



COBRA MARTIAL ARTS ASSOCIATION

This policy refers to and is for the use of the members of the
Cobra Martial Arts Association
(C.M.A.A.).

Please telephone 07909 673894 to verify membership.

Safeguarding and Protecting Children

Child Protection Policy

Policy statement (updated 21.01.2010)

C.M.A.A. has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in its activities and clubs from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of the disabled and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

C.M.A.A. will ensure that the safety and protection of all children involved in its activities and clubs through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by C.M.A.A. as advised by The Child Protection in Sport Unit.

This Policy will be reviewed at 3-year intervals. The review and modification dates will be posted at the end of this document'

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 in accordance with the Children Act 1989.

All Instructors either newly qualifying or joining the C.M.A.A. will be required to:

1. Be no less than 18 years of age and of grade no less than 1st Dan / Degree.
2. Be ISA registered and go through an **Enhanced Disclosure every 2 years** to ensure they are of suitable character to be near the young and / or vulnerable Adults. Any person refusing this check will not be permitted to Instruct within the C.M.A.A.
3. Undergo Instructor Training via the C.M.A.A. programme OR produce evidence of training elsewhere.
4. Be fully Insured for Civil Liability via the C.M.A.A. Group Policy.
5. Hold a current First Aid Certificate issued by a Health & Safety Executive approved provider
6. Keep their own Continued Professional Development (CPD) up to date by attending courses both within and outside of the C.M.A.A.

The policy and its content are a standard subject covered in the C.M.A.A. Instructor Training Programme, which is open to all including Parents and Cadets (under 18's). All new Instructors joining the C.M.A.A. made aware of the Policy and how to access it.

As well as the training the C.M.A.A. offers Instructors are advised to familiarise themselves with their own Local Area Child Protection Committee.

If any member has any comments regarding the content of this Policy please contact Andrew Morrell.

Section 1 – Defining Child Abuse

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. It commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a child regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

The abuser may be a family member, or they may be someone the child encounters in residential care or in the community, including during sports and leisure activities. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming a child.

There are five main types of child abuse:

- **Physical abuse:** where adults physically hurt or injury children, including by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating or drowning. This category of abuse can also include when a parent or carer reports non-existent symptoms of illness or deliberately causes ill health in a child they are looking after. Examples of physical abuse in sport may be when a child is forced into training and competition that exceeds the capacity of his or her immature and growing body, or where the child is given drugs to enhance performance or delay puberty
- **Sexual abuse:** when adults (male or female) use the child to meet their own sexual needs including talking to them in an explicit nature and showing them illicit photographs.
- **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve communicating to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in terms of meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of children that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn. Ill-treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse. Examples of emotional abuse in sport include subjecting children to constant criticism, name-calling and sarcasm or bullying. Putting the under pressure to perform to unrealistic high standards is also a form of emotional abuse.
- **Neglect:** this is when adults fail to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health and development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. Examples of neglect in sport could include not ensuring children are safe, exposing them to undue cold or heat or exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury, during sparring for example.
- **Bullying:** this is racism and other types of discrimination are forms of child abuse, even though those responsible are often young people themselves. It is important to recognise the impact and extent of bullying and discrimination in the lives of young people. C.M.A.A. and all of our Instructors, at whatever the level, have a duty of care to safeguard children and others who may be particularly vulnerable.

Define Bullying

Bullying can be psychological, verbal or physical in nature. It involves an imbalance of power in which the powerful attack the powerless, and occurs over time rather than being a single act.

Examples of bullying behaviour include:

- Being called names, insulted or verbally abused
- Being deliberately embarrassed and humiliated by other children

- Being made to feel different or like an outsider
- Being lied about
- Being physically assaulted or threatened with violence
- Being ignored

Boys are most likely to experience physical bullying or threats, or have property stolen or damaged. Girls are more likely to be ignored or not spoken to.

Bullying by adults is less common, but the most common forms are:

- Deliberately embarrassing or humiliating a child
- Treating them unfairly
- Verbally abusing them
- Ignoring them or not speaking to them at all

Action if Bullying is suspected

The C.M.A.A. President operates a “Penalty Points” system, which awards points for breaking club rules. Bullying is one of these rules. Students achieving a total of 6 points are suspended for a given period. Repeat offenders are usually expelled from the club.

If bullying is suspected you may simply expel the student responsible if you wish to do so, but you should also consider the following points:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak to the victim and the bully separately
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to keep it to yourself

If you decide to expel the bully from your club after the allegation has been proven then please advise the C.M.A.A. President who will then inform other C.M.A.A. clubs within the area. But firstly you should consider doing the following:

- Talk with the bully and explain the situation. Get them to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Ask them to apologise to the victim
- Inform the bullies parents
- Encourage and support the bully to change behaviour

Section 2 – Promoting Good Practice

Abuse can arouse strong emotions in those directly involved or having to face or deal with the situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment.

