



Policies, Codes and Procedures

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www.AikikaiIreland.ie

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1. General Policies

1.1 Policy Statement

Aikikai Ireland (AI) is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of all its members, particularly children. Every Member of the AI should, At all times, show respect and understanding for the rights, and safety of others, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the AI and the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland.

It is the policy of Aikikai Ireland (herein after referred to as the AI), to ensure that every child or young person who takes part in any of the AI`s activities should be able to do so in a fun and safe environment and be protected from neglect, bullying, and any form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

For the purpose of this document, the AI follows the practice established by the UN, and defines a child as any person 18 years of age, or under.

This policy statement is based on the * Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sports in Ireland * published by the Irish Sports Council.

1.2 Benefits of Aikido

Aikido: is a non-competitive martial art that promotes peace. Through Aikido techniques students learn to diffuse the force of an attack. The aikidoka never retaliates but always strives to resolve conflict peacefully.

Physical Benefits: Aikido gives the student an edge in other physical activities and sports. Conditioning, balance, timing, relaxation, visualization, kinesthetic awareness and fun are at the core of aikido practice.

Emotional Benefits: Students learn to deal with stressful situations in calm, controlled, yet self expressive ways. Practicing aikido, over time, gives students tools for resolving life's daily conflicts and improves self-esteem.

Social Benefits: The sooner students learn that there are alternatives to fighting, both physically and verbally, the sooner they will experience real personal growth as they develop strong friendships. Aikido encourages good social tendencies that should be a part of everyone's education. Both the individual and our society benefit.

1.3 Dojo Etiquette

1. The dojo is a place of peace, concentration and discipline. The behaviour at the dojo must therefore always be adapted to the creation of this atmosphere.

2. The word of the Sensei is for everyone.

3. Shoes are to be removed before entering the Dojo and mobile phones are switched off. Before entering the Tatami (mat area) make sure feet are clean.

4. When entering the dojo or the Tatami (mat area) a bow is made in the direction of the Shomen (where the picture of the founder O'Sensei is placed). If training has already started wait for the Sensei's permission before stepping onto the tatamis, during training the mats may only be left with the permission of the Sensei.

5. During training talking is to be kept to a minimum.

6. The Aikido-Gi (training suit) is to be clean and finger and toenails are to be kept short to avoid scratching and cutting.

7. When training with your partner(s), fairness and consideration are of supreme importance.

8. During the work on the tatami personal friendships or antipathies are not considered relevant.

9. In training, the attitude toward each person on the tatami is to be equal, neutral, polite and obliging. When changing training partners, first bow to the previous partner and then to the new partner before proceeding with training.

10. The goal of the Aikidoka (person practicing Aikido) is to be helpful, friendly and courteous.

11. Guests and spectators, who do not participate in the class are welcome to watch, avoid behaviour which disturbs the class and those involved.

12. The Sensei is available after the conclusion of the lesson to answer all questions.

13. After the end of the training session, the students leave the tatamis after the Sensei has left the tatamis.

14. After each training session the tatamis (mats) are to be swept.

1.4 Quality Atmosphere and Ethos

All children should be treated in an equitable and fair manner irrespective of age, gender, religion, race, ability, social or ethnic background, or political persuasion, and have the right to protection at all times from sexual, physical or emotional abuse. A young person's centered ethos will ensure that respect for fellow Aikidokas is present at all times. Children with a disability shall be involved in an integrated way thus allowing them to participate to their potential alongside other children.

The key principles underlying this policy are:

Every person under the age of 18 years should be considered as a child for the purpose of this document. While recognising that the protection of the good name of all members of the AI is of the utmost important, the safety and welfare of the child is paramount.

All suspicions and allegations will be taken seriously and will be acted on promptly.

1.5 Safety Statement

Aikikai Ireland will ensure the following:

- (A) Activities are suitable for age and stage of development , and Senseis should hold appropriate qualifications.***
- (B) Know the contact numbers of Emergency Services.***
- (C) Ensure First Aid kit is close at hand with access to qualified First-aider, and ensure that first aid kit is stocked up.***
- (D) Keep a record of any specific medical conditions of the participants.***
- (E) Ensure easy access to medical personnel if needed and have an emergency plan.***
- (F) Keep a record of emergency contact numbers for parents/guardians.***
- (G) If an incident occurs, make a brief record of the problem/injury/ and outcome. Contact the participant's parents and keep them informed of all details.***
- (H) Ensure there is adequate insurance cover for all activities.***

1.6 Code of Conduct for Students.

Please be punctual.

Train for your own enjoyment, not to please parents or Senseis.

Learn the rules and etiquette of the Aikido Dojo and abide by them.

Respect your training partners. Treat them, as you would like to be treated.

Positive, Clear, Creative and Constructive communication is expected at all times when training with fellow Aikidokas.

Never make false allegations against other students /Senseis or any member of the AI.

Behave in a manner that reflects the quality atmosphere and ethos that the AI strive to promote at all times through the principles of Aikido.

YOU are responsible for your own training equipment. Please ensure that your name is on all items.

Clean Aikido gi/Hakama is expected at all times, Nails to be cut short and please remove all jewellery before going into the class. As Aikido is a contact discipline personal hygiene is of the utmost importance.

Cameras, camera mobile phones and other visual recording devices will not be allowed without prior permission at training sessions or Gradings. Please See Section 2.4 of this document for guidelines on photography at Aikido seminars/gradings.

