



Myddelton College

Independent Listener Policy

Created by	BPD (DSL) & ICH (Head of Boarding)
Approved by	AJA & Governors (March 2023)
Next review	March 2024

INDEPENDENT LISTENER POLICY

1. The Independent Listener has been renamed the INDEPENDENT PERSON.
2. Myddelton College recognises the need for pupils to have the support and opportunity of 'independent person' access and also other alternative sources of independent advice and help – both outside the family and home, and outside the school.
3. Referencing;

Taken from KCSIE 2022: **Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff**

What school and college staff should know and do:

A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

1. Schools and colleges and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
3. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Taken from KCSIE 2022: **The immediate response to a report**

Responding to the report

467. It is important to understand that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report, or a member of school or college staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed or a child's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong. As per Part one of this guidance, if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

468. The initial response by a school or college to a report from a child is incredibly important. How the school or college responds to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward.

469. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school or college should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

Taken from: **National Minimum Standards for boarding schools - Sept 2022**
Standard 11 – Boarders' induction and individual support

11.1 There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for new boarders and that process includes information covering the standards 11.2 through 11.6.

11.2 The school should make arrangements, with parents and carers, which are clear about who is responsible for the collection and transport of boarders (including arrangements for international pupils) at the start and end of the school term and where there is any temporary absence from school.

11.3 Boarders are able to contact any member of staff with personal, academic or welfare concerns. All staff should know what to do if a boarder approaches them with a concern.

11.4 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.

11.5 Boarders are also provided with details of two or more child specific support services, such as **Childline** or the **Children's Commissioner's Help at Hand** service, to contact in case of problems or distress.

11.6 Boarders are provided with appropriate advocacy support where necessary and are made aware of what advocacy services are available, how they may access such support and any entitlement they may have to advocacy provision, and that advocacy provision adheres to the National Standards.

4. Policy aims

The central aim of this policy is to promote the Safeguarding of Myddelton College pupils by ensuring they have a variety of people to whom they can refer their worries, concerns or problems, or seek advice and help, in the first instance.

This policy also aims to outline the procedure for pupils to contact an Independent Person should they wish to talk to someone not employed by the School.

The School commits in this policy to observing the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and does not discriminate on any grounds.

5. Policy Statements

All boarders are made aware of the name and contact details of the Independent Person. The Independent Person is not an employee of the School.

Contact details for the Independent Person are displayed in all Houses and in new boarders' information packs, as well as around the school site. All boarders are assured of the discreet nature of any communication with the Independent Person. However, in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy, it is emphasised that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if a disclosure of abuse or suspected abuse is made.

The Independent Person is given appropriate induction, support and training by the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Oversight of the Policy is undertaken by the Governors in the presence of the SLT which includes the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Ms Becki Davies.

6. Independent Person

Mrs Gaenor Loftus
Myddelton College's Independent Person

Tel: 07595 632 290

If, on your first call you are unable to contact Mrs Gaenor Loftus, you can leave your first name and telephone number, in confidence, and she will return your call later.

Other independent contact points might include:

Childline:	'Call us free on 0800 1111'
Children's Commissioner at Hand:	'Freephone 0800 528 0731'
The Samaritans:	'116 123 free from any phone'

7. Links with other school Policies:

Safeguarding and Child Protection