

The Voice

Our quarterly newsletter for Kisimul families and professionals



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Message from CEO Anita Andrews

A warm welcome to the latest edition of our quarterly newsletter, The Voice. We've had a roaring start to 2023 here at Kisimul!

The roll out of our fantastic Meaningful Life model has begun across our Adult Services and the response we've received from our families has been overwhelmingly positive - we've got more on this below.

Elsewhere, our #AmazingPeople recruitment campaign has led to record numbers of applications - double the number received this time

last year. This is hugely encouraging and further evidence that the improvements we're making to our recruitment and retention processes are paying dividends.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the teams at Swinderby and Acacia Hall who received glowing reports from Ofsted. This is a great achievement for everyone involved and I'm so pleased that they're getting the recognition they richly deserve. I have to give a special nod to the therapy team, whose work has been truly life changing for so many of the young people they support.

Next month, we'll be celebrating National Autism Awareness Week

with a host of activities happening across the Kisimul Group from 27th March through to World Autism Day on 2nd April. We'll also be using this milestone to introduce our new brand values, which have been shaped by colleagues from across the business. We'll be telling you all about this in the next edition of The Voice.

From award nominations to brilliant Ofsted reports and outstanding satisfaction surveys, it's clear that Kisimul's colleagues are doing simply exceptional work. I am incredibly proud of each and every one of them and have high hopes for the year ahead...



More on our **Meaningful Life Model**

In our previous issue, we introduced Kisimul's exciting new Meaningful Life model. Since then, we've been busy bringing it to fruition across our Children's Services and ensuring our colleagues, families, and commissioners understand why we're so passionate about what we're doing.

We're already seeing the positive effects of embedding a therapeutic lived experience, with anecdotal evidence of reduced incidences of challenging behaviour across our homes and a fresh approach from colleagues to the way they interact with individuals. Following this early success, we've been working with the

transformation team to support the design and introduction of the model across Adult Services, too. Earlier this year our Partnerships Director Steve Bromley, Head of Therapeutic Services Angela Wood, Head of Strategic Transformation Kirsty Thurlby, and Adult Services Area Manager Claire Thorndale hosted an online meeting, during which they presented what the model entails and how the adults in Kisimul's care will benefit.

The reaction from attendees was overwhelmingly positive and we're confident that the long-term results of implementing this forward-thinking model will speak for themselves.

For more information on the Meaningful Life approach visit: <https://www.kisimul.co.uk/meaningful-life/> or send your questions to our dedicated email address, meaningful.life@kisimul.co.uk and someone will get back to you.

The meaningful life model means:

- Colleagues join with the individuals and their family to clarify what a meaningful life would look like for them personally, and then design provision to ensure the client's life with us is fulfilling and that they move in the direction of a meaningful future.
- Clients have a therapeutic lived experience. This means interactions with colleagues and the environment are therapeutic in nature. Emotional regulation is supported through attuned interactions with colleagues, rather than rewards and consequences.

Life's 'good' at Acacia Hall & Swinderby

It's official! Swinderby Children's Home and Acacia Hall Children's Home have been rated 'Good' by Ofsted during rigorous inspections late last year.

We received some fantastic feedback from the inspectors about both settings. Here are just some of the highlights...

"Children are happy and there are lots of smiles and laughter."

"The relationships between children and staff are good, with some very good interactions. Staff communicate with children in a calming and soothing manner...Staff have a clear understanding of the children's needs, including those children that are new to the home."

"Managers and staff understand the importance of careful transitions for children, and the careful matching of new children coming to live at the home. Staff use their skills and experience to ensure these transitions are child centred."

"Children get the opportunity to try new and exciting activities. This is irrespective of ability or disability...For some children this progress is life changing."

"Children and staff have excellent relationships. Staff know and understand the children very well. They talk warmly and positively about children's strengths and achievements..."

"The home provides a calm, settled environment in which children are happy and relaxed."

"Managers are motivated, passionate and committed to improving the quality of care for children. They have a clear vision for the home and have shown a real commitment to the children in their care, the home and staff team."

"The property feels loved and cared for. Children and staff take great pride in the home. Every room is full of children's belongings and activities. Children's artwork and their photographs are on display throughout. Their bedrooms are personalised, and children help to choose the décor of the home."



It's all relative

what do our families say about us?