1.7 Code for Parents/Guardians

Aikikai Ireland is committed to providing a safe and fair environment for all juvenile students. Our first priority is the welfare of young students and we are committed to providing an environment, which will allow participants to perform to their best ability, free from bullying and intimidation. AI believes that parents can support this in the following ways

- (A) Be a role model for children and maintain the highest standards of conduct when interacting with children, other parents, and with Senseis and organizers.***
- (B) Encourage your child to abide by rules and etiquette of the Aikido Dojo.***
- (C) Take care not to expose any junior Aikidoka, intentionally or un-intentionally, to embarrassment or disparagement by the use of flippant or sarcastic remarks.***
- (D) Always recognize the value and importance of the Senseis' who provide the opportunities for your child to practice the art of Aikido.***
- (E) Respect, Senseis organisers and other Aikidokas.***
- (F) Encourage mutual respect for fellow students.***
- (G) Parents are encouraged to support all efforts to remove all abusive and bullying behaviour in all its forms. For further details re Bullying, please Section 2.1.3 and 2.3 of this document.***

2. Child Protection

2.1 Child Protection and Welfare

Everyone must be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be suffering from abuse or neglect. This responsibility is particularly relevant to those persons involved in sports clubs, community activities or other organisations who cater for children.

All involved adults, children and parents/guardians operating within the Aikikai Ireland should be aware of how to report child protection concerns, and to whom concerns must be reported, within our organization. The safety of young people is everyone's responsibility. Everyone involved in child protection matters should be aware of his/her responsibility to work in co-operation with the statutory child protection authorities.

2.1.1 Responsibility to report child abuse or neglect

The HSE Children and Family Services should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

Any reasonable concern or suspicion of abuse or neglect must elicit a response. Ignoring the signals or failing to intervene may result in ongoing or further harm to the child. The safety of the child must take priority.

2.1.2 Legal Obligation

All organisations involved with children have an obligation to provide them with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well-being and safeguard them from abuse.

Organisations may also be legally responsible for their failure to provide adequate care and safeguards for children in their care.

Section 176 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006 introduced the criminal charge of reckless endangerment of children. It States:

'A person, having authority or control over children a child or abuser, who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by –

(a) causing or permitting any child to be placed or left in a situation which creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse, or

(b) failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation,

Is guilty of an offence’.

The penalty for a person found guilty of this offence is a fine (no upper limit) and/or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years.

2.1.3 Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse

The term “child abuse” is used to describe ways in which children are harmed, either by adults or peers, and often by those they know and trust.

(A) Neglect

Neglect is normally defined in terms of omission, where a child suffers harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, supervision, affection or medical care. It would also include occasions where an adult leaves a child alone without proper supervision.

(B) Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the ongoing relationship between an adult and a child. It occurs when a child’s need for affection, approval, consistency and security is not met. For children with disabilities it may include over-protection or conversely failure to acknowledge or understand a child’s disability.

Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming, inconsistent or unrealistic expectations of a child, use of unrealistic or over-harsh disciplinary measures, are some examples of emotional abuse.

(C) Physical Abuse

Physical abuse occurs when parents, adults or other children deliberately inflict injuries on a child or knowingly do not act to prevent such injuries. It includes injury caused by biting, shaking, squeezing, burning, hitting, or excessive force or giving children alcohol, drugs or poison. Physical abuse may also be deemed to occur if the nature or intensity of a training session disregards the ability of a child, the capacity of the child’s immature and growing body or puts the child in danger of injury as a result of fatigue or overuse.

(D) Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her sexual gratification or arousal, or for that of other. This form of abuse can range from inappropriate suggestions to sexual

intercourse. It includes intentional touching or molesting. Encouraging children to look at pornographic material or to behave in sexually inappropriate ways also constitutes sexual abuse. Taking photographic images of children for purposes of sexual arousal also constitutes abuse. For guidelines on the use of photography at AI run competitions/ events, please see "Guidelines for Photography", Section 2.4.

(E) Bullying

Bullying may include several forms of abuse. It is the firm policy of Aikikai Ireland that bullying, in any form or circumstances, will not be tolerated and a prompt and decisive response will be made to any indication that it is taking place.

Bullying can be defined as repeating aggression and may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is seen as intentionally aggravating and can be very intimidating. It can take many forms including; Physical (e.g. hitting pinching or kicking), Verbal (e.g. racist, sexual, or homophobic remarks, taunting and threats, and Emotional (e.g. isolation from games and activities and social rejection by their peer groups).

Bullying Can Occur As Follows:

Child to Child – includes physical aggression, verbal bullying, intimidation, or isolation.

Adult to Child – includes the use of repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidatory nature, or any comment intended to degrade the child.

Adult to Adult – includes verbal aggression towards other adults in order to achieve a beneficial outcome for own self or own child.

Child to Adult - includes repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidatory nature by an individual child or a group of children.

Many children are reluctant to tell adults that they are being bullied, for fear of ridicule, inaction or further intimidation if the circumstances are made public. It is important to remember that bullying also takes place in older age groups. If an allegation of bullying is reported to the Children's Officer, or to any member of the Executive Committee, and if the problem cannot be resolved informally, immediate steps will be taken. The AI Executive Committee will be the final arbitrator as whatever action it considers appropriate in the circumstances.

