WREKIN

LOVE THE JOURNEY

WREKIN COLLEGE
GUARDIAN POLICY

1. Introduction

Wrekin College is committed to the welfare, safety, and holistic development of all pupils, including those from overseas. In line with UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) Child Student visa requirements and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, all international pupils must have a UK-based guardian appointed by their parents or legal guardians until they leave school, even after they turn 18. This policy also applies to pupils who hold UK residency where parents or legal guardians reside overseas.

This policy outlines the expectations, requirements, and responsibilities relating to nominated guardianship arrangements and replaces all previous guardianship policies, including Policy 46 (Educational Guardians Policy for International Students). It is intended to support families by ensuring continuity of care, clear communication, and high standards of safeguarding for all pupils.

NB: **Wrekin College will only sponsor full time boarders, any deviation from this will only be considered on exceptional grounds and on a case-by-case basis.**

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2. Purpose of a Guardian

A guardian acts *in loco parentis* when a pupil's parents or legal guardians are overseas and is responsible for the pupil outside of term time and during periods when the school is not responsible for their care (for periods of less than 28 days). This includes:

- Half-terms, exeat weekends, and holidays
- Emergency situations (e.g. illness, suspension, school closure)
- Travel arrangements and related support

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3. Who Can Be a Guardian

3.1 Eligibility and Suitability

A suitable guardian must:

- Be a UK resident aged 25 or over
- Be a British citizen or hold Indefinite Leave to Remain, Settled Status.
- Reside permanently in the UK and not hold a temporary visa (e.g. tourist, student, or short-term work visa)
- Live within a three-hour commutable distance of Wrekin College
- Have sufficient fluency in English to communicate effectively with the school, both verbally and in writing
- Have no criminal convictions or safeguarding concerns (this applies to all members of the guardian's household)

- Provide written confirmation agreeing to undertake the responsibilities outlined in this policy

Where the guardian is a family member or family friend, the following evidence must be provided:

- • Copy of the photo page of their passport or driving licence (proof of ID)
- • Evidence that they are a UK citizen or hold Settled Status (UK passport or Share Code)
- • Proof of address (utility bill or council tax bill)

Staff employed by Wrekin College may not act as guardians for pupils, in order to avoid any conflict of interest and to maintain clear professional boundaries.

3.2 Relationship to the Pupil

The guardian may be:

- A relative aged 25 or over (note this can not be a close relative: e.g. grandparent, sibling, aunt or uncle)
- A family friend approved by the parents or legal guardians
- A professional guardian accredited by a recognised organisation such as AEGIS or the Boarding Schools' Association (BSA)

Where a pupil requires a Child Student visa, the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) will not be issued until the school is satisfied that appropriate guardianship arrangements are in place. Wrekin College reserves the right to refuse or withdraw approval of any guardianship arrangement that does not meet safeguarding, welfare, or visa compliance standards.

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4. Responsibilities of the Guardian

Guardians are expected to:

- Maintain regular contact with the pupil, parents or legal guardians, and the school
- Provide the school with up-to-date 24/7 emergency contact details
- Liaise with the school regarding term dates, half-terms, exeat weekends, and travel arrangements for all authorised absences
- Be available to act on behalf of parents or legal guardians in emergencies, including medical or personal matters
- Provide safe, private, non-commercial accommodation and appropriate care and supervision when the pupil cannot be accommodated by the school
- Promote and support the pupil's welfare, physical health, emotional wellbeing, rights, religion, and culture
- Be familiar with, and support, the school's rules, regulations, and values

Academic and Pastoral Representation

Where authorised by parents or legal guardians, a guardian may:

- Act as a point of contact for academic and pastoral matters
- Attend parent-teacher meetings or other relevant school meetings on behalf of parents or legal guardians
- Support communication regarding the pupil's academic progress, wellbeing, and participation in school life

Medical Support

Where required, guardians may be asked to support communication between the school and parents or legal guardians regarding medical matters, including ongoing physical or mental health concerns, particularly during periods when the pupil is not in the school's care. Clinical decisions and consent for treatment remain the responsibility of parents or legal guardians and appropriate medical professionals.

