



RGS SURREY HILLS

Formerly Box Hill School

INTERNATIONAL PUPILS' POLICY

Last updated: September 2025

Date of next review: March 2026

POLICY FOR INTERNATIONAL PUPILS

1. VISA REQUIREMENTS

All pupils must have a right to live and study in the UK to allow them to study at RGS Surrey Hills (formerly Box Hill School). In the case of international pupils who do not already have a right to live in the UK, the school is approved as a Student Sponsor by the UK Home Office, which enables us to sponsor pupils to come to the UK.

The school's Student Sponsor licence issued by the UK Home Office allows us to recruit overseas pupils. With the school licence comes a number of continuous and on-going responsibilities which we must comply with at all times. Any school that does not comply with the terms of the licence granted by the Home Office will prejudice their licence and may have it withdrawn by the Home Office. Where this occurs, all international pupils have to leave the school and make a new visa application. The school is subject to inspection by the Home Office at any time with or without notice. The impact, therefore, on pupils and the school can be very serious.

In order to ensure that pupils and parents comply with the UK Government's requirements on visa entry, the school has contracted Holmes & Partners Ltd, a specialist UK immigration consultancy that specialises in student visas and school licences, to complete and submit all visa applications, whether these are overseas applications, or renewal visas in the UK.

Holmes & Partners Ltd contact details are:

114 Wellington Street, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS1 1BA Website: www.holmes-partners.co.uk
Email: michelle@holmespartners.co.uk

Points to note

If a Child Student turns 18 years old, they may continue with their course until their permission to stay ends. If they want to continue with further study in the UK, they will have to apply under another category, for example Student visa.

Also, pupils joining from another school in the UK must have a visa application sponsored by RGS Surrey Hills in place before they arrive at school.

Pupils holding a Child Student Visa who are aged 12-16 cannot live with a parent. It must be a close family relative over the age of 25 who holds a British passport or who has Indefinite Leave to Remain, or a legal guardian. If the pupil is aged 4-11, they can live with one parent who has a Parent of Child Student Visa.

Child Student/ Student Visa Application Process

Step 1

The Admissions Department at the school must have received the following before the CAS process can be started:

- A signed copy of the Acceptance Form along with the acceptance deposit
- A signed confirmation that parents will comply with this policy
- A completed guardian agreement
- A copy of the pupil's passport

Step 2

On receipt of the above, the school will send a CAS application form to Holmes & Partners who will contact parents directly or via their agent/intermediary for the information and copies of documentation required to complete the visa application. When they are satisfied that the application will be compliant Holmes & Partners will:

- Issue the CAS on behalf of the school
- Complete the online visa application on behalf of parents
- Assist with booking the visa appointment at the visa application centre in the country of residence
- Send all the required paperwork with clear instructions on what needs to be signed and taken to the appointment.
- Provide a covering letter confirming they are acting as the parents' immigration consultant, which will also be submitted with the application.

In the unlikely event of a visa refusal, Holmes & Partners will assist with the administrative review.

Parents responsibilities after the completion of the visa application

Once the visa process is completed the school's responsibilities to the UK Home Office do not end at this point, they begin. To ensure that the school remains compliant with its obligations we require that parents keep us informed of any changes relevant to the child, these may include but are not limited to:

- Keeping us updated of parents' contact details
- Updating us of any changes to the child's UK guardian
- Notifying us of any immigration applications that have been made for the child
- Notifying us if the child has lost or renewed any important documents, such as passport, Biometric Residence Permit or Police Registration Certificate.
- Notifying us of any changes to the people holding parental responsibility for the child.

- During school holidays or any period of temporary school closure, parents/guardians must always inform their child's House Parent of their whereabouts whilst they remain in the UK and, of course of **any** return home (and provide the travel arrangements/flight details). This information can now be provided through the *Reach Boarding Management System*.
- If the child is under 16 years old and staying with a guardian for more than 28 days their House Parent must be notified immediately as this will need to be referred to the local council, this is called a Private Fostering Referral. The local council (where the child is staying) will need to speak to the guardian and undertake a home visit to the guardian to approve the living arrangements. Any requirements of the local council must be complied with.
- During term time, the child's House Parent will keep any travel documentation (including their passport) in a locked safe in their office for safekeeping. The child will be asked to sign to take it out at the end of term to get back into the UK after the holiday.

Please note this list is not exhaustive and if there are any other changes which parents feel may be important for us to be aware of, we would encourage them to share these with us.

2. EDUCATIONAL GUARDIANSHIP

In response to current Government legislation, RGS Surrey Hills, in promoting and safeguarding the welfare of every pupil, requires parents who are resident outside of the UK to appoint a UK based educational guardian to act on their behalf. This applies to all pupils in the school irrespective of age.

Government legislation protects the rights of children and makes 'proper and appropriate care' a compulsory requirement.

During term-time, the School is legally responsible for each pupil's welfare, and undertakes delegated parental responsibilities. However, there are times, for example

- at the start and end of term when a pupil's flights do not coincide with term dates
- half-term breaks
- 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
- if the pupil is ill or injured and needs to recuperate away from the School
- any other occasion when the pupil is released from the School

when the School must be able to hand over these parental responsibilities to a properly appointed educational guardian who is independent of the School and acts as the parents' representative in the UK. This will be required for the duration of their child's attendance at the School.

It is important to recognise the distinction between Educational Guardians and Legal Guardians. Educational Guardian is not a legal term and should not be used interchangeably

with the term Legal Guardian. An educational guardian is someone who has been appointed to care for pupils whose parents are not based in the UK, when the pupil is not in School.

