

Mushin Martial Arts

Safeguarding Policy



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1. Introduction & Statement of Intent

As a club that promotes and develops marital arts participation, we are committed to provide a safe, inclusive environment in which all children and adults at risk can participate free from harm. We acknowledge our legal duties under:

Children Act 1989 (section 17, 47)

Children Act 2004 (section 11)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (statutory guidance, Part One)

Care Act 2014 (section 42)

Data Protection Act 2018 (sections 1–3) and UK GDPR (Articles 5, 6, 9)

Every member of staff, volunteer and instructor must uphold these obligations and act in the best interests of any individual who may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

Our Safeguarding Policy is designed to guide everyone with our club – participants, parents and instructors.

This policy has been written to try and provide easily manageable actions.

If there is any part of our safeguarding policy that is not clear or that causes any form of confusion to the reader please contact our Club.

If you have any immediate concerns regarding an adult at risk, you should not delay seeking assistance, i.e., call 999 and ask for the Police.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

All staff, instructors, volunteers, committee members, contractors and any individual working on behalf of Mushin Martial Arts.

All Club activities, including face-to-face training, seminars, competitions, residential courses and any online interactions.

3. Legal Framework

Children Act 1989

Section 17: duty to safeguard and promote welfare of children

Section 47: duty to investigate suspected significant harm

Children Act 2004

Section 11: duty on organisations to ensure functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard children

Part One: principles for all practitioners

Chapter 4: inter-agency working and referral pathways

Care Act 2014

Section 42: duty to make enquiries where adult at risk

Section 44: duty to establish Safeguarding Adults Boards

Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR

Article 5: principles relating to processing of personal data

Article 6(1)(c): lawful processing necessary for compliance with a legal obligation

Article 9(2)(b): processing necessary for safeguarding of individuals

TERMINOLOGY

Club

Mushin Martial Arts, the organisation responsible for delivering martial arts training, managing memberships, and overseeing all Club activities.

Safeguarding Officer

The designated individual (Suzanne Hick) who leads on safeguarding matters. This role includes maintaining and updating the safeguarding policy, delivering instructor training, handling concerns or referrals, liaising with statutory agencies, and ensuring compliance with the Club Constitution.

Instructor

A DBS-checked and authorised martial arts coach registered by the Club. Instructors deliver training sessions, mentor students, and report any welfare or safeguarding concerns.

Lead Instructor

The senior Instructor who manages the day-to-day running of classes, supervises other Instructors, and ensures all training follows the Club's safeguarding and operational procedures.

Student

Any person enrolled in and actively participating in a training session or course at Mushin Martial Arts, regardless of age or membership status.

Member

An individual holding an active licence, membership or registration with Mushin Martial Arts, which entitles them to Club benefits and communications.

Parent, Carer or Guardian

A person with legal responsibility for a child under 18, or an adult who provides day-to-day care and support for an adult at risk.

Child

Any person under the age of 18 (as defined by the Children Act 1989).

Adult at Risk (Vulnerable Adult)

An individual aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing—or at risk of—abuse or neglect, and cannot protect themselves due to physical or mental frailty, disability, or illness (Care Act 2014).

Locally

Matters, decisions and best practice that apply specifically within Mushin Martial Arts, as opposed to national or statutory guidelines.

NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Statement of intent

We believe martial arts training offers everyone a positive opportunity to learn self-defence, build self-confidence, and grow personally.

Every participant deserves a safe, well-regulated environment. Anyone involved in delivering martial arts training has a moral and legal duty to maintain the highest standards of care and professionalism, especially when working with vulnerable individuals.

Our Club is committed to clear safeguarding policies that ensure everyone in the chain of command understands and accepts their responsibility to protect vulnerable groups from harm and abuse. This includes following our procedures and reporting any welfare concerns without delay to the appropriate authorities.

This policy aims to establish best-practice guidelines that provide vulnerable individuals with appropriate safety and protection under our instructors' care. It also ensures instructors remain informed, confident, and aware of their safeguarding obligations. Each Club instructor must comply with all safeguarding policies and take proactive steps to protect vulnerable individuals effectively.

We have a designated Safeguarding Officer who holds ultimate responsibility for maintaining and updating our safeguarding policy and ensuring all instructors receive relevant guidance, in accordance with our Club's constitution.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

While the club's lead instructor holds ultimate safeguarding responsibility, every individual shares in ensuring a safe environment.

Policy Statement

Our Club is committed to safeguarding vulnerable groups and expects every member to uphold these priorities at all times:

Emergency Response

If you have immediate concerns about a vulnerable adult's safety, call 999 and ask for the police without delay.

