



Welcome to the AEGIS newsletter! We trust you are all feeling refreshed after the summer break. We have included articles covering a wide range of topics which we hope you will find interesting and informative. As always, many thanks to everyone who has contributed – we appreciate your support.

Letter from the Chair

I hope you have all had a thoroughly enjoyable summer and are looking forward to welcoming new and returning students for this Autumn Term.

With the advent of the new academic year, we are pleased to welcome to the AEGIS Board no fewer than 5 new Trustees, who will each bring with them a wealth of experience and knowledge. Our new Trustees are:

- Lana Foster** – Managing Director, Bright World
- Ben Hughes** – Managing Director, Pippa’s Guardians
- Irfan Latif** – Principal, DLD College, London
- Jennifer Scarfe** – Deputy Head (Pastoral), Badminton School
- Marianna Slivnitskaya** – Head of Guardianship, UK Study Centre



Further details about our new Trustees can be found later in the newsletter; we are delighted that they have offered to serve. They certainly have a hard act to follow, as our Board has worked hard over the past year to take the organisation forward. Thank you again to all of our recently retired Trustees: you have all helped shape AEGIS into its current and very relevant position in the support of our international students across the UK and beyond.

The new academic year is looking busy for AEGIS, with several AEGIS training events planned (see ‘News’ section for further details). AEGIS will also be attending and participating at various upcoming conferences where we will continue to spread the important messages about guardianship and safeguarding children. We continue to work with BSA, and are currently planning our 2020 joint Annual Conference – save the date – 10th & 11th March 2020. We look forward to building on this partnership and bringing about change.

We are still (still!) awaiting news of the new National Minimum Standards (NMS) but will keep you all up-to-date once we hear anything.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your continued support of AEGIS, and wish you all a successful new term.

Dr Helen Wright,
AEGIS Chair

AEGIS welcomes new Trustees

Here's some background to our new Trustees and why becoming an AEGIS Trustee is important to them:



Lana Foster - Managing Director, Bright World

Lana founded Bright World Guardianships in 2000, having spent the previous 10 years promoting British education in the independent school sector. Bright World now employs over 48 professionals across the UK, all dedicated to placing students into UK institutions and safeguarding them as educational guardians while they are here. Lana is passionate about promoting good, accredited guardianship to overseas parents, schools and agents alike and has been an avid supporter of AEGIS.

"With Bright World entering its 20th year of operation as a guardianship organisation, I feel that the experience and knowledge that I have gained over the years will be a valuable asset to AEGIS. With the safety of international children at the heart of what I do, I am more than happy to share my knowledge and advice with schools and other guardianship organisations. Becoming an AEGIS Trustee has made me feel immensely proud and it is very important to me. I look forward to being involved, not only in the ongoing development of Bright World Guardianships, but in the guardianship sector as a whole."

Ben Hughes - Managing Director, Pippa's Guardians

Having been a boarder from the age of nine, Ben has a good understanding of the challenges faced by pupils who are far from home. He continued his education at Monash University in Melbourne so has also experienced life as an international student. Ben is passionate about making a difference to the guardianship sector, with which he has been involved since becoming Managing Director of Pippa's Guardians in April 2013, and now employs staff throughout the whole of the UK.

"I am delighted to have been appointed a Trustee and am looking forward to working with AEGIS in the crucial work they do in promoting international student welfare. I welcome the opportunity to be part of an organisation which has responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding standards are met, and that is striving to make a difference to the guardianship sector."



Irfan Latif - Principal, DLD College London

Irfan joined DLD College London in January 2018 having been the Headmaster of Sexey's School in Bruton, Somerset for nearly five years. During his career Irfan has held a number of leadership roles in the independent sector and has been the Vice Chair of the Boarding Schools' Association, Chair of the State Boarding Forum and also sat on the Board of Education at the Diocese of Bath & Wells.

"It was a privilege to be asked to join AEGIS as a trustee and I hope my extensive boarding experience across both the state and independent sectors and working with families and agents will support the great work the organisation is already doing. It's an exciting time for AEGIS and under Dr Helen Wright, the organisation will continue to grow and be further professionalised. As a trustee I have the responsibility of ensuring that high standards and expectations are always maintained and holding colleagues to account. Supporting the sectors and providing them with up to date information on guardianship issues is vital; working with the BSA and with

Government on redefining guardianship policy (including inspection frameworks) is also an area I am looking forward to working on. Ultimately, the welfare and safety of our students is paramount and so my work as an AEGIS trustee will help ensure that these are maintained."

