



BREAKTHROUGH GRAPPLING CIC:

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedures

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Safeguarding Statement & Values.....	2
2. Legal Framework	3
3. Definitions	4
4. Safeguarding Principles	5
5. Roles and Responsibilities	6
6. Safeguarding Children and Young People	7
7. Safeguarding Adults at Risk.....	8
8. Responding to Concerns & Reporting Procedures	10
9. Safe Practice Guidelines	11
10. Training, DBS, and Policy Review	13

1. Safeguarding Statement & Values

1.1 Our Commitment

Breakthrough Grappling CIC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all people who engage with our activities. We recognise that many of our participants have experienced trauma, adversity, exclusion, or harm, and that creating a safe, respectful, and supportive environment is essential to their wellbeing and recovery. We believe that everyone has the right to feel safe, to be treated with dignity and respect, and to participate in our programmes free from abuse, neglect, discrimination, or exploitation.

1.2 Who This Policy Applies To

For all activities delivered by Breakthrough Grappling CIC, including Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) classes, workshops, mentoring sessions, and community-based programmes, this safeguarding policy applies to the following groups of people:

- All children and young people under the age of 18
- All adults at risk (as defined in Section 3 of this policy)
- All directors, coaches, mentors, volunteers, and anyone acting on behalf of Breakthrough Grappling CIC

1.3 Our Values and Approach

Breakthrough Grappling CIC delivers Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and related mentoring using a **trauma-informed approach**. This means we recognise that:

- Participants may have experienced physical, emotional, or psychological trauma
- Trauma can impact how people respond to physical contact, authority, boundaries, and group environments
- Safety, trust, choice, and empowerment are central to effective engagement

Our safeguarding approach is guided by the following principles:

- **Safety:** We prioritise physical and emotional safety in all our activities
- **Respect:** We treat all participants as individuals with lived experience, autonomy, and inherent worth
- **Boundaries:** We maintain clear, appropriate professional boundaries at all times
- **Empowerment:** We support participants to have choice, voice, and control wherever possible
- **Accountability:** We take concerns seriously and act appropriately to protect those at risk

1.4 Our Responsibility

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at Breakthrough Grappling CIC. All staff, coaches, and volunteers are expected to:

- Act in the best interests of children, young people, and adults at risk
- Be alert to signs of abuse, neglect, or harm
- Respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns
- Follow the procedures set out in this policy

Breakthrough Grappling CIC will take reasonable steps to:

- Provide a safe environment for all participants
- Ensure safeguarding roles and responsibilities are clearly defined
- Ensure staff and volunteers understand and follow safeguarding procedures
- Review this policy regularly to ensure it remains effective and up to date

This policy reflects Breakthrough Grappling CIC's commitment to creating spaces where people can rebuild trust, feel safe, and thrive within a supportive community.

2. Legal Framework

This safeguarding policy is informed by, and operates in line with, relevant legislation and statutory guidance in England. Breakthrough Grappling CIC recognises its responsibility to act appropriately to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk, and to work in partnership with other organisations where concerns arise.

2.1 Children & Young People

Safeguarding children and young people is guided by the following key legislation and guidance:

- **The Children Act 1989 and 2004**, which place a duty on organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children** (Department for Education), which sets out how organisations should work together to protect children from harm

Breakthrough Grappling CIC understands that the welfare of the child is paramount, and that safeguarding concerns relating to children must be acted upon promptly and appropriately. Children may only participate in sessions or workshops with the consent of a parent or legal guardian, and staff must ensure this consent is obtained before participation.

2.2 Adults at Risk

Safeguarding adults at risk is guided by:

- **The Care Act 2014**, which outlines duties to protect adults with care and support needs who may be experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect
- **Care and Support Statutory Guidance**, which sets out principles for adult safeguarding, including empowerment, prevention, proportionality, protection, partnership, and accountability

Breakthrough Grappling CIC recognises that adults may experience vulnerability due to factors such as trauma, substance misuse, mental health challenges, disability, social exclusion, or life circumstances.

2.3 Local Safeguarding Arrangements

Breakthrough Grappling CIC operates within the local safeguarding arrangements for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and is committed to cooperating with local safeguarding partners and following local safeguarding procedures where concerns arise. Where appropriate, safeguarding concerns will be referred to:

- Children's Social Care
- Adult Social Care
- The police or emergency services

This policy is intended to reflect the size and scope of Breakthrough Grappling CIC while ensuring compliance with recognised safeguarding standards in the voluntary and community sector.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

3.1 Safeguarding

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing, and human rights, and enabling them to live free from abuse, harm, and neglect. This includes preventing harm, responding appropriately to concerns, and creating safe and respectful environments.

