

Karate Academy

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Newsletter April 2026

A short break away and suddenly you find that the Newsletter is 2 weeks late and all the things you had to say about Easter are no longer timely... In fact, reporting on the Black Belt grading from the beginning of March feels like it was a lifetime ago. Yet, these Newsletters stand as some sort of posterity, forming an archive that members can look back on to confirm times and dates and events and who was there with them, so report on March we must. Happily so, because it was such a good day. Exactly the effort and the presentation that one would hope for to represent our new black belts.

With bank holidays taking a few days out of our timetable across April and May we would encourage members to not miss out and use the lessons which are available even when their regular class is temporarily removed.

John Burke,
Chief Instructor

The Big Event

The seminar on Saturday 7th March was attended by all sorts of grades. Those of you who supported the event were lucky to have Deborah Needham (3rd dan) sensei taking us through hip movement in basics. Then Janet Drew (4th Dan) sensei took us through the intricacies of waveforms and how to generate power. Neil Tappenden (4th Dan) sensei showed the class the importance of a locus and touch before Jim Harvey (5th Dan) sensei gave us a workout with shuto uke. This just left John Burke (7th Dan) renshi to teach oyo kazushi. While all of this was happening the Dan Grade candidates were being monitored for their ability to take on new information and the effectiveness of their techniques. Congratulations to everyone who supported the event.

New Black Belts

Following the seminar, the technical Dan Grading took place with the candidates being put through their paces in Basics, Kumite, Kata, Oyo, and pressure tests. The grading was administered by a panel consisting of the seminar instructors.

We are very pleased to announce the following promotions:

Sandan

Nick Hawkes sensei

Nidan

Joe Magor

Shodan

Jamie Blondell, Slawomir Holubinka, Sam Schafer, and Charlie Slade.

Well done gentlemen. We're very proud of you.

That evening the candidates and some of the instructors went for a meal at Twelve Twenty in Wolborough Street and the young black belts took Slav out dancing...



Members Resources

Members Only Facebook Group: We want to share information for and about *members* on the **Keiko Karate** Facebook Group.

The App: if you would like to book your places just set up an account. It's free.

For iPhone users please use this link— <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/karate-academy/id1542741931>

For Android users please use this link— <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.goretrieve.karateacademy>

It should also be available in your favourite app store for free. Just search for **Karate Academy**. Our website:

www.KarateAcademy.co.uk where there are events and timetable updates available.

The *members* site

www.members.KarateAcademy.co.uk where you can access all the syllabus materials for free.

Syllabus DVDs are available from your instructor, as are John Burke renshi's range of books and DVDs on the subject of **kata applications**. You could get them on Amazon, but members receive a discount from their instructor.

If anyone requires equipment (pads etc) please see your instructor as we would hate for you to have the wrong thing.

April Timetable

Most of our classes are on as usual during April. There are, however, a few things to be aware of:

Wednesday **April 1st** Little Warriors at 5.30pm instead of 5pm.

Friday **April 3rd** Good Friday no classes

Saturday **April 4th** normal

Last Word

Easter is typically seen as a time of renewal. The rebirth of nature as we reach the Spring, the changing of the clocks to reflect the added hours of daylight, the reduction of heating as the days grow more temperate. Hopefully it's something that you feel inside, too. Being in touch with the natural ebb and flow of the world means that some of us do feel the changing of the seasons, and, if we're feeling reflective, we might come to renew our commitment to our martial art at the same time. Whatever has got you this far is part of your history, and what takes you forward might be different again. Whether you started training for fitness or self defence the wealth and beauty available in our martial art means that it might not be the same reason that makes you stay. And some people won't stay. We'll have served our purpose for them and they might not want or be able to see the benefits of the other parts of our art. We wish them well and know that we will be here for them if they ever require Keikokai in their lives again. It does become faintly ridiculous when you meet ex-members outside and they ask if you are "still teaching Karate" It demonstrates one of the reasons that they are ex-members. The lack of understanding that we are called to teach and train because we have to. That stopping isn't an option because we have an obligation to our art, to our teachers, to our students and to ourselves. Anyone can have a bad day where things have not gone well, but the overall span of our time training leads us to growth and fulfilment for ourselves and others. Hanging in the dojo is the kanji for GIRI—and we never talk about it because you either understand it or you don't.

Proud to be the Keikokai. See you in the dojo.

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Sunday **April 5th** no classes as **East-er Sunday**

Monday **April 6th** no classes as **Easter Monday**

Sunday **April 19th** there is a kyu grading from 10am.

Thursday **April 23rd** there is no 10am class.

Apart from these there will be classes throughout the Easter Holidays. Grab your training when you can.

Next Kyu Grading

The next coloured belt examination is imminent on Sunday **19th April**. You are welcome to attend to train even if you haven't had an invitation to grade.

Expressions of Interest

We're polling to find out who would be interested in a Summer School at the Karate Academy in Newton Abbot this year? We tend to run a week's training Monday to Friday 10am-3pm in addition to our regular evening classes. This can lead to an immersive Karate training experience which produces compound development through intensive training. We might also have time for some fun and games.

It has been £100 per person in recent years.

While the dates have still to be confirmed, it will be in the first two weeks of August.

If it's something you're interested in, please let us know that it will be worth us doing again in 2026.

Birthdays

The following members celebrate their Birthday this month (April)

9	Deborah Needham sensei
10	Eddie Rogers
13	Tirzah Tony
15	Austin Seabrook Jamie Blondell
18	Charlie Sharpe

Happy Birthday to You



Diary Dates:

April 2026

1st	Little Warriors at 5.30pm, Open at 6pm
3rd	Good Friday no classes
4th	Normal
5th	Easter Sunday no classes
6th	Easter Monday no classes
19th	Kyu Grading 10am
23rd	No 10am lesson

May 2026

4th	Bank Holiday
14th	Keikokai 27th Anniversary
25th	Bank Holiday

New Members

The Karate Academy is pleased to welcome the following new members who joined during March:

Evie Joyce
(Newton Abbot Little Warriors)

And a warm welcome back to **Sam Iskander**
(Newton Abbot)

Recommendation is the highest compliment we can receive.

Welcome one and all!



Dedicated to Black Belt Excellence