

Loddon Martial Arts

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Safeguarding Policy - Children

Loddon Martial Arts

Contents

Contents.....	1
Introduction.....	2
Core Principles.....	2
Commitment and Responsibilities.....	2
Definitions.....	3
Types of Abuse and Neglect.....	3
Categories include:.....	3
Related Safeguarding Concerns.....	3
Poor Practice.....	4
Signs and Indicators of Abuse.....	4
Responding to Concerns.....	5
How to Respond to a Disclosure.....	5
Recording Concerns.....	5
Flowchart.....	6
Code of Conduct.....	7
Safer Recruitment.....	7
Supervision, Support, and Training.....	7
Whistleblowing.....	7
Complaints.....	7
Useful contacts.....	8

Introduction

Loddon Martial Arts is committed to safeguarding all children and young people under the age of 18. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment and to actively support an environment where welfare concerns are taken seriously, and children feel safe to speak up. Our actions will always prioritise the best interests of the child.

Core Principles

- We uphold a duty of care to protect and promote the welfare of children in accordance with:
 - *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*
 - *Children Acts 1989 & 2004*
 - *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018*
 - *Sexual Offences Act 2003*
 - *Human Rights Act 1998*
 - *Data Protection Act 2018*
- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children—regardless of age, disability, race, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or background—have a right to:
 - A safe, positive, and inclusive experience
 - Protection from abuse in all settings, both within and outside the school

We recognise the increased vulnerability of some groups and are committed to taking appropriate steps to safeguard them.

Commitment and Responsibilities

Loddon Martial Arts will:

- Prioritise the wellbeing and protection of children and young people.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are trained and understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Act promptly on concerns and provide appropriate support.
- Maintain secure, accurate records of all safeguarding incidents.
- Prevent the employment of unsuitable individuals.
- Enforce compliance with safeguarding procedures; failure to comply may lead to exclusion or dismissal.

Definitions

A *child* is defined as anyone under 18 years of age. In Scotland, the definition may vary in some child protection procedures (e.g. to under 16).

Types of Abuse and Neglect

Abuse may involve physical, emotional, sexual harm, or neglect. It may occur online or offline, and can be perpetrated by adults or peers.

Categories include:

- *Physical abuse*: Hitting, burning, poisoning, etc.
- *Emotional abuse*: Verbal attacks, bullying, coercive control.
- *Sexual abuse*: Any form of sexual activity with a child, including grooming and online exploitation.
- *Neglect*: Persistent failure to meet basic needs (food, safety, supervision, etc.)

Related Safeguarding Concerns

These may include:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Domestic abuse
- Hate crimes and gang exploitation
- Honour-based violence and forced marriage
- Radicalisation and trafficking

Though rare, staff must remain vigilant and informed.

Poor Practice

Poor practice is behaviour that contravenes this policy or ethical standards. If serious or repeated, it may constitute abuse. Examples include:

- Excessive punishments or inappropriate physical contact
- Ignoring signs of distress or safeguarding concerns
- Inappropriate relationships or suggestive comments
- Failure to challenge inappropriate language or behaviour

Important: Instructors should not provide personal care to children. Designated carers must be assigned when needed, and arrangements clearly communicated.

Signs and Indicators of Abuse

Indicators may include:

- Unexplained injuries
- Sudden changes in behaviour or withdrawal
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge
- Poor hygiene or significant weight changes
- Reluctance to engage with adults or peers

Note: These signs are not definitive proof but should prompt concern and action.

Responding to Concerns

Everyone at Loddon Martial Arts has a role in safeguarding. Concerns must be reported to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or **Deputy DSL**, unless the concern involves those individuals.

Reporting is mandatory for:

- Observed injuries or distress
- Disclosures of abuse
- Allegations against staff or volunteers
- Accidental harm or misinterpretation of actions

If a child is in **immediate danger**, contact emergency services (999) or the **NSPCC helpline** (0808 800 5000) immediately before informing the DSL.

How to Respond to a Disclosure

- Stay calm and listen without interruption
- Don't promise confidentiality; explain who the information will be shared with
- Ask only necessary clarification questions (avoid leading questions)

- Reassure the child they've done the right thing
- Record the disclosure using the child's own words, noting time, date, people involved, and observable facts

