

St George's School

	Pupil Access to a Person Independent of the School Staff Group ('Independent Person') <i>(Relevant to National Minimum Standard 11)</i>	
	Committee: Staff & Students	
	Co-ordinator : Mrs N Borland-Peel	
	Last Reviewed : Summer 2024	Next Review : Summer 2027
	Policy links to	

Standard 11.4 of the Boarding National Minimum Standards requires 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 personal problems 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.

We aim to:

- Enable 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 Listener, other than school or boarding staff, to whom students can turn when having problems they'd like to talk through with someone

At any given time there will be at least one Independent Listener whose name, contact details and photo will appear clearly on display in all Boarding Houses and whose name and contact details will appear in boarding house handbooks. Also on display will be a brief summary of the role of the Independent Listener. The Independent Listener is not an employed member of the School.

The Independent Listeners are very much considered as part of the boarding community. They are invited to formal boarding functions and are also invited in to school to visit boarding houses on an informal basis.

As volunteers, the Independent Listeners will be DBS checked and will be required to complete child protection training as would be the case for other volunteer roles within the school.

The Independent Listeners 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 listener 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, drugs etc. will be passed on. The independent listener will be required to be familiar with boarding policy and protocol particularly as it relates to safeguarding.

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The Independent Listeners will put in writing a declaration that stipulates the role and agrees to strict confidentiality with regards to matters arising from duties as The Independent Listeners agreeing to discuss matters only with the appropriate body, organisation or member of staff. As the role is voluntary, the Independent Listeners may withdraw his/her services at any time. The School reserves the right to cancel the arrangement with the Independent Listeners and seek alternative provision if it is felt this is in the best interests of the boarders.