Takemusu Aikido Forest Row

Safeguarding Policy

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1. Purpose

Takemusu Aikido Forest Row (TAFR) is committed to providing aikido activities in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect and can participate without abuse, neglect, bullying, harassment, discrimination, exploitation or avoidable harm.

Safeguarding includes maintaining a safe and respectful culture for every participant and applying specific procedures where a concern involves a child or an adult at risk. This policy supports, but does not replace, health and safety, equality, first-aid, conduct, complaints and emergency arrangements.

2. Scope

This policy applies to TAFR classes and any seminars, courses, demonstrations, social activities, travel, online communications, photographs and recordings organised by TAFR. It applies to instructors, committee members, volunteers, participants, visitors and contractors.

TAFR regular classes and any seminars or other activities organised by TAFR are currently for adults aged 18 and over. Anyone under 18 may only be admitted after the child-specific arrangements in section 5.4 have been implemented and confirmed.

3. Definitions and principles

3.1 Child

A child is anyone under 18.

3.2 Adult at risk

An adult at risk is an adult aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and, because of those needs, is unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect. Age, disability, illness, injury, neurodivergence, mental-health difficulty or reduced mobility does not by itself make someone an adult at risk. The person's circumstances, care and support needs, the particular risk and their ability to protect themselves must be considered together.

3.3 Principles

- The welfare of a child is paramount.
- Everyone has the right to dignity, respect, equality and an enjoyable aikido experience.
- Concerns will be taken seriously and acted on promptly and without discrimination.
- Adult safeguarding will be person-led, proportionate and as unintrusive as the risk permits.
- Information will be shared only when necessary and proportionate; confidentiality cannot be promised where doing so may leave someone at risk.
- TAFR will not investigate suspected abuse. It will record, protect and refer concerns to the appropriate safeguarding or statutory body.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 TAFR Committee

- Adopt, publish and review this policy and its supporting procedures.
- Appoint a Welfare and Safeguarding Officer and an authorised alternative for absence, conflicts or concerns involving that officer.
- Ensure that sufficient time, training, procedures and administrative support are available to implement this policy.

- Ensure activity risk assessments, insurance and relevant venue requirements are in place.
- Support appropriate referral to ADS, BAB or statutory services.

4.2 Welfare and Safeguarding Officer

The Welfare and Safeguarding Officer receives concerns, helps secure immediate safety, maintains safeguarding records, obtains specialist advice and makes or supports referrals. The officer does not decide whether abuse has occurred. If the officer is unavailable or implicated, the concern must be reported through the alternative route in section 8.

4.3 Everyone involved with TAFR

Everyone must follow this policy and related conduct requirements, respond promptly, firmly and proportionately to unsafe or concerning behaviour, report concerns, cooperate with safeguarding processes and avoid investigating or circulating allegations.

5. Standards and procedures

5.1 Respectful conduct and boundaries

- Treat people fairly and respectfully; do not bully, harass, humiliate, discriminate, threaten or exploit.
- Use aikido techniques, physical contact and correction only for legitimate teaching and practice, with appropriate care, explanation and consent.
- Never use rank, teaching authority, selection or access to obtain personal, financial, sexual or other advantage.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries in person and online.
- Where behaviour creates an immediate safety concern, stop the activity and, where proportionate, require the person to leave. Record and report the matter afterwards through the appropriate safeguarding, conduct or membership procedure.

5.2 Adults and adults at risk

Not every welfare, conduct or interpersonal issue is a statutory adult-safeguarding matter. TAFR will use the route appropriate to the circumstances, including first aid, reasonable adjustments, safeguarding, complaints, or conduct or membership procedures. Where an adult may be at risk, TAFR will consider the adult's wishes, communication needs, capacity for the particular decision, risk to other people and any need for urgent protection.

Consent should normally be sought before referral. Information may be shared without consent where there is immediate danger, suspected serious crime, coercion, risk to a child or another adult, concern about capacity for the particular decision, or another compelling legal or public-interest reason. The reason will be recorded.

5.3 Volunteer roles, DBS and training

For voluntary roles involving instruction, safeguarding responsibility, supervision or access to sensitive information, TAFR will confirm the person's identity, experience, qualifications where relevant, suitability for the role, required training and any legally eligible DBS status. Checks will be proportionate to the role and the size of the Club.

A DBS certificate is only one part of safeguarding. TAFR will request the correct level only where the role is legally eligible and it is required or advised by ADS, BAB or a venue. TAFR will record the check outcome and relevant renewal or status information without retaining unnecessary certificate details.

