

Uppingham School

Guardianship and Emergency Contact Policy

UPPINGHAM

Guardianship and Emergency Contact Policy

Introduction

- 1 It is a condition of entry to the School that a pupil of any age has an Educational Guardian when parents are overseas residents. An Emergency Contact is required for all other pupils resident in the United Kingdom.

Educational guardians provide important additional support to students who typically live overseas. They care for international pupils in the UK when the pupil is not in School and provide additional support and welfare.

An Educational Guardian may be appointed through a guardianship agency or might be a close relative of the pupil or a nominated close friend of the family.

Requirements for International Residents

2. The School can accept no responsibility for providing accommodation during Leave Out weekends, half-terms or the holidays for pupils whose parents are unavailable. This responsibility is fulfilled by Educational Guardians when parents are not available.
3. Fulfilling the requirements of UKVI's care guidance, the School must be aware of the travel and reception plans when a pupil travels to (or from) the UK. Holiday and travel arrangements, including travel to and from the School, must therefore be made and communicated to the School, well in advance, through the Parent Portal via the online i-GTM travel reporting system.

Role of the Education Guardian

4. There are two levels of Educational Guardians:
 - Full Educational Guardians
 - 'Emergency Only' Educational Guardians

Full Educational Guardians are appointed by the parents as their representative with authority to act on their behalf in all respects. They provide an invaluable and necessary support service to many boarders. They care for international pupils in the UK when the pupil is not in School (for example at Leave Out weekends, half terms, holidays or if the School closes in a time of emergency.) They also have access to the Parent Portal and can see all records and information regarding the pupil. Full Educational Guardians are invited to attend School events as a parent.

'Emergency Only' Educational Guardians are appointed by the parents to provide someone who can respond with parental authority when urgent 'in person' intervention is needed. The School will only contact this type of guardian in an emergency and consequently, parents remain solely responsible for relaying all relevant information about term dates, transport arrangements, etc to the guardian. 'Emergency Only' Educational Guardians do not have access to the Parent Portal and are not routinely invited to attend School events on behalf of a parent. Parents must invite guardians to do this as required.

Other than in access to the Parent Portal and invitations to the School and School events, the responsibilities of the 'Emergency Only' Educational Guardian are exactly the same as a Full Educational Guardian.

'Emergency Only' Guardians might be appointed by families who are resident in the UK for at least part of the year and who routinely travel to the UK for Leave Out weekends.

5. Where there is any doubt in making a guardian appointment, the School's recommendation is that Educational Guardians for overseas pupils should be designated as Full Educational Guardians so as to have complete access to the Parent Portal, to receive all communications sent to parents, and to be able to represent parents at School events. This best practice allows them to fully support a pupil throughout their time at Uppingham.
6. Full Educational Guardians are expected to:
 - Act with delegated parental responsibility.
 - Act as a point of contact at all times during term and provide 24 hour contact.
 - Be able to accommodate the pupil routinely at Leave Out weekends, half term holidays and school holidays as may be required by parents.
 - Be available during term-time to respond at short notice to unforeseen events, for example, circumstances requiring the pupil to be away from the School (e.g. illness or disciplinary outcome requiring external rustication and other emergencies.)
 - Ensure provision of the necessary care and accommodation and other arrangements for the pupil during half-term, Leave Out weekends and other periods as required when parents are not in the country.
 - Receive copies of the pupil's reports and follow their academic and pastoral progress via the Parent Portal.
 - Be familiar with the School's policies and procedures.
 - Visit the pupil during term.
 - Be supportive of the mental and physical welfare and wellbeing of the pupil.
 - Have a level of English that ensures effective understanding and communication.
 - Provide the details and address of hosts with whom a pupil will stay.

In addition, Full Educational Guardians should:

- Represent the parent at parent events and parent teacher meetings and other school meetings as appropriate.
 - Feel welcome at House and School events such as concerts and sports fixtures.
 - Be based sufficiently close to the school to facilitate prompt support in an emergency. Typically this would be within two hours.
7. 'Emergency Only' Educational Guardians are expected to fulfil the same requirements listed above, but in an emergency capacity or as required by parents when they are unable to attend events or are unable to provide accommodation and care when the pupil needs to be away from school (Leave Out weekends, half term, illness, disciplinary issues etc).

'Emergency Only' Guardians are not provided with access to the Parent Portal and thus do not have access to reports, are not routinely invited to School events and cannot enter or amend travel details via the i-GTEM travel reporting system through the Parent Portal.

