

Queenswood



## Guardianship Policy and Agreement

Issued by	Assistant Head (Boarding)
Last review	October 2024
Circulation	Queenswood Website, Staff Portal

## **Policy Statement**

Following the Children Act (1989), the Protection of Children Act (1999) and the Care Standards Act (2000), Queenswood School, in promoting and safeguarding the welfare of every student, requires parents who do not live in the United Kingdom to appoint an educational guardian to act on their behalf. This legislation protects the rights of children and makes 'proper and appropriate care' a compulsory requirement.

In this document, the term '**Guardian**' refers to an Educational Guardian, which involves a delegation of parental responsibility, ensuring a pupil's welfare in and out of school throughout the pupil's enrolment at the School in the UK. The Educational Guardian is independent of the School. This is distinct from a Legal Guardian, which refers to a person who is appointed by a court of law to care for a child for example a parent who holds sole custody, or when a parent has died, or to a person acting as a guardian of a child's estate.

### **Guardianship Organisation (AEGIS / BSA Accredited):**

An organisation which provides the service of educational guardianship for international pupils. Guardianship organisations provide a range of services for international pupils which includes provision of homestay accommodation during exeat/long weekends, half term holidays, emergency stays, attendance at parent/teacher meetings and more.

### **Homestay:**

A household approved and appointed by the guardianship organisation, to provide accommodation for and care of a pupil when not at School.

### **Non-Accredited Educational Guardian (a Close Relative or Established Family Friend):**

There will be situations where a non-accredited guardian is the preferred arrangement. Close family or established friends can take the responsibility of educational guardian for the pupil provided they can meet the guardian responsibilities as set out in this Policy.

Parents should note that standards 22.3 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools gives the School the responsibility for checking the suitability of these educational guardian arrangements.

During the term time the School is legally responsible for each student's welfare, and undertakes delegated parental responsibilities. However, there are times (eg exeat/home weekends, flexi weekends, half term breaks, or when a child is unwell, suspended or expelled by the School etc) when the School must be able to hand over these parental responsibilities to another adult – a properly appointed guardian.

The School has particular responsibility, under UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) regulations, for international pupils on our Child Student Visa Sponsorship for whom we are responsible while they are living and studying in the UK. UKVI rules require that care arrangements are 'suitable' for pupils **at all times when they are in the UK, and not just when they are in the care of the School.**

## **Information Sharing between the School and Educational Guardians**

Before any planned guardian or homestay arrangement, the school may share personal or sensitive information about a pupil with the Educational Guardian, where this is deemed to be vital for the health, welfare and/or safeguarding of the pupil in question.

The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (2022) reflect this, by giving schools direct responsibility for ensuring that the guardianship arrangement is promoting the welfare, physical wellbeing and emotional wellbeing of the boarder.

## Parent Responsibilities

It is a condition of entry to Queenswood that all students whose parents live overseas have a mature and responsible guardian who has permanent residence rights to live in the UK. This requirement applies to all girls throughout their education at Queenswood, regardless of age, including all Sixth Form girls.

**Please note that where an international student needs to apply for a student visa in order to study in the UK, the required CAS (COntirmation of Acceptance to Study) number will not be issued until the School is satisfied that appropriate guardian arrangements are in place.**

For Boarders whose parents are UK based but occasionally have to travel, we require that a temporary guardian is appointed and details are provided to the School.

It is the parents', not the School's responsibility, to select a guardian, bearing in mind the absolute importance of the welfare of their child when choosing an appropriate guardian.

### Parents must:

- Satisfy themselves that the guardian is a fit person to have unsupervised care of their child;
- Satisfy themselves that the guardian can provide suitable accommodation for their child when in the UK but absent from the School;
- Inform the school if an appointed guardian's details change during a pupil's time at the School, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure accurate updated contact details (telephone, mobile, email and full postal address) together with identification documents are provided to the school immediately in writing to [violaine.ludwick@queenswoodschool.org](mailto:violaine.ludwick@queenswoodschool.org) (Assistant Head, Boarding).

## Permitted Educational Guardianship Arrangements

Ideally the guardian should live as close to the school as possible but they must live within a maximum of a 50-mile radius or two-hour journey of the school – bearing in mind that Queenswood is located in an area which experiences a very high density of traffic and major congestion often occurs in the local area due to our close vicinity to major road networks.

