts are activities where safe practice is essential to help prevent injury. Children and ‘At Risk Adults’ are particularly vulnerable as they are still developing mentally and physically, so training methods need to be modified as appropriate. Guidance for best practice as well as possible modifications can be found below:

1. **Warmups**
	1. Physical activities should first include a thorough warm up which is appropriate for the activity taking place. To help reduce the risk of injury, specific attention should be paid to those muscle groups that will be used during later activity.
	2. Adapted warmups should be considered for those with injuries. i.e., if a participant is suffering with a shoulder injury, pushups could be replaced with sit ups.
2. **Locks, Throws and Chokes**

 Some techniques taught may include throws, locks, and chokes.

The risks include but are not limited to: falling on unsuitable surfaces; landing on the head; damage to the joints from landing/throwing; strangulation

 Safe practice should include, but is not limited to:

1. Where possible, ensure there is a matted area available and the matted area is checked for suitability, particularly where the mats have been joined.
2. Checking that there are no hard surfaces or sharp/hard objects around the matted area.
3. Having an experienced instructor who will ensure that participants are not taught to use locks, throws or chokes unless deemed able to do so in a safe manner.
4. **Conditioning**

Throughout the training members may be asked to complete conditioning exercises. The risks of these include but are not limited to: breaking bones, sprains/strains, cuts/bruising

Safe practice should include, but is not limited to:

* 1. Those under 18 years of age / have existing injuries should not participate
	2. Conditioning exercises should be appropriate for the age group. Appropriate adaptation should be made by the instructor as required.
	3. Adults should try to train in conditioning techniques with those who are of a similar size and build
1. **Strikes, Punches and Kicks**

The risks include but are not limited to: concussion (brain injury) from heavy blows to the head; damage to internal organs and joints from heavy blows; injury from inappropriate stretching and other exercises.

Safe practice includes but is not limited to:

1. MKMA operates a non-contact policy. All strikes, punches and kicks should be performed in full but stopped short when aiming at an ‘opponent’.
2. When partnered, effort should be made to match up with another of similar grade, size, and age.
3. Where this is not possible students should be reminded to work safely with their partner and ensure all training exercises and activities are explained and, if needed, adapted appropriately by the instructor.
4. Head contact is strictly prohibited in children under the ages of 16.
5. Spinning backfists are prohibited during free sparring exercises.
6. Anyone under the age of 18 should avoid exercises such as press-ups on the knuckles and hitting heavy bags; the joints of children are still developing and can be damaged by these exercises.
7. **Weapons**

Safe practice should include but is not limited to:

1. No live blades (sharp or otherwise) in the training hall
2. All Training weapons should be suitably rounded off with no sharp edges.
3. Training weapons should be of a suitable material such as wood/plastic/foam.
4. full supervision at all times by Instructors
5. ensure the individual practicing has enough space around them to practice freely without danger of striking another student
6. **Breaking Boards**

Breaking boards naturally pose additional risks, these include but are not limited to; breaking skin, breaking bones, dislocation, sprains/strains, eye injuries (from flying debris)

Where clubs are using break boards for demonstrations, grading or general practice, great thought should be put into what is being asked of the individual. An appropriate risk assessment should also be in place.

Safe practice should include but us not limited to:

1. Break board thickness should be relative to the individuals age, grade and ability
2. Further consideration should also be put into techniques used for breaking. Children are more limited in the techniques they are able to use when breaking boards.

All thicknesses (and ease of breaking) offered by break board companies are guidelines only. Instructors should always air on the side of caution and use a thinner board should there be any doubt the student may be unable to break the board safely.

(c) Those under the age of 18 may only use the following techniques when breaking boards:

* Side kick
* Back Kick
* Elbow Strike

Appropriate alternatives to wooden break/smash boards include reusable break boards usually constructed from plastic and sometimes with foam for protection. These break boards relate to a designated level of competence. The above guidelines and considerations should still be followed where appropriate.

Students should not be pushed to break a board if they do not feel confident in doing so.

1. **Concrete Blocks and Brick Breaking**

The breaking of concrete blocks and bricks is a dangerous activity which poses additional risks, these include but are not limited to; breaking skin, breaking bones, dislocation, sprains/strains, eye injuries (from flying debris)

Concrete block and brick breaking should only be attempted by those 18 years and over of at least 3rd degree status. Students should have direct instruction and supervision from the instructor throughout the activity.

Any activity involving the breaking of blocks and bricks **must** have written consent from the Chief Instructor.

Appropriate first aid provisions must be in place including but not limited to; additional ice packs, bandages, sterile cleansing wipes, plasters and eye wash/bath.

1. **Cool Down**
2. Physical activities should include a thorough cool-down, which is appropriate for the activity taking place. To help reduce the risk of injury, specific attention should be paid to those muscle groups that have been used.

Above all, safe practice means having a suitably qualified and experienced instructor who will ensure that students are not exposed to the above risks and who can make a training session enjoyable whilst maintaining the discipline essential to learning a Martial Art.