



INDEPENDENT LISTENER POLICY

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The School's Independent Listener is the Reverend Gavin Knight.

All pupils are made aware of this role and contact details via:

- a. An annual assembly at which the Independent Listener is present.
- b. Regular reminders in House Assembly
- c. Posters in Houses

The pupil messaging is that the Independent Listener is one of the many people that are available for pupils to talk to along with:

- Peers
- Peer Listeners and other senior pupils
- Parents and family
- Teachers
- Tutors
- Trusted adults
- Nurses
- Chaplaincy

- Safeguarding Leads
- House staff
- Childline
- Childrens' Commissioner

Actions for the Independent Listener

Pupils are made aware that if a safeguarding concern is raised then the confidentiality has to be extended to the safeguarding team who are trained to manage incidents sensitively and professionally.

If the Independent Listener is called, they are asked to listen to the child.

Response to safeguarding concerns

If a safeguarding issue is raised, the Independent Listener is required to inform the child that the information does need to be passed to the school. A safeguarding issue may need to be disclosed unilaterally, together with the identify of the pupil. The Independent Listener will, however, always seek to act with the pupil's agreement, encouraging them to make the necessary disclosure. It is possible in some circumstances that the Independent Listener might share information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead on a no-names basis in the first instance.

Response to non-safeguarding concerns

If the matter is not a safeguarding concern, then the Independent Listener is not required to inform the School but will talk to the pupil about how the matter might be addressed and moved forward, and this may involve contacting the School on a named or no-names basis. The first point of contact is likely to be, for consistency and continuity, the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Boundaries around the role

The Independent Listener is available to talk to over the telephone. The key to the role is in the word 'Listener'. The Independent Listener is not a substitute for or addition to the School's professional counselling service (although they may refer pupils confidentially to the service), nor to provide a series of mentoring or coaching sessions.

Whilst a pupil might contact the Independent Listener on several different occasions, it is expected that there will not be regular and ongoing contact on any issue.

The Independent Listener will signpost pupils to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the counselling service or other support services listed below.

The Independent Listener would not meet with a pupil in person (unless in an exceptional case with permission from and following an assessment by the Designated Safeguarding Lead)

At times the need may simply be to listen, and no onward contact is needed.

The Independent Listener will inform the School, termly, of the number of calls made.

Further Signposts

Designated Safeguarding Lead – James Cope – 07715 990540 – copej@stedwardsoxford.org

Counselling service - SES-SchoolCounsellors@stedwardsoxford.org

Childline - 0800 1111

Online safety – CEOPS - <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>