



ROYAL
BALLET
SCHOOL

SETTING THE STANDARD

GUARDIANSHIP POLICY

JUNE 2026

Introduction

The Royal Ballet School is delighted to welcome students from all over the world. To ensure the best possible care for these students and to comply with legal requirements, it is essential that all parents/carers of students on a school-sponsored visa appoint a guardian in this country for the full length of time the student is at the School.

There are three types of guardians that can be appointed.

1. An Educational Guardianship Company – these are registered companies who offer guardianship as a service for a fee
2. A close relative – defined by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) as a grandparent, brother, sister, step-parent, uncle (the brother or half-brother of the child's parent), aunt (the sister or half-sister of the child's parent)
3. A nominated guardian – a friend or contact who the parents believe will be able to properly support and look after the child when not in boarding

The School recognises and values the significant commitment undertaken by all guardians. This role requires a high level of responsibility and dedication and is a contribution which is greatly appreciated. Acting as a guardian can offer a number of benefits, including:

- providing essential support to students living far away from home
- contributing to the development of a student's confidence and independence
- helping a student pursue their passion for ballet
- assisting a student, where appropriate, with the development of their English language skills
- forming positive relationships with families from other countries and cultures

Selecting a Guardian

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to source and provide a suitable guardian to fulfil the requirements of this policy and act in line with the latest government legislation. As listed above, the guardian may be a nominated friend of the family, another family member or supplied by an educational guardianship company.

All financial and contractual matters in relation to guardianship are to be arranged between the parents/carers and guardians. Suitable guidance for these arrangements can be found on the website of AEGIS; www.aegisuk.net.

Parents/carers of overseas students must take account of the cost of providing a guardian in their financial considerations for attendance at the School.

Close relatives or nominated guardians

Close relatives or nominated guardians must:

- be over the age of 25
- be either a citizen of the United Kingdom or hold 'Settled Status'

- be willing to host the student as necessary for all required School breaks, as well as in the case of disciplinary matters, emergency situations or times of student illness/injury
- provide a suitable living space within the guardian's home
- provide all meals for the student at no additional charge
- be able to prove suitable provision for the total number of students they are acting as guardian for, including students at other educational organisations
- provide appropriate medical care in response to injury or illness of a student in their care, including calling 111 for medical advice. In the event of an emergency, the guardian must take the child to A&E or call 999.

Close relatives or nominated Guardians *must not*:

- be a full-time student
- host the student for more than 28 consecutive days at a time
- place a student in commercial accommodation (such as a hotel, hostel, or similar)

Failure to comply with these expectations goes against the School's safeguarding requirements and may breach visa regulations, placing the student's visa at risk. The School reserves the right to make judgements about the suitability of guardianship arrangements and will require parents/carers to find alternative arrangements if we are not satisfied that the living situation is in the best interest of the student.

Individual guardians must undertake an external vetting process before the start of the school year. This includes a short questionnaire and submission of formal ID as well as a video call to check that ID and do a tour of the host's home and proposed living arrangements for the student. The cost of this vetting will be passed on to the parents/carers of the student by the School. If this vetting process has not been completed before the start of the School year, the School reserves the right to refuse the student entry to the School or Boarding Houses.

Educational guardianship companies

If you do not have family or contacts in the UK who are willing or able to act as a guardian, then you may choose to go down the Educational Guardianship route. The School cannot suggest or recommend guardianship companies, but we require that the company used is accredited by at least one of the two organisations listed below.

AEGIS; The Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students,
www.aegisuk.net

Boarding Schools Association's Certified Guardian Scheme, <https://www.boarding.org.uk/bsa-initiatives/bsa-certified-guardian-scheme/>

Guardianship companies have many different packages and rates available. Please ensure you select a package that covers your requirements, as every family's needs will be different.

The role of a guardian

The role of the guardian is to act *in loco parentis* and therefore holds many vital responsibilities. Below are some key examples of the expectations of a guardian. This list should not be treated as exhaustive.

A Guardian is expected to...

