

ZEN COMBAT ACADEMY LTD

SAFEGUARDING TRAVEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Safe transport, trips, competitions, residential stays and overseas travel

Organisation	Zen Combat Academy Ltd
Policy title	Safeguarding Travel Policy and Procedures
Version	1.0
Issue date	21 September 2026
Review date	September 2027 or sooner if required
Jurisdiction	England
Policy basis	Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, UK Government travel and road-safety requirements, and proportionate trip risk management

This is a Zen Combat Academy Ltd policy. It applies whenever the Academy organises, directs or assumes responsibility for travel connected with its activities.

1. Purpose and scope

Zen Combat Academy Ltd recognises that travel to training, gradings, competitions, demonstrations, camps and other events can create safeguarding risks that do not arise in the normal training environment. This policy sets out how those risks will be planned, supervised and managed.

It applies to directors, coaches, instructors, employees, volunteers, students, parents/carers and any person acting on behalf of the Academy. It covers travel within the UK and overseas, day trips, overnight/residential stays, private vehicles used on Academy business, hired transport and group travel.

Core principle

Where parents/carers make their own private travel arrangements for their own child, responsibility for those arrangements remains with them. Where Zen Combat Academy Ltd organises, directs or commissions transport, the Academy will take reasonable safeguarding and safety steps for the people in its care.

2. Legal and Government guidance framework

This policy is informed by the legal and Government safeguarding framework applicable in England, including:

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, which expressly includes sports clubs and organisations within safeguarding expectations;
- Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments for disabled children and adults;
- UK road traffic and seat-belt/child-restraint requirements, including the requirement for children to use the correct child restraint until the applicable age/height threshold;
- UK Government requirements on permission to take a child abroad, including permission from everyone with parental responsibility or a court where required;
- Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office travel advice and guidance on appropriate travel insurance for overseas travel, including medical treatment and repatriation cover.

Government guidance written specifically for schools and educational visits is not directly binding on a martial arts academy, but relevant principles - proportionate risk assessment, competent trip leadership and emergency planning - are used by Zen Combat Academy Ltd as recognised good practice.

3. Categories of travel and responsibility

Travel type	Responsibility
Parent/carer-arranged travel	A parent/carer transports their own child or privately agrees transport with another parent/carer. Zen does not select the driver or direct the arrangement. Responsibility remains with the adults making the private arrangement.
Academy-organised transport	Zen arranges or directs a driver, vehicle, coach/minibus, taxi, rail/air booking or group transport. Zen must plan and supervise the arrangement proportionately.
Team/group travel	The Academy travels as a squad or organised group to an event. A named trip leader and safeguarding arrangements must be in place.
Residential/overnight travel	Any trip involving hotel, hostel, residential or other overnight accommodation. Additional supervision, rooming and curfew controls apply.
International travel	Travel outside the UK. Passport, visa, parental permission, insurance, medical, emergency and destination-specific requirements must be checked.

4. Pre-event planning

For any Academy-organised trip, the level of planning must be proportionate to the distance, duration, destination, participant group and foreseeable risks. The trip leader must ensure that key information is available before departure.

☐ Date, departure and return times	☐ Destination and full address
☐ Purpose/event details	☐ Named trip leader
☐ Staff/volunteer list	☐ Participant list
☐ Parent/carer contacts	☐ Transport plan
☐ Drop-off and collection arrangements	☐ Accommodation details
☐ Activity/travel risk assessment	☐ First-aid arrangements
☐ Safeguarding contact	☐ Emergency/home contact
☐ Medical and allergy information	☐ Medication arrangements
☐ Accessibility/SEN adjustments	☐ Kit/equipment list
☐ Insurance details where applicable	☐ Passport/visa checks for overseas travel
☐ Written consent where required	☐ Code of conduct issued

Changes during the trip must be communicated promptly where they materially affect safeguarding, collection arrangements, accommodation, travel times or emergency arrangements.

5. Transport in private vehicles

Where Zen asks a person to drive children, young people or adults at risk on behalf of the Academy, the following minimum controls apply:

- The driver must hold a valid licence for the vehicle being driven and must be fit and legally entitled to drive.
- The vehicle must be roadworthy, appropriately insured and suitable for the journey and passengers.
- Each passenger must have their own seat. Seat belts must be used where legally required and children must use the correct child restraint/booster seat in accordance with current law.
- Drivers must not use a handheld mobile phone while driving and must comply with road traffic law, speed limits and any medication/alcohol restrictions relevant to safe driving.
- Journey times should allow safe breaks and avoid unreasonable pressure to meet competition or weigh-in times.
- Where possible, arrangements should avoid an unrelated adult being alone in a vehicle with a single child. If an unavoidable or emergency situation arises, the parent/carer and trip leader should be informed and the circumstances recorded.
- Where a role is eligible for a DBS check because of the nature and frequency of regulated activity, the appropriate safer-recruitment process will apply. A DBS check is not treated as a substitute for supervision or safe conduct.