Jennifer Scarfe - Deputy Head (Pastoral), Badminton School

Jennifer is currently in her 5th year at Badminton School where she is Deputy Head Pastoral and Designated Safeguarding Lead. Previously, she has held a variety of academic and pastoral responsibilities in day and boarding schools, single sex and co-ed, in both the independent and maintained sector. She has recently qualified as a Youth Mental Health First Aid Trainer so that she can cascade her passion for helping young people to the teams around her. Jennifer has held the role of Independent School's Representative on her local Safeguarding Board and been a Tutor for the BSA.

"I am excited to be joining The Board of Trustees at AEGIS as their aims resonate strongly with my own. We have a duty of care to the young people we work with and, as such, it is only appropriate that we ensure the same levels of all-round care, safety and supervision whilst they are with their guardians, as we do whilst at school with us. Through better regulation and support of guardianship organisations, and in conjunction with the newly formed partnership with the BSA, we will be able to meet the needs and best interests of not only our members, but also, perhaps most importantly, those for whom they care."



Marianna Slivnitskaya - Head of Guardianship, UK Study Centre

Marianna has worked within the guardianship and education sector for more than twenty years and is passionate about promoting cultural awareness and effective guardianship among overseas agents, families and schools. As an experienced guardian and a designated safeguarding person, Marianna believes in the importance of trust between the child, parent, school and guardian and an individual approach to working with children based on respecting their cultural differences and personalities.

"As Head of Guardianship I am in a good position to help our students to improve their boarding experience. However, becoming an AEGIS Trustee allows me to help many more. It is also a way to support the improvement of the sector in general and work in closer contact with the other guardianship organisations and schools. It is important to me that small guardianship companies are represented because they face specific challenges that I feel need to be addressed."

Growing interest in AEGIS



AEGIS has recently received increasing interest from schools and guardianship organisations in Ireland and Northern Ireland and will be taking in part in BSA's **Irish Boarding Conference** in Belfast in November. This is a one-day conference for all those working in boarding in Ireland and Northern Ireland, designed to cover current issues in the sector.

We are pleased to welcome our first Irish school member - The King's Hospital School, Dublin. Síle Jio, Marketing & Admissions Manager, gives insight into the school's international student population:

"As a culturally diverse and inclusive school that reflects the positive changes in Irish society today, we are delighted to welcome international students. Their resilience and adaptiveness makes them outstanding role models for others, while enhancing our community through cultural exchange.



Our international students currently make up 11% of the overall student body with the largest cohort at senior cycle, but an increasing number joining in 1st and 2nd year. Ireland has an optimal entry point for senior students called Transition Year (TY), the 4th year of secondary, following our Junior Cycle State Exam. TY is a bridge to the Senior Cycle (5th & 6th year) which culminates in the Leaving Cert State Exam. In TY students have the opportunity to sample senior cycle subjects, collaborate on projects and competitions, expand their knowledge of the world and enhance their personal development through community outreach and work experience. An international student has a great opportunity to improve their academic English, then hit the ground running in 5th year.

Ireland does not have an equivalent Tier 4 school sponsorship system so we mandate that every boarding student whose parents are not resident in Ireland have an independent guardian. Explained to parents at every stage of the admissions process, we have 100% compliance. Approximately 50% of our international students come to us through education agents. Agents provide their own guardians for students. Families that apply directly can opt to appoint an experienced guardian or ask a relative or family friend. A guardianship meeting held the first week of term for all guardians reinforces our expectations of their commitment to the student.

Our school does not have exeat weekends so our 7-day boarders enjoy a varied and well-organised weekend programme tailored just for teenagers. This includes; the Saturday Morning Programme with scheduled enrichment and fitness classes, on-campus sports and social activities, off-campus cultural leisure pursuits, sports events and shopping trips on Saturdays and Sundays.

While there is plenty of access to supervised study, after a busy week of academics and sport, we encourage students to relax and socialise with their fellow classmates.