How would you know if a child is being bullied?

All bullies operate using furtiveness, threats and fear. Bullying can therefore only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so. The following indicators are warning signs that a young person might be getting bullied.

- **Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities**
- **Physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings).**
- **Stress-caused illness – headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained.**
- **Fearful behaviour (fear of walking to a meeting, going different routes, asking to be driven)**
- **Frequent loss of, or shortage of, money with vague explanations.**
- **Having few friends.**
- **Changes in behaviour (withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed).**
- **Not eating.**
- **Attempting suicide or hinting at suicide.**
- **Anxiety (shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics) .**

There are other possible reasons for many of the above.

For more information re Bullying and our anti bullying Policy please see Section 2.6 of this document.

2.1.4 Responding to allegations of abuse

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to the Health Board or the Gardai. The act also covers the offence of "false reporting". This Act came into operation on 23rd January 1999.

If a young person says or indicates that he/she is being abused, or information is obtained which gives cause for concern that a young person is being abused, you should react immediately. False allegations of abuse can occur but are very rare.

The following responses are advised:

- (A) **React calmly.**

- (B) Listen compassionately and carefully – keep the questions to an absolute minimum, facilitating the child to tell about the problem.**
- (C) Take what the child is saying seriously.**
- (D) Remember the child has decided to tell about something very important and has taken a risk to do so.**
- (E) Reassure the child.**
- (F) If the nature of what the child is saying is unclear, use open, non-specific questions such as "Can you explain to me what you mean by that".**
- (G) The child should be given some indication of what happens next - informing parents/guardians, health board or social services. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage.**
- (H) Carefully record the details.**

The following actions should be avoided:

- (A) Do not make promises of confidentiality – it may not be possible to keep that promise.**
- (B) Do not make a judgment or make negative comments about the alleged abuser.**
- (C) Do not speculate or make assumptions.**
- (D) Do not interview the child – do not probe for more information than is offered.**
- (E) Do not approach the alleged abuser.**
- (F) Do not allow your shock or distaste to show.**

2.1.5 Designated Liaison Person for reporting abuse / neglect

Every organisation, both public and private, that is providing services for children or that is in regular direct contact with children should:

- (a) Identify a designated liaison person to act as a liaison with outside agencies and a resource person to any staff member or volunteer who has child protection concerns.**

(b) The designated Liaison person is responsible for ensuring that the standard reporting procedure is followed, so that suspected cases of neglect or abuse are referred promptly to the designated person in the HSE Children & Family Services or in the event of an emergency and the unavailability of the HSE, to an Garda Siochana.

(c) The designated liaison person should ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and undertake any training considered necessary to keep themselves updated on any new developments.

****The Children's Officer in each individual AI club will assume the role of designated liaison person for reporting abuse neglect***

2.1.6 Reporting Procedure :

1. Where an Aikikai Ireland club member (Sensei or otherwise) has reason to believe that a child attending training with AI may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused / neglected - then he/she will report this matter to the club Children's Officer without delay.

1.1. The club Sensei or any member of AI Executive Committee should be informed in the event that the Children's Officer is unavailable.

1.2. In the event that a child makes a disclosure of abuse / neglect directly to a club member, that member should be guided by section 2.1.4 Responding to allegations of abuse.

2. Upon receiving a report of suspected child abuse / neglect from a club member, the club Children's Officer must decide whether further action is required i.e. are there reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused.

2.2. Before deciding whether or not to make a formal report, the Children's Officer may discuss the reported concern with the HSE Children & Family Services Duty Social Worker.

2.3. In those cases where a Children's Officer decides not to report concerns to the HSE or Gardai, the individual club member who initially raised the concern should be given a clear written statement of the reasons why the Children Officer has made his/her decision not to take further action. The individual club member should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free as individuals to consult with, or report to, the HSE or Gardai. The provision of the Protection for Person's Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 apply.

3. Where reasonable grounds for concern are established that a child club member may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused – the Children’s Officer will report this concern without delay to the HSE Children and family Services.

3.1. The Standard Reporting Form for reporting child welfare and protection concerns to the HSE (see Appendix) should be used. If a report is made by telephone, this form should be completed and forwarded subsequently to the HSE.

4. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or to risk of harm pending HSE intervention. In the event of an emergency where a child is considered to be at immediate danger and contact cannot be established with the HSE, contact should be made with the Gardai via the local Gardai station.

5. Information to be included when a child protection concern is reported to HSE Children and Family Services by AI Club Children’s Officer (or any member of AI Executive Committee):

(i) the name, address and age of the child (or children) for whom the report is being made;

(ii) the name of the child’s school (where known);

(iii) the name, club role and contact details of the person reporting concerns

(iv) a full account of what constitutes the grounds for concern in relation to the protection and welfare of the child or children, e.g. details of the allegation, incident, dates, description of any injuries, etc;

(v) the names and addresses of the parents/carers of the child or children;

(vi) the name, address and details of the person allegedly causing concern in relation to the child or children;

(vii) the child’s and/or parents/carers’ own views, if known and relevant;

(viii) any other relevant information

6. The Club Children’s Officer should (where appropriate) consult and inform individual senior club Sensei of all matters arising in regard to child welfare / protection. Where necessary, the senior club Sensei will share this information with AI Executive Committee members (Ethical and statutory codes concerned with confidentiality and data protection will be strictly adhered to).

