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1. Introduction

Windlesham House School (“the School”) has a strong boarding ethos and values the diversity of its community.

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 and UKVI guidance.

During term time the School is responsible for a pupil’s welfare and acts in loco parentis. However, there are times when the School must be able to hand over these parental responsibilities to an appointed Educational Guardian (a “Guardian”).

This policy applies to pupils whose parents are based overseas or who expect to spend a significant part of the academic year outside the United Kingdom.

It is a condition of admission that these pupils have a UK-based guardian who:

- resides permanently in the United Kingdom,
- lives within two hours of the School, and
- has been approved by the School before enrolment or the issue of a CAS (for visa-sponsored pupils).

The appointed guardianship must remain in place until the pupil leaves the School.

2. Appointment of Guardian

The responsibility for selecting a suitable Guardian rests with the pupil's parents. Parents must satisfy themselves that the Guardian is able and willing to fulfil the requirements outlined in Section 3. Before enrolment (or re-enrolment), the School must verify that appropriate guardianship arrangements are in place and that all required checks have been completed.

Where the Guardian is a relative or close family friend, the School will require confirmation of the Guardian's identity and address and may, at its discretion and in line with safeguarding requirements, request additional checks where appropriate.

Where the Guardian is not a relative or close family friend, or is appointed through an agency, the following checks must be completed by the agency, and the School must verify that these checks have been satisfactorily completed before accepting the arrangement:

- an enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list),
- verification of identity and address, and
- two satisfactory references.

Any agency used must be AEGIS-accredited (Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students). Further information is available at www.aegisuk.net. Only AEGIS-accredited agencies meet current safeguarding and best-practice expectations for the appointment and ongoing monitoring of Guardians.

Ideally, a Guardian should be a relative or family friend who is well known to the child and with whom the child feels comfortable. Where families do not have a suitable contact in the UK, parents are expected to appoint a Guardian through a reputable and AEGIS-accredited organisation.

Once a Guardian has been appointed, the Guardian Details Form (Annex A) must be completed and signed by both parents and the Guardian before enrolment or a pupil's return.

For VISA-sponsored pupils, no CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) will be issued until the School is fully satisfied that the guardianship arrangements meet UKVI requirements and the School's safeguarding standards.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of a Guardian

Guardians act in loco parentis when pupils are not in School. They are responsible for the pupil's care, welfare, supervision and accommodation and must comply with UK law and all School policies. Guardians must maintain regular communication with the School and notify the School if they will be absent for more than 48 hours, providing full details of an approved alternative guardian.

a. General Responsibilities

- To be responsible for the care and wellbeing of the pupil, as would a responsible and caring parent, and to provide a 24-hour point of contact throughout the School year.
- To be ready to accommodate and take responsibility for the pupil at short notice in case of emergency, crisis or where the School requires the pupil to leave temporarily.
- To act with delegated parental authority (in loco parentis) in emergencies, including authorising medical treatment if parents cannot be contacted.
- To provide safe, suitable accommodation and appropriate supervision whenever the

pupil is not accommodated at School, liaising with the Boarding team.

Situations when the Guardian may need to accommodate the pupil include, but are not limited to:

- Exeat Weekends, half-term breaks and longer holidays
- Gaps between travel dates and term dates
- When the pupil is ill or injured and must recuperate away from School
- When the pupil must isolate or quarantine to protect the School community
- When the pupil is required to leave School for disciplinary or welfare reasons
- Any other occasion when the pupil is released from the School

b. Guardian Eligibility and Conduct

The Guardian must

- Be over the age of 25 and not in full time education
- Live within two hours' travelling distance from the School. (exceptions must be agreed in advance)
- Reside permanently in the UK during term time
- If absent from home or abroad for more than 48 hours, parents must inform the School of an alternative guardian authorised to act on their behalf.
- Communicate effectively in English (and where relevant, with parents in their native language)
- Be contactable by phone and email at all times during term and be able to attend School when required, including at short notice. If possible, attend parents' meetings on behalf of the pupil's parents when they cannot do so
- Be familiar with and comply with the School's rules and regulations and ensure that the pupil does likewise at all times.
- Ensure the pupil complies with UK law, including rules relating to alcohol, drugs, relationships and other legal obligations.

c. Practical Responsibilities

The Guardian is also responsible for ensuring that:

- The pupil attends School from the first to the last day of each term, unless agreed otherwise in exceptional circumstances.
- Safe and appropriate travel arrangements are made for holidays and Exeats within published times and that these are communicated to the School in advance.
- The School is notified at least one week in advance of where and with whom the pupil will stay during holidays and Exeat weekends.
- The pupil's passport, visa, and immigration status remain valid and compliant with UK regulations.
- The pupil is properly equipped with clothing and other necessities at the start of each term.
- Accommodation provided (including homestays) is safe, comfortable, and family-oriented, ensuring that the pupil:
 - has their own room and a quiet place to study,
 - is included in family life and not isolated,
 - has privacy (e.g. locks on bathroom doors), and
 - receives regular meals and appropriate care.

