Independent Person Policy & Role Description

This policy applies to the whole school including Boarding and the Early Years.
The current version of any policy, procedure, protocol or guideline is the version held on the TASIS website. It is the responsibility of all faculty and staff to ensure that they are following the current version.

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Agreed by:

Head of School	**Chair of the Board**
Bryan Nixon	David King
25 August 2026	25 August 2026

TASIS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all students fulfil their potential.

1. Description

1.1. **Role Description:** As described within the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS) s11.4. 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. (Ref: NMS 11.4).

1.2. **Reports to:** Director of Boarding.

2. Introduction

2.1. TASIS has a system whereby any child who wishes to talk to an independent adult about personal problems or concerns at school can do so. Details of Independent Persons are displayed around the school and within all boarding houses and dormitories.

2.2. The Independent Person system is confidential and Independent Persons are under no obligation to inform the school of any calls. Independent Persons will also visit the school a number of times throughout the year to make themselves known to staff and boarding students. Confidentiality is not absolute: safeguarding concerns must be reported under 3.1(e) and 10.3(g), and students must be told this at the outset.

2.3. The role of Independent Person is expected to follow all policies and procedures driven by the *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, (DfE, September 2026 – all parts), *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, (DfE, March 2026) and the *National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools* (DfE, May 2026). The Crime and Policing Act 2026 also applies from 1 September 2026 (see 10.3(b)). [CONFIRM – KCSIE 2026 references are keyed to the pre-publication text; verify against the final version on 1 September 2026.]

2.4. It is a fundamental value of the school that we help our students to remain healthy, enabling them to continue to access their education without stigma or exclusion. Hence all staff at TASIS England are committed to ensuring our students are safe and feel they have someone to talk to.

3. Main Areas of Responsibility

3.1. Under the direction of and in consultation with the Director of Boarding, the Independent Person will be required to note the following:

a. Take into account the schools views on the student's needs, as well as the students wishes and views;
b. If contacted by a student, they should provide an opportunity for them to talk through problems and issues in a safe and non-discriminatory manner;
c. Encourage the students to participate in decisions affecting them;
d. Keep accurate and confidential records bearing in mind some students wish to remain anonymous; Records are held under the school's Data Protection Policy and the UK GDPR as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. Anonymity cannot be maintained where a safeguarding concern arises.
e. Safeguarding and child protection issues arising from conversations with students should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) either directly or via the Director of Boarding who is a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL); this applies to disclosures by a student or an alleged perpetrator, and to witnessed abuse, whether current or non-recent.
f. Provide feedback to the Director of Boarding for reports, reviews and other meetings;
g. Work in a child centered manner, being clear about confidentiality and where boundaries lie.

4. Safeguarding Responsibilities:

4.1. To know the identity of the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy.

4.2. Proactively be alert to indicators of potential safeguarding issues and report these immediately in accordance with the schools procedure.

4.3. Be aware of the school's Safeguarding Policy and to follow its requirements.

4.4. Attend training relating to Safeguarding of Children provided by the school if required. Safeguarding induction covering KCSIE Part One and the school's reporting procedures must be completed before taking up the role, with updates thereafter (NMS 20.1).

4.5. Engage in safe practice and professional conduct to safeguard children to mitigate against the potential for misunderstandings or situations being misconstrued.

4.6. The school is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and expects the same from its volunteers, employees and representatives.

4.7. Report any concern about an adult's conduct, including a low-level concern, to the Head of School - or the Chair of the Board where it concerns the Head of School - under KCSIE Part Four and the Faculty and Staff Behaviour Policy.

4.8. Understand that the role is a position of trust under sections 16–19 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003; a sexual relationship with any student under 18 is a criminal offence, consent notwithstanding.

5. Supervision

5.1. Supervision arrangements should be discussed with the Director of Boarding to ascertain whether the Independent Person is able to arrange peer supervision outside TASIS. Nevertheless, the Independent Person will receive ongoing '*on the job'* support and guidance from the Director of Boarding on an ad hoc basis during their time as an Independent Person as and when required.

6. Job Context

6.1. The Independent Person must be child focused however sympathetic they may be to other points of view. The function is to compliment the work and activities of the boarding staff and parents.

6.2. In bringing this autonomous perspective, the Independent Person must behave in an anti-discriminatory manner. The Independent Person is not expected to accept unquestioningly what those responsible for the child tell them is in the child's interests, but should remain open-minded and foster a healthy skepticism.

7. Knowledge Experience and Training

7.1. The Independent Person should have qualities, skills, experience and/or qualifications in other settings that enable them to undertake work in a professional capacity with children. These may include:

a. An understanding and empathy of the needs of school age children and adolescents;
b. An understanding and appreciation of the difficulties caused by living away from home;
c. The ability to work flexibly with a variety of adults and children;
d. An understanding of Good Care Practice and Principles;
e. An appreciation of the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 and the National Minimum Standards and other relevant legislation;
f. Qualifications/experience in counseling or other relevant disciplines.

8. Problems and Decisions

8.1. The Independent Person will consult and work with the Director of Boarding (and the DSL where required), boarding staff and the students. They will work within all school policies and procedures. All grievances or disputes should follow the procedure and guidance within the schools Policy.

9. Duration

9.1. The initial arrangement would be for a period of 12 months, after 12 months the arrangement will be reviewed by the Head of School, Director of Boarding and the DSL. However, if for any reason an Independent Person is unable to continue with the role they should contact the Director of Boarding as soon as is reasonably practicable.

10. Notes on Independent Persons

10.1. As stated in section 1 above, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools requires the school to identify at least one person other than a parent, outside the staff, and those responsible for the leadership and governance of the school, who boarders may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at school.

10.2. The role is voluntary although reasonable expenses for travel may be agreed in advance.

10.3. The following procedure is to be followed in any appointments:

a. Appointment procedures will be required to follow the *National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools* standard 19 on Safer Recruitment standards; Standard 19 is 'Staff recruitment and checks on other adults'. NMS 20.1 also applies: job description, boarding induction on appointment, and regular review of practice.
b. The position is subject to the usual DBS, child protection, welfare and 'whistle-blowing' requirements; From 1 September 2026 the Crime and Policing Act 2026 removes the 'supervision exemption' from regulated activity. Providing advice or guidance on children's emotional wellbeing is regulated activity if done frequently, on more than three days in any 30-day period, or overnight. Where the role meets that test, an enhanced DBS certificate with children's barred list information is required before it is taken up, and an Independent Person already in post must have their barred list status checked. Where it does not, a written risk assessment must be completed and retained (KCSIE 2026, paras 381–387). An Independent Person on whom no checks have been obtained must not be left unsupervised with students. The DBS referral duty applies to volunteers as to staff.
c. Offer an appropriate role description (this document) and briefing/induction;
d. Be clear that the position is independent of the main lines of school management, but still subject to the schools specification and organisation;
e. Ensure Independent Person knowledge of 'school norms and expectations'
f. There should be an awareness of perception of Independent Persons other roles (eg police officer, governor, doctor, vicar, local counselor, local dignitary);
g. There must be clear rules on confidentiality – and duty to breach if the event of disclosure or if informed of safeguarding risks to students or other students, there must be no absolute guarantee of secrecy; [

10.4. As required by NMS 11.5 and 11.6, boarders are also given contact details for two or more child-specific support services - Childline and the Children's Commissioner's Help at Hand - and made aware of available advocacy support and how to access it. These are displayed alongside the Independent Person details in all boarding houses.