



Ackworth School

Educational Guardianship of Overseas Pupils

Ackworth School (the School) has a strong Quaker ethos which runs throughout our boarding provision. The School greatly values the diversity that both our UK and international pupils bring to the School's community.

Under the Children Act 1989, the School is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. During term time the School is responsible for a pupil's welfare and acts in loco parentis. However, there are times when the School must be able to hand over these parental responsibilities to an appointed guardian.

It is also a UKVI requirement that every pupil not from the UK under the age of 18 studying full time in the UK requires a guardian. Additionally, we require guardianship of UK boarding pupils where parents' occupations mean that they are not able to fulfill their guardianship requirements, for example, during deployment overseas with the armed forces.

Definitions

In this document, the term 'guardian' refers to an education guardian, which involves a delegation of parental responsibility, usually for short periods of time. This is distinct from a legal guardian, which refers to a person who is appointed to care for a child when a parent or guardian has died, or to a person acting as a guardian of a child's estate.

For the purposes of understanding guardianship requirements, boarders are categorised as follows:

1. International boarders
 - a) All boarders whose parents live overseas must have an appointed guardian.
2. UK resident boarders
 - b) All boarders who live in the UK but who are not local (ie parents who reside more than three hour's travel time from the School) must have an appointed guardian.
 - c) UK boarders are still required to have an appointed guardian (usually the emergency contact given on iSAMS), this person being expected to be an alternative family member or other recognised adult to whom the School can refer if parents are unavailable in case of emergencies.

Appointing a Guardian

- It is the parents' responsibility to appoint a guardian; the organisation and selection process rests solely with parents.



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- The appointed guardian must be over 25 years of age and be permanently resident in the UK; they must be able to be at the School within three hours, if requested.
- The appointed guardian must be fluent in the English language and be able to provide a point of contact for the School at all times.
- Where the guardian is a relative, the School will require copies of photographic ID.
- In these instances, the School may conduct unannounced inspections of accommodation arrangements for its pupils.
- For many pupils where the family does not have a suitable contact in the UK, it is expected that the parents will appoint a guardian via a reputable organisation. It is important to note that the School does not recommend any specific agency or organisation, but would encourage parents to ensure that it is a member of the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students (AEGIS). AEGIS can be contacted via their website: www.aegisuk.net
- In a crisis, if the Head, Deputy Head or House Parents are unable to contact parents, the guardian will have to give permission for medical care. If neither parents nor guardian can be contacted, a member of staff is empowered to act in loco parentis – as if they were the legal guardian.
- If an appointed guardian changes 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) are communicated to the School as soon as possible, in order to ensure continuity of care.
- Guardians should make contact with House Staff via email, telephone or video call to introduce themselves.

These arrangements **MUST** be made before the pupils arrive at School. Please see the form at the end of this document.

Guardian Responsibilities

All guardians must be prepared to undertake, where necessary, the following responsibilities:

- To provide a 24-hour point of contact throughout the School year.
- To be ready to accommodate and take responsibility for the pupil at short notice in case of emergency or crisis.
- To provide safe and suitable accommodation for the pupil with an appropriate degree of care and supervision when they cannot be accommodated at School and to liaise with the Housemaster regarding these arrangements. Occasions are likely to include, but are not restricted to:
 - Half-term breaks and longer holidays
 - Days at the start and end of term when a pupil's flights do not coincide with term dates



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- If a pupil is ill or injured and needs to recuperate away from School
- If the School requires a pupil to leave for disciplinary reasons or because the School determines it to be in the pupil's best interests
- Any other occasion when the pupil is released from the School.
- To make suitable alternative arrangements if they are unable to accommodate the pupil themselves, and to inform both House Parent and parents of the arrangements.
- To liaise with the School over all matters relating to the pupil's welfare, including pastoral, academic and medical care.
- To act with delegated parental authority in the case of an emergency or crisis and to make appropriate arrangements for medical care.
- To attend important parent and teacher meetings or any other important meetings at the School on behalf of the parents.

The responsibilities of guardians appointed by overseas parents and those appointed by parents in the UK are identical. However, over the usual course of the year, there are likely to be practical differences in a guardian's level of involvement:

- For overseas parents: the guardian is usually responsible for the delivery and collection of pupils at the beginning and end of term, and (where the pupil is not travelling to their home overseas) for providing a home for pupils during holidays. The guardian must be available for contact at short notice in an emergency, for granting routine permission, or for disciplinary reasons. In some medical or disciplinary cases, the guardian may be required to have the pupil to stay for a limited period of time.
- For UK parents: the guardian must be able to substitute fully for parents when parents are away or unavailable. This includes providing everything mentioned in the points above. UK parents who plan to be away for an extended period, are asked to inform the Head of Boarding in good time and to check that contact numbers are up-to-date and relevant.
- Parents and guardians should be aware that stays over 28 days are considered private fostering arrangements which are subject to Family Placement Regulations under the terms of the Children Act 2004.