



St. Francis' College Guardianship Policy

Introduction

The 'College' refers to all the staff and pupils of the Prep department and Senior School which includes Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS), Pre-prep (Key Stage 1), Prep (Key Stage 2), and Senior School (Key Stages 3-5).

Guardianship Arrangements

The College recognises that the provision of suitable education guardianship arrangements is an essential part of pastoral care. Each boarder must have a suitable Education Guardian before taking up their place at St Francis' College. This is a contractual condition and part of the College admission process. An Education Guardian is someone who has been appointed to care for an international pupil in the UK and who has been delegated temporary Parental Responsibility by the parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s) residing overseas.

Where a boarder has come to the UK on a Tier 4 student visa, the UK Border Agency (UKBA) requires the College to ensure, 'that care arrangements are "suitable" for pupils under eighteen at the time when they are in the UK and not just when in the care of the school'. The College will record where the boarders are residing, who is responsible for them and what the care arrangements are during weekends and holidays throughout the sponsorship period.

The College will insist that the boarders have competent and properly appointed education guardians. The appointment of these guardians is the responsibility of the parents. The Education Guardian will be acting on behalf of the parent and the guardianship arrangement will not fall within the College's welfare responsibility for the boarder. It is expected that the Education Guardian keeps in regular contact, providing advice and support as needed. If at any time the College is concerned about the care arrangements, staff will seek to satisfy themselves that the arrangements are suitable.

An Education Guardian must be resident in the UK and be in close enough proximity to the pupil and the College to provide care in a happy home environment. They may be a family member, a family friend, a guardianship agency, a host family, or other responsible UK-based adult. Where a guardianship agency arranges accommodation for a boarder, the agency will be responsible for ensuring the quality and safety of the accommodation including the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

The College will recommend to parents that they use AEGIS (the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Pupils) accredited guardianship agencies. AEGIS is an authoritative association for inspecting and accrediting guardianship organisations.

Duties of a Guardian

The information given below is intended to help parents in their choice of a suitable Education Guardian for their daughter and also as a guideline for Guardians, to give an outline of the kind of responsibilities which are expected of them. It is not intended in any way to be intrusive, but to indicate the areas, which the College feels, are essential to the girl's safety and well-being.

Parents and Guardians are always most welcome to visit the College at any time and to contact the Boarding House Staff if there are any concerns.

The College requires that:

- Every full time boarder **must** have a suitable Education Guardian **before** taking up her place at the College. **The parent must choose and appoint a suitable Education Guardian and it is then the parent and not the school who is responsible for the welfare of their child while staying with the appointed Education Guardian.** Each boarder must continue to have a Guardian while they are in attendance here, even after they have turned eighteen. If there is a difficulty finding a suitable Guardian, the College is able to provide a list of suitable guardianship companies.
- The parents are responsible for carrying out appropriate safeguarding checks on the Education Guardian.
- A suitable Education Guardian would preferably be a responsible adult over twenty five, but must be at least twenty-one years of age. A university student resident in student accommodation or halls of residence would not be considered a suitable Education Guardian by the College.
- In order that your daughter/ward is able to become proficient in the use of English at the earliest opportunity, it is preferred that English is the language spoken in the home where the girl will be staying. It is essential, at the very least, that the Guardian has sufficient English to be able to converse easily with the College.
- An Education Guardian must be resident in the UK and be in close enough proximity to the pupil and the college to provide care in a happy home environment. They may be a family member, a family friend, a guardianship agency, a host family, or other responsible UK-based adult. They must be able to offer to arrange accommodation for his/her daughter/ward during mid-term breaks and school holidays, as the College and Boarding House are closed during these periods. Hostels for students in Further or Higher Education are neither suitable nor acceptable accommodation for girls who are still at the College.

- An Education Guardian's responsibilities for a boarder under the age of eighteen should include being in regular contact to provide advice and support, take responsibility for the boarder when she is unwell, suspended or expelled and arrange travel. Guardians are expected to attend parents' evenings and other important occasions, therefore it is preferable that their place of residence is not more than one to one-and-a-half hours travelling time away from the College. Boarders who are eighteen still need an Education Guardian whilst they are registered with the College but may expect support advice to be provided on request. Education Guardians are sent copies of all College circulars.
- If requested, the College will arrange for girls to travel to Kings Cross (Railway Station) and Heathrow Airport with a reputable taxi firm on the official arrival and departure dates. Education Guardians are expected to make all other necessary travel arrangements, including where possible, visas.
- Parents and Guardians must adhere to specified term dates. The Boarding House is open from 12pm on the day prior to the start of term to facilitate travel arrangements. At the end of each term the Boarding House will close at 12:30pm, and at 5:30pm if it is half term. Education Guardians will be responsible for accommodation outside these times should early arrival or late departure be deemed unavoidable.
- A Guardian must assist with the removal and storage of personal belongings at the end of each academic term. Boarders who are not returning to continue their studies at the College must remove all their personal belongings on the date of their departure. The College will not provide any storage facility after this date. Girls who are returning to continue their studies at the College may leave one suitcase and one box only, during the period of school closure. These limits will be not be negotiable.
- The College recommends that parents use only AEGIS (The Association of Education and Guardianship of International Pupils) accredited guardianship agencies. AEGIS is an authoritative association for inspecting and accrediting guardianship organisations.
- The College reserves the right to refuse to accept the nomination for a Guardian for whatever reason it deems suitable. Any change of Educational Guardians during a pupil's residence at St. Francis' College must be notified in writing to the College and must be acceptable to them.

One copy of the preceding information should be retained by the parents and the other passed to the nominated Education Guardian.

The attached slip must be signed and returned to the College by the parent, who should also keep a copy.

To **The Headmistress, St. Francis' College, Letchworth, Hertfordshire SG6 3PJ, England.**

I, _____
(Name of parent, block capitals),

nominate _____
(Name of proposed Education Guardian, block capitals)

of _____
(Address of proposed Education Guardian, block capitals)

Telephone (home)

Telephone (work) _____

e-Mail _____

to be the Education Guardian of my daughter,

(Name of Daughter)

while she is a full time boarding student at St Francis' College

I understand that the College's guidelines are for the safety of my daughter and that the College reserves the right to refuse a nominee for guardianship. I also understand that the responsibility is my own for the final choice and vetting of the suitability of the Guardian, whom the College has accepted as my proposal.

I have read and understood the document concerning the duties of guardianship and state that I believe the nominee to meet these requirements.

Signed _____
(Signature of parent)

Date _____

This page must be signed and return to the College by the **proposed Education Guardian**, who should also keep a copy.

To The Headmistress, St. Francis' College, Letchworth, Hertfordshire SG6 3PJ, England.

Full Name

_____ (Block Capitals)

Address

Date of Birth

Telephone (home)

Telephone (work)

e-Mail

Is there any reason in law, or in any other way, which makes you, or anyone in your household, unsuited to care for a young person in your home?	Yes / No Please delete as necessary
Type of accommodation where you live and where your ward would be, when staying with you e.g. private house, flat etc.	
Would your ward have a separate bedroom? If no, please state with whom she would be sharing.	
Others in the household	
Your employment	
Are you English-speaking?	Yes / No Please delete as necessary

I, the undersigned, state that the information which I have given here is correct and that I have read and understood the document concerning the duties of educational guardianship and agree to accept responsibility for _____ while she is a student boarding full time at St Francis' College.

Signed

Date

Reviewed By	J Bedborough
Authorised By	B Goulding
Effective From	December 2019
Next Review Due	December 2022