2.2 Allegations of Abuse Against Sensei's.

In case of allegations against a Sensei, the safety of the child making the allegation and any others who are/may be at risk should be ensured and this should take precedence over any other consideration.

If a Sensei is the subject of the concern s/he should be treated with respect and fairness. The matter should be reported to the local health board/social services following the standard reporting procedure outlined in Section 2.1.6, above.

In the event that the concern is connected to the actions of an Sensei in the club, the individual involved in the concern should be asked to stand aside pending the outcome of any investigation by the Statutory Authorities.

It is advisable that an appointed committee member, other than the Chairperson who takes the responsibility for reporting, undertakes this task.

The accused should be informed, in private, (a) that an allegation has been made against him/her, and (b) the nature of the allegation. S/he should be afforded an opportunity to respond. His/her response should be noted and passed on to the health board/social services personnel.

All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his/her parents/guardians, the alleged offender, his/her family) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.

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. Information should be stored in a secure place, with limited access to designated people.

The requirements of the Data Protection laws should be adhered to. Breach of confidentiality is a serious matter.

Anonymous complaints / can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/children is paramount.

Any such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the AI Executive Committee. The information should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner. Rumours should not be allowed to hang in the air. Any rumours relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson and checked out without delay.

2.3 Anti-Bullying Policy

Who should deal with bullying?

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reported to the health board of An Garda Siochana, dealing with bullying behaviour is normally the responsibility of all Senseis within the AI organisation...

How can it be prevented?

- ***Ensure that all members follow the code of conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member.***
- ***Deal with any incidents as they arise.***
- ***Use a whole group policy or 'no-blame approach', i.e., not 'bullying the bully' but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a 'shared concern' of the group, (see below).***
- ***Reinforce that there is 'a permission to tell' culture rather than a 'might is right'.***
- ***Encourage young people to negotiate, co-operative and help others, particularly new or different children.***
- ***Offer victim immediate support and put the 'no blame approach' into operation.***
- ***Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can't ignore it, it hurts too much.***
- ***Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game.***
- ***Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault.***

What is the 'No Blame' Approach?

Step 1 – Interview with the victim

If you find that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim. At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling. Try asking the following questions:

- Was it verbal or physical intimidation?
- How hurt is the victim?
- Was it within his/her own peer group?
- Ensure the victim that his/her name will be not come out in the investigation. Actively listen.

Step 2 – Meet with all involved

Arrange to meet with all those involved; this should include some bystanders, those who may have colluded, those who joined in and those who initiated the bullying.

- Have a minimum of six to eight in the group – keep the number controllable
- Make a point of calling a 'special' meeting
- Ensure the severity of the topic is understood to all
- Speak only of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the victim
- Play on the conscience of all – ask questions like: How would you feel? Would you like it done to you?

Step 3 – Explain the problem.

The distress being suffered as a result of the bullying incident is explained. At this stage the details of the incident or the allocation of the blame is not discussed. Explain the feelings of loneliness, feeling left out, rejected, laughed at. Try asking questions: - Would they like if it happened to them? "Someone here in this group was bullied by someone within the group, what could we do to see it does not happen again?". Listen, watch out for reactions, and pick up on any without isolating anyone

Step 4 – Share the responsibility

Explain what steps / controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will lose out as a result.

Step 5 – Asking the group for their ideas

At this stage the group is encouraged to suggest ways that would make the victim feel happier. All positive responses are noted. Use phrases "if it were you" to encourage a response. Listen to all suggestions and note them.

Step 6 – Leave it to them

Now the problem has been identified, solutions suggested, the problem is now handed over to the group to solve. Arrange to meet again in a week's time. Pass responsibility over to the group and give a time frame within which something must be done.

Step 7 – Meet them again

All of the group, including the bully, discuss how things are going, who is doing what and have there been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process.

2.4 Guidelines on use of Photographic and Filming Equipment at Seminars and Practice Sessions

Amateur photographers/film/camera mobiles/video operators wishing to record an event such as a training session or Embukai should seek accreditation with the event organizer or Sensei of practice session.

During seminars or Training sessions, children must not be photographed or filmed without their permission and the express permission of one of their parents or person acting for the parent. A record of the permission should be kept.

Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or Training session should seek accreditation with the event organizer by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded.

A record should be kept of accreditations.

This information should be published prominently in event programs and should be announced over the public address system prior to the start of an event. The following is the recommended wording:

"In line with the recommendation in the Aikikai Ireland Code of Conduct, the promoters of this event request that any person wishing to engage in any video, zoom or close range photography should register their details with the organizers. On no account should children be photographed or filmed without their permission and the permission of their parents ".

Videoing as a coaching aid: Video equipment can be used as a legitimate coaching aid. However, permission should first be obtained from the student and the student's parent/carer.

Anyone concerned about any photography-taking place at events or training sessions can contact the organizers and ask them to deal with the matter.

2.5 Role of Children's Officers

Aikikai Ireland will appoint one or more Children's Officers. These officers are an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere in any club. They act as a resource to members with regard to children's issues and also ensure that children have a voice in the running of the club and can freely talk of their experiences.

Government guidelines advise that all clubs should appoint a children's officer and this should be done in accordance with recommended selection and recruitment procedures.

