

Child Student Visa Policy

We are delighted to be able to welcome international students to Downe House. Not only are they able to benefit from a UK education but they enrich our school life and enhance the experience of domestic students. Children from other countries, who wish to attend school in the UK and who do not have a separate right to come to and study in the UK, must apply for a Child Student visa.

As a Child Student visa sponsor Downe House must hold a licence which is issued by the UK Home Office. Our licence number is: GHC8QAKV2. With this licence comes several responsibilities which we, like all Child Student visa sponsors, must always comply with. Any school that does not do so may have their licence withdrawn by the Home Office. Where this occurs, all international students must leave the school and the impact on both students and school can be very serious.

To ensure that pupils and parents comply with the UK Government's requirements on visa entry, Downe House have instructed Newland Chase Education – a UK immigration law firm 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 U.K.

The Newland Chase Education contact details are:

Newland Chase Education

Skyline House

200 Union Street

Russell Street

London

SE1 0LX

Email: education@newlandchase.com If emailing, please note Downe House

Tel: +44 (0)113 3401512

Website: education.newlandchase.com

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General guidelines about Child Student Visa sponsorship at Downe House

- Upon acceptance of a place at Downe House the school will issue one Child Student visa CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Study) in support of a student's visa application.
- Downe House is required to photocopy a student's passport, visa and entry stamp or evidence of when they entered the UK on the first day of term, or the first day that a student arrives at the school.
- All sponsored students are required to keep their passports at school. Downe House will securely store passports for safekeeping only; students are able to access their passports whenever needed.
- Downe House must be notified if your child has obtained a new passport.
- Downe House must be notified of any change of address(es) or other contact details.
- All student absences must be reported to the UKVI. This includes students who arrive late at the beginning of term without prior notification or leave before their course completion date.
- Parents are requested to adhere to the term dates when booking international flights.
- All travel details to and from the UK and any addresses where your daughter is staying outside term-time if she is not leaving the UK must be notified in writing to her housemistress/master at the appropriate time.
- In accordance with Home Office regulations, all parents of pupils on a student visa are required to appoint a nominated guardian, with whom their daughter will stay for exeat weekends and in case of emergency. Guardians must be in place throughout the student's time at Downe House and any change in guardian must be reported immediately and approved by the School before any agreement may commence. All guardians will need to provide a Letter of Undertaking that satisfies both the School and the UKVI, confirming their responsibility for the child's welfare. More information can be found below in the section "Educational Guardians".
- All sponsored students who reside in school are recommended to stay in school for the majority of weekends.
- If a student leaves Downe House before the completion of their course, then the school will cease sponsorship and report this to UKVI.
- If a sponsored student turns 18 years old, they may carry on with their course until their permission to stay ends. If the student wants to do further study in the UK, they will have to apply under another category, for example Student visa with their new sponsor.
- Students joining from another school in the UK must have a visa application sponsored by Downe House in place before they arrive at school. If your child is transferring from another school, please contact Newland Chase Education and they will complete the new visa application sponsored by Downe House.

Educational Guardians

All overseas families must appoint an Educational Guardian to ensure that there is somebody in the UK who can take responsibility for the student and provide them with care and support when they are not in the care of the School. The Educational Guardian should also be given legal authority to act on behalf of the parent in all respects.

The Educational Guardian's responsibilities usually include caring for the student as would a responsible and caring parent by, for example, being in regular contact with the student and providing advice and support as necessary. The Educational Guardian will need to care for the student and take responsibility for the student if they are unwell, suspended or otherwise released from School. Responsibilities also include being authorised to make certain decisions concerning the student on the parents' behalf, for example decisions regarding emergency medical and dental treatment and matters of a disciplinary nature.

Students are not permitted to remain in residence at School during school holidays or Exeat weekends, as published in the School Calendar, as there is no provision for appropriate supervision during school holidays or Exeat weekends. Therefore, the Educational Guardian is expected to arrange accommodation and supervision for the student and is responsible for the student whilst they are journeying to and from School.

No student at the School is permitted to live independently. Parents may not arrange for the student to stay in unsupervised accommodation (for example in a hotel, hostel, B&B or rental) as this is not considered suitable irrespective of the student's age

Who can be an Educational Guardian and how are they appointed?

Downe House does not arrange the appointment of an Educational Guardian. The responsibility for choosing an appropriate Educational Guardian in accordance with the criteria outlined below rests solely with the parents and must be arranged before the student joins the school. The parents/legal guardians are responsible in each case for satisfying themselves as to the suitability of an Educational Guardian.

Downe House reserves the right to review and, if necessary, reject educational guardianship and / or homestay arrangements made by parents if they are deemed to be unsuitable. Any concerns about an educational guardianship arrangement will be acted on immediately and referred to any relevant agencies.

The Educational Guardian appointed must be:

- Either: accredited by the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students (**AEGIS**) or certified by the Boarding Schools' Association (**BSA**).