Key Principles

- **Inclusion and Safety**
All vulnerable adults, regardless of age, culture, ability, gender, language, race, religion, sexual identity, or martial arts discipline, have the right to train in a safe environment.
- **Protection and Respect**
Members must take every reasonable step to protect vulnerable individuals from harm, discrimination, or degrading treatment, and always treat them with respect, dignity, and care.
- **Reporting and Record-Keeping**
Any suspicion or allegation of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously, responded to swiftly and appropriately, and fully documented.
- **Qualified Instructors**
Club instructors (and equivalent roles) will be appointed based on suitability and must meet our Club's safeguarding standards and best-practice requirements.
- **Professional Partnerships**
Instructors at all levels must maintain positive, transparent relationships with students' parents, carers, or guardians to foster a culture of high standards and community welfare.
- **Shared Responsibility**
Safeguarding is essential for anyone who works unsupervised with vulnerable groups.

MONITORING & REVIEWING OF POLICY & PROCEDURES

The Club's safeguarding procedures must be routinely monitored and reviewed to ensure they reflect current best practice. The management team is responsible for this oversight and will regularly report progress, challenges, performance gaps, and any required changes to the Safeguarding Officer.

We will also review national safeguarding policies and procedures to confirm they remain up to date and fit for purpose. The Safeguarding Officer will consolidate these findings and update the Club on progress, areas for improvement, and proposed adjustments to our local processes.

All safeguarding policies, both local and national, must undergo a full review at least every two years or whenever there is a major organisational change or relevant legislative update.

While the Club will stay vigilant to legal and structural developments, we remain committed to promoting good practice by keeping our safeguarding policies and guidance readily available and current.

PROMOTING BEST PRACTICE

Introduction

Everyone must adhere to the ethical framework defined in our Club's Constitution to ensure vulnerable groups enjoy the best possible experience and opportunities in martial arts.

Recognising the difference between poor practice and abuse can be difficult. Nonetheless, each Club instructor (or equivalent) is responsible for spotting any signs of possible abuse, even minor concerns, and taking prompt action to protect the welfare of vulnerable adults as outlined in this policy.

The Club will support best practice by providing clear guidelines, informative articles, and ongoing assistance to all instructors. While we cannot identify every instance of poor practice on our own, we rely on members, both affiliated and non-affiliated, to report concerns. To make expectations and responsibilities crystal-clear, we maintain robust safeguarding procedures, Club rules, and guidelines.

Finally, the Club will establish reasonable checks and balances to reinforce best practice and will intervene whenever it detects a lapse in safeguarding responsibilities.

BEST PRACTICE

Member Safeguarding Principles

All members must adhere to the following principles and actions when working with vulnerable adults:

- Treat every vulnerable adult with respect, dignity, and courtesy.
- Ensure equal treatment for all vulnerable adults.
- Prioritise the welfare of vulnerable adults at all times.
- Operate in an open environment and avoid any situation where a vulnerable adult is isolated or unobserved.
- Minimise physical contact; only use it when absolutely necessary.
- Never be alone with a vulnerable adult.
- When physical contact is essential for safe instruction (for example, to demonstrate a throw), obtain the adult's consent, remain appropriate and non-intrusive, and ensure two suitable adults are present.
- Encourage parents, carers, or guardians to be involved whenever possible to safeguard vulnerable adults and reduce risk.
- Obtain written consent from a parent, carer, or guardian before taking photographs, videos, or other media of a vulnerable adult.

- Model exemplary behaviour in and out of the dojo by not smoking, drinking alcohol, or using foul language in the presence of vulnerable adults.
- Limit and record any social media or digital contact with vulnerable adults; instructors must not communicate via personal social media accounts.
- Recognise each vulnerable adult's development needs and never compromise their welfare or safety for instructional gain.
- Avoid excessive training and never push a student beyond their confidence level.
- Secure written parental or guardian consent for in loco parentis responsibilities and emergency first aid or medical treatment, recording any medical conditions, injuries, or allergies.
- Maintain thorough records of injuries, near-misses, treatment provided, and communications with parents, carers, guardians, or the vulnerable adult.
- Follow all Club guidelines and policies related to good and best practice.

The Club is accountable for safeguarding every individual participating in our activities, whether or not they are registered members.

CLUB SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENTS

Our Club will implement and maintain the following measures to uphold the highest safeguarding standards:

- The Safeguarding Officer must hold a valid enhanced DBS certificate (issued within the last three years) and a recognised safeguarding lead qualification.
- All instructors working with vulnerable groups must possess an enhanced DBS certificate, renewed at least every three years.
- Every instructor will read, understand, and practise the safeguarding procedures outlined in this policy.
- Any adult assisting with vulnerable adults must hold an enhanced DBS certificate that includes the Children's Barred List.
- The Club will keep complete records and grant relevant authorities' full access in the event of any safeguarding complaint or criminal proceeding.
- The welfare, safety, and safeguarding of vulnerable groups will always take precedence over commercial or financial considerations.
- The Club will ensure all instructors receive ongoing safeguarding training and remain informed of best practices.
- Students and their parents, carers, or guardians will be provided with the Safeguarding Officer's contact details.

- The Club will follow its safeguarding procedures and guidelines to foster a safe, professional martial arts environment.
- The Club will promote best practice by reinforcing the importance of this policy and, where appropriate, supporting individual clubs in developing tailored safeguarding procedures.