The Children's Officer should have the following functions:

- (A) To promote the Code of Ethics & Good Practice.***
- (B) To influence policy and practice and to prioritise children's needs.***
- (C) To ensure that children know how and whom they can report their concerns to within the club. Information disclosed by a child should be dealt with in accordance with the Department of Health and Children's Guidelines "Children First".***
- (D) To encourage the participation of parents/guardians in club activities.***
- (E) To co-operate with parents to ensure that each child enjoys his/her participation in Aikido.***
- (F) To act as a resource with regard to best practice in children's sport.***
- (G) To report regularly to the Executive Committee.***
- (H) To monitor changes in membership and follow up any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children or Senseis or other assistants.***

Children's Officers do not have the responsibility of investigating or validating child protection concerns within the club and have no counselling or therapeutic role. This responsibility lies with the Health Boards and An Garda Síochána.

2.6 Disciplinary Procedure

When an infraction of the rules of the Aikikai Ireland occurs, the following procedure shall apply:

1st Offence:

A verbal warning is given by an executive committee member or Sensei, whichever is appropriate. A verbal warning will be noted in the minutes of the AI committee..

2nd Offence:

In the case of a child, the parent/guardian is informed in writing. In the case of a member over 18 years of age, the member is informed in writing that they are in breach of the AI`s code.

The warning will be sent by a committee member or Sensei, whichever is appropriate.

3rd Offence:

The Committee, in consultation with any Sensei or other assistant who might be involved, will decide a sanction, appropriate to the nature, frequency, and consequences of the infringement.

2.7 Disciplinary Complaints Procedure

It is part of the ethos of the Aikikai Ireland and its affiliated clubs that infractions of the rules are dealt with, in the first instance, through the disciplinary procedures laid out in 2..9, of this document. However, where this fails, or where the infractions of the rules are persistent, of a serious nature, or likely to cause injury, damage or offence, the Committee has in place a complaints procedure that allows all members with dissatisfaction to register their complaint in a formal way and put an open process of investigation into action as follows:

- (A) Complaints may be lodged by all members of the club.***
- (B) The secretary of the club should receive them in writing within 7 days of the alleged incident.***
- (C) The complaint should outline all relevant details about other parties involved.***
- (D) The complaint will be brought to the attention of the Chairperson by the secretary, who will convene the Disciplinary committee, consisting of the chair and 2 other ordinary members.***
- (E) If the complaint involves a criminal offence the Chairperson should inform the statutory authorities and disband the Disciplinary committee.***
- (F) The disciplinary committee should hear the case of all parties involved and decide if a rule or regulation has been infringed.***
- (G) They should, in writing, inform those involved of the sanctions to be imposed. Written notification should be given to parents if the complaint is against a junior member.***
- (H) Keep all records on file. The Secretary will be responsible for storing all records. Allegations that prove to have been unfounded will be kept on file for a maximum of 12 months of being received.***
- (I) If any party does not agree with the disciplinary committee they an appeal can be lodged. (See Section 2.10 of this document, "Appeals Procedures").***
- (J) For disciplinary procedures involving Senseis, assistants, or members of the executive committee, please see Section 3.5 of this document.***

2.8 Appeals Procedures

- (A) *If any party does not agree with the disciplinary committee they can appeal the decision in writing within 10-day period.***
- (B) *The appeals committee is convened, whose chairperson should be taken from the executive committee (not the original chair) and 2 other ordinary members (not the original members).***
- (C) *The appeals committee should confirm or set aside or change any sanction imposed by the disciplinary committee.***

3. All Senseis/Club Personnel.

3.1 Preamble

Aikikai Ireland fully recognises the key role Senseis play in the lives of children in sport. All Senseis have as their first priority the children's safety and enjoyment of the art of Aikido and should adhere to the guidelines and regulations set out in the AI Code of Policies, Codes and Procedures.

The AI will take all reasonable steps to ensure that Senseis working with young people are suitable and appropriately qualified.

Application procedures are therefore necessary and these procedures apply to all persons, paid or unpaid, with substantial access to young people. References will be required and will be followed up.

There will be a "sign-up" procedure, whereby the appointed/re-appointed Senseis agrees to abide by the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport and to the AI Code of Conduct.

Potential appointees will be given a copy of both when appointed by the Executive Committee.

3.2 Recruitment Policies for Sensei's

The committee will take reasonable steps to ensure that suitable people work with members and young students. Specific procedures will be adopted for all persons with substantial access to young people, see junior section of this manual.

All Senseis should undergo a recruitment process, (see application form) and those taking on a temporary teaching role should be aware of the guidelines for Senseis.

- (A) Checks with referees will be followed up.***
- (B) It is recommended that terms of reference, clearly outlining the tasks to be performed and the skills required, be drawn up before recruiting and appointing a Sensei.***
- (C) A decision to appoint a Sensei is the responsibility of the Club and not of any one individual within it.***
- (D) The club committee should ratify all recommendations for appointment.***
- (E) Every effort will be made to manage and support appointed Senseis.***

There will be a "sign-up" procedure, whereby the newly recruited Sensei agrees to abide by the C of E & GP and the policies /codes and procedures of the AI.

3.3 Code of Conduct for Sensei's .

***** Aikikai Ireland Sensei's Code *****

Remember You are a role model, always lead by example, and as Senseis of a juvenile class you have a duty of care, which is more onerous than that of a Sensei to an adult class.

