



Mill Hill
EDUCATION GROUP

Independent Person Policy

Instilling values, inspiring minds

Independent Person Policy

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1. Introduction

Mill Hill Education Group (the 'Group') is the trading name of The Mill Hill School Foundation. The Group has a strong boarding ethos and greatly values the diversity that both its UK and international pupils bring to the Group's community.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the Group's Safeguarding and Protecting the Welfare of Pupils Policy. Standard 11.4 of the *National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS), September 2022* requires schools to appoint an Independent Person who is outside the staff or the leadership structures to be available to pupils who may want to discuss concerns or problems. This is over and above the provision already available to them through the implementation of the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Protecting the Welfare of Pupils Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy

The Independent Person is expected to follow all policies and procedures driven by the *Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2024* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children, December 2023*. It is a fundamental value of the Group that we help our pupils to remain healthy, enabling them to continue to access their education without stigma or exclusion. Hence all staff at the Mill Hill School Group are committed to ensuring our pupils are safe and feel they have someone to talk to.

2. Policy Aims

The aims of the policy are:

- To provide staff with information as to how pupils can access the Independent Person
- To enable pupils to obtain support and guidance when they feel unable to speak with a member of staff.

3. Key Principles and Procedure

3.1. Safer Recruitment

The Independent Person will be subject to full checks as per the *Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance, Sept 2024* and ISSR and their details will be included in the Single Central Record (SCR).

3.2. Training

The Independent Person will receive a copy of the *Group's Safeguarding and Protecting the Welfare of Pupils Policy, Boarding Handbooks* and all related policies. The Independent Person is expected to have appropriate relevant, in date Advanced Safeguarding training which will be recorded on the Central Training Record.

The Independent Person will be provided with the contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Leads. The Independent Person will be briefed on their responsibilities for confidentiality and the rules attached to breaching this responsibility as detailed by *Keeping children safe in education, September 2024*.

The Independent Person will be briefed on any trends within the Group e.g. bullying, substance abuse etc. that are likely to result in contact with pupils. They will be provided with all policies associated with these issues such as the *Anti-Bullying Policy*.

3.2 Liaison with the Group

The Independent Person is independent from the Group and will have no duty to relay information to the Group about those pupils with whom they have been in contact. In the event that information does need to be relayed for Child Protection purposes, this will be directed to the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead.

On occasion, the Independent Person may be requested to submit a numerical report on the type of issues arising in order to steer the work of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their Deputies.

3.3 Multi-Agency Working

The Independent Person will be supplied with the contact details of Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the Local Authority Children's Service. In the event a referral to the LADO or Children's Services is required, the Independent Person is under no obligation to share this information with the School. However, where a referral is made, the Independent Person may inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with the *Group's Safeguarding and Protecting the Welfare of Pupils Policy* reporting procedures.

4. Promotion of the Independent Person

4.1 Pupils

The Group will advertise widely within the Group the availability of the Independent Person. This should include (not exhaustive) posters in the schools and the Houses, information within the welcome and induction packs and verbal reinforcement by support staff etc.

The information supplied to pupils must include a simple narrative of the purpose of the Independent Person and their contact details.

4.2 Staff

All staff will receive training on the Independent Person within their Safeguarding Awareness Training.

5. Independent Person Contact Details

The contact details for the Independent Person will be displayed prominently in each School and in all Houses.

6. Review

This Policy shall be reviewed annually.

This Review: May 2024

Next Review: Autumn 2025

This Policy was approved by the Education Committee of the Court of Governors on 18th September 2024.

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The Mill Hill Education Group is the brand name for The Mill Hill School Foundation.
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