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5. Safeguarding Expectations

To safeguard pupils' wellbeing, in line with statutory safeguarding guidance including *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, all guardians must:

- Be AEGIS or BSA accredited or be subject to enhanced DBS checks or a formal criminality declaration
- Ensure that all adults in regular contact with the pupil within the guardian household are free from convictions or safeguarding concerns
- Inform the school immediately of any changes in household composition or personal circumstances that may affect the safety or welfare of the pupil

Where a guardian arranges accommodation with a third party (e.g. a host family), the school reserves the right to request full details and photographic identification in advance and to refuse any arrangement deemed unsuitable.

Wrekin College reserves the right to withdraw approval of a guardian at any time should safeguarding standards not be met.

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6. Parental Responsibilities

Parents or legal guardians must:

- Provide full guardian details and all required documentation before the CAS is issued and before the pupil travels to the UK
- Submit a signed Guardian Nomination Form and Letter of Undertaking
- Ensure the appointed guardian understands and agrees to their responsibilities
- Fully disclose all relevant medical and mental health information relating to the pupil, including ongoing conditions and medication requirements
- Notify the school promptly, in writing, of any change to guardianship arrangements and provide updated documentation to ensure continuity of care

Failure to disclose relevant medical or welfare information may result, where necessary, in the school being unable to accommodate the pupil, requiring the guardian to assume immediate responsibility.

If there are changes to the Educational Guardian, it is the responsibility of the Parent or Legal Guardian to inform Wrekin College.

7. Guardian Organisations

For all international students, unless they are having a relative or close family friend as a guardian, Wrekin College strongly encourages families to appoint guardian organisations that are accredited by **AEGIS** (Association of Education Guardians for International Students) or **BSA** Boarding Schools' Association. Guardianship agencies typically arrange accommodation as well as acting as Education Guardian for their students. Guardianship agencies will usually arrange accommodation for their students through host families, although occasionally other accommodation options will be used. Host families will be responsible for providing the day-to-day care of the student, accommodation and meals. If the Guardianship agency arranges accommodation for the child or young person, the agency will be responsible for ensuring the quality and safety of the accommodation including the necessary recruitment (DBS) checks.

The BSA is the largest association of boarding schools in the world; their Certified Guardian Scheme is an assurance of professional quality and provides assurance to Wrekin College that they are dealing with Education Guardians who have the highest standards in the safeguarding of children, safer recruitment, and training of staff and host families, and careful liaison with parents and College.
https://www.boarding.org.uk/bsa-initiatives/bsa-certified-guardian-scheme/

AEGIS is a national body for monitoring and regulating the welfare of international students and provides accreditation of Educational Guardianship Organisations in line with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding. A list of accredited guardians can be found on the AEGIS website: https://aegisuk.net/parents-agents/

There is no legal requirement that a guardianship organisation must be **AEGIS or BSA** accredited but it is considered best practice and as such Wrekin College expects that all pupils will have a guardian who meets the expectation of this policy.

If parents do not appoint an **AEGIS or BSA** accredited Educational Guardianship Agency, it is their responsibility to check that the Guardian is suitable and that adequate safeguarding measures have been taken. The Guardian will be acting on the parents' behalf and the guardianship arrangement will not fall within the school's welfare responsibility for the pupil. Appropriate vetting procedures should be followed to safeguard and promote the welfare of their child or children must be taken by the parent or legal guardian.

8. School Responsibilities

The school will:

- Monitor pupils' welfare and academic progress
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date guardian records, including identification, proof of address, and immigration status
- Liaise with guardians regarding welfare, medical, and logistical matters
- Review guardianship arrangements annually, or sooner if circumstances change
- Comply with UKVI Child Student sponsor duties and safeguarding legislation
- Train staff regularly in safeguarding and child protection
- Share information with relevant authorities where required to protect a pupil's welfare

Wrekin College retains overall responsibility for pupils during term time only. Outside this period, safeguarding responsibility transfers to the appointed guardian, with the school maintaining appropriate oversight.

9. Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency (including suspension, serious illness, or school closure), the guardian must be available to collect the pupil within 24 hours, unless otherwise agreed with the school in exceptional circumstances.

10. Private Fostering

If a pupil under the age of 18 stays with a non-relative guardian or host for 28 days or more, this constitutes a private fostering arrangement. Parents and guardians must notify the relevant local authority and provide the school with confirmation of registration.

Failure to comply may result in referral to local authorities under the Children Act 2004.

Contact for Queries

For queries regarding guardianship arrangements, please contact:

Wrekin College Admissions Office
Email: admissions@wrekincollege.com
Tel: +44 (0)1952 265603

This policy replaces all previous guardianship policies and will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation or statutory guidance.