POOR PRACTICE

Unacceptable Practices

The following actions breach our safeguarding standards and must be avoided without exception:

- Spending excessive time alone with a vulnerable adult, away from others
- Making unnecessary or excessive physical contact
- Transporting or accompanying a vulnerable adult to or from any location without another responsible adult present
- Engaging in rough, physical, or sexually suggestive games—including horseplay—before, during, or after class
- Allowing or participating in any form of inappropriate touching, or permitting others (volunteers, visitors, guardians, carers, parents, or students) to do so
- Permitting a vulnerable adult to use inappropriate language without challenge
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a vulnerable adult, even “in jest”
- Reducing a vulnerable adult to tears as a means of control
- Failing to record or act on any allegation made by a vulnerable adult
- Performing tasks of an “adult nature” that a vulnerable adult is capable of doing for themselves

Poor Practice

The following fall below our expected standards and must be addressed:

- Failing to emphasise the importance of safeguarding procedures and an instructor’s responsibility from the outset of membership
- Not referring safeguarding concerns promptly to the Safeguarding Officer
- Ignoring or failing to act on complaints about the safety or welfare of adults at risk
- Lacking openness and honesty when implementing or updating safeguarding procedures

Investigations and Disciplinary Action

If a complaint or safeguarding concern arises regarding any instructor, Club committee officers will launch a formal investigation in line with our Complaints Policy.

Where there are immediate concerns for a vulnerable adult’s safety, the Club may suspend or expel the instructor(s) involved without delay and without financial compensation.

Incident Reporting

Should an instructor unintentionally harm a vulnerable adult, or if a vulnerable adult appears distressed, upset, or misinterprets any action, the incident must be reported immediately in writing.

Parents, carers, or guardians must also be informed without delay. Such reporting is mandatory and not optional.

DEFINING VULNERABLE ADULT ABUSE (UNDER THE CHILDRENS ABUSE ACT)

Introduction

Abuse of vulnerable adults includes any physical, sexual, or emotional mistreatment, or failure to provide adequate care, that causes harm or injury. It usually occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility, representing an abuse of power or breach of that trust. Any vulnerable adult, regardless of age, gender, race, or ability, can be a victim.

Perpetrators may be family members, caregivers in residential or healthcare settings, instructors or other participants in community activities, and anyone the vulnerable adult encounters. Abuse can happen through direct harmful acts or by failing to prevent another person from causing harm.

The impact of abuse can be profound and long-lasting, potentially affecting an individual for life if not addressed. Adults with disabilities face an even greater risk due to factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, social isolation, and communication barriers.

Club members are not expected to identify specific types of abuse but do have a duty to report any concerns, no matter how minor, to the designated Safeguarding Officer or appropriate authorities without delay.

Types of Abuse

Physical abuse

Sexual abuse

Emotional abuse

Bullying and harassment

Neglect

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse occurs when someone deliberately causes physical harm or injury to a vulnerable adult. Examples include:

Hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, scalding, biting, suffocating, drowning, or female genital mutilation (FGM)

Poisoning or administering inappropriate drugs or alcohol

Munchausen's syndrome by proxy, where a caregiver fabricates or induces illness in the person they're responsible for

In a sports environment, physical abuse can also arise if training intensity or techniques exceed the adult's physical or mental capacity, causing injury or distress.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional mistreatment of an adult, likely to cause severe and lasting damage to their mental health and development. It can include:

Insults, belittling remarks, or constant criticism ("You're worthless," "You'll never succeed")

Setting unrealistic expectations that exceed the adult's age, ability, or development

Regularly shouting at, threatening, humiliating, or isolating the adult, causing fear or withdrawal

In sports, repeatedly giving negative feedback, name-calling, or forcing performance beyond the adult's capability

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying is deliberate, repeated harmful behaviour that leaves the victim unable to defend themselves. It may be carried out by peers or adults and can take four main forms:

Physical: hitting, kicking, slapping

Verbal: racist or homophobic comments, threats, name-calling, abusive texts

Emotional: tormenting, ridiculing, ignoring, isolating from the group

Sexual: unwanted touching or sexually abusive remarks

In martial arts, bullying might occur if an instructor or parent pressures an adult too harshly or if another student targets them.

Neglect

Neglect happens when a caregiver fails to meet a vulnerable adult's basic physical or psychological needs, risking serious harm to their health or development. Examples include not providing:

Adequate food, clothing, or shelter

Protection from physical danger

Necessary medical care or treatment

Emotional support, affection, or attention

In a training context, neglect might look like leaving an adult exposed to extreme temperatures, ignoring injuries, or routinely failing to supervise them properly.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves any non-consensual sexual activity or exploitative behaviour. It includes:

Full sexual intercourse, oral sex, masturbation, fondling, or anal intercourse

Exposing a vulnerable adult to pornography or making sexually explicit comments

In sports, the combination of physical contact and power imbalance between instructor and student can create situations where inappropriate contact or advances go unnoticed.

