

Glenstal Abbey School Guardianship Policy and Agreement

Introduction

At Glenstal Abbey School we welcome students from all over the world. Our international students are part of a diverse community of people who care for each other and flourish as individuals, celebrating diversity and forging lifelong friendships. Living in a foreign country, in unfamiliar surroundings, and perhaps, having to communicate in a different language can be a challenge to our international students. Our pastoral care team works to ensure all international students are effectively supported as they integrate into School life.

All international students are required to have an Irish resident guardian whilst studying at Glenstal. Guardianship provides an additional level of support for an international student whilst they are in the Ireland, and allows them to have another adult outside of the School to whom they can turn to for assistance or advice, and who will provide accommodation when the School is closed as it may be impractical to travel home.

As the person with shared delegated parental responsibility, the role of guardian complements the requirement of Housemasters to act in 'loco parentis'. Effective partnership between staff concerned with pastoral care, parents and guardians will safeguard the welfare of international students. Some parents choose to appoint a family friend or relative, but where this is not practicable professional guardians can be appointed using reputable, and ideally accredited, guardianship agencies

The purpose of a Guardianship Policy

- To provide the parents of international students (and the Guardians they appoint) with a clear explanation of the school's expectations relating to educational guardianship.
- To provide the parents of international students with a clear explanation of the responsibilities of the Educational Guardian they appoint.
- To make known to the parents of international students that the school reserves the right to determine the acceptability of arrangements made for their son when they are residing out of School; should the arrangements prove unacceptable, parents and guardians will be advised and given reasonable opportunity to change the arrangements.
- To provide a pro-forma for the registration of an educational guardian.
- To provide details on how communications between the School, international parents and educational guardians will operate.

Guardianship Requirements

- It is the primary responsibility of the parents to appoint an Education Guardian and the selection of the appropriate person or organisation rests with the parents. Glenstal School may be able to provide details of agencies or individuals who have acted as guardians to students from the School in the past, but we do not recommend any specific agency or individual. Parents must fully satisfy themselves as to the suitability of their chosen Education Guardian.
- The appointed Guardian may be a nominated friend of the family or another family member, or may be employed by a professional Guardianship Agency.
- The appointed person must be over 25 years of age. Older brothers and sisters who are undergraduates at university, for example, are not accepted.
- The designated Guardian should have a permanent or semi-permanent place of residence in Ireland and ideally should reside within two hours travelling distance from the School, by either car or public transport.
- They should be English speaking and able to provide a point of contact for the School at all times.
- To liaise with the School regarding long weekends and Half-Term arrangements, including informing the School about details of travel arrangements made for students leaving on all authorised breaks and at the beginning and end of term. This information must be provided in writing to the School Administrator, at least one week prior to departure or arrival.
- To provide accurate contact information (including telephone/mobile, email and full address contact details) to the Glenstal School Admissions Office and later to regularly update this information as necessary by notifying the School Administrator.
- A Guardian must provide safe and suitable accommodation and appropriate care and supervision for the student during periods when they cannot be accommodated at the School (including periods of long-term illness and disciplinary measures); regardless of the child's age, we do not consider unsupervised stays in hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation or other such accommodation to provide an adequate level of accommodation or care.
- If Guardians are going to be away from their Irish home, for however short a time, they must notify the appropriate Housemaster. They must give full contact details for the period of absence and the name and address of a responsible person in Ireland, fully authorised by the parents to act on their behalf.
- Parents may wish to ask g to attend Parents' Weekend and School events, and the school is happy to facilitate this. They are encouraged to maintain regular contact with their charge and are warmly welcomed to visit the School.
- To be familiar with the School's rules, regulations and policies and to support Glenstal Abbey School's aims and values.
- To ensure that legal documents such as visas and registration documents are kept up-to-date and renewed/updated when necessary.
- A change of Guardian must be communicated promptly to the School Administrator in writing, providing all necessary details in order to facilitate continuous care.