



# GIGGLESWICK SCHOOL

## Independent Person Policy

Lead Author(s)	Second Master
Reviewed by	Headmaster Head of the Prep School
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## 1 THE INDEPENDENT PERSON - REGULATIONS

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Part F, Standard 11, paragraph 11.4 of National Minimum Standards for Boarding (2022) states:

*"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."*

Giggleswick school ("the School") believes that the house system provides equality of opportunity through a caring environment in which each pupil, with support, mutual respect and encouragement of members of staff and of other pupils, is valued and is allowed to develop their own personality and talents while learning to live as part of a community. The School aims to ensure that this community is one in which there is no place for harassment, discrimination or bullying.

Each pupil has a number of different adults to whom they may turn for advice and support including Senior House Staff, Resident Tutor or Matron in the House, their academic tutor, the Chaplain, or another trusted teacher. The Wellbeing Centre is staffed with trained nurses who are available from 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday and 12pm to 6pm Saturday (not Exeats) and the School Counsellor is available to see in confidence (there is a referral process for this).

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## 2 PASTORAL CARE AND PUPIL WELLBEING

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The School places great emphasis on pupil wellbeing; systems in place to support wellbeing are robust. However, there are occasions when a pupil wishes to speak to someone who is not part of the School.

The School has a volunteer Independent Person who acts in this capacity.

The Independent Person is currently:

Mrs Gilly Harper  
Mobile 07788 494042  
Home 0161 442 5531  
Email [gilly@zimzam.tv](mailto:gilly@zimzam.tv)

These contact details are displayed on House noticeboards alongside those of the Children's Commissioner (Help at Hand Service), Childline and ISI.

Mrs Harper is a former Governor of the School. She was also a pupil here in the sixth form and her father was the Deputy Headmaster. She has an intimate knowledge of Giggleswick, its pastoral care structures and values. She has also been a teacher in the independent sector and is a parent of teenagers. She stepped down from her role as governor in March 2022. It is important to note that, in her role as Independent Person, she will not be actively counselling pupils. Rather, she will act as a supportive adult and active listener who may, in appropriate circumstances, suggest to a pupil the next steps they may wish to consider.

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### **3 ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT PERSON(S)**

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1. The Independent Person will act as a confidential (see 1.a. for qualification) and supportive adult to pupils in the School who wish to discuss concerns or worries.
  - a. In a similar way to any member of staff, including the School Counsellor, confidentiality cannot be maintained in a case where there is concern for the welfare or safety of the pupil (or others) as a consequence of any discussion with the Independent Person. In these situations, the Independent Person should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, in specific situations as detailed in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the NYSCP LADO team or the Police.
2. Other than as set out in 1.a. above, there is no requirement for the Independent Person to report to the School any of the conversations they have with pupils. However:
  - a. The Independent Person, with explicit agreement from/at the request of a pupil, may contact the School to share specific details or raise particular concerns.
  - b. At their discretion, the Independent Person can report to the DSL generic information such as the number of calls they receive, or the types of concerns brought to her attention.
3. The Independent Person will visit the School on occasion, have lunch with the pupils and familiarise themselves with the School on an informal basis.
4. There will be no expectation that the Independent Person make themselves available in person for face-face meetings with pupils.

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### **4 APPOINTMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT PERSON**

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The following procedure is to be followed in appointing the Independent Person.

- The School will follow the normal recruitment policy in line with current legislation, National Minimum Standards for Boarding, ISI regulations and KCSIE (2024) guidance, including appropriate checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- They will be included in the Single Central Register.
- They will be subject to the School's policies on Safeguarding and Whistleblowing.
- This document will be provided to the Independent Person as a job description.
- The Independent Person will be provided with an induction which will include safeguarding training as well as a discussion of the ethos, aims and pastoral care of the School.
- The School will make it clear that the position, which is an unpaid and voluntary role, is to support the boarding pupils, in particular, and lies outside the School management structure.
- The School will be aware of the Independent Person's other roles and experience (e.g. police officer, governor, doctor, vicar, counsellor, local dignitary).
- The School will be aware of the Independent Person's own other professional expectations and codes (e.g. religious, medical, counselling).
- The School will make clear to the Independent Person the rules on confidentiality – especially their duty to breach confidentiality if informed of a safeguarding risk to a pupil or pupils.
- The School will ensure that, alongside their understanding of the supportive pastoral structures in place within the School, pupils are aware of the role of Independent Person, including the rules on confidentiality.