BRITISH TAEKWONDO COUNCIL

Safeguarding – Protecting Children Policies and Procedures

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MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR GUIDELINES

Whilst this document covers the majority of circumstances that you may be confronted with, we recommend for your perusal other documents which address this subject which are available from the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit [CPSU]

The BTC want all children and young people to enjoy our sport in a safe and healthy environment shared with like minded other young people and adults. The BTC has over 20,000 children and young people participating in Taekwondo activity. It is inevitable that you will be confronted with challenging behaviour from time to time.

Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers who deliver Taekwondo activities to children may, on occasions, will be required to deal with a child's challenging behaviour.

These guidelines aim to promote good practice and to encourage a proactive response to supporting children to manage their own behaviour. They suggest some strategies and sanctions which can be used and also identify unacceptable sanctions or interventions which must *never* be used by Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers. The guidelines will also include the views and suggestions of children.

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.
- All those involved in activities including children, instructors, coaches / volunteers and parents/carers should be provided with clear guidelines about required standards of conduct, and the BTC and club's process for responding to behaviour that is deemed unacceptable.
- Children must never be subject to any form of treatment that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading.

- Some children exhibit challenging behaviour as a result of specific circumstances, eg a medical or psychological condition, and instructors may therefore require specific or additional guidance. These and any other specific needs the child may have should be discussed with parents/carers and the child prior to the child starting training, to ensure that an appropriate approach is agreed and, where necessary, additional support provided e.g. from external agencies, Children's Social Care services etc
- Taekwondo can make a significant contribution to improving the life experience and outcomes for all children and young people. Every child should be supported to participate and, only in exceptional circumstances where the safety of a child or of other children cannot be maintained, should a child be excluded from club activities.

Planning Activities

Good instructing practice requires planning sessions around the group as a whole but also involves taking into consideration the needs of each individual within that group. As part of session planning, instructors should consider whether any members of the group have presented in the past or are likely to present any difficulties in relation to the tasks involved, the other participants or the environment.

Where Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers, identify potential risks, strategies to manage those risks should be agreed in advance of the session, event or activity. The planning should also identify the appropriate number of adults required to safely manage and support the session including being able to adequately respond to any challenging behaviour and to safeguard other members of the group.

When children are identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require additional supervision, specialist expertise or support, this should be discussed with parents/carers and where appropriate children and young people themselves. The instructor/club should seek to work in partnership with parents/carers, and where necessary external agencies, to ensure that a child or young person can be supported to participate safely.

Agreeing Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviours

Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers and parents carers should be involved in developing an agreed statement of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour (code of conduct) and the range of sanctions which may be applied in response to unacceptable behaviour. This can be done when the child / young person enrolls at the club.

Issues of behaviour and control should regularly be discussed with Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers, parents/carers and children in the context of rights and responsibilities. When children are specifically asked, as a group, to draw up a code of conduct that will govern their participation in club activities, experience indicates that they tend to arrive at a very sensible working set of 'rules' with greater 'buy-in' from participants than those simply imposed by adults within the club. If and when such a code is compiled, every member of the group can be asked to sign it, as can new members as they join.

Managing Challenging Behaviour

In responding to challenging behaviour the response should always be proportionate to the actions, be imposed as soon as is practicable and be fully explained to the child and their parents/carers. In dealing with children who display negative or challenging behaviours, Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers might consider the following options:

- Time out - from the activity, group or individual work.
- Reparation - the act or process of making amends.
- Restitution - the act of giving something back.
- Behavioural reinforcement - rewards for good behaviour, consequences for negative behaviour.
- De-escalation of the situation - talking through with the child / young person.
- Increased supervision by Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers
- Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements for their future or continued participation
- Sanctions or consequences e.g. missing an event.
- Seeking additional / specialist support through working in partnership with other agencies to ensure a child's / young person's needs are met appropriately e.g. referral for support to Children's Social Care, discussion with the child's key worker if they have one, speaking to the child's school about management strategies (all require parental consent unless the child is felt to be 'at risk' or 'in need of protection').
- Temporary or permanent exclusion

The following should never be permitted as a means of managing a child's behaviour:

- Physical punishment or the threat of such.
- Refusal to speak to or interact with the child.
- Being deprived of food, water, access to changing facilities or toilets or other essential facilities.
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers should review the needs of any child for whom sanctions are frequently necessary. This review should involve the child, parents/carers and in some cases others involved in supporting or providing services for the child and his / her family, to ensure an informed decision is made about the child's future or continued participation. As a last resort, if a child continues to present a high level of risk or danger to him or herself, or others, he or she may have to be suspended or barred from the group or club activities.