3.2 Children and Young People

A **child or young person** is anyone under the age of 18.

Safeguarding children involves protecting them from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health or development, and ensuring they grow up in safe and effective circumstances.

3.3 Adults at Risk

An **adult at risk** is a person aged 18 or over who:

- Has care and support needs (whether or not these are currently being met), and
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- Is unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect because of those needs.

Vulnerability may be temporary or situational and may relate to factors such as trauma, mental health challenges, substance misuse, disability, or social exclusion.

3.4 Abuse and Neglect

Abuse and neglect may be a single act or repeated acts and may be intentional or unintentional. Forms include physical, emotional, sexual, financial, discriminatory, organisational abuse, and neglect or acts of omission.

3.5 Consent and Capacity (Adults)

Adults are presumed to have capacity to make decisions about their own lives unless there is reason to believe otherwise. Safeguarding actions will respect autonomy and consent wherever possible, while prioritising safety where there is a risk of serious harm.

4. Safeguarding Principles

Breakthrough Grappling CIC is committed to embedding safeguarding into all aspects of its work. Our safeguarding practice is underpinned by the following principles, which guide decision-making, behaviour, and responses to concerns.

4.1 Child-Centred and Person-Centred Practice

- The welfare of children and young people is paramount
- Adults at risk are supported in a way that respects their dignity, wishes, feelings, and beliefs
- Safeguarding actions will focus on outcomes that matter to the individual wherever possible

4.2 Trauma-Informed Practice

We recognise that many participants may have experienced trauma, including abuse, neglect, violence, or significant life adversity. Our approach seeks to:

- Avoid re-traumatisation
- Promote emotional and physical safety
- Offer choice and control where possible
- Build trust through consistency, transparency, and respect

4.3 Proportionality and Prevention

- Safeguarding responses will be proportionate to the level of risk identified
- We aim to prevent harm through clear boundaries, safe practice, and early intervention
- Concerns will be addressed promptly to reduce escalation

4.4 Partnership and Accountability

- Safeguarding is a shared responsibility
- We will work in partnership with participants, carers, referring organisations, and statutory agencies where appropriate
- All safeguarding concerns will be taken seriously, recorded, and acted upon in line with this policy

4.5 Inclusion and Non-Discrimination

- Safeguarding applies equally to everyone, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or background
- Discriminatory abuse and exclusion are recognised as safeguarding concerns
- We are committed to creating inclusive spaces where difference is respected and valued

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding at Breakthrough Grappling CIC is a shared responsibility. Clear roles and responsibilities help ensure that safeguarding concerns are recognised and responded to appropriately.

5.1 Directors

The Directors of Breakthrough Grappling CIC have overall responsibility for safeguarding and will:

- Ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place, implemented, and reviewed regularly
- Appoint a Safeguarding Lead
- Ensure safeguarding is considered in planning, delivery, and partnerships
- Take appropriate action where safeguarding concerns relate to staff, coaches, or volunteers

5.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead

Breakthrough Grappling CIC has appointed Director Toby Littler as our designated Safeguarding Lead. The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Acting as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Providing advice and guidance to staff, coaches, and volunteers
- Ensuring safeguarding concerns are recorded and stored securely
- Making referrals to local safeguarding services where necessary
- Liaising with partner organisations and statutory agencies as appropriate
- Supporting a trauma-informed and proportionate response to safeguarding concerns

In the absence of the Safeguarding Lead, Kyle Brown, the other Director, will take on safeguarding responsibilities.

5.3 Coaches, Mentors, and Volunteers

All coaches, mentors, and volunteers are responsible for:

- Creating a safe and respectful environment during all activities
- Following this safeguarding policy and related procedures
- Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries with participants
- Being alert to signs of abuse, neglect, or distress
- Reporting safeguarding concerns promptly to the Safeguarding Lead

- Recording concerns accurately and factually

5.4 All Staff and Volunteers

Everyone involved in the delivery of Breakthrough Grappling CIC activities must:

- Treat all participants with respect and dignity
- Never ignore or dismiss safeguarding concerns
- Act in the best interests of children, young people, and adults at risk
- Cooperate with safeguarding processes and investigations

Failure to follow safeguarding responsibilities may result in disciplinary or other appropriate action.

6. Safeguarding Children and Young People

Breakthrough Grappling CIC recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people who take part in its activities.