Some individuals will actually enter into a group involved with children in order to carry out abuse. With this in mind all new Instructors qualifying or joining C.M.A.A. will be ISA registered and under go an Enhanced Disclosure through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). This check will go

towards showing the good character of all of our Instructors. C.M.A.A. is a Registered Body with the CRB for that reason. Any person objecting to, or refusing to, ISA registration and going through an Enhanced Disclosure will not be permitted to Instruct in any capacity within C.M.A.A. and in certain cases maybe reported to the authorities.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence for any person who has a previous conviction for offences related to abuse to work with children or vulnerable people. This is reinforced by the details of the Children's Barred List (CBL) and the Adults Barred List (ABL).

When a child enters one of your club(s) having been subjected to abuse outside, and you are made aware of this, it is important that you work closely with appropriate local agencies. Sport can play a crucial part in improving an abused child's self esteem.

Good Practice Guidelines

All "Personnel" should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. Both Adults and Children have a responsibility to treat each other with respect, dignity, sensitivity and fairness irregardless of age, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation / background or culture.

The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

- Always work in an open environment, avoid private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication with no secrets
- Treat all young people the same, this includes the disabled should any of you teach them
- Put the welfare of the young person first above all else, such as competition and achieving set goals such as activities involved in grading
- Maintain an appropriate distance with as least physical contact as possible especially when the child is moving through a technique. Avoid physically "guiding" them
- Build a balanced relation ship with your Cadet Leaders and involve them in the decision making process within your club. Remember a Cadet Leader is a child and therefore thinks like one
- Make your classes fun and promote fair play at all times
- If your club has changing facilities encourage the parent to remain whilst their child gets ready for the class. Failing this always enter accompanied, never alone especially if there is only one child present
- Be an excellent role model, your students will do as you do
- Keep an accident book in your club to record any injury and the treatment given. In the event of an accidents the parent should sign the book
- If you are to transport children in your car get the consent of the parent, preferably written. Ideally get the parent to go as well, especially of you are going to be away for a day or so.
- Any disciplinary measures / sanctions that you use must be non violent and must not be humiliating to children and young people.

Incidents that must be reported / recorded

If any of the following occur please report them to the club Senior Most Instructor or the C.M.A.A. President as well as the parents

- If you accidentally hurt a child
- If he / she seems overly distressed
- If a student misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done that could lead to an allegation

Use of photographic / filming equipment during training

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or recordings of children in vulnerable positions, gymnastics for example.

All clubs should be vigilant and whilst there is no intention to prevent Instructors from using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid parents should be asked for permission first stating the reasons. Any tapes / photographs should be stored safely.

Responding to allegations or suspicions and the action to be taken

It is not the responsibility of our selves as Instructors of any person within C.M.A.A. to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns relating to abuse and also discrimination and offensive or violent behaviour as these are unacceptable through contact with the appropriate authorities.

C.M.A.A. will full support and protect all of our members who in good faith report any concerns that another member has or may be abusing a child.

When a complaint is reported there are three types of investigation:

- Criminal - carried out by the local Police
- Child Protection - carried out by the local Authority
- Disciplinary - carried out by C.M.A.A.

If the concern is clearly about poor practice only then C.M.A.A. will deal with it as an “internal” issue in a fair and open-minded manner. All accusations will or course be open to appeal as per the above chart.

