



KISIMUL GROUP

Operational and Educational Policy and Procedure

Managing Allegations Policy

1. Policy Statement

1.1.1 It is the philosophy of the group that the overriding principle to be followed is: **the child/young person's welfare is paramount and this takes precedence over doubt.** This means that all allegations made by children, young people or adults will be taken seriously and investigated fully. This helps the organisation to protect those who use our services and also the staff that work with us. However, Kisimul does recognise that when an allegation is made this is a very difficult situation and it will endeavour to ensure that members of staff are fully supported throughout the process.

1.1.2 This policy sets out the standards by which all allegations will be managed. Kisimul has high expectations of those who work within our services and they can have high expectations of the support received to do that job to the highest standard.

1.1.3 These ideals are supported by the principles underpinning work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children set out in the Kisimul 'Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy', alongside the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2015' **'Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016'** and **'Safeguarding Children and Young People and Young Vulnerable Adults February 2015'**.

2. Threshold for Implementation

2.1.1 These procedures should be applied when there is an allegation or concern that any person who works with children, in connection with his/her employment or voluntary activity, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates (s)he may pose a risk of harm to children.

Additionally Kisimul's managers should consider use of the policy when a member of staff's alleged behaviour may compromise Kisimul's reputation to safeguard children. This includes behaviour outside of the workplace and/or relating to personal life.

2.1.2 The nature of the allegations may not necessarily constitute a criminal offence or reach the threshold for significant harm. There must be sound

assessment of the situation at all stages. For this reason it is important that the Responsible Person for Safeguarding is consulted whenever there are suspicions that a person working for Kisimul has acted in such a way that consideration should be given to employing this policy.

3. Child on Child Allegation

3.1.1 Occasionally, allegations may be made of a safeguarding nature against children by other children. Staff will follow the same protocol within the managing allegations policy and report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will escalate accordingly.

4. The Role of the (LA) DO

4.1.1 All local authorities must have a (Local Authority) Designated Officer (LA) DO to be involved in the management and oversight of individual allegations management cases. The (LA) DO should provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the police and other agencies and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

It is vital that if the relevant named person feels that this policy should be implemented then the relevant (LA) DO should be informed of the situation within 24 hours. If the relevant senior officer is unsure whether or not the situation meets the threshold to use this policy then it may be useful to seek guidance from the relevant (LA) DO to discuss the threshold and any protective action the manager may want to take.

5. Named Senior Officers within the Kisimul Group

5.1.1 **Woodstock House School:** The Designated Safeguarding Leads are for Care: Kathy Behar 07483432824 and Anna Ditcham 07484 504642. For education: Denise Heffernan 07919 325496 and Lillith Osborn 020 8335 2570.

5.1.2 **Cruckton Hall School:** The Designated Safeguarding Leads are Catherine Fletcher (Head of Care 07483974688) and Robert Arrowsmith (Head Teacher 07826871290).

5.1.3 **The Old Vicarage, Swinderby:** The Designated Safeguarding Leads are Martyn Jackson (Head of Care 07919325509), Jason Simpson (Deputy Head of Care 07500975312) and Paul Routledge (Head Teacher).

5.1.4 **Acacia Hall:** The Designated Safeguarding Leads are Amanda Collins (Head of Care 07484091715) and Paul Routledge (Head Teacher 07881315959).

5.1.5 All allegations must be reported immediately.

5.1.6 The Responsible Person for safeguarding for the Kisimul Group is Donna Varley-Turner (07483 432811). In the event of this policy being used Donna Varley-Turner must be informed without delay.

6. Whistleblowing

- 6.1.1 Staff will be trained to appreciate the great importance which is attached to safeguarding children/young people (Sources of abuse can be staff, children/young people, external carers, parents, visitors, etc.). **No one who is involved in any way with the care of children/young people can escape responsibility for identifying the signs of child abuse and having done so, for taking appropriate action as detailed in this procedure. To this end the Group has set up a whistleblowing helpline, which enables staff to ring in and voice their concerns without having to approach a senior member of staff if they do not feel confident to do so.**

Whistleblowing Help Line: 0800 313 4338

All staff have a duty to conform to this procedure and to be conversant with:

The Surrey LSCB Code of Practice and the Kisimul Code of Conduct for Woodstock House School

The Lincolnshire LSCB Code of Practice and the Kisimul Code of Conduct for Acacia Hall and The Old Vicarage at Swinderby.