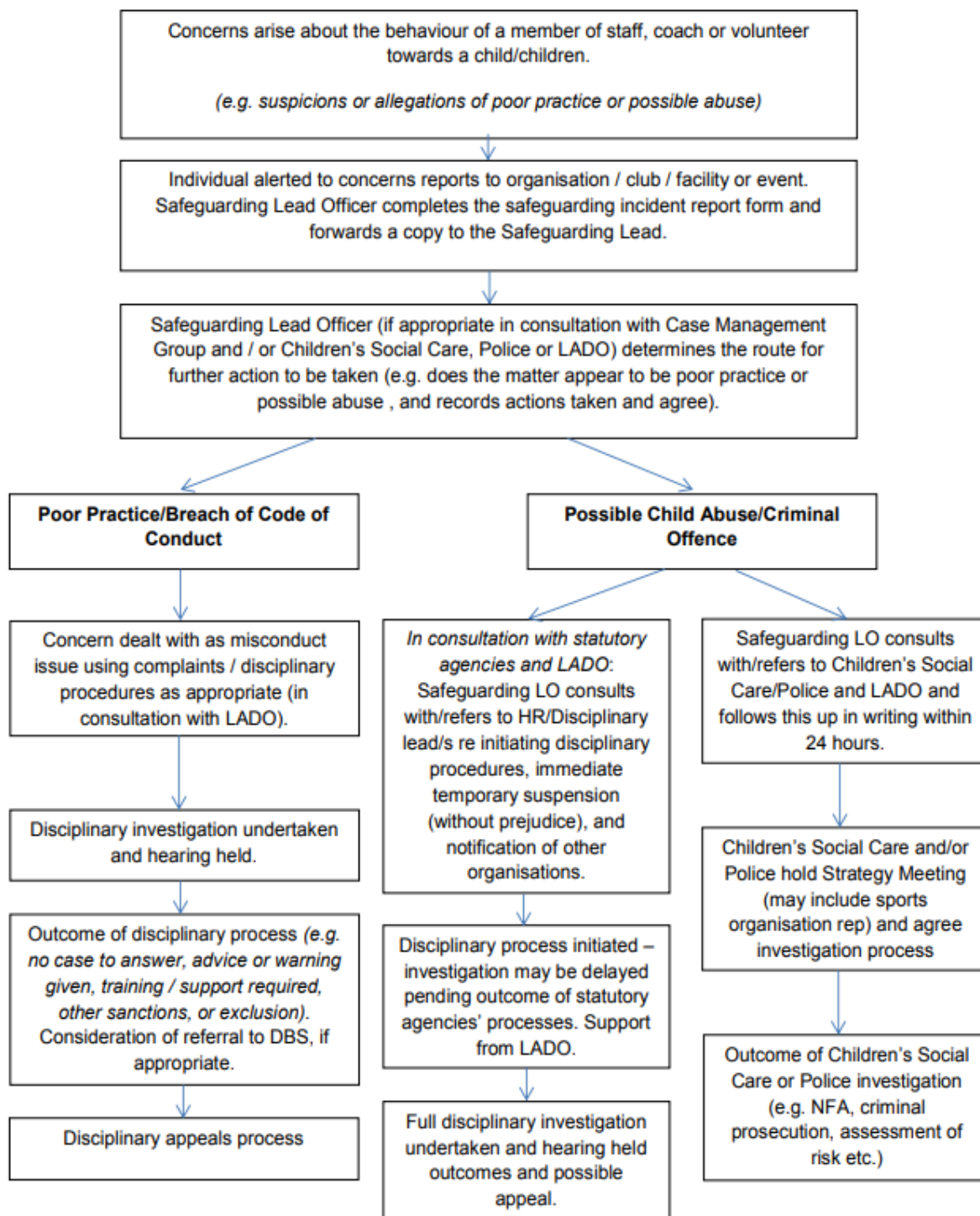
Do not attempt to investigate. Share your report with the DSL as soon as possible.

Recording Concerns

- Use an official **Incident Referral Form** where possible
- Clearly separate facts from opinion or interpretation
- Maintain confidentiality and secure storage of all records
- Ongoing records must be kept throughout any investigation or process

Flowchart

1. About the behaviour of the organisation's staff member or volunteer (e.g. allegation about a coach or officer's behaviour towards a child)



Code of Conduct

Everyone involved in Loddon Martial Arts must follow the separate **Codes of Conduct and Ethics** document. Commitment is demonstrated by signing the relevant version.

Safer Recruitment

We take all reasonable steps to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children. This includes:

- Following safer recruitment procedures (outlined separately)
- Requiring enhanced DBS checks for all instructors

Supervision, Support, and Training

All staff and volunteers will receive:

- Safeguarding induction
- A trial period with supervision
- Ongoing training appropriate to their role

We encourage ongoing development to build safeguarding awareness and capability.

Whistleblowing

Loddon Martial Arts promotes a culture of openness. Concerns about unsafe or illegal practices must be reported without fear of reprisal. The NSPCC provides a **whistleblowing advice line** for external support.

Complaints

We have a dedicated procedure for dealing with safeguarding complaints from any child, parent, staff member, or volunteer. This includes advocacy and support throughout the process and links with wider organisational complaints procedures.

Useful contacts

Lead Safeguarding:

- Julian Blakey
- 07748 156212
- loddonmartialarts@gmail.com

Review date: May 2025

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner in the event of legislative changes or revised policies and best practice.

Local Authority Safeguarding

Web links:

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/keeping-children-safe/report-concerns>

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/keeping-children-safe/local-authority-designated-officer>

- Email: LADO@norfolk.gov.uk

If you are concerned about a child in Norfolk and want to speak to someone, contact us on [0344 800 8020](tel:03448008020). If you consider the incident to be an emergency, call [999](tel:999).

NSPCC

- Telephone- 0808 800 5000
- Email - help@nspcc.org.uk