4. Monitoring and Oversight

Boarding staff must speak with pupils after each stay with their Guardian to gather feedback about their experience. Staff must record pupils' responses and immediately report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/ Deputy Head Pastoral.

When a concern is raised, actions may include:

- Meeting with the pupil to explore concerns further
- Speaking directly with the Guardian and informing parents
- Requesting that parents appoint a new Guardian if the existing arrangements are deemed unsuitable.
- Alerting relevant authorities including Children's Services, AEGIS, the Boarding Schools' Association (BSA), the Local Authority (LEA) or the Police where appropriate.
- In exceptional circumstances, informing UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) service, particularly where failure to comply with this policy may constitute a breach of visa conditions.

The School will review all guardianship arrangements annually to ensure that they continue to meet safeguarding, welfare, and compliance requirements. Where concerns persist, the School reserves the right to require a change of Guardian or to contact relevant statutory or regulatory bodies.

5. Change of Guardian or Contact Details

Parents must notify the School immediately of any change in guardian or contact details (including telephone, mobile, email address and full postal address) to ensure continuity of care.

The appointment of a new Guardian will be subject to the same verification standards set out in Section 2 (Appointment and Approval of Guardians). No new Guardianship arrangement will be approved until these requirements have been verified by the School.

Guardians must confirm in writing each academic year that their contact details remain current and they continue to meet eligibility requirements.

6. Unsuitable Arrangements

If, at any point during a pupil's time at Windlesham House, the School has concerns about the suitability of a Guardian or guardianship arrangement, the parents will be informed immediately. The School may request that parents appoint a new Guardian or revise the existing arrangements.

If the School continues to have concerns and these are not satisfactorily resolved, the pupils' place at the School may be reviewed and in serious cases, withdrawal may be required. For visa-sponsored pupils, failure to maintain acceptable guardianship arrangements may result in withdrawal of sponsorship by the School.

The following arrangements are not acceptable:

- Guardians who are not resident in the UK during term time or who are unable or unwilling to take responsibility for the pupil when requested.
- Guardians who lack enhanced DBS clearance (where required under Section 2) or who fail to meet the School's safeguarding and welfare standards.
- Pupils staying in hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation or other temporary

establishments without the direct supervision of the approved Guardian or another adult formally approved by the School.

- Unvetted or informal homestay arrangements that have not been approved by the School.
- Provision of false or misleading information regarding a pupil's whereabouts or travel arrangements.
- Any arrangement that fails to provide safe accommodation, adequate supervision or appropriate welfare, or does not meet the standard of care experienced at school.
- Any arrangement that breaches UK law or visa requirements, or which may compromise a pupil's safeguarding, welfare, or immigration compliance.
- Any employee of the School acting as a Guardian (under the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, no member of staff may act as a Guardian unless they are a close family member).

The School reserves the right to decline permission for any leave or travel arrangements if it is not fully satisfied with the proposed guardianship or accommodation arrangements.

7. Emergency Provision

If the appointed Guardian cannot be contacted or fulfil their duties, the School reserves the right to appoint a temporary emergency Guardian and notify parents immediately. Associated costs may be charged to parents.

8. Private Fostering and Legal Compliance

Where a pupil stays with a non-relative for 28 consecutive days or more, the School will notify the relevant local authority in accordance with the Children Act 1989. This ensures that appropriate safeguarding oversight and UKVI compliance requirements are met.

9. Data Sharing and Consent

Parents' consent to the sharing of relevant pupil information with the appointed Guardian (including academic records, reports and welfare updates) to facilitate effective care and communication in accordance with UK data protection legislation and KCSIE guidance.

10. Guardian Familiarisation and Engagement

Guardians are encouraged to visit the School and meet boarding staff, particularly during induction events and review meetings. This helps strengthen the pupil's support network and ensures a shared understanding of School expectations and safeguarding duties.

11. Record-Keeping and Review

The policy is reviewed annually or following regulatory updates. Records of Guardian vetting, correspondence and pupil feedback will be securely stored in accordance with data protection regulations.

APPENDIX 1 – Educational Guardianship Form

I confirm:

- That I have been appointed by the parents as this pupil's Guardian. I have read and understood the School Guardianship Policy and agree to abide by all its terms and fulfil all aspects of the role and responsibilities of a Guardian as outlined in the policy.
- I am resident in the United Kingdom during term time.
- I understand that the School may require verification of my identity, address, and where applicable, enhanced DBS clearance and references, in accordance with the School's Guardianship Policy.
- I am over the age of 25.
- I understand that I am acting with delegated parental authority in case of an emergency, and I will make proper arrangements for medical care if required.
- I will meet the pupil's form teacher online or in person shortly after the pupil starts at Windlesham house.
- I will provide pastoral and educational support if required.
- I will liaise with the boarding staff on the parents' behalf on matters relating to the pupil's welfare if the parent requires me to do so.
- I will be a point of contact for the parents, pupil and staff.
- I will be ready to accommodate the pupils at short notice if needed.
- I will provide suitable accommodation, if needed, for the pupil and an appropriate degree of care and supervision during exeats or half term breaks and at the beginning and end of terms if travel plans require this.
- If I take care of the pupil, I will engage them in activities and provide appropriate meals, eaten with the family.
- If for any reason I am unable to fulfil my duties as a guardian, either temporarily or permanently, I will inform the pupil's parents and the school.
- I also confirm that if I am not the person with whom the pupil will stay for exeats and half terms, I will provide full details of the home stay and references for the homestay.