Maintaining clear boundaries and constant supervision is essential to prevent and detect any misconduct.

INDICATIONS OF ABUSE

Recognising Possible Abuse

Even experienced professionals may find it challenging to spot abuse, and most adults are not—and should not be expected to be—expert investigators. However, you should be alert to any of the following signs in a vulnerable adult:

- **Unexplained or suspicious injuries**
Bruises, cuts, burns, or other wounds, especially on body areas not prone to accidental injury
- **Inconsistent explanations**
Injuries or symptoms that don't match the given account
- **Direct disclosures**
The adult describes an act that appears abusive
- **Third-party concerns**
Another person expresses worry about the adult's welfare
- **Behavioural changes**
Sudden withdrawal, tearfulness, anxiety, aggression, or mood swings
- **Inappropriate sexual awareness**
Engaging in sexual behaviour beyond their developmental level
- **Social difficulties**
Distrust of normally trusted adults, difficulty making friends, or being isolated from peers
- **Changes in eating or appearance**
Noticeable weight loss, overeating, poor personal hygiene, or consistently unkempt appearance

Recognising Bullying

Bullying can involve peers or adults and often goes unreported. Look out for:

- **Emotional and behavioural shifts**
Reduced concentration, clinginess, tearfulness, reluctance to train, or sudden drop in performance
- **Physical complaints or signs**
Headaches, stomach aches, sleep disturbances, bed wetting, unexplained bruises, or damaged clothing

- **Social and material indicators**

Reluctance to attend sessions, loss of money or possessions, or sudden isolation

What to Do

- These lists are not exhaustive, and the presence of one or more signs does not prove abuse or bullying.
- It is not your role to determine whether abuse is definitely occurring—only to act on any concerns.
- Report all worries, however minor, to the Safeguarding Officer or follow the Club’s safeguarding procedure without delay.

TRAINING INJURIES VS. ABUSE

Given the physical nature of martial arts, injuries can happen through normal training.

Never dismiss a sign of potential abuse as merely “rough and tumble.” Always treat any concern with due diligence and report it according to policy.

USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC OR FILMING EQUIPMENT

The government has warned that abusers may exploit inter-club events or routine training sessions to take inappropriate photographs or videos of vulnerable adults. To guard against this risk, our Club requires the following:

1. Vigilance and Reporting
 - All members must stay alert for any suspicious photography or filming.
 - Report any concerns immediately to the Club Instructor (or equivalent Safeguarding Officer).
2. Advance Notice and Consent
 - Instructors must inform parents, carers, guardians, and adult students in writing before using video equipment for coaching, advertising, or marketing.
 - Written consent must be obtained in advance for any recording.
3. Policy Awareness
 - Ensure that anyone attending or assisting in classes—parents, carers, guardians, and volunteers—understands our Club’s local photography and videography policies.
4. Publication Restrictions
 - No images or videos of vulnerable adults may appear on the Club’s website or in any publications unless explicit, written consent has been received from the parent or guardian.

RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS & ALLEGATIONS

Introduction

No adult in our Club, whether paid or volunteer, is responsible for determining if abuse has occurred. However, anyone with concerns must report suspicions or allegations to the appropriate authorities so they can investigate and take action to protect the vulnerable

adult. This duty to report applies equally to concerns arising within our Club or lessons and to any allegations or suspicions that occur outside the martial arts setting.

Evidence Of Possible Abuse

Instructors may become aware of abuse in various ways. The instructor may see it happening, may suspect it because of symptoms or signs (such as those previously listed) or it may be reported to the instructor by the adult, or another third party.

Especially in the case that a vulnerable adult might directly confide any form of abuse our Club must take immediate steps to safeguard that adult effectively.

If a vulnerable adult indicates that they are being abused, the instructor to whom the disclosure is made should:

- Stay calm so as not to frighten them.
- Reassure the adult that they are not to blame and that it was right to inform you.
- Listen to the adult, showing that you are taking them seriously.
- Keep questions to a minimum so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. The law is very strict and vulnerable adult abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the vulnerable adult has been led, or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Accordingly, the instructor must only ask questions to clarify details – not to question further.
- Inform the adult that you need to inform another adult about what they have told you. Tell the adult this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
- Assess the safety of the vulnerable adult. Safety of the vulnerable adult is paramount. If the adult needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern, and ensure they are made aware that this is a safeguarding issue. Stay with the adult as they may be frightened.
- Record all information. [Appendix B](#)
- Report the incident to our Club instructor without delay.
- Refer to Safeguarding flow chart as to course of actions available. [Appendix A](#)

If the instructor is not clear on the action required and there is a real or immediate threat to the adult at risk, they should contact the Police by calling 999.

The Safeguarding Officer should be contacted once the adult is safe.

Any member or non-member can contact:

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 (24hrs)

The local Social Services

REMEMBER the vulnerable adult may fear the outcome, so the adult whom the vulnerable adult told should stay with them whilst the authorities are informed, especially if any injury is involved and they are required to go to hospital.

