

Educational Guardianship Policy

Introduction

Denstone College has a strong boarding ethos and greatly values the diversity that both its UK and international pupils bring to the Denstone College's community.

We very much value the input and the support of our Educational Guardians. A guardian can provide support for boarders outside of school and boarding, a friendly voice in times of need, and a homely environment outside of school which helps boarders to have a well-needed break at times, as well as providing support at times of crisis.

Under the Children Act 1989, Denstone College is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. During term time Denstone College is responsible for a pupil's welfare and acts in loco parentis. However, there are times when Denstone College must be able to hand over these parental responsibilities to an appointed Educational Guardian. For this reason, Denstone College requires all of its boarding or day pupils whose parents or legal guardians do not live in the United Kingdom to have Educational Guardians.

In addition to our Safeguarding responsibilities as outlined in the College's Policy to Safeguard and Protect the Welfare of children who are Pupils at the College, Denstone College has particular responsibility under UKVI regulations for international students on our Child Student visa sponsorship, for whom we are responsible while they are living and studying in the United Kingdom.

Denstone College may request a change of Educational Guardian or revision of the arrangement if it is felt necessary. It should be noted, for example, that Denstone College does not consider unsupervised stays in hotels or bed and breakfast accommodation to be an acceptable level of accommodation or care.

Definitions

In this document, the term 'Guardian' refers to an Educational 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 by a court of law 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. In this document the term 'School' shall refer to Denstone College.

Appointing an Education Guardian

Guardians are appointed by parents. Denstone College can advise parents on how to find a guardian, if required, but Denstone College does not appoint guardians. Denstone College's advice, preference and the standard we set for appointment of guardians is that of an AGEIS registered or BSA accredited guardian.

If, for any reason, the chosen guardian is not AGEIS registered or BSA accredited, Denstone College needs to understand the reasons that this particular guardian has been appointed and be satisfied that the guardian is appropriate and understands and is fully committed to all that their role entails. This is likely to involve an interview with the guardian, along with satisfactory documentation confirming their identity and background. This will be an interview with the Head of Boarding. Denstone College

reserves the right to refuse admission to pupils whose guardianship arrangements are not deemed to be satisfactory. Any concerns which Denstone College has or changes which Denstone College becomes aware of are will be reported without delay to the Sponsor Management System (UK Home Office).

The appointed Educational Guardian must be over 23 years of age and be permanently resident in the UK; they must be able to be at Denstone College within two hours, if requested

The appointed Educational Guardian must be fluent in the English language and be able to provide a point of contact for Denstone College at all times. If an Educational Guardian is leaving the UK, they and the pupil's parents should inform the school of alternative arrangements for the pupil's guardianship in their absence

Ideally the Guardian should become well known to the child, and be someone with whom the child feels happy and comfortable staying. An unacceptable Guardian arrangement would be one in which the environment is not warm, welcoming and very much like a family home and/or where numerous young people are staying in one establishment which feels more like a hostel

If an appointed Guardian's details change during a pupil's time at the Denstone College, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure accurate updated contact details (telephone, mobile, email and full postal address) are communicated to the pupils' House Master/Mistress, as soon as possible, in order to ensure continuity of care.

Guardians must be resident in the UK for the entire duration of the pupil's time at Denstone College Boarding and must have evidence of their right to remain in the UK.

Guardian Responsibilities

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

- To provide a 24-hour point of contact throughout Denstone College year.
- To be ready to accommodate and take responsibility for the pupil at short notice in case of emergency or crisis.
- To provide a home-like, safe and suitable accommodation for the pupil with an appropriate degree of care and supervision when they cannot be accommodated at Denstone College and to liaise with the House Master/Mistress/Head of boarding regarding these arrangements. Occasions are likely to include, but are not restricted to:
 - Exeats, 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
 - If a pupil is ill or injured and needs to recuperate away from the 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 Master/Mistress 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.
- To notify the pupil's House Master/Mistress (teaching or non-teaching) if the Guardian is 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.

Private Fostering

Pupils 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. 'Close relative' for the purposes of UKVI is defined as a person aged over 18 who is the pupil's grandparent, brother, sister, step-parent, uncle (the brother or half-brother of the pupil's parent) or aunt (the sister or half-sister of the pupil's parent). The School will be required to contact the relevant local authority to ensure make a private fostering referral. ' 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.

