

# Bedales School Educational, Nominated and Legal Guardianship Policy

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Author	Head of Boarding and Compliance (Bedales Senior)
Review body (individual or group)	Deputy Head (Pastoral) Bedales Senior, Designated Safeguarding Lead (Bedales Senior), Deputy Head (Pastoral) Bedales Prep, Staff member i/c Sponsored Students, External Relations Director
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*Tick relevant box(es) how this Policy should appear:*

Website	Upload	✓
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**Bedales School  
Educational and Legal  
Guardianship Policy**

## Context

Bedales School strongly recommends that all students with parents living outside the UK have an educational guardian. Guardianship provides another means of support for such students while they are in the UK and allows them to have another adult outside school to whom they can turn for assistance and advice, and who will provide accommodation when the School is closed and it may be impractical to travel home.

It is important to recognise the distinction between 'Educational Guardians' and 'Legal Guardians'. 'Educational Guardian' is not a legal term and should not be used interchangeably with the term 'Legal Guardian'. An educational guardian is someone who has been appointed to care for students whose parents are not based in the UK when the student is not in school (e.g., long leaves, half-terms, holidays, absence for illness or disciplinary reasons, or if the School has had to close in an emergency).

As the person with shared delegated parental responsibility, the role of the guardian complements the requirement of Houseparents to act in 'loco parentis'. Effective partnership between staff concerned with pastoral care, parents, and educational guardians will safeguard the welfare of students with parents living outside the UK. Some parents choose to appoint a relative or friend, but where this is not practical, professional educational guardians must be appointed using reputable and accredited educational guardianship agencies, of individuals accredited through the BSA Accredited Guardian Scheme, or through AEGIS. If this latter option is chosen, it is important that the agency allocates one host family for the student; it is not appropriate to have an arrangement whereby the host family changes. Ideally, all guardians (along with the student's parents if feasible) will meet their student's Houseparent on the student's first day at Bedales Senior/Bedales Prep, in order to build a rapport to help everyone best support the student. If parents choose not to use a relative or a professional guardian, then their chosen guardian must meet the criteria in this policy and provide the required Letter of Undertaking.

## Policy Definitions

- **Educational Guardian:** An individual or agency-appointed representative who takes responsibility for a student's welfare, accommodation, and emergency care when their parents reside outside the UK. Educational guardians provide support outside of school hours and act as a point of contact for the School. They must meet Bedales School's requirements, reside in the UK permanently, and be available to attend the School within two hours if needed.
- **Parental Responsibility:** A legal term referring to the rights, duties, powers, and responsibilities that a parent has concerning their child. While parents retain primary parental responsibility, an educational guardian acts with delegated authority to make necessary arrangements for the student's welfare when required.
- **Child Student Visa:** A visa category under UK Immigration Rules that allows students aged 4 to 17 to study at independent schools in the UK. Students must have a responsible adult in the

UK, and guardians play a key role in ensuring compliance with visa conditions, including attendance and welfare obligations.

- **Nominated Guardian:** An individual chosen by a student's parents to provide care, accommodation and/or act as a point of contact while the student is in the UK. A nominated guardian may be a relative or family friend rather than a professional guardian. Bedales recognises nominated guardians as a lawful option under UKVI guidance, provided the nominated guardian meets the criteria set out in this policy and submits the required Letter of Undertaking before the student's arrival. The School will assess the suitability of all nominated guardians to ensure compliance with safeguarding and immigration requirements.

### **The purpose of an Educational Guardianship Policy**

- To provide the parents of such students (and the educational and legal guardians they appoint) with a clear explanation of the School's expectations relating to educational guardianship.
- To provide parents with a clear explanation of the responsibilities of the educational or legal guardian they appoint.
- To make known to parents that the School will contact them if it has reason to believe the arrangements made for their child when they are residing out of school are of concern and will give a reasonable opportunity for parents to change the arrangements. The School will also comply with its Safeguarding Policy in this regard. This is available to read on our website.
- To provide pro-forma for the registration of an educational guardian (Appendix to this Policy).
- To provide a termly checklist to allow Houseparents to monitor guardianship suitability (Appendix to this Policy).
- To provide details on how communications between the School, parents and educational or legal guardians will operate.
- To set out how the school will assess suitability for guardianship arrangements.