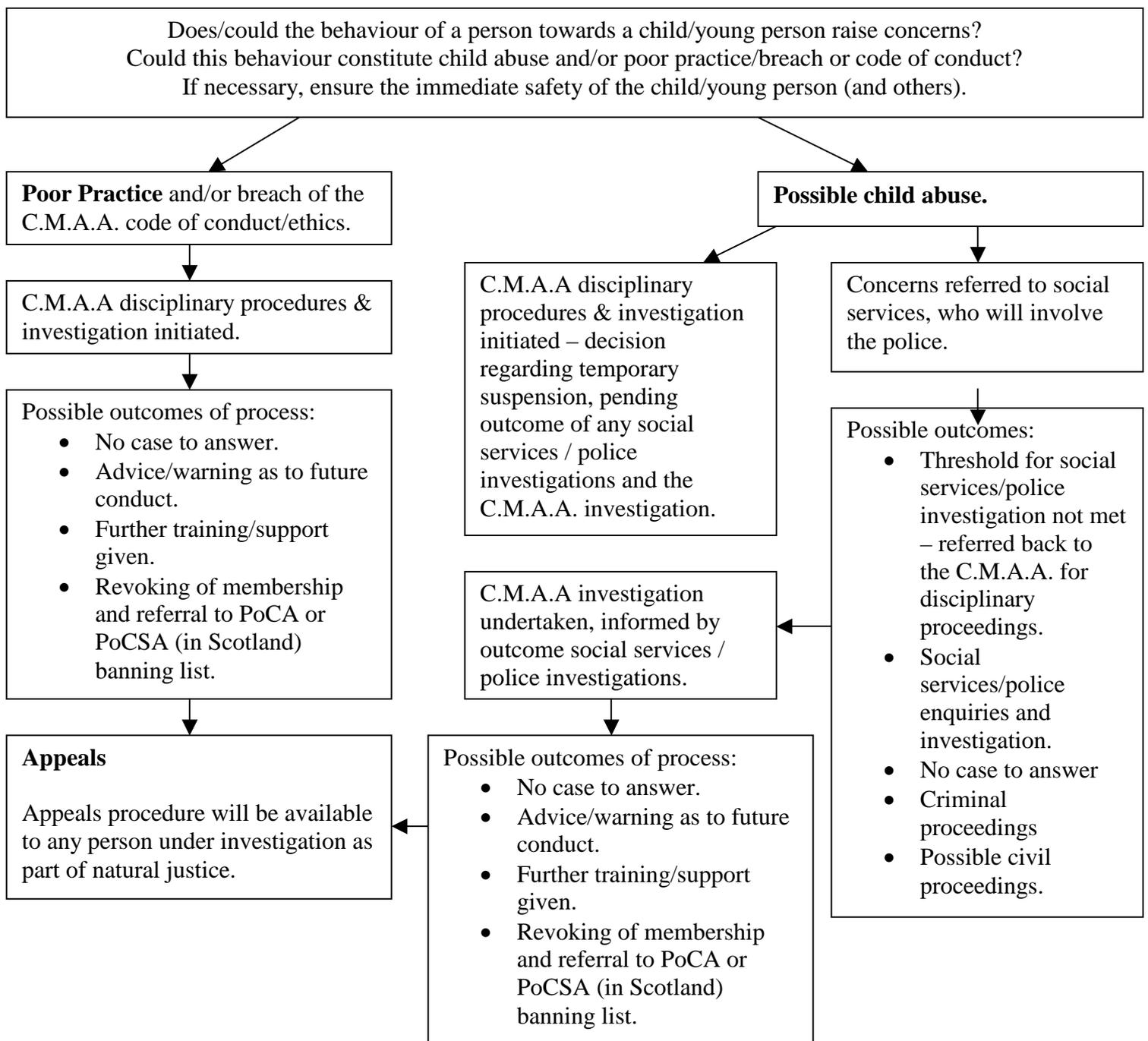
If the concern is about suspected abuse then it should be reported to the Clubs Senior Instructor who will then report to the C.M.A.A. President.

If the concern is in relation to the Clubs Senior Instructor it should be reported directly to the C.M.A.A. President.

In both cases the C.M.A.A. President will contact the local Social Services. The following information will be required:

- The child’s name, age and date of birth
- 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 and any other relevant information
- Make a clear distinction between fact, opinion or hearsay
- A description of any physical injury or bruising, also any signs such as changes in behaviour
- Details of any witnesses
- The child’s own account of events, if it can be given
- Whether or not the parents are aware and what has been said
- Has anyone else been consulted, if so record the details
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident have he or she been informed and if so what was said?
- Who is the alleged abuser?

The following chart demonstrates the general guidelines on how to respond to any concerns relating to C.M.A.A. members / Instructors / volunteers or any other person who may come into contact with C.M.A.A. members.



Confidentiality

If you are worried about sharing concerns about any alleged abuse within C.M.A.A. you can contact Social Services, Your Local Area Child Protection Committee or the Police direct. Or the NSPCC Child Protection help line on 0808 800 5000 or Child line on 0800 1111

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 Club Senior Instructor
- The C.M.A.A. President

- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- Social services
- The Police
- The alleged abuser

The alleged abuser **SHOULD NOT** be approached without firstly seeking the advice of the Local Social Services.

Any evidence or information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people in line with data protection laws which state that information should be accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure.

Allegations or previous abuse

Allegations may be made some time after the event e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child by an Instructor or member who is still active within C.M.A.A.

Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedure as detailed above. This is important as other children, both in and outside of your club, may be at risk or even be being abused by this person.

POLICY WRITTEN BY:

Andrew Morrell
President & Founder of the C.M.A.A.
CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER
Authorised Signatory for the C.R.B.
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