Physical Intervention

The use of physical intervention should always be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent a child or young person injuring themselves or others, or causing serious damage to property. All forms of physical intervention should form part of a broader approach to the management of challenging behaviour.

Physical contact to prevent something happening should always be the result of conscious decision-making and not a reaction. Before physically intervening, the member of Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers should ask themselves, 'Is this the only option in order to manage the situation and ensure safety?' It is good practice to ensure that if you have to physically intervene in a situation with a child / young person, it is in the least restrictive way necessary to prevent them from getting hurt, and used only after all other strategies have been exhausted. Studies have shown that, where this is the case, children and young people understand and accept the reasons for the intervention.

The following must always be considered:

- Contact should be avoided with buttocks, genitals and breasts. Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers should never behave in a way which could be interpreted as sexual.
- Any form of physical intervention should achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern.
- Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers should consider the circumstances, the risks associated with employing physical intervention compared with the risks of not employing physical intervention.
- The scale and nature of physical intervention must always be proportionate to the behaviour of the young person and the nature of harm / damage they might cause.
- All forms of physical intervention should employ only a reasonable amount of force - i.e. the minimum force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property - applied for the shortest period of time.
- Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers should never employ physical interventions which are deemed to present an unreasonable risk to children or staff/volunteers.
- Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers shall never use physical intervention as a form of punishment.
- Physical intervention should NOT involve inflicting pain
- In amateur sparring or other like activities must never be used to control or punish a child or young person who is displaying challenging behaviour
- Where children are identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require physical intervention this should be discussed with parents/carers and where necessary the club will seek advice from or to work in partnership with external agencies (e.g. Children's Social Care) to ensure that a child or young person can be supported to participate safely. This may include asking for the provision of a suitably trained support worker / volunteer or accessing staff / volunteer training in physical intervention.

Any physical intervention used should be recorded as soon as possible after the incident by the Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers involved using the BTC Incident Report Form and passed to the Club Welfare Officer as soon as possible.

Views of the child

It is clear from the accounts of children and young people that physical intervention provokes strong feelings. Children and young people may be left physically or emotionally hurt. Even a child / young person who hasn't been directly involved in the situation may be fearful that it will happen to them in future or have been upset by seeing what has happened to others.

A timely debrief for appropriate Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers, the child and parents/carers should always take place following an incident where physical intervention has been used. This should include ensuring that the physical and emotional well-being of those involved has been addressed and ongoing support offered where necessary. Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers, children and parents/carers should be given an opportunity to talk about what happened in a calm and safe environment.

There should also be a discussion with the child / young person's parents/carers about the child's needs and continued safe participation in the group or activity.

It is important that all Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers, are made aware of and understand the BTC's guidance about managing challenging behaviour to ensure that they are aware of ways in which they may need to intervene and are clear about the practice guidance in this area.

A policy for managing challenging behaviour

In conclusion, the BTC have a duty of care to children and young people and have implement this policy and procedure on managing challenging behaviour and in doing so have incorporated this document into their child protection policy portfolio. An accompanying document to this BTC Policy to responding to Challenging Behaviour' outlines the following:

- The standard of conduct expected from Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers,
- How the organisation will respond to unacceptable behaviours.
- How your organisation will respond to 'high risk' behaviours'. This will give children and young people a clear message about when staff may need to get involved to stop a particular form of behaviour, and describe options to avoid confrontation through for example, time out.
- The circumstances in which children will be restrained. A decision to restrain a child should be firmly based on the safety of the child and must NEVER be made as a punishment or to get children / young people to comply with instructions.
- The guidance, information or any support and / or training available to Instructors, Coaches, Club Officials and volunteers, particularly where they are supporting a child with recognised challenging behaviour to access club activities.
- The circumstances where external agencies will be contacted for support or in response to concerns e.g. – Children's Social Care services, the Police.

What will happen after an incident?

- The BTC have in place arrangements to check on the physical and emotional wellbeing of the child and staff, guidance on recording, who should be informed and a system for recording and monitoring.