Our international students are encouraged to spread their wings by integrating in all aspects of school life, inside and outside the classroom. As a result they leave us with many new interests, friends for life and a love of Ireland. We are now beginning to see enrolment of 2nd generation students as their parents have fond memories of their time with us and want their children to have the same experience."

Síle Jio,
Marketing and Admissions Manager,
The King's Hospital School, Dublin



Update from AEGIS Inspections



All members will be shortly receiving a copy of the updated AEGIS Minimum Standards. Please do take time to read through this document and reflect on the contents. The Minimum Standards explain the expectations AEGIS has of its members at all times; not just at times of accreditation and re-accreditation. AEGIS is proud of the high standards achieved by their members and the fact that AEGIS accreditation is increasingly recognised by parents, students and schools. Failure for a guardianship organisation to maintain high standards not only reflects badly on the organisation, but on AEGIS as well. It is recommended that guardianship organisations undertake their own annual self-evaluation to check that all documentation and procedures are in line with the current standards. That way, when re-accreditation looms, there will be little preparation required. If you have any queries regarding the content of the revised AEGIS minimum standards, please do not hesitate to contact the AEGIS office, where we will be happy to assist.

**Jackie Scotney,
Head of Inspections, AEGIS**

We thank our member schools for their support and understanding of the guardianship sector

“As an AEGIS member school, Felsted is proud to be part of a system that cares for and protects the young people in its care. It is a source of comfort knowing that our pupils are in safe hands when they are not within the school grounds, and that AEGIS accredited guardians are required to adhere to stringent checks and follow detailed guidance. We are proud to have updated our guardianship policy to ask that our pupils who use a guardianship organisation choose one that is AEGIS accredited to ensure that they experience the best that the UK can offer.”

Felsted School

“Knowledgeable British based guardianship is a vital component of making a success of a boarding education for our overseas boarders. Those pupils who have AEGIS approved guardians are assured of practical, appropriate, modern advice and support which allows them to flourish and enjoy their boarding adventure in our school.”

Loughborough Grammar School



SAVE THE DATE for the BSA-AEGIS CONFERENCE 2020

We are holding our second joint conference with BSA on 10th & 11th March 2020 in London. We are currently at the planning stage, so details will follow when our programme is finalised.

Building relationships between guardianships and agents - StudyTravel

Partnerships with overseas education agents are becoming increasingly important for guardianship companies in the UK wanting to reach out to international students and their parents.

There are 28,910 non-British pupils in the UK whose parents live overseas, equating to 5.4% of all pupils, according to the Independent Schools Council Census 2019. Yasemin Wigglesworth, Executive Officer of UK guardianship accreditation body AEGIS www.aegisuk.net, recently told StudyTravel Magazine that there are about 5,900 pupils under the care of AEGIS accredited guardians this year.

“Agents are becoming more and more aware of the importance of good guardianship,” says Charlotte Hamson, Director of Sales and Marketing at guardianship service provider Bright World www.brightworld.co.uk, “and as schools are also usually now recommending that agents inform their overseas parents of the existence of AEGIS in an otherwise unregulated industry, they are more informed about things.”

Alison Warne, Guardianship Manager at Guardians UK www.guardiansuk.com, adds, “I would say 50% of our students are through an agent. Very few of our students come directly from a school as schools will not normally recommend a specific guardianship organisation.”

Other guardianship companies tell StudyTravel Magazine they rely on agents for between 30 and 100% of their student referrals.

Guardianship providers are now turning to social media to promote their services to students and agents, as well as using traditional methods such as attending education conferences and fairs.

Charlotte from Bright World says the company has built up an “excellent network of agents and school relationships” through marketing campaigns and with the help of networking events such as the StudyTravel Alphe Conferences. Some guardianship service providers deal with hundreds of agents, whereas others prefer to build strong relationships with a smaller selection of trusted agents. Most companies offer commission to agents for student referrals, with Guardians UK offering an introductory commission rate of 15% to agents and reverting to 10% after the first year. Alison concludes, “I think most agents now understand guardianship – they have to explain the necessity of guardians to parents and students.”

