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"CHANGING LIVES THROUGH MOVEMENT"

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy 2026

Capoeira for All will ensure that:

- **The welfare of the child is paramount.**
- All children, whatever their age, culture, (dis)ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately, according to procedure.
- All staff, paid or unpaid, can make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
- All staff are aware that they have a responsibility to know and understand the Capoeira for All Child Protection Policy & Safeguarding policy.

Capoeira for All Child Protection Policy Statement

Capoeira for All has a duty of care to safeguard all children from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. Capoeira for All will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by Capoeira for All. In this document, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989); “staff” indicates any adults, paid or unpaid, who may have contact with children during a Capoeira for All activity.

Promoting good practice

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and will be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

Good practice guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication.
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first.
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust and empowering children and young people to share in decision making.
- Making Capoeira fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play, creativity and self expression.
- Ensuring that when any form of manual or physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance.
- Ensuring that adults should not enter children's changing rooms or invite children into their changing area, where separate changing facilities are available.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking, drinking alcohol or swearing in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Ensuring all relevant DBS checks are carried out for staff and volunteers who work with young people and vulnerable adults.
- Enabling staff to remain up to date on Safeguarding training.

Definitions and Signs of Abuse

Capoeira for All recognises that abuse can take many forms and may affect children, young people and vulnerable adults. Staff, volunteers and coaches should be aware of the different categories of abuse and understand the possible signs and indicators; staff being continuously trained in safeguarding recognise that abuse can be in the form of physical, emotional, sexual, neglect and/or bullying.

Abuse may be caused by an adult or another child and can occur in person or through neglect and exploitation.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the deliberate causing of physical harm to a child or vulnerable person. Signs of physical abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruises, burns, bites, fractures or injuries
- Injuries inconsistent with the explanation given
- Fear of physical contact or returning home
- Wearing clothing to cover injuries even in warm weather
- Aggressive behaviour or withdrawal

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that negatively affects their emotional development and sense of self-worth. Signs of emotional abuse may include:

- Low self-esteem or serious lack of confidence
- Anxiety, depression, or excessive fearfulness
- Sudden speech disorders or developmental delay
- Self-harm or eating disorders
- Extreme behaviour such as aggression or withdrawal

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or encouraging a child or vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. Signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour for the child's age
- Sudden changes in behaviour or mood
- Avoidance of a particular person or place
- Pain, soreness, or bruising around genital areas
- Difficult walking or sitting
- Self-harm or substance abuse

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or emotional and psychological needs. Signs of neglect may include:

- Poor hygiene or consistently inappropriate clothing
- Hunger or untreated medical conditions
- Frequent absence or lateness
- Tiredness or lack of concentration
- Developmental delay or poor social skills

Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that intentionally hurts another person physically or emotionally. Signs of bullying may include:

- Reluctance to attend sessions or activities
- Sudden loss of confidence
- Anxiety or withdrawn behaviour
- Unexplained injuries or damaged belongings
- Change in mood or eating

Responding to allegations or suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

Capoeira for All will assure all staff that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports a concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation
- a child protection investigation
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Action

1. Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, a Capoeira for All Director will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by a Capoeira for All Director, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to another Capoeira for All Director who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

2. Concerns about any form of suspected abuse:

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The Safeguard Lead will refer the allegation to the social services department which may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- If the Safeguard Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate Manager who will refer the allegation to social services.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

This includes the following people:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The parents/guardian of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- Social Services and Police
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Advice may be sought from social services on who should approach the alleged abuser.

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (eg that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Internal enquiries and suspension

- Capoeira for All Safeguarding Lead will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries Capoeira for All Board of Directors will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, Capoeira for All Board must reach a decision based upon the available information, which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. **The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.**

Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (eg by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made, Capoeira for All will follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

Action if bullying is suspected

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in sport:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or

threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).

Action towards the bully:

- Talk with the bully, explain the situation, and try to get the bully to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim.
- Inform the bully's parents.
- Insist on the return of any 'borrowed' items and that the bully compensate the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.

3. Information for social services or the police about suspected abuse

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth of the child.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents/guardians been contacted? If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible, referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact social services or the police directly, or the **NSPCC Child Protection** Helpline on **0808 800 5000**, or **Childline** on **0800 1111**.

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If a case arises where these situations are unavoidable (eg the child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session), it should be with the full

knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents.

Otherwise, avoid:

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Taking or dropping off a child to an event.

The following should *<u>never</u>* be allowed. Staff should never:

- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults that they can do for themselves.

<u>Incidents that must be reported/recorded</u>

If any of the following occur, staff should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. They should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If a participant is accidentally hurt
- If he or she seems distressed in any manner
- If a participant appears to misunderstand or misinterprets something he or she has done.

<u>Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers</u>

Capoeira for All recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way, and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

Pre-selection and interview checks must include the following:

- Ensuring all staff and volunteers have the appropriate advanced DBS check within the last three years.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers have been interviewed and previous offences regarding children have been disclosed and an appropriate decision made on their suitability for employment.
- Ensuring staff and volunteers are aware of the Capoeira for All Child Protection policy and have committed to adhering to its requirements, guidelines and conduct.

<u>Use of photographic/filming equipment at sessions or events</u>

Staff must always seek the appropriate permission to take photographs and for the use of photographs at public events. Regarding children, written consent must be acquired by guardians or parents for the use of photographs or videos that they are captured by. Particular care must be taken in respect to Looked-After children and children in care. No images or videos are to be used on social media without the express permission of guardians, parents, schools or other organisations responsible for the well-being of the child.

Declaration

On behalf of Capoeira for All CIC, we, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Signed: Akil Morgan & Michael Horsley

Name: Akil Morgan

Position: CEO

Date: 3.1.2026

Name: Michael Horsley

Position: Director & Safeguarding Lead

Date: 3.1.2026

Main Officer: Akil Morgan

Signed: 