The Shropshire LSCB of Practice and the Kisimul Code of Conduct for Cruckton Hall School

Failure to follow the Safeguarding Children/Young People Procedure is serious and may result in disciplinary action being taken.

7. Support for Staff Subject to an Allegation

- 7.1.1 Kisimul recognises that when an allegation is made this can be very distressing. Whilst all allegations will be dealt with seriously and robustly the member of staff involved in the allegations will be fully supported. This includes any member of staff who has an allegation made about them or anybody who has used the whistleblowing procedure.
- 7.1.2 Should a member of staff have an allegation made against them advice will be taken from the (LA) DO about the safest way to manage this situation. The (LA) DO may call a multi-agency strategy meeting which a senior manager at Kisimul will attend. This will inform the best way of managing the allegation.
- 7.1.3 It is important that any staff member involved and the relevant senior manager keeps all information relating to the concern or allegation confidential in order for the concern to be carefully managed. It may be that not following this protocol could detrimentally affect a potential criminal investigation.
- 7.1.4 Any member of staff involved in such events will be treated with dignity and respect and will be kept up to date regarding the investigation as appropriate.
- 7.1.5 Should the member of staff be suspended from duty a named supporting officer will be appointed to ensure the staff member is supported and that there is clear communication.

8. Settlement Agreements

- 8.1.1 Kisimul will not let a member of staff leave the organisation in order to not have a safeguarding concern dealt with. Should a member of staff subject to an allegation leave the organisation Kisimul will still work with the relevant multi-agency partners to properly investigate any concerns.
- 8.1.2 Kisimul will not use settlement agreements in these circumstances.

9. Restrictions on Identifying Staff

- 9.1.1 Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. Apart from keeping the child, parents and accused person up to date with progress of the case, information should be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to protect children, facilitate enquiries, manage related disciplinary or suitability processes.
- 9.1.2 In accordance with the Education (Restriction of Employment) Regulations 2000 a report must be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service when an employee is suspected of or dismissed for an allegation of child abuse. The LADO and/or HR department will guide this process.

10. Historical Abuse

- 10.1.1 Any member of staff or other person who may have information about historical abuse that is alleged to have taken place at any Kisimul service will be treated in line with this policy.
- 10.1.2 Any information of historical abuse will be taken equally as seriously as a current allegation and the allegation will be reported to the LADO in the same manner within 24 hours. This will help inform the best way of managing this allegation and ensuring that a multi-agency response can be ensured.

11. False Allegations

- 11.1.1 If during the course of an investigation it becomes clear that an allegation or concern raised by a member of Kisimul's staff about a colleague is malicious then this will be taken seriously as a breach of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. This is because a false allegation can lead to unnecessary safeguarding action which not only wastes the time of multi-agency partners but also leads to considerable distress to those whom false allegations are made about.
- 11.1.2 Should this occur the relevant senior manager will consult with the (LA) DO regarding the person making the false allegation as their action may result in disciplinary action.
- 11.1.3 The relevant senior manager will notify Ofsted of any allegation that is being managed (Children's Homes Regulations (2015))

12. Links to Surrey LSCB procedures

<http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html>

Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board referral 0300 200 1006

(Local Authority) Designated Officer 0300 200 1006

Contact Centre Children's Team 0300 200 1006

Contact Centre Children's Team, Conquest House, Wood St, Kingston upon Thames KT1

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Links to Lincolnshire LSCB procedures

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb/>

13. (Local Authority) Designated Officer Childrens 01522 554668

(Local Authority Designated officer Adults 01522 554616

Ruth Fox (LSCB Education Lead) 01522 554687

Customer Service Centre 01522 782111

14. Links to Shropshire LSCB procedures

**First Point of Contact (Initial Contact Team 0345
6789021**

(Local Authority) Designated Officer:

Ellie Jones 01743 250007

Cruckton Hall is a subsidiary of Kisimul School Holdings Limited and as such will adopt relevant policies, where appropriate, from Kisimul Group.

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