5.4 Children and young people

Before admitting anyone under 18, TAFR must formally activate and document child-safeguarding arrangements consistent with current ADS and BAB requirements. These must include a trained welfare role and alternative, appropriate safeguarding and first-aid training, role-eligible DBS checks, child-specific risk assessment, supervision and collection arrangements, parental consent, emergency and medical information, written first-aid consent, and child-specific communications, photography and data-handling procedures. Instructors responsible for under-18s must hold current appropriate first-aid certification.

A child who attends unexpectedly will not take part. The organiser will keep them safe while contacting their parent or carer and obtaining appropriate safeguarding advice.

5.5 Communication, photography and online conduct

The TAFR Communication and Online Conduct Policy applies to WhatsApp, Signal, email and other digital platforms used by the Club. It sets the general standards for respectful use, moderation and reporting concerns. This safeguarding policy adds that communications must never be used to groom, pressure, isolate or exploit; images must not be sexualised, demeaning or misleading; and child-specific ADS/BAB procedures must be in place before under-18s are admitted.

6. Raising concerns and reporting

1. Protect immediate safety. Call 999 if anyone is in immediate danger or urgent medical help is needed.

2. Listen and take the person seriously. Allow them to use their own words and do not ask leading questions.

3. Do not promise secrecy. Explain that information may need to be shared with people who can help.

4. Do not investigate, confront an alleged person responsible, or discuss the matter beyond those who need to know.

5. Make a factual record as soon as possible, including date, time, place, people present, the person's words where possible, observations, actions and who was informed. Separate fact from opinion.

6. Report promptly to the Welfare and Safeguarding Officer. If that officer is unavailable or implicated, use the alternative route in section 8.

7. Continue proportionate support and cooperate with safeguarding bodies. Do not promise an outcome or conduct a parallel inquiry.

7. Records, confidentiality and information handling

Blank reporting templates and procedures will be held centrally in the Club's policy repository. Completed safeguarding records will be stored in a secure, access-controlled, club-controlled repository and not solely in an individual officer's personal account. Access will normally be limited to the Welfare and Safeguarding Officer and one designated authorised alternative. A person who is implicated in a concern must not have access to that case record.

The authorised alternative will provide continuity if the Welfare and Safeguarding Officer is unavailable, leaves the role or is involved in the concern. Records will be factual, dated, separated from ordinary attendance records and disclosed only where necessary for protection, advice, referral, investigation or legal compliance.

A supporting Safeguarding Records and Reporting Procedure will define the approved repository, folder and file naming, access permissions, backup, retention, disclosure, handover and secure deletion. Identifiable safeguarding information must not be entered into a general-purpose or shared AI task unless a separately approved privacy and security process explicitly permits it.

8. Contacts and escalation

Contact	Use	Details
Emergency services	Immediate danger or urgent medical help	999
TAFR Welfare and Safeguarding Officer	First organisational safeguarding contact	Ian Reilly safety@takemusuaikido.net
TAFR Chair	If the officer is unavailable, implicated, or the concern involves that role	chair@takemusuaikido.net
ADS Child Protection Officer	Association advice or escalation	cpo@aikido-development-society.org
British Aikido Board	BAB safeguarding policy, advice and escalation	bab.org.uk/safeguarding/
Local authority safeguarding	Statutory safeguarding advice or referral	Use current local authority contact details; call 999 in an emergency

9. Related documents and external guidance

- TAFR Constitution.
- TAFR Communication and Online Conduct Policy.
- TAFR Safeguarding Records and Reporting Procedure (to be created).
- TAFR Conduct and Membership Procedure and Complaints Procedure (to be created).
- Aikido Development Society safeguarding page and safeguarding FAQ.
- British Aikido Board Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy and associated procedures.
- Care Act 2014 and Care and Support Statutory Guidance, chapter 14.
- Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and current statutory safeguarding guidance.

10. Monitoring and review

The Committee will review this policy at least annually and sooner after a safeguarding incident, a material change in activity or age range, updated law or guidance, or a change in ADS or BAB requirements. The policy was approved by the TAFR Committee following safeguarding review by Ian Reilly, Welfare and Safeguarding Officer, and is effective from 22 September 2026.

Document approval

Approved by	TAFR Committee, following safeguarding review by Ian Reilly
Role or authority	TAFR Committee; Welfare and Safeguarding Officer review
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Version history

Version	Date	Summary of change	Approved by
0.1	27 August 2026	Draft updated following safeguarding review	Pending
1.0	22 September 2026	Initial approved issue	TAFR Committee