8. When any Full Educational Guardian is appointed, ideally arrangements should be made for them to visit the School to meet with the pupil's Houseparent, Matron or Tutor. During term-time, contact between Full Educational Guardians and House staff is encouraged to ensure that the pupil is provided with adequate pastoral support throughout the academic year.
9. If, during term-time, an Educational Guardian is required to be away from his or her UK home or is unable to act at short notice (eg on holiday, or working abroad), he or she must inform the parents and the School so that appropriate alternative arrangements, can be made and authorised by the parents via email. The School needs to know who to contact alternatively at such times.

Appointing an Educational Guardian

10. The responsibility for choosing appropriate Educational Guardians rests solely with the parents. The School can only assist by providing the names of agencies successfully active within the school community. Such agencies will always be registered with AEGIS (the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students) www.aegisuk.net.
11. AEGIS is the only independent body regulating the guardianship industry and is formally recognised by the Department for Education's (DfE) for this vital role in the sector. AEGIS offers the highest level of inspection and accreditation of guardianship in the UK. This means member organisations are thoroughly vetted, and AEGIS ensures that such agencies and educational guardians are accountable, and that their professional standards are monitored and certified. This accreditation represents the highest level of safeguarding due diligence in the industry and meets both the Independent School's Inspectorate National Minimum Standards (22.3) and the safeguarding requirements of UKVI. AEGIS lists Guardianship member organisations on its website.
12. Where the parents employ a guardianship organisation or an educational guardian, the School strongly advises that such agencies and guardians are registered with AEGIS (The Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students) www.aegisuk.net.
13. The Educational Guardian must be appointed in advance of the pupil joining the School. This detail will either be included in the New Pupil's Joining Papers or before the CAS is issued, whichever is earlier. A pupil will not be permitted to join the School without acceptable guardianship arrangements being in place.
14. Following the submission of an Educational Guardian's contact details, they will be contacted annually. This contact will allow the School to confirm the identity of the educational guardian, to ensure the guardian is aware and clear of their responsibilities and agree to these, and as part of the school's data update review process to ensure all details are maintained as current.
15. When an Educational Guardian's contact details change outside of this update process, the School should be informed by email from the parent so that the database and house records can be maintained accurately. Such changes should be shared with the pupil's house parent and the pupil's record via admissions@uppingham.co.uk.

Suitability of Educational Guardians

16. If the School has concerns about the suitability of an Educational Guardian (for instance where a pupil may be inadequately supervised, be known or suspected to be in unsuitable accommodation or to be in any way unsafe) these concerns would, in the first instance, be communicated to parents so that alternative arrangements can be made. However, parents should be aware that if the School is unable to resolve these issues with the parents, the School is obliged, under statutory guidance, to refer the concern to the relevant external agency typically the Social Services Local Authority Designated Officer in the first instance and, potentially, UKVI. The School is under no obligation to continue to provide a place at the school if no arrangements deemed suitable by the school can be put in place.
17. To ensure the appropriate welfare of pupils is supported by Educational Guardians, it would be rare for a guardian to be younger than 25 years old and any such appointment would be deemed exceptional and should be discussed with the School. Guidance advises that pupils need appropriate emotional maturity in their Educational Guardian.

Private Fostering Arrangements

18. Private Fostering is defined as when a person under the age of 16 is resident for more than 28 consecutive days with a non-family member. In such cases, the School is legally obliged to inform the local authority. If parents plan to make private fostering arrangements, they must inform the School in writing.

Emergency Contacts (required for all families resident in the United Kingdom)

19. The School requires an Emergency Contact, other than a parent, for all pupils whether day or boarding pupils.
 - For pupils living outside the UK, the Educational Guardian satisfies this requirement.
 - Educational Guardians are also recommended if UK based parents travel often outside of the UK (please see above).

An Emergency Contact is someone who is an alternative point of contact and who is able to provide assistance or advice to a child at short notice. Such contacts, appointed by parents act as their representative with the authority to act on their behalf in an emergency situation when the parent(s) are not contactable. The Emergency Contact for a UK based family does not have access to the Parental Portal.

An Emergency Contact might be a relative of the pupil or a nominated friend of the family.

For the same reasons stated in point 17 above, only in exceptional circumstances would an Emergency Contact be younger than 25 years old.

Following the submission of an Emergency Contact's contact details, they will be contacted annually as part of the school's data update review process to ensure all details are maintained as current.

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