Cothill Policy Documents

ISSR 7: Education Guardianship Policy

Date: September 2026
Next review: September 2027

Parents of pupils at Cothill School who are normally resident outside the UK must appoint an Education Guardian who is resident in the UK and will provide a good level of care whilst the pupil is in the UK but not at the school. The safety and wellbeing of pupils is our utmost priority and therefore this is the case for all pupils, regardless of their age and regardless of their nationality. Parents who are normally resident in the UK but travel overseas on a regular basis during term time will also need to nominate a third party to act in loco parentis in their absence.

Definition of an Education Guardian

It is important to recognise the distinction between 'Education Guardian' and 'Legal Guardian'. 'Education Guardian' is not a legal term and should not be used interchangeably with a Legal Guardian. An Education Guardian is someone who has been appointed to care for international pupils in the UK, acting on behalf of the parents, when the pupil is not in school (eg. exeats, halfterms, holidays, for medical or disciplinary reasons or if the school has had to close in times of emergency).

Appointing an Education Guardian

The school does not make, or facilitate, the arrangement of guardianship or host family accommodation. The responsibility for appointing an Education Guardian rests solely with parents. This can be either a family member or close family friend, an AEGIS accredited guardianship organisation (The Association for the Education & Guardianship of International Students http://www.aegisuk.net) or a BSA Certified Guardian under the Scheme operated by the Boarding Schools' Association.

The appointed Guardian **must not be connected to the school in any way**, including teaching or support staff.

The Education Guardian must be appointed before the child joins the school. The school will send parents an 'Education Guardianship Policy and Agreement' asking for contact details of the Education Guardian. This must be completed, signed by both parents and the Education Guardian and sent to Cothill by the given date, prior to the pupil joining Cothill. We cannot accept a new student to the school until the Education Guardian arrangements have been confirmed. Parents are responsible for giving a copy of this Education Guardianship Policy and Agreement to the Education Guardian for their signature.

The responsibility for carrying out any safeguarding checks rests solely with parents, but the school must agree to the suitability of the Education Guardian. The Education Guardian will only be deemed suitable if they are a citizen of the UK or have settled status/indefinite leave to remain, live at an acceptable proximity to Cothill, are aged over 25 years old, speak

English, so as to ensure effective communication with the school, are not regularly involved in travel overseas and are capable of providing care for a child in a happy, secure home environment as would a reasonable and responsible parent. Guardians on temporary visas (e.g., work, student, visitor) are not eligible.

Parents must arrange for their child's Education Guardian to meet the Head of Boarding or School Secretary at, or before, the beginning of their child's first term. Guardians of Cothill pupils must agree to provide proof of residency in the UK and photographic ID at this meeting. Evidence of this will be recorded on the pupil's record.

To comply with National Minimum Boarding Standards, Educational Guardianship arrangements will be monitored on a regular basis. Parents must keep the school informed of any changes to the Education Guardian, including all contact details.

The Responsibilities of the Education Guardian

1. The Education Guardian will be responsible for the care of the pupil, as would a responsible and caring parent, whenever the pupil is residing in the UK but is not the responsibility of the school or the pupil's parents at that time. This includes exeats, half-terms, holidays and in times of an emergency, such as an epidemic, when the school has to close. The Education Guardian will also be responsible for the care of the pupil if they have to leave the school for medical reasons or if they are excluded from school at short notice.

2. During these times, the Education Guardian will be responsible for looking after the pupil if medical issues require or if they are involved in an accident. They will need to be available to care for the pupil and make decisions as appropriate at such times.

3. The Education Guardian will be responsible for travel and accommodation arrangements for the pupil during these times and must ensure that the school is aware of such arrangements.

4. The Education Guardian must provide care in a private, non-commercial residence. Accommodation in hotels, Airbnb, university halls or temporary lodgings is not permitted.

5. The Education Guardian should collect and return the pupil at the appropriate times for the start and end of term/half term and Exeats. All dates and timings are published on the website and in the school calendar.

6. If the Education Guardian is going to be away from their home for longer than 24 hours, they must notify the school. They must give full contact details for the period of absence and the name and address of a responsible person in the UK, fully authorised by the parents to act on their behalf.

7. The Education Guardian must be able to consent to emergency medical treatment for a pupil in the event that the parent/s cannot be contacted.

8. The Education Guardian is welcome to attend Parents' Meetings and school events as appropriate.

9. Where the pupil is studying at Cothill on a Child Student Visa and the Education Guardian is facilitating travel arrangements to and from the UK, they must immediately contact both parents and the school in the event that the pupil does not reach them at the specified time, whether that be arrival at the airport or at their home.

10. The Education Guardian must confirm that no adult (person aged over 16-years-old), including themselves or anyone regularly present at their address, has any criminal convictions, is under criminal investigation, or is subject to any safeguarding concerns in the UK or abroad.

Private Foster Care Arrangements

The following applies to any pupil under the age of 16 (or under the age of 18 if disabled): Parents are obliged to inform the local education authority if the Education Guardian appointed for their child is not a relative (defined as: grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt) or legal guardian with parental responsibility and if their child would be staying with the Education Guardian for 28 days or more. This length of stay is considered by the state to be providing a Private Foster Care Arrangement and anyone providing a Private Foster Care Arrangement must inform and receive in advance all necessary approvals from the local borough in which they reside. Failure to do so without reasonable cause is an offence under the Children's Act 2004. The school must inform the local authority of any Private Foster Care Arrangement where that arrangement has been made, or appears to have been made, without all necessary approvals having been properly obtained in advance from the local authority. The school will therefore require evidence of approvals from any Education Guardian who will be providing accommodation to any pupil in a Private Foster Care Arrangement.

ASP - September 2026