

## EDUCATION GUARDIANSHIP POLICY

### Requirement to Appoint Education Guardian

Parents of every boarding pupil at Queen Margaret's (including pupils over the age of 18 and regardless of their nationality) who do not live in the United Kingdom must appoint an Education Guardian to act on their behalf whilst their daughter is in the UK. Such guardians must be appointed by the pupil's parents and may not be appointed by the School.

This policy provides information on education guardianship and refers to the education guardianship form, which all parents to whom this policy applies are required to complete (via the School's online parent portal) before their daughter joins the School or immediately upon a change of Education Guardian.

### Definitions

The following definitions of key terms may be useful:

**Guardian:** The technical meaning of guardian refers to a person who is appointed to care for a child because her parents have died, or to a person acting as a testamentary guardian or a guardian of the child's estate. We 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 **Education 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. A number of people can have parental responsibility at the same time.

**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, Education Guardian or a boarding school.

### Who can be an Education Guardian?

For all non-UK based families, the School expects that parents will appoint either a family member/ close family friend or a reputable Educational Guardianship Organisation that is accredited by AEGIS (the Association of Educational Guardians for International Students) or is a BSA Certified Guardian under the Scheme operated by the Boarding Schools' Association as their daughter's Education Guardian. The Education Guardian must be aged 25 or older, unless a brother or sister of the Child, when they must be over 21 years of age. The Guardian cannot live in university halls or shared accommodation with any other adult under 25 years of age.

An Education Guardian must be resident in the UK. Commercial Guardians, i.e. those who are not family members or close family friends must have their base within reasonable proximity to Queen Margaret's School, preferably within 90 minutes travel, but no more than two hours, (given rail travel times on the East Coast main line this includes London) and be capable of providing care for a child in a happy home environment as would a reasonable and responsible parent.

The Education 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 Education Guardian will need to care for the student and take responsibility for the pupil if she is unwell, suspended or otherwise released from School. Pupils are not permitted to remain in residence at School during school holidays (except for Leave-Out weekends when the School's Stay in for Leave Out scheme is in operation), as published in the School Calendar, as there is no provision for appropriate supervision during school holidays.

Most overseas parents use a guardianship agency to act as Education 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.

The Education Guardian will have access to the parent portal in relation to the pupil which will permit the Education Guardian to see and respond to a wide range of information about the pupil.

Queen Margaret's School recommends parents use the service of AEGIS or the BSA. AEGIS is the authoritative association for inspecting and accrediting guardianship agencies in the UK. AEGIS can be contacted via their website: [www.aegisuk.net](http://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.

If parents do not appoint an AEGIS accredited Educational Guardianship Organisation or one accredited by the BSA it is their responsibility to check that the Educational Guardian is suitable and that adequate safeguarding measures have been taken which meet the requirements of Tier 4 sponsorship and the standards outlined in this policy.

The School will review the guardianship arrangements for all overseas girls and reserves the right to refuse entry to girls if their guardianship arrangements are cause for concern.

### **How is an Education Guardian appointed?**

The responsibility for choosing an appropriate Education Guardian rests solely with the parents. The parents are responsible in each case for satisfying themselves as to the suitability of an Education Guardian. 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 Education Guardian and is not able to arrange accommodation for any pupils (except when they are boarding at School).

### **Informing the School of a change of Education Guardian**

Parents MUST inform the School as soon as possible if there are any changes to any details relating to the Education Guardian, including any change in Guardian.

### **Duties of an Education Guardian**

- Be aware of all travel arrangements of the Pupil at the beginnings and ends of term, each Half Term and each Leave Out and ensure that the Housemistress has full and correct details of these
- Be available to host the Pupil in any planned or emergency situation in which the Pupil will return to School later than 22:00 on any of the start of term, return from Half Term, return from a Leave Out or from an extraordinary time away from School (such as at a weekend, university visit, etc.)
- Collect, if required, and accommodate the Pupil in their home at Half Term, at Leave Outs and at the beginning and end of term, if the Pupil is unable to travel home and, if necessary, for the School holidays for the same reason or for other exceptional reasons;

- Collect and accommodate the Pupil in their home in the event that the Pupil is excluded or suspended or withdrawn from the School for disciplinary or other reasons;
- Ensure the Pupil returns to School punctually and in line with the School's timetable whenever the Pupil stays with the Guardian, whether during the weekend or midweek;
- Liaise with the Housemistress, Senior Sister or other senior member of the School staff in connection with matters related to the health, welfare, travel plans and education of the Pupil.
- Attend the School premises or any other location in case of emergency or if the Pupil is unwell and if deemed necessary by the School, provided that the Education Guardian immediately informs the Parent(s) of what has happened;
- Collect and accommodate the Pupil in their home in the event that the Pupil is unwell and unable to attend School;
- Attend medical appointments with the Pupil, if requested by the parent(s) to do so;
- Access the parent portal and provide consents on behalf of the parent(s)
- Provide consent for the Pupil to receive emergency medical treatment if necessary and only if the School is unable to contact the parent(s);
- Should the parent(s) request, the Guardian is welcome to attend, as appropriate, School events such as Parents' Meetings, Speech Day, Carol Service, Sports Fixtures, Concerts and other instances in which the Pupil is participating. In such circumstances, the Guardian is requested to inform the Housemistress in advance.

### **Education Guardianship Agreement**

Parents who reside outside the UK are expected to complete an education guardianship form on the parent portal which provides the School with full details of the Education Guardian and the consent of the Parents to the Education Guardian exercising the responsibilities which the Parents have delegated to them.

Date agreed October 2020

Review Date October 2022