



Stamford American
SCHOOL HONG KONG

Guardianship Program Information

Dear Stamford Families,

In our school community, your child's safety and well-being is our number one priority. We have a team of professionals committed to supporting students who may live under the care or supervision of a guardian. We understand that students may, at times, reside with family members or other trusted adults due to extenuating circumstances, such as when parents live and/or work outside of Hong Kong.

It is very important that the school is made aware if your child has an appointed guardian, either temporarily (during times when both parents are outside of Hong Kong) or for the duration of any academic year. In order to best support your child throughout the school year and in the event of an emergency, it is essential that we have up-to-date information. Under guardianship circumstances, the school will request the completion of necessary guardianship forms. These forms provide the school with explicit parental permission for designated adults to act as your child's legal guardian in your absence, along with their contact information and identity document (Hong Kong ID or passport). This will also ensure that we know who to contact in case of an emergency and who is responsible for the safety and well-being of your child while you are traveling or living outside of Hong Kong.

Please note that while a family may appoint a guardian, it is the parents who retain legal rights and responsibility for the care and welfare of the child/children. The education of a child is a partnership and requires all those involved to be active in their role. The school will keep parents informed at all times and welcome regular contact with parents of children in guardianship arrangements.

An appointed guardian* must be an adult agreeing to do the following:

- Accept responsibility for the day-to-day care of the child/children.
- Accept responsibility for the day-to-day contact with the school and attend any meetings in lieu of the parent.
- In case of emergency, authorize medical treatment, including giving consent for an operation/giving of blood.
- Represent the child during any child protective or police service meeting if necessary.

*The chosen guardian(s) must be a Hong Kong Permanent Resident or hold a valid long-term Hong Kong visa.

The dedicated team that supports families under guardianship circumstances at Stamford is the International School Liaison (ISL). The ISL team consists of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and a Senior Admissions Manager who speaks Mandarin, Cantonese, and English. Members of this team will contact the family quarterly and reserve the right to make visits to the guardianship home by appointment. Please feel free to contact them with any concerns or questions concerning guardianship paperwork and policies. Thank you for completing the following forms so that we can best support you and your family.



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Guardianship Panel

ISL, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead *Cantonese, Mandarin & English	Regina Ng	regina.ng@sais.edu.hk
ISL, Senior Admissions Manager *Cantonese, Mandarin & English	Zita Suen	zita.suen@sais.edu.hk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Hannah Casey	hannah.casey@sais.edu.hk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Julia Wales	julia.wales@sais.edu.hk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Kristina Parisi	kristina.parisi@sais.edu.hk
Head of School	Andrew Noakes	andrew.noakes@sais.edu.hk
Extracurricular & Enrichment Programs Principal	Alan Erickson	alan.erickson@sais.edu.hk
High School Principal	Ocki Fernandes	ocki.fernandes@sais.edu.hk
Middle School Principal	Chris Llewellyn	chris.llewellyn@sais.edu.hk
Elementary School Principal	Rae Lang	rae.lang@sais.edu.hk
Principal of Multilingual Education and Community Educational Engagement *Mandarin & English	Qian Wang	qian.wang@sais.edu.hk
Head of Student Support, Counselor, BEd	Mia Nortje	mia.nortje@sais.edu.hk



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Guardianship Policy

Guiding Statement

Stamford American School Hong Kong supports the right of every student to have adult supervision and holistic care at all times. All students are required to have an adult who will be responsible for all legal and ethical needs, provide care and nurture the student's academic, social-emotional, and personal growth. This adult should be fully aware and engaged with all student activities within and outside the school.

Guardianship Procedures

To address the safeguarding risks associated with guardianship arrangements:

1. Stamford has a dedicated team to act as the ISL (International School Liaison). This ISL team consists of the DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) and a Senior Admissions Manager who speaks Mandarin, Cantonese, and English.
2. Additional team members such as the Head of School, Principals, DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead), and student support staff can be called to assist the ISL team at any time. For example, the behavior interventionist who speaks Tagalog may accompany the ISL on home visits and/or work with Filipino guardians to support students.
3. The ISL team will do the following:
 - A. Explain the school expectations around guardianship arrangements during the admissions process.
 - B. Work with the grade level counselor and homeroom teacher to ensure the students have a smooth transition to Stamford.
 - C. If deemed necessary, work with the student support team to provide resources and training to guardians to ensure that student welfare is prioritized.
 - D. Complete a quarterly wellness check with guardianship students and their families, and monitor student progress closely between meetings.
 - E. Act as an additional point of communication between the school, parents, and guardians in regard to absenteeism, and behavioral and social-emotional concerns.
 - F. If deemed necessary by the school leadership or the DSL, the ISL will review the living conditions of the students to ensure they meet Cognita minimum standards. Unmet standards will warrant suggested changes and follow-up inspections to ensure compliance with the Cognita minimum standards.
4. When the ISL receives notice of a child living in a guardianship arrangement, parents will be asked to complete the necessary forms and return them to the school as soon as possible. The signing of forms will need to be done annually, even if only to confirm no change of details. The ISL reserves the right to visit the home and inspect the living quarters of the student. See Point 3.F above regarding suitability of guardianship premises.