- take full responsibility for the care and wellbeing of the student, acting as a representative of the student's family
- ensure safe and adequate travel arrangements are made for the beginning and end of holidays and exeats and to communicate these to the School in a timely manner
- be contactable by phone and e-mail during term-time and be able to come to the School if required, sometimes at short notice
- where reasonably possible, attend parent meetings if the parents/carers are unable to attend.
- be familiar with the School's rules, regulations and policies
- oversee arrangements for the storage of the student's belongings in holiday periods as needed

The role of the guardian in the visa process

When a student applies for a visa, they will be asked to include a Letter of Undertaking from their guardian. This is a statement from them that they agree to uphold the responsibilities of being the student's guardian within the required guidelines of UKVI. A template letter will be provided by the School for any close relatives or nominated guardians. Guardianship companies will have their own.

Any change of guardian must be communicated to the School in writing as soon as the change is made to ensure that visa requirements are maintained. A new Letter of Undertaking must then be submitted.

It is essential that parents/carers and guardians understand the requirements laid out for Child Student Visas in relevant government guidance, particularly the information found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-child-student>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/69c12c71b920af63be1c7654/Student_and_Child_Student.pdf

School Procedures

The School contacts all guardians when students start at the school. The guardian is sent a copy of the School Guardianship Policy and they are asked to ensure that they are able to fulfil the requirements of the role.

Because the School has sponsored the student's visa, we are required to collect certain information, including but not limited to: all travel details, places of stay within and outside the UK, documentation to prove the safeguarding of the student, proof of visa status, and more. Once requested, parents/carers must provide all information in a timely manner. (This is likely to be around every school break at a minimum.)

House Staff will check with students that the guardianship arrangement is working well (after each visit) and will feed back any concerns to the Assistant Principal Pastoral & Welfare (APPW) or Designated Safeguarding & Wellbeing Lead. Parents/carers will be informed as appropriate.

Guardians will receive all term dates, the School Calendar and all routine communications from School. (This does not include reports or personal medical information, however reports can be sent at the request of the parents/carers.) The School will treat guardians as acting for parents in all matters (e.g., medical, behaviour etc.) when it is not possible to contact or communicate with parents/carers in a timely fashion.

Appointed guardians must advise the parents/carers and the School of any absence from the UK during term time and suitable alternative arrangements must be made for that period. Guardianship

Agencies can also recommend Host Families to cover temporary absences or holiday periods of residence etc. if your nominated guardian is unavailable, but the School must be made aware of this arrangement.

The School reserves the right to decline any guardian where it believes the arrangement is not compliant with UKVI guidance or the School's safeguarding expectations. If a guardian is found to be in breach and is deemed to be unsuitable at any time, families of all students using that guardian will be asked to find a new guardian immediately and no students will be able to use that guardian in the future.

The rules students should follow when with guardians

When a student stays with a guardian, the usual School rules should apply. A copy of the appropriate Boarding Handbook will be sent to guardians and the relevant School policies are available on the School website or in hard copy by request.

The School requests that any student under the age of 15 be accompanied by an adult when travelling. The School will allow unaccompanied travel only in particular circumstances and with written permission from the parents/carers and/or guardian. The School reserves the right to enforce its own decision for the welfare of the student.

A student should be expected to help with chores around the house and be treated very much as a member of the family when staying with a guardian.

Conclusion

The safety and wellbeing of our students is of the utmost importance to us, both at the School and when students are away from us. The role of guardian is important in ensuring that students are able to thrive whilst they are away from their families, and the relationship between guardian and student should be a positive one for all parties.

Annex: Related Policies and Guidance

This policy has been written with due regard to the appropriate government guidance:

- Student Sponsor Guidance, Document 2: Sponsorship Duties (Home Office, April 2026)
- Student Sponsor Guidance, Document 3: Student sponsor compliance (Home Office, June 2026)
- Immigration Rules Appendix Child Student (Home Office, April 2026)

This policy should be read alongside the School's Safeguarding policy, which can be found on the school website.

Please direct any questions or concerns related to this policy to the Head of Admissions and/or Designated Safeguarding & Wellbeing Lead.