



Kisimul Group

Operational and Educational Policy and Procedure

Child Protection Policy

Policy

It is the policy of Kisimul School to ensure that a safe and caring environment is provided at all times for the pupils entrusted to its care, and to protect them from significant harm. (Section 17 of the Children Act 1989) The company is committed to ensuring that all children and young people attending services are kept safe and that concerns about a child are followed up in the right way and to ensure that everyone including parents/carers, staff, volunteers and children know what should happen and what is expected of them.

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school/residential units. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practise safer recruitment in checking the suitability of our staff and volunteers
- Raising awareness of Safeguarding Children issues
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- Supporting our vulnerable pupils who may have been subjected to abuse in accordance with their Individual Pupil Care Plan
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop

It is the philosophy of the school that the overriding principle to be followed is: **that the child's welfare is paramount and this takes precedence over doubt.** If after statutory investigation the concerns or allegations are found to be unsubstantiated, staff should not reproach themselves in any way for having raised the concern.

In pursuance of the above mentioned policy the school follows the guidelines set out by the *Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Code of Practice (Feb 2009)* and to facilitate this the school has written procedures in place which give specific instructions to be followed by all members of staff. These procedures are attached to this policy and form an integral part of it.

The overall responsibility of adhering to safeguarding children regulations and procedures as well as their implementation rests with the Operations Director, who champions this cause within the organisation and maintains the links with relevant outside agencies. (Section 11 Standards for the Safeguarding and promotion of Child Welfare)

All staff directly involved with working with the pupils shall be made aware of the Kisimul School Safeguarding Children's Procedures and the above guidelines by means of appropriate training. Everybody in the school shall have access to them at all times and all relevant members of staff have a duty to maintain their awareness and to conform to the procedures.

Every setting in which children live away from home should provide the same basic safeguards against abuse, founded on an approach that promotes their general welfare, protects them from harm of all kinds and treats them with dignity and respect.

The Head of Care and Head teacher as well as people listed in Appendix 1 have the booklet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'. There are also copies available in the staffroom.

Procedure

General

This procedure follows the guidelines laid out in the *Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Code of Practice*, additional information can be found at [www. http://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm](http://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm) . The website will be routinely checked and any changes identified will be made to this policy by the Project Manager. This procedure is intended to complement the Code of Practice in relation to matters which relate specifically to the school. Staff should be conversant with the location and contents of the Code of Practice and follow the Code in conjunction with this procedure at all times, as specified in the Children Act 2004.

Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse for a number of reasons. Some disabled children may:

- Have fewer outside contacts than other children
- Receive intimate personal care, possibly from a number of carers, which may both increase the risk of exposure to abusive behaviour and make it more difficult to set and maintain physical boundaries.
- Have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse
- Have communication difficulties that may make it difficult to tell others what is happening
- Be inhibited about complaining because of a fear of losing services
- Be especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation and/or
- Be more vulnerable than other children to abuse by their peers

For further information see LSCB procedures, section D:5

The teaching and care staff at Kisimul School are particularly well placed to observe the children in their care and to report instances where they have cause for concern about colleagues, other students or external care providers. To help in this, the definition of child abuse and common social and medical indicators are contained within Appendix 2 of the Lincolnshire County Council Safeguarding Policy.

Responsibilities

Staff will be trained to appreciate the great importance which is attached to safeguarding Children. (Sources of abuse can be staff, pupils, external carers, parents, visitors, etc.) **No one who is involved in any way with the care of children can escape responsibility for identifying the signs of child abuse and having done so, for taking appropriate action as detailed in this procedure. Accordingly, all staff have a duty to conform to this procedure and to be conversant with the Code of Practice.**

The school has a member of staff designated as the 'Child Protection Liaison Officer'. The Child Protection Liaison Officer acts as a focal point for all matters concerning safeguarding children and acts as the contact between the school and the safeguarding children agencies.

The Child Protection Liaison officer at Kisimul School is a member of staff who has attended the Lincolnshire Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People 3 Day Foundation Course. At present the role is being undertaken by Tina Johnson. In the absence of Tina Johnson responsibility is delegated to the persons named in Appendix 1 to this procedure. (Please note: in the first instance any member of the senior staff team may be contacted.)