Be generous with your praise when it is deserved and encourage a sense of team spirit amongst all participants.

Watch out for bullying.

Never use foul or vulgar language.

Never ridicule a student for making mistakes. Screaming abuse or unrealistic instructions never improved a student's performance.

Be reasonable in your demands on your student's time. Remember that they have other interests that should also be encouraged.

If you need to discipline a student – take the student aside and talk to him/her quietly.

Be consistent in your approach – if you are inconsistent it confuses young people and they will lose faith in your ability.

Do not ignore their questions – if you do they will stop asking and seek answers elsewhere and perhaps leave your club.

Do not ever give the impression that you are perfect or infallible - you insult their intelligence and leave yourself open to ridicule.

Be aware at all times of the Tenets and Core Values of the AI.

As a Sensei your role is to remain objective at all times and never resort to favouritism in any shape or form.

Try to remember Aikido is not the only martial art in the world and that all education is complementary.

Be generous with praise and never ridicule or shout at players for making mistakes. All young students are entitled to respect.

Be careful to avoid the "star system". Each child deserves equal time and attention.

Care must be taken not to expose a child intentionally Or unintentionally to embarrassment or disparagement by use of sarcastic or flippant remarks about the child or his/her family.

Physical punishment or physical force must never be used. Never punish a mistake - by verbal means, physical means, or exclusion.

Encourage the development of respect for fellow students and other Senseis, avoid criticism of fellow Senseis.

It is important to realise that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted by the participant or by outsiders. Senseis are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with students. It is unadvisable for Senseis to involve young Aikidoka in their personal life i.e. visit to Senseis home or overnight stays.

3.4 Policy for Travelling with Children

If the activities involve staying away from home overnight, attention should be paid to the following:

- ***Written parental consent (for each individual trip) forms to be signed. The Consent Form in the ` Procedures Section ` within the Level I Manual and may be photocopied for your use.***
- ***Cars used to transport Aikidokas: Those who use their own Vehicles to transport players must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover and be careful not to carry more than the permitted number of passengers. Senseis are actively discouraged from travelling alone in cars with children.***
- ***Adequate insurance, to cover all aspects of the trip.***
- ***Any information about the children which may be relevant to staying away overnight, i.e., allergies, medical problems, or special needs.***
- ***Appropriate and well-supervised sleeping arrangements. As a norm adults should not share a room with a child. Where the presence of an adult is required there should be more than one child in the room with the adult. If children are sharing a room, it should be with those of the same age and sex.***
- ***Respect for the privacy of children and young people in Dormitories, Changing rooms, showers and toilets.***
- ***Where there are mixed groups there should be at least one adult female in the group.***
- ***All adults who travel on away trips should be carefully chosen.***
- ***The roles and responsibilities of adults on away trips should be clearly defined.***
- ***Adequate adult/child ratios should be observed.***

- ***Special care should be taken in the selection of homes for overnight stays and where practicable more than one child should be placed with each host family.***
- ***Avoid being alone with one Aikidoka (e.g. travelling to a venue or consulting/ advising in closed off room – If necessary leave the door open and be in earshot of others.***
- ***Avoid unnecessary physical contact outside the normal Dojo training session.***
- ***Remember casual comment can be open to misconstruction.***
- ***All group socialisation should take place in communal area. (i.e. no boys in girls' rooms and vice versa).***
- ***Alcoholic drink, smoking or other illegal substances are forbidden to students.***
- ***The behaviour of the group should at all times be such that the good name of the AI is upheld.***
- ***Lights out times should be enforced.***
- ***Young students should be under reasonable supervision at all times and should never be allowed to leave the accommodation or sports venue without prior permission***
- ***Injury(s): Make a brief record of injury and action taken.***
- ***Behavioural Problems: Make a brief record of the problem/action/outcome.***
- ***Submit report/s on return home.***
- ***Parents/Guardians should be informed as soon as possible should their child suffer a significant injury or accident.***

Senseis /Authorised Volunteer asked to travel with the group in a supervisory capacity must sign up for each overnight trip.

Parents must sign an agreement that their children will abide by the Code of Conduct of our organisation.

3.5 Disciplinary Procedures: Sensei's and Committee Members

An allegation of misconduct involving Executive Committee members, Senseis, or any other person involved in the running of any AI club is a serious matter, with implications for the well-being of the alleged victim, the good name of the alleged perpetrator, and a potentially detrimental effect on the proper conduct of the organisation. In instances in which the misconduct is not serious, or arises from a misunderstanding, AI prefer to deal with such allegations by means of informal reconciliation. However, (a) when, in the opinion of the Executive Committee such informal means have been exhausted; (b) when the accusations are of a serious nature; or (c) when either the accused or the accuser requests, the following process will be applied:

Within a period not exceeding two weeks of the first verbal statement of allegations of misconduct, the accuser shall furnish, in writing, a signed and dated statement containing the following:

- a. General substance of the allegations of misconduct***
- b. Details of individual instances of misconduct, including the location, date, approximate time, as well as names and contact details of witnesses who were present, as well as their relationship to the accuser and accused.***
- c. Good cause as to why the alleged instances of misconduct outlined in the statement constitute a matter that falls within the jurisdiction of the Club.***

Upon receipt of such an allegation of misconduct, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee shall appoint a Disciplinary Sub Committee, who shall be authorised to investigate the allegations. The Sub-Committee shall be composed of four members, at least one of who shall be external to the Executive, and who will have relevant experience. Every effort will be made to achieve gender balance in the composition of the Sub-Committee. If it deems necessary, the Sub-Committee may request that the Executive Committee provide resources to obtain specialised professional advice.