### **Guardianship Requirements**

- Parents living outside the UK are responsible for arranging suitable guardianship in the UK for their child. This may be either:
  - a professional or accredited educational guardian (strongly recommended by the School); or
  - a nominated guardian or close relative who meets the School's safeguarding and residency criteria.
- In either case, full details must be provided to the School before the student arrives, and any changes must be notified immediately in writing. The School reserves the right to refuse guardianship arrangements which do not meet these requirements.
- The designated guardian should be a 24-hour point of contact throughout the school year, have a permanent residence in the UK, and be able to be at the School within two hours if requested. Temporary or overseas residence during term time is not permitted.

- The guardian must be over 25 years of age and not a full-time student.
- The guardian must be legally resident in the UK.
- They should be English-speaking and able to communicate with the School at all times.
- They must liaise with the School over all travel arrangements for which they are responsible, including long leave weekends, half-terms, and term beginnings and endings. This information must be provided to the School in writing at least two weeks prior to departure or arrival.
- They must provide accurate and up-to-date contact information to the Bedales School Admissions Office before the student joins and keep this updated via Houseparents once the student has joined. Guardian details can be viewed and updated via the Parent Portal.
- They must provide safe and suitable accommodation and appropriate care and supervision for students during periods when they cannot be accommodated at school, including during illness or disciplinary absences. Educational guardians must be willing and able to collect a student from school and accommodate them at short notice.
- Unsupervised stays in hotels, bed and breakfast accommodations, or university halls of residence are not considered appropriate.
- If educational guardians are away from the UK during term time, they must notify the appropriate Houseparent, make alternative arrangements, and provide full contact details for the responsible person authorised by parents to act on their behalf.
- Educational guardians are expected to attend School events and Parents' Meetings, particularly when parents are unable to attend, and maintain regular contact with their students. They are welcome to visit the School and should arrange such visits with student's Houseparent.
- They should be familiar with and support the School's rules, policies, aims, and ethos.
- They must ensure all legal documents, such as visas, are up to date and renewed where necessary. Educational guardians must support students in complying with all visa conditions, including those applicable under the Child Student visa route, and assist in reporting any concerns regarding attendance or welfare.
- Any change in educational guardian arrangements must be reported to the School immediately, providing all necessary details to ensure continuous care and compliance with immigration and sponsorship requirements.
- Educational guardians must comply with current UK Immigration Rules and guidance regarding hosting and guardianship arrangements for child students. Confirmation of understanding and adherence to these legal obligations will be required.
- They should liaise with the School on all matters relating to the student's welfare and act with delegated parental authority in emergencies, making appropriate arrangements for medical care when required.
- Bedales School believes strongly that professional guardians are more suitable than private arrangements.

## **Compliance with UKVI Legislation**

Bedales School is committed to ensuring full compliance with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) regulations as an independent school and licensed Child Student Sponsor. The School will verify that all Child Student visa holders and other students with parents overseas have appropriate guardianship arrangements in place – either an educational guardian or a nominated guardian – that meet UKVI safeguarding and accommodation requirements. The School will maintain evidence of these arrangements to comply with UKVI guidance and will inform parents and guardians of any changes in immigration rules.

### **Nominated Guardianship Guidance**

While Bedales strongly recommends the appointment of a professional or accredited educational guardian, parents may instead appoint a nominated guardian or close relative in line with UKVI guidance, provided the arrangement meets the criteria in this policy. Nominated guardians must be over 25 years old, legally resident in the UK, and not living in temporary accommodation or enrolled as full-time students. They may be relatives or family friends. The school reserves the right to request references and documentation, including proof of address and a letter of undertaking outlining the care arrangements. Nominated guardians must be willing to undergo safeguarding checks if required, be contactable at all times when the student is in their care, and ensure that accommodation is safe, stable, and suitable. They must not be members of school staff unless specifically approved by the Head and not involved in the student's care or education. Any change to nominated guardian arrangements must be notified to the school in writing at least seven days in advance and approved before taking effect.

### **British passport holders who live overseas**

Students who hold a British passport but reside overseas are not classified as Sponsored Students and therefore are not subject to the same guardianship requirements. While they must have a guardian in place during their time at Bedales School, this can be a nominated guardian chosen by the parents, rather than an educational guardian appointed through an accredited agency. These nominated guardians are not required to undergo the same level of checks, interviews, or formal registration as educational guardians. However, their suitability will be monitored regularly by the student's Houseparent to ensure the arrangements meet the student's welfare needs and align with the School's safeguarding expectations.