Following updates to the Immigration Rules effective 29 May 2025, the UKVI now explicitly recognises the concept of a “nominated guardian” within the Appendix: Child Student. These updates follow the changes to the National Minimum Standards of Boarding 2022, Standard 22 is now explicitly about ‘Educational Guardianship’. As a result of these changes, the school has greater and more specific responsibility for the quality of guardianship arrangements.

Following these change, the school requires that families appoint AEGIS accredited guardians (NMS, 2022), or the nominated guardian has been through the BSA Family Guardian Scheme (UKVI, 2025). In very exceptional circumstances, the school may consider an alternative arrangement.

The school does not recommend specific guardianship organisations, but parents should seek guardianship accredited through AEGIS. RGS Surrey Hills cannot in any way be held responsible for the choice of guardian that parents make, and we strongly recommend that parents check carefully the accreditation of any guardianship organisation they propose to use. The types of services that they can offer include arranging homestay accommodation and travel to the airport, attending parents’ meetings and generally providing support to the pupil during their stay in the UK.

Parents have the responsibility to appoint a guardian in whom they have confidence to provide for and safeguard the very best interests of their child.

An appointed guardian will:

- Be a 24-hour point of contact for parents, pupils, the school and host family.
- Act with delegated parental authority in the case of an emergency or crisis.
- Provide both pastoral and educational support, including attendance at parents’ evening where necessary and appropriate.
- Liaise with the school and parents over holiday arrangements.
- Make appropriate arrangements for medical care, including emergency admissions to hospital.
- Inform the school in writing about all the details of travel arrangements made prior to a child leaving the school for a holiday period. The school must know the exact details of pupils’ accommodation and methods and dates of transportation
- Retain overall responsibility for visa/passport arrangements at the start and end of term in conjunction with parents (who retain legal responsibility).
- Not be a member of RGS Surrey Hills staff.
- Be English speaking (it is not necessary for English to be a first language , but a minimum level of fluency is required to ensure communications can be fully understood.
- Be available 24 hours a day in the case of an emergency.

Guardians should also respect the rights, religion and customs of a child, and adhere to what is commonly regarded as best practice in the guardianship and hosting of international

pupils. This includes having in place a proper agreement with the pupil's parents as to what the guardian's responsibilities may entail.

If a pupil does not have a guardian when required to do so by the school, or the appointed guardian is considered by the school to be unsatisfactory, the school will invite parents to find a new guardian. Should parents fail to do so, either they will be required to use a guardian organisation recommended by AEGIS, or the child may not be accepted into the school. Parents should never terminate an agreement with one guardian before having an alternative agreement in place with a new guardian.

It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the school is notified immediately of any change to the guardianship arrangements for a pupil.

3. TRAVEL

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to arrange travel at the beginning and end of terms, as well as at half term. House Parents can arrange taxis to/from the airport, coach or railway station, but it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to request these arrangements to be made well in advance.

The easiest way to get from London Heathrow or London Gatwick airports is by taxi to the School. Parents are STRONGLY advised to arrange taxis via House Parents and to avoid using taxis at the airports. The taxi service used by the School meets the appropriate child safeguarding requirements and is subject to the School's checks and review in this regard. It is the School's expectation that public transport will not be used by pupils to travel to and from School at the start and end of term.

Parents have ultimate responsibility in ensuring that pupils have the appropriate and required documentation and approval from the relevant authorities to enter the UK. Whilst the school is the sponsor of the pupil where a visa is required and will provide all necessary support and guidance in respect of the regulations in force at any time, it remains a parental responsibility to ensure that each pupil entering RGS Surrey Hills complies with the UK immigration and entry requirements that pertain at that time.

4. ARRIVAL AT AND DEPARTURE FROM BOX HILL SCHOOL

Term dates are published well in advance, and parents/guardians must book tickets in good time to ensure that the pupils arrive and leave on the designated day. The School does not sanction late arrival or early departures at any time as this will affect a pupil's academic progress and could affect their visa eligibility. It is imperative therefore, that pupils do not arrive late, nor leave early at the start/end of any holiday. Term dates are published with a Boarders return date, this means that they should arrive on that afternoon and no later than 20:00hrs.

5. TUITION IN ENGLISH

Overseas pupils for whom English is not their first language are entitled to EAL (English as an Additional Language) tuition within the curriculum. The precise nature of this tuition varies

according to age of entry to the school, their level of English and the course on which they are enrolled to study.

Pupils are tested before entry to the school to determine their precise level of ability and needs. The result of this test is used to help us to decide where a pupil is placed in the school. Pupils in Years 7-8, in mainstream, receive EAL tuition in English and in other lessons. In Years 9-11 mainstream, EAL is taught against mainstream English.

Pupils taking EAL are taught in small groups to enable them to improve their English language to nationally approved examination standards. When appropriate, some English literature is studied. We believe this is right for our more able pupils and they enjoy the challenge. Pupils on our programmes will have EAL as a part of their course structure and this is integral to all programmes.

We occasionally receive requests from parents for their son or daughter to study in mainstream English only. We consider each pupil individually but generally it is the case that a pupil will do better to remain in EAL.

Pupils entering the 6th Form (age 16+) to study IB will study English as their Language B. In the A Level programme, EAL is taught separately as part of the curriculum for those without a GCSE in First Language English (or suitable equivalent). Pupils are prepared for the IELTS qualification.

We recommend that new overseas pupils whose English is not fluent attend our intensive course in English prior to joining the school. RGS Surrey Hills runs its own Two Week Intensive Academic English Course in late August each year, which is essentially an induction course immediately prior to the start of the academic year in September.

September 2025

To be reviewed: March 2026