6.1 Specific Risks in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Group Activities

We recognise that delivering Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and group-based activities presents specific safeguarding considerations for children and young people, including:

- Physical contact inherent in grappling and coaching
- Close supervision and instruction
- Power imbalance between adults and children
- Mixed-ability or mixed-age group settings
- Changing rooms or shared spaces

Breakthrough Grappling CIC takes reasonable steps to minimise risk by:

- Ensuring clear boundaries around physical contact and coaching methods
- Using age-appropriate instruction and language
- Maintaining appropriate ratios of adults to children
- Avoiding unnecessary one-to-one situations where possible
- Ensuring sessions are delivered in open, observable environments

6.2 Recognising Signs of Abuse

Staff, coaches, and volunteers should be alert to indicators that a child or young person may be experiencing harm, including:

- Unexplained injuries or repeated injuries
- Sudden changes in behaviour or mood
- Withdrawal, fearfulness, or distress
- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour

- Reluctance to engage in physical activity or contact

These signs do not necessarily indicate abuse but should not be ignored.

6.3 Responding to a Disclosure

If a child or young person discloses abuse or harm:

- Listen calmly and take what they say seriously
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling someone
- Avoid asking leading questions
- Record the information as soon as possible, using the child's own words where possible
- Report the concern immediately to the Safeguarding Lead

6.4 Reporting Concerns

Any safeguarding concern relating to a child or young person must be reported to the Safeguarding Lead without delay.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm, emergency services will be contacted.

The Safeguarding Lead will consider the information and take appropriate action, which may include:

- Consulting with Children's Social Care
- Making a referral to Children's Social Care
- Liaising with partner organisations or safeguarding professionals

The welfare of the child will always be the primary consideration.

7. Safeguarding Adults at Risk

Breakthrough Grappling CIC recognises its responsibility to safeguard adults at risk who engage in its activities, while also respecting their autonomy, dignity, and right to make choices.

7.1 Understanding Safeguarding for Adults

Safeguarding adults differs from safeguarding children in that adults are presumed to have capacity to make decisions about their own lives. However, safeguarding action may be required where an adult at risk:

- Is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and
- Is unable to protect themselves due to care and support needs or vulnerability

Breakthrough Grappling CIC recognises that adults participating in our programmes may experience vulnerability linked to trauma, recovery, mental health, substance misuse, social exclusion, or life circumstances.

7.2 Specific Risks in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Group Activities

When working with adults at risk, particular safeguarding considerations may include:

- Physical contact inherent in grappling and coaching
- Trauma responses triggered by touch, proximity, or authority
- Power imbalances between coaches and participants
- Emotional dependency or blurred boundaries
- Peer-on-peer harm within group settings

To reduce risk, Breakthrough Grappling CIC will:

- Promote clear professional boundaries at all times
- Encourage consent-based participation and allow participants to opt out of activities
- Use trauma-informed coaching methods
- Address inappropriate behaviour promptly and proportionately
- Provide clear routes for raising concerns

7.3 Maintaining Healthy Boundaries and Independence

Breakthrough Grappling CIC recognises that some participants, particularly those recovering from addiction or experiencing trauma, may develop a strong emotional reliance on training sessions, staff, or the structure provided. Staff and coaches will manage this through clear professional boundaries, promoting independence, encouraging a balanced use of support networks, and planning transitions or endings to programmes in a supportive and transparent way.

7.4 Recognising Signs of Abuse or Neglect

Staff, coaches, and volunteers should be alert to indicators that an adult may be experiencing harm, including:

- Unexplained injuries or signs of physical harm
- Changes in behaviour, mood, or engagement
- Signs of fear, distress, or withdrawal
- Financial concerns or exploitation
- Disclosures or concerns raised by the individual or others

7.5 Responding to a Disclosure or Concern

If an adult at risk discloses abuse or harm:

- Listen respectfully and take the concern seriously
- Do not make promises that cannot be kept
- Seek consent to share information wherever possible
- Explain what will happen next in a clear and supportive way
- Record the information accurately and factually

- Report the concern to the Safeguarding Lead

Where there is an immediate risk of serious harm, emergency services will be contacted without delay.

7.6 Reporting and Decision-Making

The Safeguarding Lead will:

- Assess the level of risk
- Consider the adult's wishes, capacity, and consent
- Seek advice from Adult Social Care or safeguarding professionals where appropriate
- Make referrals where necessary

Safeguarding decisions will be guided by the principles of empowerment, proportionality, protection, partnership, and accountability.

8. Responding to Concerns & Reporting Procedures

Breakthrough Grappling CIC has clear procedures to ensure that safeguarding concerns are recognised, recorded, and acted upon promptly and appropriately. These procedures apply to both children and adults at risk.

Step 1: Recognise

All staff, coaches, and volunteers should be alert to signs of abuse, neglect, or harm, including disclosures, physical indicators, or changes in behaviour.

