



Republic of Ireland Taekwon-Do Association (R.I.T.A.)

Instructors/Assistants Code of Ethics

Taekwon-Do and Adults

Although much of this document refers to young people, many of the points and its philosophy applies to teaching male and female adults too, indeed many of the principles are outlined in General Choi's encyclopaedia.

Taekwon-Do and Young People

The R.I.T.A. is indebted to the instructors/assistants who give of their time in providing Taekwon-Do opportunities for children and young people (up to 18 years of age). Taekwon-Do provides an excellent pathway for children and young people to learn new skills, become more confident and maximise their own potential. Through their participation, they can learn and develop life skills, have fun and enjoyment, make friends and experience life in a way that can enhance their personal growth throughout their lives.

People become involved in Taekwon-Do for young people for a variety of different reasons. They may come from a variety of sporting backgrounds and take on various roles within the school. Yet irrespective of their role or responsibility, they all share the common goal of providing Taekwon-Do opportunities for young people.

Instructors/assistants all have an important role to play in promoting good practice in children's Taekwon-Do. They should have, as their first priority, children's safety and enjoyment of Taekwon-Do.

The R.I.T.A. want Taekwon-Do to be safe, to be fun and to ensure that no matter what level of ability they have, that it takes place in the spirit of **'FAIR PLAY'**.

Fair play is the guiding principle of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice which is designed to provide guidance for those working with young people in all sports and martial arts. It outlines the type of issues that need to be discussed and addressed to provide the safest and most enjoyable environment not only for students but also the instructors/assistants involved.

There is a competitive side to Taekwon-Do and as such students train and compete to win in each of the disciplines. Instructors/assistants should develop students to their maximum potential to help them achieve the goal of winning but should not do so in a way that fosters/encourages a win at all cost mentality.

Instructors/assistants achieve satisfaction from working with children and young people. Focusing on the individual participant's needs and performance encourages young people to achieve and demonstrate enjoyment, equality and fair play. They will come to realise that standards of behaviour are as important as performance.

In taking this approach children are encouraged to:

- Do their best – put in their best effort.
- Improve and develop their skills.
- Make friends.
- Play by the rules.

- Appreciate/accept everyone in the group, regardless of ability, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

Student Centred Approach

Instructors/assistants need to be aware of why children want to be involved in Taekwon-Do. They want to learn new skills, make new friends, be part of a group, to win and be successful, experience challenges, excitement and action. While winning is important, it must be remembered that winning at all costs does not meet the needs of students. Results are not necessarily a good indicator of instructor effectiveness or ability, the improvement level of students and their level of enjoyment is. Instructors/assistants should aim to provide a safe and enjoyable environment where children and young people are placed at the centre of all activities.

In promoting good practice and creating a student centred approach Instructors/assistants should:

- Act as good role models.
- Encourage and be positive during sessions so that students leave with a sense of achievement.
- Set challenging, realistic but achievable goals.
- Plan and prepare each session appropriately and ensure proper levels of supervision.
- Ensure that all activities are inclusive and allow all students to participate in an enjoyable way.
- Put the welfare and enjoyment of students first and strike a balance between this and winning or achieving results.
- Enforce the principles of fair play treating each student equally, with dignity and respect and ensure that all students play within the rules.
- Be aware of the developmental stages and needs of students.
- Avoid over training and over emphasis on competition.
- Involve parents/guardians and other schools members in what we do.
- Be qualified and up to date with the latest teaching knowledge and skills

Best Practice

In keeping children and young people at the forefront of planning and practice, Instructors/assistants can be confident that students will enjoy their Taekwon-Do experiences and that their actions are regarded as safe and in keeping with the principle that the welfare of children is of paramount consideration.

Instructors/assistants are given a position of trust by parents/guardians and students, and should show the highest standards of behaviour whilst in the company of children.

It is important that Instructors/assistants follow an agreed code of good practice and parents/school officials are satisfied that Instructors/assistants are suitable to lead the activities undertaken. It is important to note that in adhering to these guidelines we ensure

not only a safe environment for students but also a safe environment in which Instructors/assistants can operate. If students are present, instructors/assistants should always conduct themselves in a manner consistent with that expected in the Dojang whether they are in a formal or social situation.

Instructors/assistants should never:

- Exert undue influence over a student in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Share a room with a young person alone on away trips.
- Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and/or make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child.
- Use any form of corporal punishment or physical force on a young person.
- Take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adult.
- Undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of young people. Most Instructors/assistants work in an environment where it is recognised that, in a martial arts context, certain types of teaching require a 'hands on approach', i.e., it may be necessary to support a participant in order to physically demonstrate a particular technique. This should only occur when necessary and in an open and appropriate way with the knowledge, permission and full understanding of the participant concerned and his/her parents/guardians.

Instructors/assistants must realise that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted, not only by the student, but by outsiders motivated by jealousy, dislike or mistrust and could lead to allegations of sexual misconduct or impropriety. Therefore Instructors/assistants should be aware of, and avoid all situations conducive to risk.

Where possible, Instructors/assistants should avoid:

- Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others.
- Taking sessions alone (always employ "Two Deep" supervision).
- Taking children to their homes.
- Taking children on journeys alone in their care.

Safety

Instructors/assistants have a responsibility to ensure the safety of the students with whom they work as far as possible within the limits of their control. Therefore, Instructors/assistants should seek to create a safe and enjoyable environment in which to play and train.