While Bedales strongly recommends the appointment of a professional or accredited educational guardian for all students whose parents live outside the UK, we recognise that UKVI guidance also permits the use of nominated guardians or close relatives, provided the care and accommodation are suitable and properly documented. The School will work with parents to ensure that whichever arrangement is chosen meets safeguarding standards and complies with UKVI requirements.

## **Guardianship Suitability and Safeguarding**

### **Houseparent Guardianship Monitoring**

- Each term, Houseparents will complete a form (see Appendix) to help monitor the suitability of guardianship arrangements.
- The checklist will ensure a regular dialogue between student and Houseparent to ensure the guardianship arrangements in place meet their needs.
- In addition, the checklist will allow Houseparents to ensure guardians are operating within the expectations laid out in this policy.
- Completed checklists will be stored and monitored by the Head of Boarding and Compliance (Bedales Senior) and the Deputy Head (Pastoral) Bedales Prep.

### **Video Call for New Guardians**

The Head of Boarding and Compliance (Bedales Senior) and the Head of Boarding (Bedales Prep) will hold a video call for guardians of all new overseas students. The call will cover:

- The guardianship policy.
- Ensuring guardians understand the requirements set out in the policy.
- Confirming addresses and identity, including proof of address and a copy of their passport.
- Arrange an initial, mutually exclusive time for the guardian to visit the school. This should happen at the earliest opportunity once the student arrives at the school.
- Complete the suitability questions as set out in appendix 3. Guardians must sign and return the signed policy, alongside their proof of address and a copy of their passport, once the interview has been completed.

### **Sponsored student Guardians only**

The School must adhere to compliance standards as set out by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) as a condition of its continued ability to support Student Visa applications.

Students aged from 11- 18 years old who want to study at an independent school in the UK may be eligible for a Child Student visa. To enable a student to apply for the visa they must have been offered and accepted a place on a course at Bedales School, which is a licensed student sponsor.

Sponsored student guardians must work with the School to ensure that sponsored students do not miss the start or end of term or have any unusual absence without the School's knowledge and consent. The educational guardians of sponsored students must inform Houseparents of travel plans for Long Leaves and Holidays, as well as any overnight stays at the weekend during term-time – in all

cases a contact number, address and any travel details for the sponsored student must be shared with Houseparents in advance. We adhere to a Missing Child Policy.

#### [Policies | Bedales School](#)

In addition, if a sponsored student is out of contact without permission, for more than 10 registrations (between 8.25am and 5.30pm) this could break the conditions of the student's licence to stay in the UK under a sponsored student visa. School may contact authorities to report a missing student according to the relevant school's policy.

Additional information about sponsored student guidelines can be found at:

#### [Child Student visa: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

Additional information can be found via AEGIS (The Association for the Education and Education guardianship of International Students), or the British Boarding Schools' Association. These organisations inspect and accredit education guardianship providers in the UK and work to promote the welfare of international students. ([www.aegisuk.net](http://www.aegisuk.net) or <https://www.boarding.org.uk/bsa-initiatives/bsa-certified-guardian-scheme/>)

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NB: All School policies are available to staff and can be found here:

#### [Whole School Policies Home](#)



**Bedales School Educational and Legal Guardianship  
Agreement for Parents of Overseas Boarders**

As a resident abroad, the following UK-based person has agreed to act as Educational Guardian to my/our son or daughter and may be consulted in an emergency.

**Name of Student** \_\_\_\_\_

**Houseparent (at Bedales School)** \_\_\_\_\_

If using an educational or legal guardian please provide full details below:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

If using a guardianship agency please give full details below:

Name of agency \_\_\_\_\_

Individual contact \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that I have read the Bedales School Educational and Legal Guardianship Policy and agree to abide by the requirements outlined. I understand that failure to do so may result in the removal of the child from the School.



Signature of Parent

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Educational or Legal Guardian

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **APPOINTED EDUCATIONAL GUARDIAN'S AGREEMENT**

I confirm that as the appointed Educational Guardian of the above named pupil, that I am prepared to act with delegated parental authority to the pupil in case of an emergency and other matters agreed by the parents. To provide a home for the pupil for half term, exeats and holidays when the pupil is unable to go home, and to deal with arrival and or departure from UK airports if necessary.

Appointed Educational Guardian's Signature:.....

Date:.....

Please attach copies of documentation as outlined in pages 3-5 of the policy. The above-named person/organisation has agreed to act as Appointed Educational Guardian and by signing above, agrees to undertake the responsibilities as detailed in the Educational Guardianship Policy.

