



**OXFORD
International
College**

A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT PERSON POLICY

POLICY INTENDED FOR:	Whole College
CATEGORY:	Safeguarding
POLICY IMPLEMENTED BY:	Director of Boarding
POLICY MONITORED BY:	DSL, DoB
REVIEWED BY:	Director of Boarding
REVIEWED DATE:	August 2024
CONSULTATION WITH:	Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
NEXT REVIEW:	August 2025

The Three Pillars

The three pillars of Oxford International College (OIC) are:

- Academic Excellence
- Personal Development
- Career and University Pathways

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INTRODUCTION

In line with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding schools (Standard 11.4), the college has a named 'Independent Person' who any student can speak to in confidence. This independent person is widely advertised and circulated to students by posters around the College in classrooms, the boarding houses and in public places. This makes the independent person 'easily accessible'.

The independent person, whilst a volunteer, has gone through a full recruitment and DBS clearance process before being appointed. This is a confidential system and the independent person is under no obligation to inform the school of any calls. The children are also able to contact our Head of Counselling or their dedicated Welfare Office at Oxford International College Oxford, as well as Childline, NSPCC, and the Children's Commissioner:

- Head of Counselling: Meryl Suissa at meryl.suissa@oxcoll.com
- Childline: 0800 1111
- NSPCC 0808 800 5000 help@NSPCC.org.uk
- The Children's Commissioner: Dame Rachel de Souza: 02077838330 Children's Commissioner for England childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

All of the above are advertised in all boarding houses and are part of a open and transparent culture when it comes to supporting the welfare and wellbeing of the students in our care.

INDEPENDENT PERSON

The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Standards (NMS 11.4) requires schools to appoint an independent person, as a possible 'safety valve' for students with concerns or problems.

The following procedure is to be followed in any appointments:

- The College will follow the normal recruitment process in line with Policy and with current legislation, National Minimum Standards for Boarding, ISI regulations and KCSIE guidelines, including appropriate checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- The Independent Person will be included in the Single Central Register.
- This will be accompanied by an appropriate job description and on boarding process.
- The position, which is an unpaid and voluntary role, is to support the students and lies outside the school management structure, but is still subject to the school's specification and organisation.
- The College will be aware of the Independent Person's other roles and experience (e.g. police officer, governor, doctor, vicar, counsellor, local dignitary).
- The College will be aware of the Independent Person's own other professional expectations and codes (e.g. religious, medical, counselling).

CONDITIONS AND PRECAUTIONS

- The Independent Person will be subject to school policy on Safeguarding and Child Protection, Low Level Concerns and Whistleblowing.
- The College will make clear to the Independent Person the rules on confidentiality – especially their duty to breach confidentiality if informed of a safeguarding risk to students.
- There must be carefully planned access for students – time, place, ease of access, risks assessed and recorded. This is in the interest of transparency and best practice.
- The College will ensure that, alongside their understanding of the supportive pastoral structures in place within the College.
- Students are aware of the role of an Independent Person including the rules on confidentiality and when it can be broken in the interest of safeguarding them.
- The Independent Person will be briefed on specific College policies including but not limited to: safeguarding, bullying, drugs, behaviour etc.
- Double feedback – this will come from the Independent Person regarding general welfare issues raised (not specific instances) from students regarding the service and their ease of access to it.

ROLE AND JOB DESCRIPTION

- 1) The Independent Person will act as a confidential and supportive adult to students who wish to discuss concerns or worries.
- 2) In a comparable way to any member of staff, confidentiality cannot be maintained in a case where there is concern for the welfare or safety of the student (or others) because of any discussion with the Independent Person. This should be detailed to the student in line with best safeguarding practices.
- 3) In these situations, the Independent Person should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or, in specific situations and as discussed and advised, as detailed in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the LADO team or the Police.
- 4) Other than as set out above, there is no requirement for the Independent Person to report to the College any of the conversations they have with students. However:
 - a) The Independent Person, with explicit agreement from or at the request of a student, may contact the College to share specific details or raise concerns.
 - b) At their discretion, the Independent Person can report to the Vice Principal or Principal generic information such as the number of calls they receive and thematic summaries of what they support students with.
- 5) The Independent Person will visit the school on occasion, so the children are aware of who they are and the Independent Person role.

- 6) There will be no expectation that the Independent Person will make themselves available in person for face-to-face meetings with the students. However, it would be considered good practice to do so from time to time.
- 7) The Independent Person will need to have knowledge of 'school norms and expectations' including current issues, trends as well as the National Minimum Standards.
- 8) This will be done through regular training and communication with the Director of Boarding.