As a part of their investigations, the Sub-Committee of Enquiry shall discuss the allegations with the person or persons accused of misconduct. The Sub-Committee will offer the accused the opportunity to supply the names and contact details of witnesses who were present at the time of the alleged instances of misconduct. The Sub-Committee will also discuss the allegations with the accuser.

The Sub-Committee will be asked to report under the following three headings:

- ***The truthfulness of the allegations of misconduct.***
- ***The seriousness of such misconduct.***
- ***Whether or not such misconduct falls within the jurisdiction of the Club and its activities.***

The Sub-Committee will present its findings three headings in writing.

All Sub-Committee decisions will be decided by a majority vote within the Sub-Committee. In the case of an evenly balanced vote, the Chairperson shall be co-opted to the Sub-Committee to cast the deciding vote.

The report of the Sub-Committee of Enquiry will be presented to a meeting of the whole Executive, convened solely for that purpose, excluding the accuser, the accused, and any other Executive member who may feel the need to declare a conflict of interest.

The Executive Committee thus composed will adjudicate on the truthfulness of the allegations of misconduct, based on the report of the Sub-Committee. If it finds that the allegations are truthful, it will further rule on whether or not the misconduct falls within the jurisdiction of the Club. It will then rule on the seriousness of the misconduct. All decisions of the Executive Committee on these matters will be determined by a majority vote.

If the Club decides, based on the report of the Sub-Committee, that the allegations are truthful, within the jurisdiction of the Club, and of a serious nature, it will decide whether or not disciplinary action is warranted, and if so, what form such disciplinary action will take. Should the Executive Committee determine that the allegations are unfounded and malicious, it may decide to implement disciplinary procedures against the accuser.

Any party to the original allegation may appeal all decisions of the Sub-Committee, and actions arising from such decisions. The composition of the Appeals Sub-Committee will be determined by the Chairperson, who shall take cognisance of the nature of the original allegation in convening such a Sub-Committee. The Appeals Sub-Committee will either uphold, uphold with modifications, or reject the decision of the original Sub-Committee.

4. Appendices

Appendix A: Membership Forms



NAME:

ADDRESS:
.....

D.O.B. : **E-MAIL :**

PHONE NO: **MOBILE**

CLUB: **GRADE :**

HEALTH:

Do you have any medical condition that the Sensei should be aware of? Please state details.

.....

Are you on medication? If yes – please give details.

.....

***** SPECIAL MEDICAL INFORMATION /ALLERGIES :**

Please state type :

In the event of an emergency and should I not be contactable I DO / DO NOT consent to my child receiving any medical treatment deemed necessary.

I will respect the rules and procedures of the AI and the Code of Ethics & Good Practice as adopted by Aikikai Ireland.

Signed : _____

Date: _____

Welcome and Thank you for completing the membership form.

www.AikikaiIreland.ie

Appendix B: Application Forms



**** SENSEI APPLICATION FORM ****

Confidential.

Name: -----

Address: -----

Telephone No: ----- **Mobile :** -----

E-mail: ----- **Date of Birth:** -----

Previous experience/involvement in Martial Arts? Please supply details.

Aikido / Sporting/ NGB Qualifications:

Name of Club	Dates	Job Title	Reason leaving? for

Previous experience/involvement in voluntary work related to children? Please supply details.

Name of Organisation	Dates	Nature of work	Reason leaving? for

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation in the past?

Yes	
No	

(If you have answered yes we will contact you in confidence)

Please note that, Aikikai Ireland is an organisation fully committed to the welfare/protection and happiness of children, all appointments are subject to reference checks and when available, Garda clearance.

Do you agree to operate within the *Code of Ethics & Good Practice as adopted by Aikikai Ireland.**

Yes	
No	

Referee:

Please supply the names of two responsible people whom we can contact and who from personal knowledge is willing to endorse your application. If you had a previous involvement in sport, one of these names should be that of an administrator/Sensei of your last club/place of involvement.

Referees Name/Address

Signed:

Date:

.....

.....

Appendix C: Parent Handout re Policy and Procedures (Away Trips)

We in Aikikai Ireland are fully committed to ensuring that all necessary steps are taken to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people who participate in Aikido.

It is the policy of AI to safeguard the welfare of our under age Aikidokas by protecting them from physical, emotional or sexual harm and from neglect or bullying.

This information is given to you not as a response to massive problems within Aikido , rather our organisation has accepted its moral and legal responsibilities and mainly to ensure that children enjoy Aikido in safety.

At all times we are committed to providing the highest possible standards of care in a safe environment.

In this respect children are entitled to:

- ❖ Be safe***
- ❖ Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect .***
- ❖ Be happy, have fun and enjoy Aikido.***
- ❖ Comment and make suggestions in an appropriate and constructive manner.***
- ❖ Be listened to.***
- ❖ Be believed.***

Most importantly they are entitled to express concerns and make complaints in an appropriate way and have these dealt with through an effective complaints procedure.

The Children's Officer for our club is

and they can be contacted at :

.....
.....