Private parent-to-parent lifts

If parents/carers independently arrange lifts between themselves, that is a private arrangement. Zen may provide meeting times and event information, but it does not become the transport organiser merely because parents coordinate travel to the same event.

6. Hired transport, taxis, minibuses, coaches, rail and air

- Bookings should be made with reputable providers and, where appropriate, through recognised booking channels.
- The trip leader must know the planned route, departure/arrival point and method for accounting for the group at transfers and stops.
- Children must not be left unaccounted for at stations, airports, service areas or other public transport hubs.
- For taxis/private hire, children should be accompanied and supervised in accordance with the trip plan; legal child-restraint exceptions for taxis do not remove the Academy duty to make sensible safeguarding arrangements.
- For coaches/minibuses, seat-belt and seating requirements must be followed and the group must receive clear instructions about boarding, disembarking and emergency procedures.
- At airports and international borders, passports and documents must remain under an agreed secure system; no child should be required to hand personal documents to an unauthorised person.

7. Consent, medical information and information sharing

Before a non-routine Academy-organised trip involving a child, Zen will obtain sufficient parental/carer consent and information to manage foreseeable risks. For overseas travel, written permission must meet the legal and destination-specific requirements for taking the child abroad.

- Consent forms should identify the trip, dates, destination, transport and relevant emergency arrangements.
- Parents/carers must provide current emergency contact details and disclose relevant medical, allergy, medication, disability, communication and support information needed for safe participation.
- Information will be shared only with those who need it to safeguard the participant or respond to an emergency, in line with the Academy safeguarding and data-protection arrangements.
- Where emergency medical treatment is required, staff will seek appropriate medical help without delay. Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as reasonably practicable.

- Where the adult/young person is able to participate in decisions about their own care and safeguarding, their views should be heard and respected in accordance with age, capacity and legal requirements.

8. Supervision and staffing

There is no single fixed staffing ratio that is appropriate for every trip. Supervision must be based on a risk assessment taking account of age, needs, disability, behaviour, venue, activity, transport, overnight arrangements and the competence of supervising adults.

- A named trip leader must have overall responsibility for the trip.
- A named safeguarding contact must be identified and participants must know how to raise a concern.
- Coaches must be able to focus on coaching. Where a coach cannot safely combine coaching and general supervision, additional responsible adults must be provided.
- Head counts or equivalent accountability checks must be used at departure, arrival, transfers, after bouts/activities, before leaving venues and at any other point the trip leader considers necessary.
- Children must know the boundaries of where they may go, who they must stay with and the procedure if separated from the group.
- One-to-one situations should be avoided where practicable. Any necessary one-to-one support must follow Zen safeguarding procedures and reasonable adjustments.

9. SEN, disability and additional support

Travel arrangements must be inclusive and must consider reasonable adjustments. A disability or additional need must never be treated as an automatic reason to exclude a participant from a trip.

- Accessibility of vehicles, stations, airports, venues and accommodation should be checked in advance where relevant.
- Communication plans may include visual schedules, Makaton/signing, simple written instructions, quiet spaces, additional preparation or an agreed support person.
- Medication and personal-care arrangements must be agreed in advance with the participant/parent/carer and must remain within staff competence and safeguarding boundaries.
- Where sensory, behavioural or anxiety needs may make busy transport hubs or unfamiliar accommodation difficult, the trip plan should include reasonable adjustments and contingency arrangements.
- Where a participant requires a personal assistant/carer, responsibilities must be clearly agreed before travel.

10. Accommodation and overnight stays

- Accommodation must be suitable for the group, reasonably secure and, where required, accessible.
- Room allocations must be planned in advance. Children will not share bedrooms with unrelated adults. Adults in a supervisory role must have separate sleeping accommodation unless the adult is the child's parent/legal guardian or a specific safeguarding arrangement has been approved for a participant's care needs.
- Where possible, children should be grouped by appropriate age and safeguarding considerations. Privacy, dignity and any disability-related needs must be respected.
- Staff must not enter a child's room alone except in an emergency or where immediate welfare requires it. Wherever practicable, two adults or an open/observable arrangement should be used.
- Curfews, meeting points, meal times, emergency exits and fire muster points must be explained clearly.

- Participants must not leave the accommodation or event area contrary to the trip rules or without the required permission/supervision.
- Access to swimming pools, gyms, balconies, nightlife areas or other higher-risk facilities must be specifically controlled where relevant.