If information is made available to our Club, either through direct or indirect contact with any member of the public or any member of our Club will be bound to seek immediate

guidance from either the Safeguarding Officer or, in the case of immediate or real potential threat, the Police / LADO / NSPCC / Social Services.

The member (or instructor) in question shall not have the opportunity to override the Club's response to a safeguarding alert where it is deemed an adult may be being abused. Depending on the nature of the allegation, our Club may not be able to share or disclose details with the instructor prior to involvement of law enforcement.

RECORDING INFORMATION

To ensure that information is accurate and useful for any subsequent police or local-authority investigation, the Club must maintain detailed records of every disclosure or suspicion.

A written account must be completed as soon as possible after a disclosure is made. The person receiving the disclosure—whether an instructor or another adult—must confine the record to facts only. They should clearly distinguish between what they personally observed and what was reported by the vulnerable adult or a third party. No opinions or assumptions should be included.

Information should, at minimum, include:

- The vulnerable adult's name, age, and date of birth
- Home address and telephone number
- The identity of the person making the report and whether they are speaking for themselves or on someone else's behalf
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times, and any relevant context
- A description of any visible bruising or injury (location, size, shape) and any indirect signs such as behavioural changes
- Names and contact details of any witnesses
- The vulnerable adult's own account, where possible, of what happened and how injuries occurred
- Whether parents, carers, or guardians were contacted—and a summary of that conversation
- Whether any other professionals or agencies were consulted—and what was discussed
- Details of any alleged perpetrator

Confidentiality must be strictly maintained. Information should be shared only on a "need to know" basis.

As part of our safeguarding policy, these records must also be retained—even if concerns are reported directly to external bodies.

Reporting a Concern

Reporting Suspicions and Allegations

All suspicions and allegations of abuse or neglect must be reported immediately and recorded on the Club's Safeguarding Incident Form. Under the Care Act 2014 (s.42) and Children Act 2004 (s.11), every adult has a legal duty to escalate concerns without delay.

1. Internal Reporting

Submit the completed Safeguarding Incident Form to your Club Instructor or directly to the Safeguarding Officer.

Do not allow personal loyalty to delay or override this process. Any member who fails to report concerns will be referred to the relevant authority and have their membership terminated without notice.

2. Verifying Action

After reporting, confirm with your Club Instructor or Safeguarding Officer that appropriate steps have been taken.

If you are not satisfied, or if your concern involves the local instructor, escalate immediately to the Safeguarding Officer.

3. External Escalation

If internal routes are unavailable or inappropriate, or the allegation is against a staff member, contact one of the following directly:

- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – via your local council**
- **Police (999 in an emergency; 101 for non-urgent matters)**
- **NSPCC Adult Helpline: 0808 800 5000 or <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/help-and-advice/>**
- **Childline (for under-18s): 0800 1111 or <https://www.childline.org.uk/>**
- **Local Social Services department**

4. Types of Investigation

Depending on the nature of the allegation, one or more of the following may run in parallel:

Criminal Investigation (Police involvement)

Adult Safeguarding (Social Services under Care Act 2014)

Child Protection (Children's Services under Children Act 1989)

Internal Disciplinary (Club committee review under our Constitution)

All allegations are taken seriously, documented in writing, and any witness will be asked to provide a dated statement detailing time, place, and description of the incident.

5. Fair Treatment and Communication

Adults under investigation will be treated sensitively, fairly and with respect.

Facts will be recorded objectively and stored securely.

All parties will receive written updates on the process and outcomes.

6. Duty to Refer

Neither Club Instructors nor members are required to determine whether abuse has actually occurred. Their obligation is to:

Report every suspicion or allegation to professional agencies.

Allow qualified authorities to assess and investigate further.

Under the Children Act 1989, Social Services must investigate all child protection referrals, interview the child or family and liaising with the Police and other agencies.

Note: If in doubt, always report. A single report may be part of a wider pattern of concern.

Our Club emphasises the following:

- Every adult associated with the Club has a moral and legal duty to safeguard vulnerable adults effectively.
- All concerns must be reported immediately and without exception.
- No concern is too minor to warrant escalation.
- Any suspicion that a vulnerable adult has been abused by an instructor or member must be reported to the Safeguarding Officer, who will take all necessary steps to protect the individual in question and any others at risk.

At minimum, the Club recommends you:

- Record the incident—and any subsequent developments—on the form in Appendix C, keeping it up to date.
- Ensure the instructor or, if different, the Safeguarding Officer refers the matter to the appropriate external agency.
- Contact the vulnerable adult's parent, carer, or guardian as soon as possible, following the external agency's guidance, provided it does not increase risk.
- Notify the Safeguarding Officer without delay. They must initiate any disciplinary proceedings under the Club's constitution and appoint a spokesperson for media inquiries.
- Make sure the Safeguarding Officer informs the Club's officers.
- If the allegation involves the Club instructor, report it directly to the Safeguarding Officer, who will refer the case to the correct external agency. Even if the allegation arises long after the event, it must be treated with the same urgency to safeguard all potentially at-risk adults.
- Exclude anyone with a previous conviction for offences against children from working with vulnerable adults.