In our first newsletter, we shared the results of our relatives' satisfaction survey for our Adult Services. This time, we're putting our Children's Services in the spotlight...



100%

of respondents said that their relative is respected when making lifestyle choices

100%

of those asked said that the care and supported provided is tailored to the likes and dislikes of their relative

100%

said that Kisimul provides good support to their relative

Perhaps most importantly

100%

of relatives feel that they are asked for their opinion and listened to, to ensure the support provided can be continually improved

100%

of those asked felt involved in the review process, and were happy that it centred around the needs of their relative

100%

said that they would recommend the support provided by Kisimul to others.

We're listening

We received a small number of comments across both surveys relating to staffing at Kisimul. We take your concerns seriously and want you to know that we're working hard to bolster our team across the Group.

Our #AmazingPeople campaign has already led to us successfully hiring 100 candidates so far this year.

Rigorous checks are vital, of course but we are continuing to streamline our recruitment processes where possible to allow us to fill vacancies more quickly.

To encourage colleagues to stick with us, we're concentrating on developing new ways to show our gratitude for the sterling work they do. These include enhanced practical benefits like increases to rates of pay and mileage, discounts via the Blue Light card, and access to money management service, Wagestream. Meanwhile, we're improving internal communication to ensure our people feel connected, engaged, and empowered. In essence,

through clearly defined meaningful careers we're bringing our education, care, and support offer to life for our colleagues as well as the people we support.

We want to make sure we're doing all we can to communicate effectively with our families, too. Aside from reading about them in *The Voice*, you may well have noticed us sharing good news stories every week on our social media channels - [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#). We also have a library of informative videos about what we do and why, over on our [YouTube](#) channel.

Awards galore for Kisimul's super staff



Left to right: Leanne Millar, Lucy Whiting, Sarah Wilkins, Jason Simson, Nicky Lilley at the Women Achieving Greatness in Social Care Awards

Great British Care Awards

Kisimul was thrilled to have three of its team shortlisted for 2022's regional Great British Care Awards. We are enormously proud of all three of them, but we're delighted to report that Adam Wilkins, Area Manager for Adult Care South came away with the gong for Frontline Leader at the South East event. Huge congratulations to Adam, and also to Lucy Whiting and Gemma Kelly who were both finalists.

Women Achieving Greatness in Social Care Awards

Despite not taking home a prize from the East Mids Great British Care Awards, Senior Registered Manager Lucy Whiting was recognised at the prestigious Women Achieving Greatness in Social Care ceremony. Lucy was highly commended in the Social Care Superwoman category (children and young people).

She says,

"It was an incredible evening, celebrating not only my personal achievements, but also celebrating lots of other women within the sector that are doing amazing work in social care."

The judges commented on Lucy's dedication to her role, noting that, "With an emphasis on a person-centred approach, Lucy is a manager who keeps the wellbeing of her team at the top of her priorities...Effectively managing her professional life whilst also looking after two young boys at home, Lucy is an inspiration to those around her."

Lincolnshire Care Awards

Finally, we'll all be keeping our fingers crossed during the Lincolnshire Care Awards gala dinner on 30th March. Our very own Georgia Oxby and Darren Clifton have been shortlisted in the Frontline Leader and Residential Care award categories respectively, having been recognised for their incredible contribution to health and social care. Good luck!





Donnell's **success story**



When affectionate and lively Donnell became seriously ill in July 2020, he experienced escalating anxiety and demonstrated behaviours of concern which made it difficult for him to continue to be supported in his family home. In December that year it was agreed that Donnell would begin a residential placement at Kisimul's Acacia Hall School.

Since then, a bespoke therapy-led timetable has been created

for him and he has regular one-to-one sessions with music therapist, Andrei Celik. Donnell has responded brilliantly to this programme and is now able to access more of the school, showing improved tolerance and adaptability. In the home, he's also formed positive relationships with other practitioners and his peers – a huge achievement!

Donnell's exceptional progress is reflected in the time he spends with his family, too – all of whom

have had fantastic visits to his home, as well as being able to enjoy trips out and Christmas together without issue. Crucially, his wellbeing has improved significantly. His sense of humour is clear to see, and his prevailing mood is now happy and relaxed.

You can read more about Donnell's journey with Kisimul, [here](#).

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