Guardian Duties

- ensure that arrival and departure times comply with the School's published term dates and times
- To be a 24 hour point of contact in an emergency throughout the School year
- To arrange travel to and from School at beginnings and ends of terms, at half terms, and for exeat or liaise with the Housemaster/Housemistress to organise taxi's
- To submit all Requests to the pupil's House Master/Mistress for leave from school
- To arrange proper care and supervised accommodation for School holidays and exeats
- To notify the pupil's House Master/Mistress at the end of each half term of exact travel arrangements for the pupil's return to School
- To communicate with the School the travel arrangements of new pupils, ideally as soon as possible, and no later than a week before the start of term.
- To notify the pupil's House Master/Mistress at the start of the academic year, of the pupil's safe arrival in the UK and, if arriving before the opening of boarding houses, to arrange proper care and supervised accommodation.
- To communicate in place of the parent(s) with the School regarding the pupil's well being

Guardian Regulations

A Guardian is normally the nominee of the parents but the Head reserves the right to refuse to accept the nominee as a Guardian at any time should she feel that the person nominated was or has become unsuitable. In some cases, the Head may require boarders to change to be under the guardianship of an AEGIS Accredited or BSA Certified Educational Guardian (the preference of Denstone College – alternatives are considered exceptions and must be approved by Denstone College).

A Guardian must reside within a reasonable travelling distance of the School and must be able to be at Denstone College within two hours. They must have the right to reside in the United Kingdom.

A Guardian must be no younger than 23 years of age.

A Guardian should try to attend all important occasions in the pupil's life at School. These include academic Parents' Evenings that are calendared.

A Guardian is expected to inform the relevant House Master/Mistress if leaving the country at any point during term time and a temporary Guardian must be appointed before the period of absence commences.

A Guardian is expected to act in loco parentis in any involvement with the School and to assume the duties and responsibilities which entails providing a home for the pupil at weekends when required and during any School holidays in which the pupil is not returning to their home

A Guardian is expected to assume responsibility for the care of the pupil if they are suspended or if their removal is required from the School by the Head.

A Guardian is expected to assume responsibility for the care of the pupil if they are too ill to remain at School and on the recommendation of the School Doctor is sent home.

A Guardian is expected to assume responsibility for the care of the pupil if the School were to close in an emergency.

The School accepts no responsibility for any financial agreement or dealings between the parents and the Guardian.

Guardians are expected to attend the induction lunch held in the Boarding House on the day of the new Pupil's arrival. If for some reason this is not possible, then a visit to the House Master/Mistress before half term is a mandatory requirement.

Guardians must be prepared to provide character references if requested by the Head.

Pupils who are required by the Denstone College's Guardianship Policy to have an Educational Guardian will only start at Denstone College until a suitable Educational Guardian has been appointed and this Guardianship Agreement has been signed by the parent(s) and the Educational Guardian.

Boarding Handbooks

Our boarding handbooks give a summary of Denstone College's position on suitable guardians, their roles and relationship with seek to build with them. This summary is below:



International pupils visit their guardians or a guardian-authorised homestay family for exeat weekends (and sometimes over shorter holidays). Parents are expected to appoint an accredited guardian; they should be accredited with the BSA or AEGIS. With a high standard of guardian, all can benefit from a supportive and cooperative relationship between guardian, parents and school, with the best interests of the child at the heart of this arrangement. We would hope that the pupil would develop a strong relationship with their home-stay family, feeling a homely sense of belonging, and so being able to get the most out of their break from the school setting. We hope to hear of home-stay experiences where our international boarders have had the chance to share in family cooking and eating, along with walks and trips around the local area. The genuine warmth and positive experiences which our international boarders are able to gain over their exeats are critical for their welfare, happiness and success. It is also important that both international boarders and school have a strong and trusting relationship with guardians and homestays, because guardians also act as a go-to source of pupil support, which the school may need to call upon, and, indeed, guardians will often communicate with school with a view to supporting their charge.

We would ask that guardians please make exeat arrangements known as early as possible, giving full details of the homestay and making any transport requests.

International boarders will have a review of their experience over an exeat with the head of their boarding house upon return. If there are any exceptional circumstances in which the above requirements cannot be met, these must be discussed with the Head of Boarding and meet with his approval.

Agreement with the above

Parents and guardians are required to agree to and provide details pertaining to the above. This is by means of an electronic form which is sent at the time of joining, and can be re-sent as necessary.

Guardian Declaration

When completing and returning the electronic form, the following declaration is being made by parents and the guardian:

I have read and agree to comply with the Guardian Duties and Regulations stated above and the Policy on Educational Guardianship. I consent to the College holding the pupil's passport and BRP during term time.

I agree to provide ID documents (e.g. copy of passport), including proof of address – please send to admissions@denstonecollege.net

I/We confirm that the appointed Guardian named above has agreed to undertake these responsibilities, is aged 23 and over and lives in the United Kingdom. I/We understand that if I/we do not provide the details of the Guardian, or if the School does not consider the Guardian to be suitable, I/we will be required to choose a Guardianship Agency from the School's recommended Guardianship Agency list.



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In an emergency where the Guardian cannot be contacted, the School will make appropriate arrangements with a Guardian of their choice and charge me accordingly.