When deciding how to proceed, consider:

- The vulnerable adult's wishes and feelings
- The right of parents, carers, or guardians to be informed (unless doing so would endanger the vulnerable adult or compromise a criminal investigation)
- The impact of sharing, or withholding, information from those parties
- The current risk assessment for the vulnerable adult and the source of any risk
- Any existing risk-management plans

CONCERNS OUTSIDE THE IMMEDIATE TEACHING ENVIRONMENT OR CLUB

All members must remain vigilant in both their professional and personal lives for any signs of abuse. If concerns arise outside the immediate teaching environment, the following minimum steps should be taken—alongside any additional local club safeguarding procedures:

- Report relevant concerns immediately to the Club instructor.
- If the Club instructor is unavailable, contact the Safeguarding Officer and/or inform the police or local social services without delay. Then notify the Club office at help@shotoryukarate.co.uk.
- In conjunction with social services or the police, the Club instructor or Safeguarding Officer will determine how and when to inform the vulnerable adult's parents, carers, or guardians.
- The Club instructor (or their appointed delegate) must ensure the Safeguarding Officer is notified if not already contacted. The Club will then establish whether any adults involved hold official roles and respond in accordance with the safeguarding policy.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is vital that information is shared only on a strictly need-to-know basis, and instructors must maintain confidentiality at all times. If you have any immediate concerns about the welfare of a young person or an adult at risk, do not hesitate to seek help.

Information should only be disclosed when absolutely necessary or under the direction of the police or another appropriate authority. Whenever a disclosure—or even a request for advice—is made to any Club member, there are circumstances in which we are legally required to report it to the relevant authority.

INTERNAL INQUIRIES & SUSPENSIONS

Responsibilities for the Local Safeguarding Policy

The Club must ensure its local safeguarding policy addresses the following areas clearly and comprehensively:

1. Suspension Pending Investigation

- Define whether accused adult(s) should be suspended while police or social services inquiries are ongoing.
- Consult with the police or relevant authority for guidance on suspension.

2. Mandatory Reporting and Disciplinary Review

- Report all allegations, regardless of external findings, to the Safeguarding Officer or Club Officers.

- Conduct an internal review of conduct and initiate disciplinary proceedings if necessary, following the procedures below.

3. Risk Management and Expulsion

- If there is an ongoing risk of harm, expel the individual (and any associated members) immediately and without compensation.
- Notify local authorities for further monitoring if required.
- The Club's decision in these matters is final and may include expulsion without justification, delay, or remuneration.

4. Decision-Making Process for Allegations

- Prioritise the safety of the vulnerable adult and take all reasonable steps to prevent the accused from further contact with any child or adult at risk.
- If no charges are brought by police or social services, the Club will still assess the allegation. All Club Officers must deliberate and agree, by majority vote, whether it is more likely than not that the allegation is true or that the incident was mishandled by the Club or its Safeguarding Officer.

5. Post-Expulsion Reporting

- After expulsion, determine if there is sufficient evidence to report the expelled member to relevant authorities.
- Report to local authorities whenever there is reasonable suspicion of malpractice or safeguarding offences.

6. Guidance and Member Accountability

- Provide clear, impartial safeguarding guidance to all members and instructors.
- Hold members accountable: lack of knowledge about safeguarding procedures will not be accepted as a defence in any disciplinary action.

USEFUL CONTACTS & SUMMARY NOTES

Key Contacts

Members wishing to make a safeguarding disclosure or to obtain further guidance on effective club-level safeguarding may contact the Safeguarding Officer at any time. Please verify that the details below are current before proceeding.

Key Contacts

Safeguarding Officer

Name: Suzanne Hick

Email: <mailto:secretary@mushin.club>

General Secretary

Name: Suzanne Hick

Email: <mailto:secretary@mushin.club>

SUMMARY NOTES FOR INSTRUCTORS

You are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding at club level is managed effectively. This includes:

- Implementing and upholding our Club's safeguarding policy.
- Holding a valid Enhanced DBS certificate issued within the last three years.
- Maintaining a comprehensive safeguarding policy for every Club instructor.
- Carrying professional liability insurance.
- Establishing clear rules on medical disclosures, conduct, safeguarding, and volunteer vetting.
- Adhering to all other Club regulations and best-practice guidelines for martial-arts safeguarding.

Our Club is here to support, not impede, your safeguarding efforts. While we must escalate concerns when required by law, we warmly welcome any member who seeks guidance, advice, or assistance in meeting these standards. We encourage a proactive approach to safeguarding, so please don't hesitate to contact us by email or any other means.

Demonstrating professional competency protects both your members and the Club from unfounded allegations.