Bethan Norris,
Senior Editor,
Study Travel Magazine

AEGIS MEMBER GUARDIANSHIP ORGANISATION NEWS



Takamura from Japan Piano story

18 year old Risako's very successful first year at school in Edinburgh included winning the Advanced Class of the prestigious 9th James Waterhouse Piano competition. As a result of her success, Risako was then invited to perform in the Steinway Hall, London. This was a fabulous experience for her as one of only two performers and also to play on one of the best pianos in the world! Her mum and sister came from Japan for her performance.

However, Risako doesn't only perform on the world's best piano in prestigious venues. When she stays with her host family she visits their local care home and plays for the residents. They love listening to her recitals and always look forward to her visits.

Risako is delighted that her host family is so well matched to her interests and enables her to connect with different British communities and share her talents with them. Risako feels very much at home in the UK and is confidently able to share cultures – what a great ambassador for international boarding!

Sophie Clayton, Guardianship Support, Academic Families

Pim from Thailand

It is always sad to say goodbye to students when they leave a guardianship organisation after many years as the bond that develops between host parent and student can be very close. They have become part of the family, essentially like a nephew or niece.

Pim joined a boarding school in Gloucestershire in 2010, in Year 8. She could not speak a word of English and was incredibly shy. She came to Cotswold Guardians every exeat and half term until she left in 2016.

Academically, she had to work very hard to achieve success but obviously had a gift for art. Through hard work and dedication she achieved good GCSE grades and then went on to study A levels in Art, DT and ICT where she achieved an A*, B and B. Pim went on to attend Glasgow College of Art and has just graduated with a first class degree, having loved her time in Scotland.

It has been a great pleasure to see the development of this shy girl into a confident young woman ready to enter business life.

Anne Sharp, Proprietor, Cotswold Guardians Ltd



Zoe Guatschy - 6th form student at Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate

Zoe was an amazing student and very well thought of by the teachers at the school. She was the first international student to receive 2 awards for History and French. Her host family attended the presentation ceremony when she received her 'Student of Excellence' award.

Peggotty Moore, Operations Director, White House Guardianships



Everett from China

Everett dreamed, like many boys, of being a famous athlete. He loved basketball and believed that by working hard in the sport he would find success. When he injured his back, he didn't let this stop him. After recovering from a serious operation and completing his first year of study overseas, Everett found a new inspiration – Mathematics. Everett was supported by two of our dedicated guardians and has had positive experiences with both.

“Everett is an independent and knowledgeable student with an excellent work ethic. He always works hard and is determined to learn and grow. He is very organized, optimistic and driven. His English was at an average level when he joined Gateway Education, but after a lot of hard work he has achieved an IELTS of 8, which is a great accomplishment.”

Henry, Everett's guardian

Lucy Diack-Sabcheva, Marketing Manager, Gateway Education

Ranco Liu from Hong Kong

In April 2019 we attended a wonderful performance of music at the Royal Festival Hall where the Duet Philharmonic Orchestra were performing.

Our very talented student, Ranco Liu – studying at Sherborne School, was the lead in the timpani section of the Orchestra along with many other students from schools all over the UK.

Ranco is one talented young man, starting with percussion lessons at the age of 6 and gaining a scholarship in music at Sherborne. He is currently at Grade 8 percussion and has triumphed in passing his ATCL (Association of Trinity College, London) piano diploma achieving a Level 4, the first ever student at Sherborne to achieve such a mark in year 10.

It was a wonderful evening and an absolute honour to attend on behalf of his parents!

Paula Sherry, Operations Director, Guardians International Support



Seyi from USA

Seyi is an unusual guardianship student as he is actually 24 years old and a university student but requires an appointed guardian due to various medical conditions and learning needs.

We have been Seyi's guardians for the past 2 years. He had a very difficult first year in the UK and we attended numerous meetings at the university and with doctors on his parents' behalf. However, he pushed through passing his foundation year and has now completed his first year of undergraduate study in Media and Communication.

We visit Seyi regularly and are extremely proud of how much he has developed in the past 2 years, both academically and personally.

Wendy Hou, Office Manager, UKGuardianship

NEWS from AEGIS MEMBER SCHOOLS

Leighton Park School - CREST Award Successes



Congratulations to Garegin Melkonyan (Year 11, from Russia) for being the first Leighton Park School international student to be awarded the prestigious CREST Silver Award from the British Science Association. CREST is a scheme that inspires young people to think and behave like scientists and engineers. These student-led projects, supported by Club STEAM, were on topics far beyond the curriculum. Garegin chose to research 'The Efficiency of Space Rockets'.