11. International travel

Overseas trips require additional planning. Zen Combat Academy Ltd will check destination-specific requirements and current Government travel advice before departure and while the trip is ongoing.

- Written permission must be obtained from everyone with parental responsibility where required, or from a court if necessary. A consent letter should include trip details and contact information. Some countries, carriers or authorities may require additional or notarised documentation.
- Passports, visas, entry requirements and the age at which the destination treats a person as a child must be checked in sufficient time.
- Appropriate travel insurance must cover the actual martial arts/combat-sport activity, relevant declared medical conditions, emergency treatment and medical evacuation/repatriation. A GHIC/EHIC, where available, is not a replacement for travel insurance.
- The trip leader should have details of local emergency services, appropriate hospitals/medical support, insurer emergency assistance and British embassy/consular contact routes where relevant.
- Parents/carers and adult participants must be told what insurance or healthcare documents they are expected to carry.
- Changes to Government travel advice that materially affect safety must trigger a review of whether the trip should proceed or continue.

12. Conduct during travel and events

Everyone representing Zen Combat Academy Ltd is expected to behave in a way that supports safety, safeguarding and the reputation of the Academy.

- Follow reasonable instructions from the trip leader, coaches, officials, venue staff and emergency services.
- Treat teammates, opponents, officials, staff and members of the public with respect. Bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexualised behaviour, intimidation or violence outside the sporting activity is prohibited.
- Observe curfews and agreed check-in/meeting times.
- Report injuries, illness, safeguarding concerns, loss of medication/documents or any situation that may affect safety.
- Under-18 participants must not consume alcohol, tobacco, nicotine products or illegal substances. Adults with supervisory responsibilities must not be impaired by alcohol or drugs while responsible for the group.
- Keep accommodation and transport reasonably clean and do not deliberately damage property.
- Use social media responsibly and do not post another participant's location, room number, medical information or safeguarding information without appropriate permission.

13. Emergency procedures

The trip leader must have an emergency plan proportionate to the trip. At the start of a residential or international trip, participants should be told how to obtain help and what to do if separated from the group.

Incident

Immediate response

Medical emergency	Call the appropriate emergency service. Provide first aid within competence. Contact parent/carer/emergency contact and insurer where relevant. Record the incident.
Fire/evacuation	Follow venue instructions. Move to the designated muster point. Complete an immediate head count/accountability check.
Transport disruption	Keep the group together and supervised. Communicate revised arrangements and collection times. Reassess safeguarding risks created by delays.
Safeguarding disclosure	Listen, do not investigate, record accurately and report to the Academy safeguarding lead or statutory agency as required by the safeguarding policy.
Lost passport/document	Secure the group, notify the trip leader and follow airline/border/consular and insurer advice as appropriate.
Serious incident abroad	Contact local emergency authorities first where necessary, then insurer/consular assistance and the Academy home contact. Maintain a communication log.

14. Missing child or young person procedure

Do not rely on an arbitrary waiting period

If there is an immediate risk - for example suspected abduction, a very young child, significant additional needs, danger from traffic/water, or the child may have left the venue - contact police/emergency services immediately. A search must never delay emergency action.

1. Confirm the child is genuinely unaccounted for and identify when and where they were last seen.
2. Keep all other children safely supervised. Do not send children to search.
3. Alert the trip leader, safeguarding contact and venue/event security immediately.
4. Conduct a prompt, coordinated search of appropriate nearby areas using responsible adults, with clear zones and reporting points.
5. Contact the parent/carer unless doing so would create a safeguarding risk or police advise otherwise.
6. If the child is not quickly located, or the circumstances cause concern at any point, contact police/emergency services without delay and follow their instructions.
7. Prepare an accurate description, recent photograph if lawfully available, clothing details, medical/additional needs and last known location for police.
8. When the child is found, stop the search, notify all relevant parties, check the child's welfare and consider whether medical or safeguarding action is required.
9. Record the incident and review what happened, including whether travel/supervision arrangements need to change.

15. Handover, collection and return

- Children must only be released in accordance with the agreed collection arrangements. Any change should be confirmed by an authorised parent/carer using an appropriate method.
- If a parent/carer is unexpectedly late, the child must remain appropriately supervised; staff must not simply leave the child alone or make an unplanned private transport arrangement without considering safeguarding.

- Where the group returns substantially earlier or later than planned, parents/carers should be informed as soon as possible.
- Significant injuries, medication issues, safeguarding concerns or welfare matters arising during the trip must be communicated at handover as appropriate.

16. Recording, review and policy breaches

Safeguarding concerns, accidents, missing-person incidents, serious travel disruption and significant breaches of this policy must be recorded using the relevant Academy system. Records must distinguish fact, observation, allegation and opinion.

