



# THE ORATORY

## THE ORATORY SCHOOL (OS) Guardianship Policy

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## **Introduction**

The Oratory School has a strong boarding ethos and greatly values the diversity that both our UK and international students bring to the School's community.

Under the Children Act 1989, the School is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of students. 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 Guardian.

If, at any point, during the pupil's time at The Oratory, the School has concerns about the suitability of a Guardian or guardianship arrangement, the parents will be informed. Housemasters conduct a check at the start of the year and then after each school holiday. If there is a concern, as a result of these checks or via a pupil raising any worries, then this would be raised as a MyConcern and therefore notified to the DSL and senior staff. The School would then contact the parents. The School may request a change of Guardian or revision of the arrangement. If the School continues to have concerns about the child's Guardianship arrangements, the child could be asked to leave the School. It should be noted, for example, that the School does not consider unsupervised stays in hotels or bed and breakfast accommodation to be an adequate level of accommodation or care.

## **Definitions**

In this document, the term 'Guardian' refers to an Education Guardian, which involves a delegation of parental responsibility, usually for short periods of time. This is distinct from a Legal Guardian, which refers to a person who is appointed to care for a child when a parent or guardian has died, or to a person acting as a guardian of a child's estate.

## **Appointing a Guardian**

- It is the parents' responsibility to appoint a Guardian; the organisation and selection process rests solely with parents.
- The appointed Guardian must be over 25 years of age and be permanently resident in the UK; they must be able to be at the School within two hours, if requested.
- The appointed Guardian must be fluent in the English language and be able to provide a point of contact for the School at all times.
- Ideally the Guardian should be a relative or family friend who is well known to the child, and be someone with whom the child feels happy and comfortable staying.
- For many students where the family does not have a suitable contact in the UK, it is expected that the parents will appoint a Guardian via a reputable organisation. It is important to note that the School does not recommend any specific agency or organisation, but would encourage parents to ensure that it is a member of the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students (AEGIS). AEGIS can be contacted via their website:

[www.aegisuk.net](http://www.aegisuk.net)

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- In a crisis, if the Headmaster, Deputy Head Pastoral or Housemaster are unable to contact parents, the Guardian will have to give permission for medical care. If neither parents nor guardian can be contacted, the Housemaster is empowered to act in loco parentis – as if they were the legal Guardian.
- If an appointed Guardian changes during a pupil's time at the School, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure accurate updated contact details (telephone, mobile, email and full postal address) are communicated to the School as soon as possible, in order to ensure continuity of care.

### **Guardian Responsibilities**

All Guardians must be prepared to undertake, where necessary, the following responsibilities:

- 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 or crisis.
- To provide safe and suitable accommodation for the pupil with an appropriate degree of care and supervision when they cannot be accommodated at School and to liaise with the Housemaster regarding these arrangements. Occasions are likely to include, but are not restricted to:
  - o Holidays
  - o Days at the start and end of term when a pupil's flights do not coincide with term dates
  - o If a pupil is ill or injured and needs to recuperate away from School
  - o If the School requires a pupil to leave for disciplinary reasons or because the School determines it to be in the pupil's best interests
  - o Any other occasion when the pupil is released from the School
- To make suitable alternative arrangements if they are unable to accommodate the pupil themselves, and to inform both Housemaster and parents of the arrangements.
- To liaise with the School over all matters relating to the pupil's welfare, including pastoral, academic and medical care.
- To act with delegated parental authority in the case of an emergency or crisis and to make appropriate arrangements for medical care.
- To attend important parent and teacher meetings or any other important meetings at the School on behalf of the parents.

- The Guardian should promote the welfare, physical wellbeing and emotional wellbeing of the boarder

The responsibilities of Guardians appointed by overseas parents and those appointed by parents in the UK are identical. However, over the usual course of the year, there are likely to be practical differences in a Guardian's level of involvement:

- **For overseas parents:** The Guardian is usually responsible for the delivery and collection of students at the beginning and end of term, and (where the pupil is not travelling to their home overseas) for providing a home for students during Exeats and Leave Weekends. The Guardian must be available for contact at short notice in an emergency, for granting routine permission, or for disciplinary reasons. In some medical or disciplinary cases, the Guardian may be required to have the pupil to stay for a limited period of time.

If required as part of Visa arrangements for students over 16, the Guardian should arrange to accompany the pupil to a local police station to register their arrival in the UK.

- **For UK parents:** the Guardian must be able to substitute fully for parents when parents are away or unavailable. This includes providing everything mentioned in the points above. UK parents who plan to be away for an extended period, are asked to inform the Housemaster in good time and to check that contact numbers are up-to-date and relevant.



Guardianship Agreement – Parent

**Please read the Education Guardianship Policy before completing this form. Please ask the appointed Guardian to complete The Guardian Agreement Form on the next page.**

**Pupil Name**

**Guardian Details**

<p><b>Name</b>..... .....</p> <p><b>Address</b>..... ..... ..... .....</p> <p><b>Telephone Number / Mobile</b>.....</p> <p><b>Email</b>..... .....</p> <p><b>Relationship to pupil</b>.....</p>
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I/we have read The Oratory School Guardianship Policy and agree to the appointment of the above Guardian. I/we recognise that in certain circumstances, the School may need to share specific pupil information with the Guardian (such as pupil records, reports, examination results, correspondence with parents etc).



In the unlikely event of the School being unable to contact the appointed Guardian, The Oratory may use as a temporary measure, the services of an emergency Guardian and add the charges to your bill.

**Parent Name**

**Parent Signature**

**Date**

**Parent Name**

**Parent Signature**

**Date**

**NB Except in the case of a single parent who has custody of the child, this form must be signed by both parents.**

I have read The Oratory School Education Guardianship Policy and confirm that, as the appointed Guardian of the above named pupil, I accept and agree to undertake the responsibilities outlined therein.

I am over 25 and live permanently in the United Kingdom, within two hours of The Oratory School. I am not a full-time student living in accommodation provided by another educational institution. I am fluent in the English Language.

**Guardian Name**

**Guardian Signature**

**Date**