Club STEAM is an after-school activity open to all students. Its aim is to help students take ideas or passions and make them fly, either through individual or team projects. STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths and ensures that creative thinking is central to the development of STEM projects. Mark Budge, one of our STEAM teachers explains, "Garegin has been

a wonderful STEAM Ambassador as he has shown what you can achieve with incredible initiative and drive. It is great to have validation of his success from the British Science Association."

Emma Randall, Marketing Manager, Leighton Park School

Reddam House, Berkshire

I am Tamar and I have been studying at Reddam House for three years with an academic scholarship. My journey in the UK has been rather exceptional and unique. I was originally a reduced fee scholar of HMC (the Headmasters' & Headmistresses' Conference) organisation, however, after a few months of Year 12, Reddam House saw my potential as a top student and awarded me with a full scholarship for both years of my A-Levels. Here, I had opportunities I could not even dream of before. I have been the first international student to achieve both leadership positions of Head Girl and Head of the Boarding House. At the end of my A-Levels, I earned top grades in all of my subjects; however, they were not enough to secure a scholarship for university. Thus, Reddam awarded me with an additional third year's full scholarship in order to help me secure my university place, which I believe has been the first occasion in the history of my school and the HMC organisation.



Reddam gave me the most powerful weapon for success, the confidence and belief in my abilities to achieve what first seemed unimaginable for a little and naïve girl from Georgia. Coming from a public school in a war-torn country, I experienced a major cultural shock when I first arrived at Reddam. I can confidently say that if it were not for the amazing teachers and the boarding house parents who have supported me throughout, I would not have been able to integrate into a new community and grasp every opportunity before me.

Reddam has played a significant role in my development as well as encouraging me to pursue my personal ambitions. Reddam gave me another year to pursue my university dream and if it weren't for this incredible school, I would not be informing you that I have just received a scholarship from one of the most renowned Political Sciences Universities, Sciences Po. Reddam has taught me to always give back and I am so grateful for all of the wonderful opportunities afforded to me during my time there.

Kamladze (Tamar's formal name), Aged 18 years, from Georgia, Asia



News

- In July, we were lucky enough to offer our member guardianship organisations a chance to attend a free Webinar entitled '10 ways to get visitors to your website', run by Chris Knight – the Managing Director of Inner Media – a full-service digital agency. Chris has over 15 years' experience in working with clients to offer their visitors and followers the very best online experience www.innermedia.co.uk
 - We are running the following training sessions/webinars:
 - **Thursday 26th September** Selling to overseas agents, processes, practicalities and tips – webinar with Nicola Lutz, No Fluff
 - **Monday 7th October** Basic Safeguarding Training day with Dale Wilkins, BSA
 - **Monday 4th November** Designated Safeguarding Lead Training day with Dale Wilkins, BSA
 - **Monday 25th November** AEGIS Pre-Inspection Workshop
- If you are interested in finding out more details please email elaine@aegisuk.net or sharon@aegisuk.net
- Yasemin will be running a training day - Guardianship best practice with BSA on Tuesday 24th September 2019 at Wycombe Abbey School, High Wycombe. For further details please [click here](#)
 - AEGIS will be attending ST Alphe Secondary Focus in Frankfurt 4-6 October 2019 – looking forward to lots of agent meetings! www.studytravel.network
 - AEGIS will be taking part in BSA's **Irish Boarding conference** on Thursday 14th November 2019 at Campbell College, Belfast. For further details please [click here](#)
 - We would like to congratulate **Cotswold Guardians, English Country Guardians, English Guardian (part of UK Study Group)** and **Heritage Educational Planning** for all gaining AEGIS re-accreditation; and welcome on board the following new guardianship organisations **Achieve Partners Ltd, BOSSS UK, Sherwood Guardians Ltd** and **Ten Garden Education Group**.

Opinion Disclaimer

The views, thoughts and opinions expressed by our contributors and authors to this AEGIS newsletter solely belong to the contributors and authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of AEGIS.

Thank you to all our member Schools and Guardianship Organisations for your continued support.



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