



Managing allegations of abuse

Feb 2021

Managing allegations against or concerns about people who work or volunteer with young people

Any allegation or concern that a member or visitor has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a young person must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly, regardless of where the alleged incident took place.

Depending on the situation, an appropriate response may involve:

- the police investigating a possible criminal offence
- your local child protection services making enquiries and/or assessing whether a child is in need of support
- Marlow Chamber revoking membership of the individuals concerned.

Any children involved will be given appropriate support.

**If you think a child is in immediate danger
Don't delay – call the police on 999,
or call the NSPCC on [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000), straight away.**

Procedures for managing allegations and concerns

All members and visitors should read and understand our policies and procedures for managing allegations.

Who to contact with allegations or suspicions of child abuse within Marlow Chamber

Nominated child protection lead

Jo Braybrooke, Chamber Secretary

Deputy child protection lead

Lesley James, Chamber President



Responding to concerns and allegations

Marlow Chamber of Commerce will take any concerns raised about members or visitors seriously, regardless of who the person is or how long they've been involved with the organisation.

Marlow Chamber of Commerce will not attempt to investigate the matter, but gather the facts of the case and keep written records.

If an allegation is made that a member or visitor has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, 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 they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

This will be reported **immediately** to the relevant agencies (for example the [NSPCC helpline*](#) on **0808 800 5000**, the local child protection services or the police).

Marlow Chamber will liaise with the local child protection services and the police to ensure we are responding appropriately.

If the allegation is against someone not directly in our membership the organisation they work or volunteer for should be involved in the investigation.

Resignations and 'settlement agreements'

If someone leaves Marlow Chamber as a result of allegations or refuses to cooperate with the process, this will not prevent an allegation being followed up.

Confidentiality and support

Every effort to maintain the confidentiality of all parties while an allegation or concern is being investigated is a priority for Marlow Chamber of Commerce. All members will be required to read, and agree to having read and understood, all Child Safeguarding Policies and relating documents written by Marlow Chamber – therefore they will be made aware of the above confidentiality statement.



Ways Marlow Chamber intends to support the children involved, their parents or carers, and individuals who have had an allegation made against them. This includes:

- telling parents or carers and the member or visitor concerned about the allegation as soon as possible (as long as this does not place any children at further risk of harm)
- telling them how we are going to manage the allegation
- keeping everyone informed about the progress and outcomes of the case.

Record keeping

We intend to keep a clear and comprehensive summary of:

- all allegations that have been made
- details of how allegations have been followed up and investigated
- decisions made about the allegation and actions taken.

Reporting

If a member of Marlow Chamber of Commerce has been removed from working with children because they pose a risk of harm (even if the member left voluntarily), Marlow Chamber will comply in its legal duty to inform the relevant disclosure and barring agency. Failure to do this is a criminal offence.

We will refer to the [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) (DBS) (DBS, 2018).**

Learning lessons

If an allegation is substantiated we will endeavour to think about lessons that can be learnt. This should include:

- considering any factors that may have contributed to or failed to prevent abuse occurring
- reviewing safeguarding and child protection measures to ensure ongoing vigilance
- making changes to organisational policies and procedures as necessary.



References

References and resources for managing allegations can be found on the NSPCC website.

* <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/our-services/nspcc-helpline/>

** <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-referrals-guidance--2>