Parent/Legal Guardian Name/s:..... I/we confirm that I/we have asked the person named above to act with delegated parental authority for my/our child whilst I am/we are overseas.

I/we confirm that the appointed Educational Guardian is over 25 years of age, is legally resident in the UK, and is not a full-time student living in accommodation provided by another educational institution or university student accommodation. I/we also undertake to notify the school in writing of any change of Guardian and to provide full contact details of the new Guardian.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature:.....

Date:.....

Please circle Is the Appointed Educational Guardian a friend or relative? YES NO

Is the Appointed Educational Guardian named above expected to be taking charge of your child for a period in excess of twenty eight consecutive days? YES NO

Do you wish a copy of your child's end of term report, together with accompanying information to be sent to their Appointed Educational Guardian? YES NO

## Guardianship Checklist

## Appendix 2

Name of Student:

The student enjoys their time with their guardian.

Number of visits to guardian this term:

☐ Yes

☐ No

The student has the opportunities to engage in activity / leisure with the guardian.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Examples

The student is able to eat the food they want and is sufficient in quantity to meet their needs.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Examples

The student feels safe while staying with the guardian.

☐ Yes

☐ No

The student has enough space and privacy within the accommodation.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Are you, the Houseparent, in regular contact with the guardian?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do they respond to emails / calls in a timely manner?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Any other comments?

### Appendix 3

#### Teams Interview Questions

During the Teams interview, the following questions will be asked to ensure the suitability of the students' guardianship arrangements:

Accreditation

Safeguarding

Awareness of UKVI guidance for sponsored students

**1. Travel Arrangements:**

- How will you manage the student's travel to and from school?
- Are you able to provide transportation for the student during long leave weekends, half-terms, and the beginning and end of terms?
- How will you handle travel arrangements in case of an emergency?

**2. Sleeping Arrangements:**

- What are the sleeping arrangements for the student at your residence?
- Will the student have their own room, or will they be sharing with others?
- How will you ensure the student has a comfortable and private space?

**3. Other Members of the Household:**

- Who else resides in your household?
- Are there any other students or children living with you?
- How will you ensure the student's safety and well-being in a shared household?

**4. Relationship Between the Parent and the Guardian:**

- What is your relationship with the student's parents?
- How often do you communicate with the parents of the student?
- How will you handle any issues or concerns that may arise?

**5. Availability to the Student:**

- How often will you be available to the student during their time at Bedales?
- Are you able to provide 24-hour support and be a point of contact throughout the school year?
- How will you manage your availability if you need to be away from the UK during term-time?
- Can you be at school within 2 hours to collect the student should the need arise?

**6. Activities and Leisure:**

- What activities do you plan to do with the student during their stay with you?

- How will you ensure the student has opportunities for leisure and engagement outside of school?
- Are there any specific interests or hobbies you will support the student in pursuing?

**7. Handling Emergencies:**

- How will you handle emergencies or crises involving the student?
- Are you prepared to act with delegated parental authority in case of an emergency?
- What arrangements will you make for medical care if required?

**8. Previous Experience:**

- Do you have any previous experience in a similar guardianship role?
- How will your past experience help you in supporting the student at Bedales?
- Are there any other challenges you anticipate, and how will you address them?
- **Details for Letter of Undertaking for Nominated Guardians**

## **Appendix 4**

If a Child Student is being cared for in the UK by a nominated guardian, close relative, or private foster carer (appointed by their parent, school, or legal guardian), the carer must provide a Letter of Undertaking that includes the following details:

### **1. Carer's Details**

- Full name
- Current address
- Contact information (phone number and email)

## **2. Living Arrangements**

- Address where the carer and the Child Student will be living (if different from the carer's current address)

## **3. Accommodation Confirmation**

- A statement confirming that the student will be living in a private home and not in a commercial setting such as a hotel, hostel, or rental accommodation without supervision

## **4. Relationship Details**

- An explanation of the carer's relationship to the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s)

## **5. Care Agreement**

- A declaration that the carer agrees to the care arrangements for the student and understands their responsibilities

## **6. Other Dependents**

- A list of any other individuals the carer is currently supporting or has agreed to support

## **7. Household Members (if applicable)**

- If the student is staying with a nominated guardian, details of anyone else regularly living in the guardian's home

## **8. Signature and Date**

- The carer must sign and date the letter to confirm the accuracy of the information provided

This letter must be submitted to the School before the student's arrival and updated promptly if there are any changes to the care arrangements.