Step 2: Respond

- Remain calm and listen carefully
- Do not investigate or ask leading questions
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing by speaking up
- Explain what you will do next in an age-appropriate and respectful way

Step 3: Record

- Record the concern as soon as possible, using factual language in **Breakthrough Grappling CIC's safeguarding concerns log**.
- Include dates, times, locations, and people involved
- Keep the record secure and confidential

Step 4: Report

- Report the concern immediately to the Safeguarding Lead:
Toby Littler
Email- hello@breakthroughgrappling.com
- If the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, report to a Director
- In cases of immediate danger, contact emergency services (999) without delay

Step 5: Action by Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead will:

- Assess the level of risk
- Consult with statutory agencies or local safeguarding partners as appropriate
- Make referrals to Children's or Adult Social Care where required
- Maintain records of all actions taken
- Provide guidance and support to the reporter

8.1 Managing safeguarding concerns against staff or volunteers

Where a safeguarding concern relates to staff or volunteers, the Directors will follow statutory guidance, including notifying the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for children or equivalent adult safeguarding body, while taking care to maintain confidentiality.

8.2 Confidentiality

- Information relating to a safeguarding concern will only be shared with those who need to know to protect the individual
- Records will be stored securely and only accessible to authorised personnel

8.3 Follow-Up

- The Safeguarding Lead will ensure the matter is monitored and reviewed as necessary
- Feedback will be given to the person who raised the concern (where appropriate) without breaching confidentiality

These procedures are designed to ensure that concerns are handled in a consistent, safe, and transparent manner while prioritising the wellbeing of children and adults at risk.

9. Safe Practice Guidelines

Breakthrough Grappling CIC is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment in all activities. Safe practice is central to reducing the risk of harm and promoting positive experiences for participants.

9.1 General Principles

- Treat all participants with respect, dignity, and fairness
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times
- Ensure that interactions and instructions are age- and ability-appropriate
- Model positive behaviour and respect within the group

9.2 Physical Contact and Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

- Physical contact inherent in BJJ should be purposeful, safe, and explained clearly to participants
- Obtain verbal consent before applying techniques, particularly with adults at risk
- Avoid prolonged one-to-one physical contact where unnecessary
- Maintain supervision ratios appropriate to the age and needs of participants

9.3 Environment and Equipment

- Use clean, safe, and appropriately sized training spaces
- Ensure mats, protective equipment, and other resources are maintained in good condition
- Monitor environmental risks such as trip hazards, wet floors, or overcrowding

9.4 Changing Rooms and Personal Care

- Where changing facilities are shared, supervise in a way that respects privacy while ensuring safety
- Staff and volunteers should never assist with personal care unless absolutely necessary, and only with clear consent and another adult present where possible

9.5 Peer-on-Peer Interaction

- Monitor participant interactions to prevent bullying, harassment, or abuse
- Intervene promptly and proportionately if issues arise
- Encourage a culture of mutual respect and inclusion

9.6 Communication and Social Media

- Maintain professional communication with participants at all times
- Follow organisational guidance on social media and messaging platforms
- Do not share private information or images of participants without consent

9.7 Continuous Awareness

- Remain alert to changes in behaviour or well-being
- Seek guidance from the Safeguarding Lead if unsure about any situation
- Reflect on practice and participate in training to maintain safe practice standards

These guidelines apply to all directors, coaches, mentors, and volunteers, and are designed to complement the broader safeguarding procedures outlined in this policy.

10. Training, DBS, and Policy Review

Breakthrough Grappling CIC recognises that safeguarding is an ongoing responsibility and requires that all staff and volunteers are appropriately trained, vetted, and supported.

10.1 Training

- All staff, coaches, and volunteers will receive the appropriate safeguarding training needed for their roles
- Training covers recognising abuse, responding to disclosures, safe practice, and trauma-informed approaches
- Training will be refreshed yearly to maintain awareness of best practices and legal requirements

10.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

- All staff and volunteers working with children or adults at risk will undergo an enhanced DBS check before beginning their role
- DBS checks will be renewed according to best practice and statutory guidance
- Breakthrough Grappling CIC will ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities regarding safe recruitment and ongoing monitoring

10.3 Policy Review

- This safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes in legislation, guidance, or organisational practice
- Reviews will involve directors and the Safeguarding Lead, and may include consultation with staff, participants, or external safeguarding advisors
- Changes and updates to the policy will be communicated to all staff, volunteers, and partners

By ensuring regular training, proper vetting, and ongoing review, Breakthrough Grappling CIC maintains a culture of safeguarding and continuous improvement, prioritising the safety and wellbeing of all participants.