

## Physical Contact Policy

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Funakoshi Shotokan Karate trades as **FUNAKOSHI LTD**



Like many other 'contact' sports, such as boxing, judo or rugby etc, karate and most martial arts have a degree of contact needed in their teaching. It is essential that this should be so. In teaching children, there are acceptable guidelines for the degree of this type of contact and I hope to make these clear in this policy and explain some of the situations where contact MAY BE USED.

Part of teaching karate is to instruct in what we call Kata, these are a sequence of movements which are done in a specific order to help master certain techniques. Each Kata has a Bunkai, which is in essence, the applications of specific movements and techniques in each kata. When Bunkai is performed the instructor will place four students around the student performing the kata. The students on the outside play an attacking role so the student performing the kata can test out the effectiveness of his/her defence in a challenging realistic scenario.

The Kata form of this art is very difficult for any student at any level (especially prior to black belt level). Thus to understand the meaning of each move it is very normal for an instructor to want to demonstrate the application of each move in detail. In these instances a student is selected to take part in the demonstration and everyone is being taught the application both physically and verbally.

The student should feel very proud to be picked, as he will benefit from the demonstration. He will overcome, stress, fear, nervousness and gain confidence and self-control. The instructor would not select a student who is known to have medical conditions nor would he/she try to make it a harrowing experience for anyone. It is all about learning!

The verbal explanation goes hand in hand with the physical demonstration as it adds depth to the students' knowledge of and application of certain techniques. Remember historically karate was learnt and taught as a method of self-defence and so with this in mind the instructor will explain target areas on the body. A good instructor will have knowledge of human anatomy and share that with students.

Another reason for contact in karate is to build up over time mental strength; we live in a city where crime is high and the reality of teenage violence is shown to us every day on TV. I firmly believe that through hard physical challenges we grow mentally. I feel very passionate about trying to help children and teenagers improve their mental strength as I believe this is an essential life skill in the modern world.

Below is a guide line of what is considered normal:

11<sup>th</sup> Kyu – 9<sup>th</sup> Kyu (Red to Orange belt)

**Basics & Kata:** Most basic movements and beginner's kata are taught individually. Risk of contact NONE

**Bunkai:** When teaching a new kata to beginners the movements in the kata are explained verbally. Risk of contact NONE. The children might then do a Bunkai with other students of a similar age and grade. Risk of contact SLIGHT

**Partner work:** Children may be asked to practise their basics against each other. Risk of contact SLIGHT

**Kumite:** Only children with the FULL protective gear will be introduced to kumite. They are allowed to only make slight contact to the body. It is not unusual for a child to get 'winded' by another student.

**General:** If students are disruptive or keep talking during class it is normal that the instructor will ask them to do a repetitive experience with moderate numbers, i.e. push ups or sit ups

8<sup>th</sup> Kyu – 6<sup>th</sup> Kyu (Blue to Green belt with a stripe)

**Basics & Kata:** At this grade it is normal for students to pair up with partners when practicing their basics. Risk of contact SLIGHT

**Bunkai:** When teaching these grades it is normal that the students will practise Bunkai with other students in the class. Risk of contact: SLIGHT. It is also normal that the instructor might select a student in class to be used in a demonstration. The instructor might make light contact with the student when teaching target areas for the application of the kata.

**Partner work:** It is normal that students will practise their basics against each other. Risk of contact SLIGHT

**Kumite:** Students at this grade will do kumite regularly (Only children with the FULL protective gear). Kumite is part of their karate exams at this grade. They are expected to control all attacks but due to the nature of kumite regular medium contact is made to the body. It is not unusual for a child to get 'winded' by another student.

**General:** The students are now challenged more on a physical level during class. We aim to strengthen their bodies and minds through rigorous exercise. Disruptive or disrespectful behaviour could mean the students are asked to do a repetitive exercise, i.e. push ups or sit ups or squats.

5<sup>th</sup> Kyu and above: (Purple belt and above)

**Basics & Kata:** At this grade it is normal for students to pair up with partners when practicing their basics. Risk of contact MODERATE

**Bunkai:** When teaching these grades it is normal that the students will practise Bunkai with other students in the class. Risk of contact: MODERATE. It is also normal that the instructor might select a student in class to be used in a demonstration. The instructor might make moderate contact with the student when teaching target areas for the application of the kata.

**Partner work:** It is normal that students will practise their basics against each other. Risk of contact MODERATE

**Kumite:** Students at this grade will do kumite regularly (Only children with the FULL protective gear). They are expected to control all attacks but due to the nature of kumite regular medium contact is made to the body.

**Kumite:** is part of all grading and as the students move towards black belt they are regularly pushed out of their comfort zone. This is aimed at building character and mental strength. Having a strong mind and body is important in a world where teenagers are exposed to alcohol and drugs at an early age. It also aims to toughen them up and prepare them mentally should they need to use their skills in self-defence. Risk of contact: HIGH

**General:** The students are now challenged more on a physical level during class. We aim to strengthen their bodies and minds through rigorous exercise. Disruptive or disrespectful behaviour could mean the students are asked to do a repetitive exercise, i.e. push ups or sit ups or squats.

**Sensei Debi Steven** (6<sup>th</sup> Dan)

Head of Funakoshi Limited

**Shihan Kenneth Funakoshi** (10<sup>th</sup> Dan)

Founder/Head of Funakoshi Shotokan Karate

**FSKA (FUNAKOSHI LIMITED) INSTRUCTOR:**

I, ..... have read and understood the **Physical Contact Policy**.  
(please print name)

Signature:..... Date:.....