1. Accredited guardian - Parents may choose the guardianship agency that they prefer for their child, but they must be an AEGIS or BSA approved guardianship organisation.

Please see the links here for the AEGIS and BSA websites for the range of guardianship agencies available. [AEGIS Click Here](#); or [BSA Click Here](#)

2. Guardians can be a close family relative who is over 25 years of age and who is not a full time student, who is permanently resident in the UK, and has appropriate facilities in their home to accommodate the student. They must also speak a suitable level of English. Parents must give details to how they are related.
3. Family friend – this arrangement is only acceptable so long as the child has an established relationship with the family friend being appointed as guardian and is approved first by the school.

# Educational Guardian Requirements and Responsibilities

## Educational guardians must:

- have UK residency be legally resident in the UK for the entire duration of the pupil's stay in the UK and must provide the School with evidence of their right to remain in the UK;
- be English speaking and contactable at all times by telephone / email and to be in a position to travel to the School at short notice;
- be over 25 years of age and not a full-time student. The age limit is required to ensure emotional maturity and provision of a safe environment;
- be available not only to the pupil but also to the School in the absence of the parents. To act with delegated parental authority in the case of an emergency and be ready to liaise with the Housemistress on behalf of the parents of the pupil in any matters relating to the pupil's welfare;
- be someone with whom the child feels happy and comfortable staying – very much like a family home, with an appropriate degree of care and supervision. An unacceptable educational guardian arrangement would be one in which the environment is not warm and welcoming and/or where numerous young people are staying in one establishment. Unsupervised hotel, B & B, hostel or student accommodation will not be considered acceptable;
- be expected to uphold the ethos and values of the School;
- take charge of travel arrangements, communicate all holiday and exeat arrangements
- with the Housemistress on the travel forms provided;
- act as an escort to and from the airport check-in, if the student is travelling as an unaccompanied minor.
- inform the Housemistress if they are planning to leave the UK and to ensure that the pupil's parent(s) have appointed a suitable replacement/temporary guardian to act whilst they are outside the UK;
- provide a 24-hour point of contact throughout the school term and be ready to accommodate the student at short notice in case of an emergency, illness or crisis, either in their own home (if a private guardian) or at a suitable host family;
- the guardian must be available to accompany the student to any planned and/or emergency medical appointments, if the medical or House staff are not able to do so. They must also be willing to take oversight of hospital stays, including any aftercare that is necessary which precludes an immediate return to school.
- If the student is taken ill the guardian should be able to provide such care in their home as per the advice of our medical staff. This includes the requirement to isolate away from school for 48 hours in the case of sickness such as vomiting and diarrhoea. The guardian will be required to come and pick up the student in person. Taxis and Ubers or similar are not suitable transport arrangements when a student is unwell;
- if medication is required by the student during their stay with the guardian, it is the guardian's responsibility to ensure the student takes their medication;
- register the student with their own GP as a temporary resident so medical appointments can be booked if necessary while resident with their guardian;
- attend the Induction Day if at all possible with the student if her parent(s) are unable to attend;
- attend important parent/teacher meetings or any other special meeting at the school on the parents' behalf if at all possible or required;
- assist the student in opening a bank account;
- assist the student in renewing her passport if necessary;
- assist the student in arranging any relevant visas for private overseas trips that are not linked to school activities;
- assist the student in arranging any relevant Schengen visas for school trips to Europe.

Guardians should also respect the rights, religion and customs of a child, and adhere to what is commonly regarded as best practice in the guardianship and hosting of international students. This includes having in place a proper agreement with the student's parents as to what the guardian's responsibilities are.

The School's Educational Guardianship Agreement Form must be completed by both the parent(s) of the pupil and by the educational guardian, and returned to the School, before an educational guardian can be assessed and confirmed by the School as an acceptable person to undertake the responsibilities outlined in this Policy. The School may request a change of educational guardian, or revision of the arrangement, if it is felt necessary.

Queenswood always endeavours to give as much care, attention and support to each student as possible, but a guardian is in a position to centre his/her attention exclusively on their ward, thus providing extra emotional reassurance.

During a student's time at Queenswood, if the appointed guardian is considered to be unsatisfactory, the school will invite parents to find a new guardian who is AEGIS or BSA accredited.