Procedures

Incidents of possible child abuse obviously need to be handled with sensitivity and confidentiality consistent with the multidisciplinary approach. The Child Protection Liaison officer will, upon receiving an allegation of abuse, avoid asking leading questions or giving inappropriate guarantees of confidentiality.

If somebody believes that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, then s/he should always refer his or her concerns immediately to the Child Protection Liaison Officer, who will in turn inform the Safeguarding Children Team if the alleged perpetrator works with children or young people and the Customer Services if the alleged perpetrator does not work with children or young people.

If the allegation concerns a member of staff, there should be an immediate referral if the member of staff:

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; or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Staff are reminded to be aware of other indications such as distress at the onset of a holiday period or signs of abuse on return from holiday which could indicate that a child may be subject to abuse while at home or during respite care breaks. Staff should be vigilant regarding bruises and injuries and any such concerns should be recorded and immediately brought to the attention of the Child Protection Liaison Officer.

The procedures to be followed are set out below:-

- Any suspicion of child abuse **must** be reported **immediately** to the Child Protection Liaison Officer or another designated member of staff.
- The immediate safety of the child is our first priority and consideration must be given to the supervision arrangements for the child to safeguard them.
- If any child appears to be in need of immediate medical treatment the Local Authority Designated Officer should be informed and staff to follow any instructions given. Staff must not arrange to take the child to hospital without instructions from the Local Authority Designated Officer. Please note that in the case of any delay when contacting the LADO our duty of care will prevail and immediate medical treatment must be sought
- Staff must fill out the complaint form (Appendix 2) with their team leader and this will be kept on the child's individual confidential file. Please note: if the complaint concerns a particular member of staff, then the team leader/teacher should ensure that the member of staff in question is temporarily moved to work with a different group/class while the Child Protection Liaison Officer is contacted.
- Staff should not take any further action, unless any relevant information is volunteered by a parent, guardian or any other individual in which case it should be recorded and passed on to the Child Protection Liaison Officer for action.
- Any case of suspected child abuse or allegation of child abuse, even in the absence of physical evidence, must be brought to the immediate attention of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and their advice obtained if the allegation involves anyone who works with children. Similarly where the abuse is alleged or suspected to have been perpetrated by an outside caregiver or someone who does not work with children then the Lincolnshire Customer Service Centre should be contacted.
- At the time of making the referral to the LADO advice should be sought regarding informing the parents of the incident.
- Contacting the LADO or Customer Service Centre should not be delayed to gather information. The School must not conduct their own investigation.

- The LADO will take the lead in the investigation and will advise staff accordingly of any actions to take and will keep the Child Protection Liaison Officer informed throughout the investigation process.
- The Child Protection Liaison Officer has to decide, in conjunction with the Operations Director or another of the company's Directors, whether to suspend a member of staff where appropriate.
- In line with the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes 2001 the registered manager has a duty to inform Ofsted without delay about any referral under the Safeguarding Children Procedure, and/or a serious incident alleged or otherwise, as a notifiable event (Schedule 5).
- The Child Protection Liaison Officer may contact the Reviewing Unit (Tel: 01522 554061) in order to ascertain previously recorded and/or ongoing issues.
- The Child Protection Liaison Officer must keep hand written records of all observations and actions taken, timed, dated and signed. These records are to include any signs of abuse, neglect or injury where appropriate and must also include records of any communication with Social Care or Police.
- When a referral is made to a statutory protective agency such as Social Care, the Child Protection Liaison Officer should ensure that there is no misunderstanding regarding:
 1. The reasons for making the referral
 2. Any special needs of the child including any linguistic, cultural, religious, physical or psychological factors (and where appropriate the child's family)
 3. His or her expectations of the agency to which the referral has been made
- The Child Protection Liaison Officer must confirm all verbal communication in writing within 24 hours repeating all relevant information and agreed actions using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- Following a Safeguarding Children Investigation, if the Child Protection Liaison Officer still has concerns about the safety of the child, the Social Services Area Manager should be contacted with a view to convening a Child Protection Conference
- In accordance with the Education (Restriction of Employment) Regulations 2000 a report must be made to the Independent

Safeguarding Authority when an employee is suspected or dismissed for an allegation of child abuse. The LADO and/or HR department will guide this process.

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Safeguarding Children Team:	
LADO	(01522) 554668
Ruth Fox	(01522) 554687
Customer Service Centre:	(01522) 782111

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