In this respect:

- Regular safety checks should be carried out in relation to premises, training facilities and equipment.
- Appropriate safety rules should be adopted and implemented.
- Parents/guardians should be informed of the starting and finishing times of training sessions and events.
- A first aid kit should be available at all training sessions /events and injuries should be

recorded, with a note of action taken in relation to each one. Never make injured students train.

- Parents/Guardians should be notified of injuries/illness which their children incur while participating in any Taekwon-Do activity.

In promoting “Taekwon-Do” Instructors\Assistants should:

- Encourage participation and enjoyment.
- Emphasise and praise effort.
- Act as a good role model.
- Actively discourage students from abusing, officials, team mates or opponents.
- Insist on **FAIR PLAY**
- Be realistic with your expectations.
- Be aware of students feelings.
- Never encourage a child to lie or cheat e.g. lie about their age or grade in a competition
- Teach students to respect different cultures.

There is a competitive side to Taekwon-Do and as such students train and compete to win in each of the disciplines. Instructors/assistants should develop students to their maximum potential to help them achieve the goal of winning but should not do so in a way that fosters/encourages a win at all cost mentality.

Children in Taekwon-Do are entitled to:

- Be safe.
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect.
- Participate on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability and stage of development.
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy Taekwon-Do.
- Make a complaint in an appropriate way and have it dealt with through a proper and effective complaints procedure.
- Be afforded appropriate confidentiality.
- Be listened to and to be believed.

Students should also be encouraged to realise that they also have responsibilities to treat other students, fellow students, Instructors/assistants with the same degree of fairness and respect.

In this regard students should undertake to:

- Play fairly, do their best and have fun.
- Make high standards of Fair Play the standard others want to follow.
- Respect opponents, they are not the enemy; they are partners in Taekwon-Do.
- Shake hands before and after an event, whoever wins.
- Accept apologies from opponents when they are offered.
- Respect fellow school members and support them both when they do well and when things go wrong.

- Treat students from minority groups with the same respect you show other people.
- Be modest in victory and be gracious in defeat.

Approach the Taekwon-Do School's Children's Officer with any questions or concerns they might have. Instructors/assistants and parents should encourage children to speak out and support them in doing so.

Children should not:

- Cheat.
- Use abusive language, or argue with, officials, class mates or opponents.
- Use violence, use physical contact only when it is allowed within the rules.
- Bully.
- Tell lies about adults or other children.
- Spread rumours.
- Take banned substances to improve performance.
- Keep secrets about any person who may have caused them harm.

Responsibility to Report

Any person, who has concerns about a child's welfare or who suspects that a child is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, should report them to the school's Child Protection officer. This can if necessary be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Persons unsure about whether or not certain behaviours are abusive and therefore reportable, are advised that they can seek advice from the duty social worker in their local health board area where they will receive appropriate advice.

In cases of emergency where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the duty social worker is not contactable, call the Gardaí. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities.

All schools should have clear procedures for responding to reports or concerns relating to the safety and welfare of children. Instructors/assistants, children and parents / guardians should be aware of how and to whom they report concerns within the school or organisation.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are often given to children for security, enabling parents to keep in touch and make sure they are safe.

However such technology has also allowed an increase in direct personal contact with young people, in some cases used to cross personal boundaries and cause harm. Within schools there is a need to encourage responsible and secure use of mobile phones.

In this respect Instructors/assistants are advised to:

- Use group texts for communication among students and teams and inform parents of this at the start of each year
- It is not appropriate to have constant communication for individual students
- Don't use the phone in certain locations; inappropriate use of your camera phone may cause upset or offence to another person, e.g. changing rooms

Social Media

Social media has become an integral part of the culture in most organisations. The use of social media is a powerful tool in advertising and running a school as well as an informational outlet for parents and students. While the use of social media can be a huge benefit it can potentially cause issues.

Our membership form informs parents and students that photographs may be taken and used in the promotion of the school. Photographs/articles may be removed at the request of a parent student or senior officials.

If using Social Media you should ensure that:

- Any photographs taken are used only on official sites for our school/association.
- Care should be taken to avoid offense, likely offense or embarrassment on any social media outlet.
- Under 18's should not be directly named where possible.
- School social media should not be used for personal purposes or individual gain; it is there for the use of the school only.

In general you should only post photos and videos which people have posed for (i.e. given permission) or are in an environment where photos and videos are commonly taken (i.e. implied permission) e.g. a tournament, class etc. These photos/videos should only be of Taekwon-Do related activities and not something which may cause embarrassment or offence.

R.I.T.A. Instructor\Assistant Education & Support Policy

The Masters Council of the R.I.T.A. is indebted to our Instructors\assistants who give freely of their valuable time in providing a stimulating, challenging, supportive and fun Taekwon-Do experience to children and young people in the School.

The Council will endeavour to support these Instructors\assistants in their work by providing an environment where all activities are carried out in a safe, fun manner at all times conducted in the spirit of "R.I.T.A. Schools Policies".

The R.I.T.A. will make all efforts to assist all new instructors\assistants in whatever way they can.

R.I.T.A. School members will familiarise them with School rules, policies and procedures and expected codes of behaviour for children, Instructors and parents/spectators.

The Masters Council of the R.I.T.A. recognise the value of having appropriately qualified personnel in the school, and therefore will endeavour to support any of our Instructors in the instructor education process.

At no time will any instructor\assistant be expected to work or deal with any problem alone and they will be assured of Masters Council assistance and support at all times. Also, Instructors\assistants are encouraged to share ideas, expertise and support other school personnel in any way they can.