AEGIS is the authoritative association for inspecting and accrediting guardianship agencies in the UK. AEGIS can be contacted via their website: www.aegisuk.net

The BSA champions boarding and promotes boarding excellence. The BSA is the largest association of boarding schools in the world and represents more than 600 independent and state boarding schools, over 500 of which are based in the UK.

The list of BSA Certified Guardians can be found on the below link:

[BSA Certified Guardian Scheme | Boarding School Training | The Boarding Schools' Association](#)

It is expected that the large majority of parents will appoint an Educational Guardian via this approach.

- Or: a family member who must satisfy the following criteria:
 - (i) is independent (i.e. not connected to the School)
 - (ii) is not employed by the School
 - (iii) is a close family relative over the age of 25 (brother, sister, aunt, uncle, grandparent or step parent), resident in the UK
 - (iv) holds a British passport or has permanent resident rights in the UK
 - (v) lives ideally within a 60 mile radius of the school
 - (vi) is available during term-time, including weekends
 - (vii) is not a current university student
 - (viii) is able to provide suitable accommodation, including a separate bedroom, for the student
 - (ix) be financially able to support/feed the student as required during holiday periods or periods of absence from School

- (x) will engage with the School and relevant Housemistress regarding travel and accommodation arrangements for the start and end of the School terms and where there is any temporary absence from school
- (xi) will take an active interest in the student's welfare, physical wellbeing, emotional wellbeing and progress at the School.

It is expected that only a small minority of parents will appoint an Educational Guardian via this approach. Please note that these requirements (excluding the family connection) will also apply to Educational Guardians appointed via either AEGIS or BSA.

In occasional circumstances, a close family friend may be appointed as a guardian, but this is not a recommended option. The requirements outlined above for a family member will also apply to a close family friend appointed as Educational Guardian. The family friend should expect routine phone calls and could be visited without notice, if the School has concerns over the living arrangements or the welfare of the student. The UKVI may also require every member of the household (over 16 years old) to undergo a DBS check, the costs and arrangement of which, will be borne by the family of the student who will be taken into their care.

A member of staff of the School cannot take on the role of Educational Guardian for any student at the School, even if they satisfy the above criteria.

The purpose behind these criteria for appointing an Educational Guardian is to safeguard and protect the needs of each child.

In an emergency situation, a member of school staff may be temporarily appointed as an educational guardian where the arrangement has been adequately risk assessed and agreed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headmistress. Amended arrangements for a student should be implemented as soon as possible and any staff appointment should be for no longer than necessary.

[Downe House's Child Student Visa Application Process](#)

The earliest you can apply for a visa is six months before the start of the Michaelmas term. New boarders are required to arrive at Downe House for the Settling in Day on Sunday 31 August 2025 (R-LV only).

The service charge for Newland Chase Education to assist in the visa application and issuance of CAS is currently £675.00 plus VAT. This will be charged to new parents in July on their bill for the Michaelmas term. For current parents whose daughters are joining the Sixth Form, this will appear on their invoice for their first term in the Sixth Form.

[Step 1](#)

The Admissions Department at Downe House 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 copy of the Downe House Student Visa policy
- Parents of all new starters will be required to make full payment of the 2024-2025 fees which are yet to be agreed but are **currently for 2024-2025 £58,290**. A pro forma invoice will be raised by our Finance Department. Parents of current students rising from UV to LVI, with a good payment history, do not need to pay a year's fees in advance but should continue to pay their normal termly fee prior to the start of term. Any families with outstanding debts will need to clear any debts and may be asked to pay fees in advance.
- A colour copy of your daughter's passport biodata page.
- A first-generation colour copy of both parent's passport biodata page.
- An original birth certificate with English translation (where applicable) which should be certified with the translator's credentials, contact information and stamp.
- Full details of your daughter's guardian as completed on the Acceptance Form.
- Signed consent letter

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Step 2

- On receipt of the above Downe House will send your details to Newland Chase Education who will contact you directly for the information and copies of documentation required to complete the visa application. They will check the compliance of the supporting documentation and will work with you to ensure the application form is completed with all necessary information.
- When they are satisfied that the application will be compliant, they will:
 - Obtain your daughter's CAS from Downe House.
 - Submit the online visa application on your behalf.
 - Assist with booking the visa appointment at the UK Visa Application Centre in your country of residence.
 - Send you all the required paperwork with clear instructions on what needs to be signed and what original documentation needs to be taken to the appointment.
 - Provide a covering letter, explaining that they are acting as your immigration lawyer, which will also be submitted with the application.

In the unlikely event of a visa refusal Newland Chase Education will assist with the administrative review.

Revision History:

Revision	Date	Description of changes	Requested By
New	April 2023	Policy Created	Tara Reeve
	January 2024	Policy revised	Tara Reeve
	April 2024	Revised and amended	Tara Reeve
	May 2025	Updated rules from UKVI re guardians	Tara Reeve

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Next Review: April 2026

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