[Safeguarding Flow Chart](#)

[Safeguarding Continuous Reporting Form](#) – Inhouse Club level

[Safeguarding Forms Incident Reporting](#)

SUMMARY NOTES FOR PARENTS & CARERS

Safeguarding is our Club's top priority, but parents, carers and guardians also play a crucial role in protecting vulnerable adults.

We strongly recommend you review the safeguarding policy, especially the sections on defining abuse, recognising warning signs and reporting concerns—so you're equipped to address any issues you observe.

Any questions or concerns you raise will be taken seriously by your Club instructor or our Safeguarding Officer. If you feel they are not responding adequately, or if your concern involves the instructor directly, you may escalate it to us in complete confidence.

Please contact our office at secretary@mushin.club. This secure inbox is monitored only by the Safeguarding Officer. Your information will remain confidential and will not be shared with other staff, executives, committee members or instructors. We respond to all safeguarding emails promptly during working hours.

Trust your instincts. Never hesitate to report concerns without delay to the relevant authorities.

If you believe a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, bypass the Safeguarding Officer and dial 999. Once the police have given you permission to share details, please inform us so we can ensure ongoing monitoring from a martial-arts perspective.

SUMMARY NOTES FOR PARTICIPANTS & VULNERABLE ADULTS

As a martial-arts participant, you have the right to train in a safe, friendly environment that is free from abuse and bullying.

Our Club operates a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of bullying or safeguarding neglect and will take immediate action to protect you.

If you or another vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police. For advice, guidance, or to lodge a complaint about our Club or an instructor, email secretary@mushin.club.

Please do not use Facebook Messenger or any other social media platform for safeguarding disclosures, those channels are monitored by multiple members.

Never hesitate to seek urgent assistance if you have immediate concerns about a young person or adult at risk.

CONTROLLING ACCESS TO ADULTS AT RISK

Suitability of Instructors (and Volunteers etc.) To Work in Contact with Vulnerable Adults

Introduction

Preventing Unsuitable Adults from Working with Vulnerable Adults

It is the responsibility of our Club officers to take every reasonable step to ensure that no adult who may pose a risk is ever allowed to work with vulnerable adults. This obligation applies equally to all adults, volunteers or paid staff, regardless of their role or background.

Instructor Responsibilities

To verify suitability, each Club instructor (or their equivalent) must:

- Vet every adult—whether already within the Club or joining from outside—before they assist with any class involving vulnerable adults.
- Obtain and follow up on satisfactory references for any adult not known professionally for at least three years.
- Require an Enhanced DBS check (including barred-list and referral checks) and completion of safeguarding awareness training. Confirm that the DBS outcome deems them appropriate for close or unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults.
- Adhere to both our Club's safeguarding policy and any additional local safeguarding procedures.
- Provide ongoing training so instructors can reflect on and continuously improve their safeguarding practice, minimising the risk of misunderstandings or false allegations.

Club Measures

Our Club will support instructors by:

- Withholding approval for anyone to act as an instructor until all DBS and safeguarding checks are complete and verified.
- Prohibiting membership or affiliation for any adult with a past conviction for sexual or violent offences, regardless of how long ago it occurred.
- Promoting awareness of safeguarding procedures and the importance of due diligence among all members.
- Encouraging students and the public to review local safeguarding policies and to report any concerns to our Club.
- Following up on complaints or concerns in line with our safeguarding policy and advising instructors when issues arise.
- Excluding any instructor or member who fails to take their safeguarding duties seriously or who refuses to comply with information requests.

Ultimate Accountability and Membership

While our Club provides guidance and resources, the ultimate duty of care, and the responsibility to implement safeguarding measures, lies with the instructor or club team at the point of contact and instruction.