| | |
|---|--|
| Guardian's full name | |
| Pupil's full name | |
| Agency's name if applicable, or relationship to the child | |
| Guardian's address | |
| Guardian's contact number | |
| Guardian's contact email address | |
| Guardian's signature and date | |

APPENDIX 2 – Pupil Feedback after stays with Guardian

We want to make sure you have a safe and positive experience with your guardian or host family during Exeat weekends and holidays. Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire honestly — your feedback helps us make sure every pupil is well cared for while away from school.

If you are unhappy about your stay, please speak to your tutor or a member of the Boarding Team.

1. Pupil name:
2. Name of guardian or home stay:
3. Was your travel plan as expected? E.g. by school taxi / by bus or train / collection by host/ guardian / driver? and did this work well? (If no, please add details):
4. Did you have your own room? If not, who did you share a room with?
5. How many other children were staying there?
6. Did you have access to bathroom facilities with a lock?
7. Did you have a quiet place to study?
8. How much did the person / family you were staying with involve you in activities? (please select)
Not at all
Sometimes
All the time
9. Did the family provide food and meals? (please select)
Yes - for most and/or all meals
No - I always ate on my own
Sometimes - e.g. I joined them for main meals
I prepared most or all my own meals
I ordered takeaway
10. Please rate your stay with your guardian (You can choose more than one option)
Excellent
Good
Satisfactory
Unsatisfactory
Poor
I would like to change my host family or guardian next time

11. Please choose the phrases which best describe your stay. You can choose more than one option and add details in the Comments section.

- ☐ Fun - I really enjoyed it
- ☐ Plenty of time for quiet study
- ☐ I had a lot of time to myself
- ☐ Really busy with the family / guardian
- ☐ Lonely
- ☐ Stressful (please tell us why in the comments section)
- ☐ Happy
- ☐ Relaxing
- ☐ Unhappy (please tell us why in the comments section)
- ☐ I liked the person I stayed with and would like to stay with them again
- ☐ I did not like the person I stayed with and would not like to stay with them again.

Comments:

12. Write a sentence or two to describe your weekend.

13. Any further comments or questions?

14. Do you have any concerns about your guardian, homestay, or the accommodation that you would like the School to know about?

APPENDIX 3 -Annual Guardianship Review

Pupil Name:

Year Group:

Guardian Name:

Date of Annual Review:

Reviewer(s):

Section A – Guardian Confirmation

| Requirement | Evidence Provided | Meets Standard? | Notes |
|---|--|--|-------|
| Written confirmation of contact details | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Confirmation guardian meets eligibility (over 25, UK resident, within 2 hours, available) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Confirmed willingness to act in loco parentis | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Confirmation of ability to host during exeats/holidays | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |

Section B – Safeguarding Verification

| Safeguarding Element | Evidence | Meets Standard? | Notes |
|--|---|--|-------|
| Identity verified | File checked | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Address verified | File checked | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Enhanced DBS (if applicable) | Issue date: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| References (if applicable) | On file | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Homestay suitability checked (if relevant) | Documentation on file | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Any safeguarding concerns recorded during year | <input type="checkbox"/> None / <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (attach details) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |

Section C – Pupil Feedback (From Appendix 2 Forms)

| Review Point | Findings | Meets Standard? | Notes |
|------------------------------------|--|--|-------|
| Number of stays reviewed | _____ stays | — | — |
| Themes identified | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed <input type="checkbox"/> Concerning | — | |
| Accommodation safe and appropriate | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Pupil included in family life | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Meals and care appropriate | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Pupil expresses concerns | <input type="checkbox"/> None / <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | |

Section D – Assessment of Ongoing Suitability

| Criteria | Meets Standard? | Evidence | Notes |
|---|--|----------|-------|
| Safe, appropriate accommodation | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | | |
| Appropriate supervision | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | | |
| Correct travel arrangements | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | | |
| Good communication with school | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | | |
| Compliance with UK law and school rules | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No | | |

Section E – Actions Required

| Issue Identified | Action Needed | Responsible Person | Deadline | Completed? |
|------------------|---------------|--------------------|----------|------------|
| | | | | |

Section F – Final Outcome

- ☐ Guardianship arrangement **approved** for next academic year
- ☐ **Approved with actions** (see section E)
- ☐ **Not approved** – new guardian required

Reviewer Signature:

Reviewer Name:

Date: