

Policy on the Safety of Children and Vulnerable Adults in Shintaido

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British Shintaido and its local branches believe that children and vulnerable adults who attend Shintaido classes expect the instructors to be of the highest integrity and to behave in a professional manner.

British Shintaido does not employ “full time” instructors for weekly classes: the classes are run as a recreational activity and instructors are frequently unpaid volunteers. All qualified instructors are well known to the organization and respected within it, having practised for a minimum of four years and in most cases much longer. When a candidate takes the examination to be an instructor, his or her character, as well as technique, has been assessed by the examiners. It is not the policy of British Shintaido to allow an unknown instructor to take sole control of a class under any circumstances. Some workshops and weekend courses are taken by guest instructors from other countries, but these are also individuals well-known to the officers of British Shintaido; and they will be assisted at all times by British Shintaido instructors. British Shintaido requires that all British-based instructors teaching classes involving children and vulnerable adults obtain CRB Enhanced Disclosures.

Some aspects of Shintaido involves the use of weapons – boh, joh and boktoh – and of karate punches and kicks. The techniques are very safe when approached with care by the instructors and when the students are made aware of the proper handling of the weapons and proper behaviour during practice. Any instructor teaching using weapons or karate techniques must seek the written permission of parents in advance. Instructors are expected to have current First Aid certificates.

British Shintaido recognises that instructors inevitably need to make physical contact with the students in the class. This is in the nature of Shintaido, and it is the duty of the instructor to make this clear to the parent/carer when a child first joins a class. However, instructors must be aware of what constitutes inappropriate contact and they should not conduct themselves in ways which could be considered unprofessional.

Instructors will require parents or carers to complete a form with details of age, physical condition, medical background including doctor's name and contact details, as well as emergency contact details. Parents or carers will also be made aware of this Policy, and of the contact details of the nominated Child Protection Officer to whom any complaints should be directed. Until further notice the Child Protection Officer is Helen Holt 01483 825459.

Instructors need to be sensitive to the needs of all students. Any attempt by an instructor to bully or force a child or vulnerable adult to attempt some activity which they are clearly unable to master, or otherwise intimidate children, is not tolerated. Similarly, bullying by other students, or inappropriate physical intimacy, will not be allowed during practice nor in the changing rooms. British Shintaido expects all instructors to be aware of the issues surrounding Child Protection and do their professional best to ensure the standards are maintained, or indeed raised. Instructors must take action where a student is involved in bullying, intimidation or inappropriate intimacy; this may include asking them to leave the class, and informing parents.

Where possible instructors must seek to have another adult present at all times when teaching children or vulnerable adults. No instructor will undertake Shintaido instruction with a child or vulnerable adult privately, with no other adults present.

Instructors in British Shintaido may occasionally find themselves in the position of being confided in by a student, as a trusted adult. On such occasions, instructors should be able to act in an appropriate manner. It is recommended that instructors teaching Shintaido to children undergo Child Protection training for such circumstances.

Any accusation of inappropriate behaviour towards any student on the part of an instructor, should be reported to the nominated Child Protection Officer. Any accusations of child abuse will be passed to the appropriate social services; other accusations will be investigated internally by the Chairman or if serious reported to the police. A full report of the accusation, and action taken including sanctions against the instructor in question, will be kept by the Chairman. British Shintaido will co-operate fully with any other investigation which might arise.

If photographs of children are used for publicity, the instructor or representative will seek permission of the parent/guardian prior to publication. Where the club name is mentioned, the child's name will not be given.