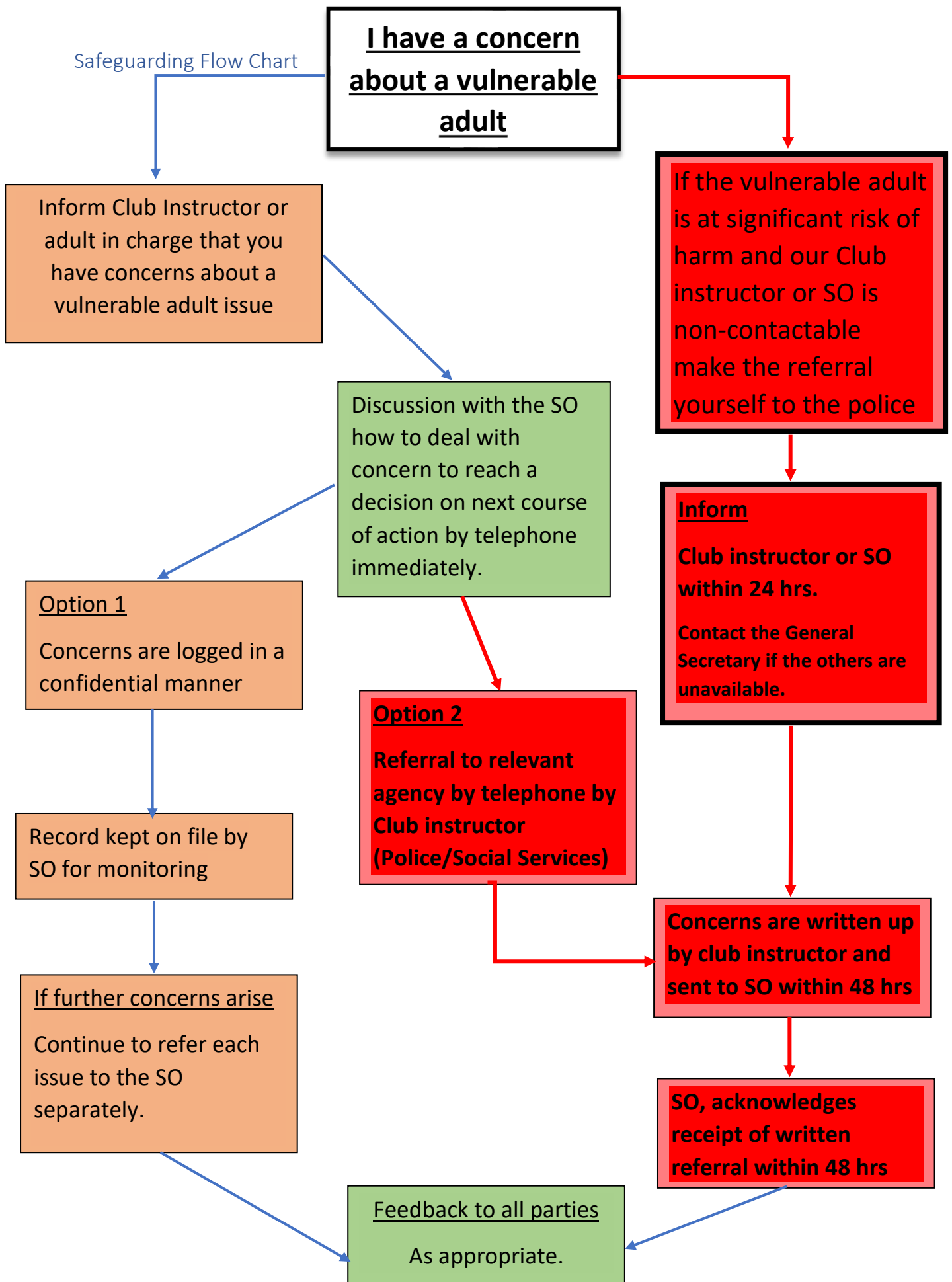
Membership of our Club is conditional upon full compliance with this safeguarding policy. Any breach may result in suspension or expulsion without notice.

FORMS

Safeguarding - Continuous Incident Recording Sheet

Date & Time	Name of Vulnerable Adult	Observation	Action Taken if any	Follow-up action & Club Instr initials

Safeguarding Flow Chart



Safeguarding Incident Report

Your Name:	Date:	Your details
Position held within club:	Tel & Email:	
Vulnerable Adults Name/DOB: Address: Tel & Email:		Details of vulnerable adult
Name of adult(s) the allegation is against:		
Date/time/place of incident(s):		
Your observations: <i>(Visual bruising, behavioural etc)</i>		
What the adult has said/ What you said. <i>(Do not lead the adult – be factual and as accurate as possible: location, dates, times, witnesses, allegations etc)</i>		
Are you reporting your own concerns or on behalf of someone else? Own Concerns/ Someone else (delete one as appropriate) Name of adult whom you are reporting for: Tel _____ Email: _____		Who reported concerns
Parent/Carers/Guardians address if different to above: Name: Tel: _____ Email _____ Have they been informed? Yes / No		Carers Details
Has the Safeguarding Officer been informed? Yes / No	Has the police or social services been informed? Yes / No	
Signature of the adult who completed this form: Date:	Signature of club instructor (If different) Date:	

To be completed by our Club's Safeguarding Officer

Record discussions had about the vulnerable adult or accused staff member:
Record decisions made:
If appropriate, have the parent/carers/guardians been informed that contact is going to be made with social services: Yes / No <i>NB: parents/carers/guardians should always be informed unless to do so could place the person at risk of further harm, please seek advice of this point from social services if you are uncertain.</i>
If you contacted Social Services, please provide: Contact details [name, etc]: Information given: Details of advice received:
If a referral was made to the social services, have you followed up in writing within 48 hours? Yes / No
If no, please state why:
If you contacted the Local Authority Designated Officer (for allegations against instructors only), please provide: Contact details [name, etc]: Information given:

Safeguarding Incident Report

Details of advice received:	
If a referral was made to the Local Authority Designated Officer, have you followed up in writing within 24 hours? If no, please state why:	Yes / No
Any other external agencies contacted (contact details, date and time, information given, and advice received)	
Outcomes:	
Disciplinary actions:	
Signature: Name: Date	