



Pupil Access to A Person Independent of the School Policy

Date of last review:	2024	Review period:	Annual
Date of next review:	2025	Written by:	Rebecca Garratt
Type of policy:	Statutory	Committee:	FGB
Signature:			

Standard 17.2 of the Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards require that the school identifies at least one person other than a parent, outside the staff and those responsible for the leadership and governance of the school, who children may contact directly about a personal problem or concerns at the school. This person may be known as the 'independent person'. Children know who this person is, know how to contact them and feel comfortable talking to them. The person is easily accessible at all reasonable times, visits regularly and knows the children. The person should have the necessary skills to interact and communicate effectively with the children and be able to recognise good/poor care and safeguarding concerns. Children who cannot communicate verbally are given the means to request individual support. Schools may need to make a range of arrangements for independent support, which might be provided by more than one person, to ensure that the needs of each child are met.

We aim to:

- Enable all boarders to obtain support and guidance when they feel unable to talk to a member of boarding or school staff or other agencies.
- Provide an alternative person, referred to as the independent visitor, other than school or boarding staff, to whom all students can turn to when having problems or concerns they'd like to talk through with someone.
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At any given time, there will be at least one independent visitor whose name and photo will appear clearly on displays in the home.

The independent visitor is very much considered as part of the boarding community and is very much welcomed by both staff and students.

The Independent visitor will offer advice and guidance for students in order to ensure a happy and safe environment and will report any matters of concern to the appropriate body, organisation or member of staff. The independent visitor will not offer confidentiality to a student making a disclosure and is duty bound to report any information which may result in harm to a child in boarding or elsewhere. Updated information, advice and guidance on situations likely to arise e.g. bullying etc. will be passed on. The independent visitor will be required to be familiar with boarding policy and protocol particularly as it relates to safeguarding.

The independent visitor will make six unannounced visits spread evenly over the course of the school year and will complete a written report.

Visits will include.

- Conversations with children, senior management team and staff.
- Conversations with social workers where relevant
- Conversations with parents/carers
- Checks on the school's records of attendance, complaints, sanctions and bullying.
- Evaluation of the quality of the provision and effectiveness of care provided to students and whether they are safeguarded.
- Assessment of the suitability and physical condition of the building, furniture and equipment of the residential provision and the external environment.

The representative is vetted in line with the school's safer recruitment policy, in accordance with the safer recruitment requirements set out in keeping children safe in education and has the skills and authority to carry out this role.