

Educational Guardianship

Parents of pupils at Stowe School (the School) who are resident outside the UK must appoint an Educational Guardian for their child in the UK. This is the case for all pupils, irrelevant of age.

This note provides information on educational guardianship and also includes the educational guardianship form which all parents who reside overseas are expected to complete.

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Definitions

You may find the following definitions of key terms useful:

Guardian: The technical meaning of guardian refers to a person who is appointed to care for a child because the parent or guardian has died, or to a person acting as a testamentary guardian or a guardian of the child's estate. We will refer to this type of guardian as a Legal Guardian. The second, informal meaning arises where there is simply a delegation of parental responsibility and we refer to this as an Educational Guardian.

Parental Responsibility: This expression means the whole raft of rights and duties which a parent has in relation to their child. Married parents, Legal Guardians and those with court orders have parental responsibility. Unmarried fathers may acquire parental responsibility by agreement, by registering the birth jointly with the mother or by Court Order but they do not obtain such responsibility automatically. A number of people can have parental responsibility at the same time. Parent and Legal Guardians do not lose it when others or a local authority acquire it (except in adoption cases).

Delegating Parental Responsibility: A person who has parental responsibility may arrange for some or all of it to be met by one or more persons acting on their behalf, such as a nanny, Educational Guardian or a boarding school.

Why must an Educational Guardian be appointed?

It is usual for independent schools to insist that overseas parents appoint Educational Guardians for their children whilst they are at school in the UK. This is to ensure that there is somebody in the UK who can take responsibility for the child or young person and provide them with care and support when they are not in the care of the School.

The Educational Guardian should also be given legal authority to act on behalf of the Parent in all respects.

The Educational Guardian's responsibilities usually include caring for the pupil as would a responsible and caring parent by, for example, being in regular contact with the student and providing advice and support as necessary. The Educational Guardian will need to care for the pupil and take responsibility for the pupil if he/she is unwell, suspended or otherwise released from school. Responsibilities also include being authorised to make certain decisions concerning the pupil on the Parents' behalf, for example decisions regarding emergency medical and dental treatment and matters of a disciplinary nature.

The Educational Guardian may provide accommodation for the pupil, or the pupil may be accommodated elsewhere. It is usual for independent schools to insist that overseas parents appoint Educational Guardians for their children whilst they are at school in the UK. This is to ensure that there is somebody in the UK who can take responsibility for the child or young person and provide them with care and support when they are not in the care of the School.

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Who can be an Educational Guardian?

An Educational Guardian may be a family member, a family friend, a guardianship agency, a host family, or other responsible adult based in the UK.

Most overseas parents use a guardianship agency to act as Educational Guardian.

Guardianship agencies typically arrange accommodation as well as acting as Educational Guardian for their students. Guardianship agencies will usually arrange accommodation for their students through host families, although sometimes other accommodation options will be used. Host families will then be responsible for providing the day to day care of the student, accommodation and meals. If the guardianship agency arranges accommodation for the child or young person, the agency will be responsible for ensuring the quality and safety of the accommodation including the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

An Educational Guardian must be resident in the UK at a suitable proximity to the School and be capable of providing care for a child in a happy home environment as would a reasonable and responsible parent.

How is an Educational Guardian appointed?

The responsibility for choosing an appropriate Educational Guardian rests solely with the Parents. The Parents are responsible in each case for satisfying themselves as to the suitability of an Educational Guardian.

It is expected that the Parents will appoint an Educational Guardian via a reputable organisation, preferably a member organisation of the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students (AEGIS). AEGIS is the authoritative association for inspecting and accrediting guardianship agencies in the UK. AEGIS can be contacted via their website: www.aegisuk.net.

It is important to note that the School does not recommend any specific agency and parents are required to make their own checks into the suitability of any agency. The School is not able to arrange the appointment of an Educational Guardian.

Educational Guardianship Agreement

Parents who reside outside of the UK are expected to complete an Educational Guardianship form which provides the School with full details of the Educational Guardian and the responsibilities which the Parents have delegated to them. The form is found in your joining form pack on the Parent Portal.

Parents are expected to inform the School if there are any changes to any details relating to the Educational Guardian.