As a last resort, the school may revoke a girl's place if an appropriate guardian is not appointed.

## **Private Fostering**

Students under the age of 16 who stay with persons in the UK who are not their parents or close relatives for 28 days or more (consecutively) during term-time or school holidays, may be subject to the law on private fostering. The school may be required to contact the relevant local authority to ensure appropriate safeguarding is in place. 'Close relative' for the purposes of UKVI is defined as a person aged over 18 who is the student's grandparent, brother, sister, stepparent, uncle (the brother or half-brother of the student's parent) or aunt (the sister or half-sister of the student's parent). The School has a duty under the National Minimum Standards for boarding to inform the local authority in which a boarder is staying, should they be staying with anyone who is not a 'close relative' under the definition above for over 28 days.

In such cases, the Local Authority may visit the family and undertake an assessment in order for the child to continue living with the Guardian. This assessment may involve requesting to meet all adult members of the family.

## **Related Policies and Documents**

Safeguarding Children Policy – <https://www.queenswood.org/explore/policies/>

## GUARDIAN AGREEMENT FORM

**Both parents and nominated guardians are required to sign this form.**

Full Name of Student	
Full Name of Parent	

Do you have a home in the UK where your daughter will be staying with you during some weekends/holidays?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If Yes, please provide the address:		
Postcode		

What type of Educational Guardian are you appointing?		
AEGIS or BSA accredited Guardianship Agency If yes please complete <b>Section A</b> below	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Close relative If yes please complete <b>Section B</b> below	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Family friend If yes please completed <b>Section C</b> below	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

### Section A - Guardianship Agency

We will contact the agency to confirm the details of the host family.

Name of Agency	
Telephone Number	
Email	

### Section B - Close Relative

Please provide a copy of the relatives passport

Full name (Mr/Ms/Mrs/Miss)	
Telephone Number	
Mobile Number	
Email	
Occupation	
Address	
Postcode	
Relationship to your daughter	

### Section C - Family Friend

Please provide a copy of the family friend's passport

Full name (Mr/Ms/Mrs/Miss)	
Telephone Number	
Mobile Number	
Email	
Occupation	
Address	
Postcode	
How long has your daughter known this person?	

## Sharing of Information

Please choose ONE option from the following:

I/We give permission for our/my daughter's guardian to access My School Portal and to receive copies of all generic emails sent by the school via iSAMS.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I/We give permission for our/my daughter's guardian to receive copies of all generic emails sent by the school via iSAMS but not to access My School Portal.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I/We do not give permission for our/my daughter's guardian to access My School Portal or to receive copies of all generic emails from the school. I. We/I agree to forward any relevant information from MSP and relevant emails to our/my daughter's Guardian.	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Please read and confirm ALL the statements below.**

I/We accept the school's terms and conditions regarding the appointment of guardians as explained in the Queenswood Guardianship Policy which I/we have read.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I/We accept the school's terms and conditions regarding the appointment of guardians as explained in the Queenswood Guardianship Policy, which I/we have read.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I/We confirm that the guardian is over 25 years of age and resides permanently in the UK, living no further from Queenswood than a two-hour journey.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I/We confirm the guardian is not a full-time student living in accommodation provided by another educational institution.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I/We will notify the school immediately if we change my/our daughter's guardian in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>

PARENT NAME	
PARENT SIGNATURE	
DATE	

## Guardian Declaration

I have read and agree to comply with the Guardian Duties and Regulations stated in the Queenswood Policy on Guardianship.

I attach to this declaration details of my identity and proof of address.

- One form of photographic ID (e.g., Passport, driving license, national identity card).
- One proof of address (e.g., utility bill, mortgage, or rental agreement)
- If applicable Evidence of the right to reside in the UK (e.g., Passport and Biometric Residence Permit card)

GUARDIAN NAME AND TITLE	
GUARDIAN SIGNATURE	
DATE	



Queenswood School Limited Registered in England Company No 40561. Registered Charity Number 311060  
Shepherd's Way, Brookmans Park, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL9 6NS  
Telephone +44 (0)1707 602500 · Email: [go@queenswood.org](mailto:go@queenswood.org)  
[www.queenswood.org](http://www.queenswood.org)