



WYCHWOOD
SCHOOL • OXFORD

Guardianship Policy

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Education Guardians

In cases where a parent of a Wychwood School pupil reside outside the mainland UK, they must appoint an education guardian to care for their child while the child is in the UK but not in the school's care. This includes Sixth Form pupils regardless of age. Education guardians of school pupils are appointed solely by their parents, not by Wychwood School. The School can accept no responsibility for any detriment caused by the failings of an education guardian nor by a guardianship agency.

Whilst the school is not directly involved in the appointment of education guardians, it does regard their careful selection as an important safeguarding concern. To this end, the school requires that parents arrange for the appointment of an education guardian wherever possible through a professional agency. Due to new UKVI regulations, 29th May 2025, we highly recommend that you appoint a Guardian accredited by the Association for the Education & Guardianship of International Students (AEGIS) (<https://aegisuk.net/>). An alternative contact would be Boarding Schools Association (BSA - <https://www.boarding.org.uk/>). Both these companies operate a Code of Conduct, inspection procedures for each company in their membership scheme which promote the welfare and safety of international pupils.

The school accepts that there will be cases in which parents wish to appoint a close family member or friend as their child's education guardian, rather than use a professional agency. In these circumstances parents must ensure that the person nominated is fully able to fulfil the role of an education guardian. This means:

- The adult appointed should be over 25 years and not living in Halls of Residence at a university campus or living in multi-occupancy residence. The home where the child will reside should be safe, appropriate and secure.
- The guardian is not allowed to be on a visa and must be a minimum of settled status for EU or indefinite leave to remain if non-EU or a British Citizen
- The guardian should be able to speak English, so as to ensure effective communication with the school
- The guardian would be able to arrange transport for the pupil to and from the school, and suitable overnight or homestay accommodation as required, at the beginning and end of term, during half-term breaks, and at other periods when the pupil is in the UK but not in the school's care (e.g. if they are temporarily suspended, ill, etc) up to a maximum of 28 continuous days per academic year

- If a pupil is infectious or ill then the school will require the pupil to be nursed at the Educational Guardian's home or the Agency's appointed homestay
- In the unlikely event of a pupil being suspended from School, then the Guardian would need to collect and take responsibility - accommodating the pupil for an agreed period
- Should the pupil arrive by air and the arrival or departure is outside the end (or beginning) of term's travel dates, then the Educational Guardian will ensure that all flights and destinations are reached safely
- Should travel plans not coincide with School arrangements then the Educational Guardian would be expected to plan for homestay or take personal responsibility for the pupil
- The Educational Guardian is responsible for ensuring that should a flight be cancelled or delayed that they will take responsibility for organising alternative arrangements until a flight can be re-booked. The parent will be responsible for all necessary and subsequent costs for this including the Educational Guardian (or designated employee) accompanying where required
- The guardian should be accessible to the Oxford area and travel from their usual place of residence to the school is within 45 - 90 minutes wherever possible
- Ability to give consent to emergency medical treatment for the pupil in the event that a parent cannot be contacted and act in loco parentis
- If the nominated guardian is to be out of the UK themselves during term time, the parents must appoint another responsible person in their absence, and they must inform Wychwood School of the name and contact details of the temporary guardian
- No teacher, employee or anyone in their households may act as an Educational Guardian or homestay to any pupil at Wychwood School.

Guardianship occasionally is considered to be private fostering. Private fostering is an arrangement by a child's parents for their child (under 16 years or 18 years if disabled) to be cared for by another adult who is not closely related and is not a legal guardian with parental responsibility for 28 days or more. It is not private fostering if the carer is a close relative to the child. A close family relative according to the Children's Act 1989 is a parent, an adult sibling (over 25 years old), grandparent, aunt, uncle or step-parent.

The UK Law requires parents, carers, educational guardians and homestays to report private fostering arrangements to the local authority independently. The school will also report such arrangements to the Oxford local authority if it becomes aware of them, in line with its safeguarding obligations to pupils. The school will notify the local authority of the circumstances, via First Response. Once notified, the local authority will check that the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

As such, it is of the utmost importance that, where a pupil is to stay with either the educational guardian or anyone else to whom the pupil is not closely related for any period of 28 days or more, the parents immediately inform the school of this and provide the name of the foster carer and the address at which the pupil will be residing.

AEGIS Gold Standard Accredited guardians are bound by strict rules and procedures relating to private fostering and therefore will understand what is required of them should their support of a pupil turn into a private fostering arrangement.

Pupils who require an education guardian will only be able to take up their place at the school on condition that their parents have informed the school of the education

guardian's name and contact details prior to the pupil's first scheduled day of attendance and the relevant forms have been completed and signed by the parents and the proposed guardians. Please note that if a pupil needs to be sponsored for their studies at Wychwood, a guardian will need to be appointed, and all relevant guardian forms completed and signed before the CAS application process can commence.

Parents must also inform the school if their child's education guardian changes by contacting admissions@wychwoodschool.org as a matter of urgency. You will be provided with the relevant paperwork to complete.

The nominated educational guardian must confirm their residence by completing the Guardianship Agreement Form and within that they must confirm that they nor any adult residing in their household has been convicted of any offence, in the UK or overseas, for which custodial sentence of twelve months or more was imposed, and that they have no other relevant criminal convictions that would render them unsuitable to care for a child. Should Wychwood School have any concerns relating to the appointment of a guardian, this could be grounds for refusal during the admissions process.

Should Wychwood School not be comfortable with arrangements made with an Educational Guardianship when the pupil returns from a holiday (exeat, half term or longer break) then the school reserves the right to inform parents. House staff will check in with pupils after each holiday period to ensure that the pupils were happy and felt safe during their stay with Educational Guardians or homestays to ensure that the accommodation and the arrangements made promote the welfare and wellbeing of pupils. Should Wychwood become concerned about the suitability of an Educational Guardian or the safety of a pupil we reserve the right to act immediately and refer our concerns to the relevant agencies.

Parents will be required to complete a Parental Educational Guardian form. This details who their nominated guardian will be for their child. Once Wychwood School has received the completed Parental Educational Guardian form from the parents, the Educational Guardianship Agreement form and the Guardianship Policy will be sent to the nominated Guardian. The Educational Guardian will need to sign and return the completed form. Should the guardian not be AEGIS or BSA approved they will be required to supply a copy of their passport or other proof to state that they are ordinarily resident in the UK and a copy of a council tax bill to provide the address of the residency of where the child will be residing with them.

Parents must ensure that their nominated Educational Guardian is clear on what requirements they must fulfil as the Educational Guardian. Wychwood School sends the Guardian policy to the nominated Educational Guardian so that there is complete understanding from all parties about what their commitment is.