5. Guardianship Policies

Guardian Responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The guardian assigned by the parents has everyday responsibility for the student as stated in the guardianship agreement.● Parental responsibility remains with the parents and so a strong relationship between the school, parent and guardian is essential.● A guardian must willingly support all areas of a student's life, prioritize the progress and welfare of the young person, and keep the student safe.● There may, infrequently, be instances where a student is unwell or involved in an accident when it is necessary to have a guardian close at hand for consultation and support.	
Guardian Requirements (ALL of the below apply)	
Family member of the student/parent by blood or marriage**	✓
Over 21 years of age.	✓
Hong Kong Permanent Resident or hold a valid long-term Hong Kong visa.	✓
Must abide by all local laws in relation to student enrolment and guardianship.	✓

****For Secondary (Grades 6-12 ONLY):** If the parent-appointed guardian is not a family member by blood or marriage, they **MUST** have the legal right to abide in and care for a child in Hong Kong, and are over 25 years of age. **Such appointments are considered on a case-by-case basis by the Guardianship Panel, which includes the Safeguarding team, Head of School, Principals, and the ISL team.**

1. The guardianship forms state clearly that the appointed guardian will be responsible for the following:
 - Meet the day-to-day needs of the child/children. This includes providing behavioral and social/emotional support.
 - Ensure that a safe and secure home environment is provided with personal space and appropriate access to private bathroom facilities and recreational spaces.
 - Serve as the main domestic point of contact for the school, including attending parent-teacher conferences and any requested school meetings in lieu of the parent.
 - Provide access to any necessary medical attention when ill. Authorize medical treatment, including giving consent for an operation in the case of an emergency.
 - Serve as a representative on behalf of the child with authorities such as child protective services or police services.
 - Act as the child/children's legal guardian in the absence of the parent, taking on responsibility for child protection, health, and wellbeing.



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- Inform the ISL team immediately of any change of circumstances pertaining to school enrollment, travel outside of Hong Kong, or living arrangements.

Legal Considerations & Policies

1. Students must be permanent residents of Hong Kong or hold a dependent visa or student visa. Appointed guardians must also be permanent residents of Hong Kong or hold a Hong Kong visa.
2. Students must attend classes regularly. If attendance is lower than 90% without a valid reason, the school retains the right to investigate and take appropriate action to ensure student welfare.
3. The school reserves the right to exclude the student from the school or require the removal of any student residing with a guardian whom the school deems to be unsuitable.
4. When both parents or the appointed guardian(s) will be absent from the student's home overnight or longer than a twenty-four hour period, the school must be notified and given contact information for who will be responsible temporarily for that student.
5. Only a parent or approved guardian is permitted to access a student's personal information/data.
6. Students enrolled in Stamford American Hong Kong are required to live with a parent/guardian at all times. Students over the age of 18 may request to live independently; however, these cases will need to be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Guardianship Panel, which includes the Safeguarding team, Head of School, Principals, and the ISL team. Unless approved by the safeguarding team, students must live with a parent or appointed guardian.
7. If it becomes apparent that information considered to be relevant to consideration for entry to the school has been withheld, inaccurate or falsified, the school has the right to discontinue the student's enrollment effective immediately due to a breach of the agreement between the school & parents/legal guardians signed upon enrollment without refund of fees as outlined in the SASHK terms and conditions.
8. In the event that the school discovers a student's parents or guardians have made a false or untrue declaration or failed and/or refused to comply with the school's expectations and policies in regard to student welfare and guardianship, the school is entitled to discontinue the student's enrollment effective immediately without refund of fees as outlined in the SASHK terms and conditions.

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Parent Guidance for Selecting a Guardian (suggested reference only)

The parent/legal carer may wish to vet and confirm, through completing background checks, the suitability of a guardian to provide supervision and care for their child. Such actions are the sole responsibility of the parent.

Common practical considerations include:

- Is the potential guardian able to speak, read, and write fluently in English, Cantonese, and/or Putonghua?
- Do they have adequate time to care for and supervise the number of children they are guardian of?
- Are they willing to get to know your child, keep them safe and care for their wellbeing?
- Are they willing to keep in regular contact with you, the parent?
- Are they able to attend meetings at school, when needed?
- Are they able to notify the school by 8am if a student is going to be absent from school?
- Are they willing and capable of assisting the student to access any necessary medical, dental, hospital or other health-related services, as required?
- Can they provide care for a student at short notice, for example, if a student is ill, injured, or is suspended for a serious breach of school rules.
- Are they a person with no current or history of criminal behavior or mental illness?

Accommodation

- Is there suitable toilet and washing facilities which are easily accessed from sleeping accommodation and provide privacy?
- Is the accommodation well-lit, cooled, ventilated, and regularly cleaned?
- Is the accommodation furnished for the age and needs of the student with separation of genders and age groups?
- Is adult accommodation separate to that of students?
- Is bedding clean, regularly laundered, and sufficiently warm or cool?
- Is student accommodation protected from access by unauthorized persons?
- Is surveillance equipment (e.g., CCTV cameras) or guards patrolling buildings or grounds for security purposes respectful of student privacy?
- Are any roommates of the same age or no more than a year older or younger?
- Does sleeping accommodation have a lock on the inside of the door (which is accessible by a responsible adult during an emergency)?
- Is there secure storage for student's personal items?
- Does the accommodation meet all health and safety requirements with risk assessments in place?

Support for study

- Does the student have access to a study area?
- Are there quiet times allocated for study with an adult who supervises study?
- Is wi-fi available and firewall filters in place to support safe, age-appropriate use?



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Student Wellbeing

- Can the student access medical, health and well-being attention with the support of their guardian, if needed?
- Does the food available meet the needs of the student?
- Will an adult always be on the premises?
- Are there curfew and lights out times that are age appropriate?

Safeguarding Considerations

- Female students should not be paired with a single male guardian (and vice versa)
- The school and parents should be informed at least 3 working days in advance if the guardian is traveling out of the country with a definite return date. Full details of a responsible adult acting as a temporary guardian during this absence should be shared with the school and the parent.