On all away trips there is a designated Head of Team /Delegation who has overall responsibility for the student's well being, behaviour and accommodation arrangements.

The designated Head of Team/Delegation for this Event is:

Name & Contact Number

He/she will also act as the designated child protection officer for the trip and all concerns or complaints should be submitted to this person.

In the event that the complaint refers to this person they can approach any member of staff of their choice and they can be assured that their concerns will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

Parents and students are also advised that they can also raise concerns with the AI's National Children's Officer :

Name: & Contact Number :.....

Parents and students inhibited for any reason in reporting any incident internally ,or are unhappy with the internal response, can also report concerns to your local Health Board who have statutory responsibility for safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children here in Ireland.

The first priority is that no student will be exposed to unnecessary risk in keeping with the fundamental principle that the welfare of the child is the first and paramount importance.

All allegations of child abuse will be managed, in accordance with the Government Guidelines, in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice.

In keeping with best practice standards, a Parent/guardian Travel Consent /Medical Form is required for all activities relating to your son/daughters participation whilst in the care of the designated Head of Team .

Appendix D: Parent Guardian Travel Medical Consent Form.
TRAVEL CONSENT FORM
(UNDER 18s – same form for seniors)

Seminar :

Date:

NAME:

ADDRESS:.....

HOME PHONE: **MOBILE:**

E-MAIL ADDRESS OF PARENT :

PARENTS/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE:

EMERGENCY CONTACT No.

HEALTH:

Do you have any medical condition that the Sensei should be aware of ? Please state details.

Are you on medication?

***** SPECIAL MEDICAL INFORMATION /ALLERGIES :**

Please state type :

A) Underage format.

In the event of an emergency and should I not be contactable I DO / DO NOT consent to my child receiving any medical treatment deemed necessary.

I will respect the rules and procedures of the AI and the Code of Ethics & Good Practice as adopted by the Aikikai Ireland.

Parent Signature:

Date:.....

A) Senior 18years and over..

In the event of an emergency I give my consent to :

Name: **Contact No:**
who will act on my behalf, should any medical treatment be deemed necessary.

I will respect the rules and procedures of the AI and the Code of Ethics & Good Practice as adopted by Aikikai Ireland.

Signature: :

Date:

Appendix E: Standard Reporting Form for Reporting Child Protection and Welfare Concerns to a Health Board.

**Standard reporting Form
For
Reporting Child Protection and Welfare Concerns to a Health Board**

1. Date of Report :

2. Name of person reporting:

.....

3. Address of person reporting:

.....

4. Relationship of reporting person with child :

.....

5. Method of reporting (telephone call, personal call to office):

.....

6. FAMILY DETAILS
Details of child concerned

Surname	Forename
D.O.B.	Male/ Female
Alias (known as)	
Address :	
Correspondence address (if different)	
Telephone number	E-mail:

7. State whether you consider your report to indicate (a) suspected or actual child abuse or (b) need for family support, giving reasons

	Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Abuse	Neglect
Suspected				
Actual				

8. Details of other family members/household members

NAME	AGE	RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD	EMPLOYMENT/ SCHOOL	LOCATION

In cases of emergency, or outside health board hours, reports should be made to An Garda Siochana.

9.

**Name of other professionals involved with child/ren and/or parents/carers. Public health nurse: School:General practitioner:
Any other agency or professional involved (please describe the nature of any involvement:**

10. REPORT DETAILS

Describe, as fully as possible the nature of the problem or Incident being reported, giving details of times and dates of Individual Incidents, the circumstances in which they occurred, any other Persons who were present at the time, and their involvement:

11.

Has any explanation been offered by the child, and/or parents/carer which would account for the current problem or incident? (details)

12.

As far as possible, describe the state of the child/rens physical, Mental and emotional well being.

13.

If child abuse is being alleged, who is believed to be responsible for causing it: Include (if known)

Name:

Address:

Describe (in detail) any risks to which the child/ren in this situation are believed to be exposed.

15.

How did this information come to your attention?

16.

What has prompted you to report your concern at this time?

17.

What evidence of Harm exists at present?

18.

Are there any factors in the child and/or parents/care present situation, which may have relevance to the current concern? (For Example, recent illness, bereavement, separation, addiction, mental Health problem or other difficulty)

19.

Are there any factors in the Childs and/or parents/carers situation which could be considered protective or helpful (for example, extended family or community support.

20.

Has any action been taken in response to the current concern or Incident/ details: Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to the health board?

21.

Is there a need for urgent protective action at this point?

SIGNED _____

DATE _____

Appendix F: Definitions Used in this Document

Child:

For the purpose of this document, The Aikikai Ireland follows the practice established by the UN, and defines a child as any person 18 years of age, or under.

Sensei:

Any person instructing in all aspects of Aikido as practiced and taught by Aikikai Ireland.

Committee Member:

Any member of the Executive Committee of Aikikai Ireland. This includes both those positions defined by the AI Constitution (Copy of same may be had on request), as well as any additional positions that the Committee may chose to bring into being at its ordinary meetings.

Member:

Any person, whether adult or child, who is a fully paid-up member of Aikikai Ireland.

Parent/Guardian:

Even when it is not explicitly stated, the word "parent" in this document refers to any adult who has a duty of care towards a child.

Student:

Any person, whether child or adult, who is learning the art of Aikido under the auspices of the Aikikai Ireland.