A serious or repeated breach may result in removal from a trip, suspension from Academy activity, disciplinary action or referral to statutory authorities where appropriate. Safety and welfare take priority over participation in an event.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following significant incidents, changes in law or Government guidance, changes to Academy activities, or learning from a trip.

Appendix A - Academy trip planning checklist

☐ Trip leader appointed	☐ Safeguarding contact appointed
☐ Home/emergency contact appointed	☐ Participant list complete
☐ Parent/carers contacts checked	☐ Consent complete
☐ Medical/allergy information checked	☐ Medication plan agreed
☐ SEN/disability adjustments planned	☐ Risk assessment completed/reviewed
☐ Transport checked	☐ Driver/vehicle checks where Zen-organised
☐ Accommodation checked	☐ Rooming plan completed
☐ Emergency exits/muster point identified	☐ Local hospital/emergency details recorded
☐ Insurance checked	☐ Combat-sport activity covered by insurance
☐ Passports/visas checked	☐ Parental permission for overseas travel checked
☐ FCDO travel advice checked	☐ Codes of conduct issued
☐ Kit/protective equipment list issued	☐ Head-count system agreed
☐ Collection/handover arrangements confirmed	☐ Post-trip review scheduled

Appendix B - Travel Code of Conduct

The following standards apply to athletes, students and accompanying adults while representing Zen Combat Academy Ltd.

1. Follow the trip leader's reasonable instructions, curfews, meeting times and safety procedures.
2. Respect coaches, teammates, opponents, officials, venue staff, hotel staff and the public.
3. Do not bully, discriminate against, threaten, harass or deliberately exclude another person.
4. Do not leave the agreed venue/accommodation area without permission where supervision rules require it.
5. Report injury, illness, safeguarding concerns and missing property/documents promptly.
6. Use protective equipment and competition kit as instructed.
7. No under-age alcohol, tobacco, nicotine products, illegal drugs or prohibited substances.
8. Do not damage accommodation, transport or venue property.

9. Do not post confidential, medical, safeguarding, room-location or private travel information on social media.

10. Represent Zen Combat Academy Ltd with good sportsmanship and appropriate behaviour.

Travel Code Acceptance

Athlete/student name	
Signature	
Date	
Parent/carer name (if under 18)	
Parent/carer signature	
Date	

Appendix C - Parent/Carer Travel Consent Record

To be completed for non-routine Academy-organised travel involving a child. Additional destination/carrier documents may also be required for international travel.

Child/young person	
Date of birth	
Trip/event	
Destination	
Departure date/time	
Expected return date/time	
Parent/carer 1 contact	
Parent/carer 2 / emergency contact	
Medical conditions/allergies	
Medication requirements	
Disability/SEN/access needs	
Dietary requirements	
Relevant behavioural/communication information	
Travel insurance details (if required)	
Passport/visa checked (overseas)	Yes / No / N/A
Permission to travel abroad confirmed	Yes / No / N/A

I confirm that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I consent to the child named above taking part in the stated trip under the arrangements communicated by Zen Combat Academy Ltd. I understand that the Academy may seek urgent medical assistance where necessary and will attempt to contact me as soon as reasonably practicable.

Parent/carer name	
Signature	
Date	

Appendix D - Missing person quick action flow

Step	Action
1. ABSENCE IDENTIFIED	Confirm who is missing, last known location/time and immediate risk factors.
2. SECURE THE GROUP	Keep other children/participants supervised. Do not send children to search.
3. ALERT	Tell trip leader, safeguarding contact and venue/event security.
4. RISK DECISION	If immediate danger or suspected abduction: call police/emergency services now. Do not delay.
5. COORDINATED SEARCH	Responsible adults search defined nearby areas while maintaining communication.
6. POLICE / PARENT	If not quickly located or concern exists, call police promptly and inform parent/carer unless unsafe or advised otherwise.
7. CHILD LOCATED	Check welfare, stop search, notify all parties and obtain medical/safeguarding help if needed.
8. RECORD & REVIEW	Complete incident record and review supervision/travel arrangements.

Appendix E - Reference framework

Key external sources used in the 2026 review of this policy:

- Department for Education - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (applies in England and includes sports clubs and organisations).
- GOV.UK - Get permission to take a child abroad.
- GOV.UK - Seat belts: the law and Child car seats: the law.
- Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office - Foreign travel insurance and country-specific travel advice.
- Department for Education - Health and safety on educational visits (used as relevant good-practice guidance for proportionate planning and emergency arrangements, not as a direct statutory code for the Academy).

Where external guidance changes, the current law and Government guidance will take precedence over an outdated wording in this policy until the document is formally revised.

Approval and review

Approved by	
Role	Director / Head Coach
Signature	
Approval date	
Next scheduled review	September 2027