



Guardianship Policy

Summary of changes

Staff member responsible	Revision date	Approved by	Approval date	Reason for update	Frequency of review
Deputy Rector		SSG	Sept 2025	New policy	36 months

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Links to UNCRC

This policy links to the following UNCRC articles:

- Article 3 – Best interests of a Child
- Article 8 – Identity
- Article 10 – Contact with parents across countries
- Article 18 – Responsibility of parents
- Article 29 – Aims of education

Links To Other Dollar Academy Policies

This policy has links with the following Dollar Academy policies:

- Child Protection Policy
- Suitability for Boarding Policy

Introduction

The School maintains a strong boarding ethos and greatly values the diversity that both its UK and international pupils bring to our community. Pastoral staff provide vital support to international pupils, aiding integration and helping them get the most out of their time in the UK. Educational Guardians provide extra support to pupils, ensuring their welfare in and out of School. An Educational Guardian acts as the parents' representative in the UK and is independent of the School.

Occasions for guardianship are likely to include, but are not restricted to:

- Half-term breaks, and inter-term 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.

In addition to the School's responsibilities as outlined in the School's Safeguarding Policy, the School has particular responsibility, under UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) regulations, for international pupils on its Child Student Visa Sponsorship for whom we are responsible while they are living and studying in the UK. UKVI rules require that care arrangements are 'suitable' for pupils **at all times when they are in the UK, and not just when they are in the care of the School.**

Definitions

Guardian

In this document, the term 'Guardian' refers to an Educational Guardian, which involves a delegation of parental responsibility, ensuring a pupil's welfare in and out of School throughout the pupil's enrolment at the School in the UK. The Educational Guardian is independent of the School. 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 for example a parent who holds sole custody, or when a parent has died, or to a person acting as a guardian of a child's estate.

Guardianship Organisation (AEGIS/BSA Accredited)

An organisation which provides the service of educational guardianship for international pupils. Guardianship organisations provide a range of services to international pupils which includes provision of homestay accommodation during exeat/long weekend opportunities, half term holidays and inter-term holidays.

Examples of the different packages offered are:

- "Emergency cover", which is only activated in an emergency. In this case, the service would not include anything extra e.g. parent/teacher consultations.
- "Fully comprehensive", which might include, for example, airport transfers, attendance at a parent/teacher consultation, more frequent school visits, homestay accommodation during holidays, and accompaniment to the school to settle in.

Homestay

A household approved and appointed by the guardianship organisation, to provide accommodation for and care of a pupil when not at School.

Non-Accredited Educational Guardian (a Close Relative or Established Family Friend)

There will be situations where a non-accredited guardian is the preferred arrangement with parents enlisting close family or established friends to take the responsibility of Educational Guardian for the pupil while they attend School in the UK.

Information Sharing between the School and Educational Guardians

Before any planned guardian or homestay arrangement, the School may share personal or sensitive information about a pupil with the Educational Guardian, where this is deemed to be vital for the health, welfare and/or safeguarding of the pupil in question. The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (2022), which apply in England and Wales but are a good framework for Scottish boarding schools, reflect this, by giving schools direct responsibility for ensuring that the guardianship arrangement is promoting the welfare, physical wellbeing and emotional wellbeing of the boarder.

Permitted Educational Guardianship arrangement options

1. Accredited guardian – Parents may choose the guardianship agency that they prefer for their child, and the School does not insist on any one AEGIS or BSA approved guardianship organisation over another. Please see the links here for the AEGIS and BSA websites for the range of guardianship agencies available. AEGIS [Click Here](#); or BSA [Click Here](#).
2. Family member – a **close** relative who satisfies the requirements within the Guardianship Policy.
3. Family friend – this arrangement is only acceptable so long as the child has an **established relationship** with the family friend being appointed as guardian.

Parent Responsibilities

The parents must:

- Satisfy themselves that the Educational Guardian is a fit person to have unsupervised care of their child;
- Satisfy themselves that the Educational Guardian can provide suitable accommodation for their child when in the UK but absent from the School;
- Inform the School if the Educational Guardian is:
 - confirmed as accredited by AEGIS [Click Here](#); or BSA [Click Here](#);
 - a close relative of the pupil and must give details as to how they are related;
 - a family friend with an established relationship with their child and living within a two-hour drive time of the School.
- Complete the required documentation forwarded by Dollar Academy regarding guardianship arrangements for their child.

If an appointed Educational Guardian's details change 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) together with identification documents are provided to the School immediately in writing to rector@dollaracademy.org.uk.

Educational Guardian requirements and responsibilities

Educational Guardians must:

- Be British citizens or have settled status within the UK;
- Be English speaking and contactable at all times by telephone / email and to be in a position to travel to the School at short notice, 24 hours a day;
- Be over 25 years of age and not a full-time student. The age limit is required to ensure emotional maturity and provision of a safe environment;
- Be available not only to the pupil but also to the School as a proxy for the parents. To act with delegated parental authority in the case of an emergency and be ready to liaise with the Houseparents and other school staff on behalf of the parents of the pupil in any matters relating to the pupil's welfare;
- Be someone with whom the child feels happy and comfortable staying – very much like a family home, with an appropriate degree of care and supervision. An unacceptable Educational Guardian arrangement would be one in which the environment is not warm and welcoming and/or where numerous young people are staying in one establishment. Unsupervised hotel, B & B, hostel or student accommodation will not be considered acceptable;
- If the pupil is staying with the guardian, ensure a stimulating range of activities are on offer;
- Be expected to uphold the ethos and values of the School;
- Be expected to respect and support the rights, religion, and customs of the pupil;
- Be legally resident in the UK for the entire duration of the pupil's stay in the UK and must provide the School with evidence of their right to remain in the UK;
- Be able to provide the documents listed under 'Identity Verification' below;
- If taking charge of travel arrangements, must communicate all holiday arrangements in writing in line with the School's expectations
- Notify the pupil's Houseparent if they are 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;

Educational Guardians must **not** be an employee of the School unless with the express permission of the Rector.

The School's Educational Guardianship Agreement Form must be completed by both the parent(s) of the pupil and by the Educational Guardian, and returned to the School, before an Educational Guardian can be assessed and confirmed by the School as an acceptable person to undertake the responsibilities outlined in this Policy. The School may request a change of Educational Guardian, or revision of the arrangement, if it is felt necessary.

Pupils who are required by this Policy to have an Educational Guardian will only be permitted to start at the School when a suitable Educational Guardian has been appointed and the Educational Guardianship Agreement Form signed by the parent(s) and the Educational Guardian has been returned to the School together with the evidence documents set out in clause 4.1 below.

If a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) is required prior to a visa application, this will be issued only upon receipt of the completed and signed Educational Guardian Agreement Forms/appendices, and the information therein being deemed acceptable.

Identity Verification

The School has a duty to undertake appropriate checks on Educational Guardians. Any person undertaking the responsibilities of an Educational Guardian is required to provide the following documents for every adult member of the household over the age of 18. This is required for the purposes of identity verification and safeguarding and will be checked by School Admissions staff:

- One form of photographic ID (eg. Passport, driving licence, national identity card);
- One proof of UK residency (eg utility bill, mortgage or rental agreement);
- Evidence of their right to reside in the UK (eg Passport and proof of immigration status).