



UKVI Compliance Policy (Trust including EYFS)

Author / Role	Director of Communications, Admissions and Development
Date Published	April 2022
Approving Body	Executive
Regulatory References	UK Visas and Immigration
Date of Review	March 2024

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Check for new Policy completed by (committee/date):
Executive

Documentation Distribution

Please delete as applicable

All staff / volunteers	Y
Governing Body	N
Parents on request	Y
Published on School website	Y
ISI requirement to be available on request	N
ISI requirement to be on School website	N
Parent Portal	Y
Staff Hub	Y
ISI Portal	N
Limited Internal Use Only (state recipients)	

This policy is considered a 'live' document and will be updated as statutory guidance is released

Bede's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

Where every child finds joy in their pursuit of brilliance

Our Mission

We continue to craft a more joyful education.

- Cultivating a vibrant learning experience, motivating us to pursue our individual best.
- Providing a festival of opportunity, enabling us to discover new passions and develop new talents.
- Building a kind-hearted community, inspiring us to enhance the lives of others.

Our Values

Be Compassionate

Because a caring community fosters belonging.

We expect our community to show kindness to people of all ages, genders and ethnicities, maintaining campuses where every person feels joyful and energised.

Be Courageous

Because fortune favours the brave.

We challenge our community to stand up for what is right, providing them with a safe environment where they can take bold action in pursuit of brilliance.

Be Curious

Because wisdom can be found off the beaten track.

We encourage our community to discover unlikely passions and hidden niches, releasing them into a wealth of opportunities inside and outside the classroom.

Be Conscientious

Because dedication is a spearhead of success.

We ask our community to throw themselves wholeheartedly into every endeavour, taking responsibility for their journey and inspiring others to do the same.

Policy Principles/Aims:

This is a policy to explain the Trust's policies and procedures in regards to UKVI Compliance

Statutory Guidance:

Not statutory.

Associated Trust Policies:

Admissions Policy
Guardians Policy

Summary

What is this document about?

This policy document outlines Bede's UKVI compliance with the requirements of the Home Office UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) for the admittance of Non-UK pupils, under the Points Based Immigration Child Student and Student Route. This policy highlights the best practice and safeguarding of Bede's sponsor licence and will be subject to regular change in line with Government legislation or whenever the guidance is subject to change.

Who is this policy for?

This policy will be of interest to all boarding staff and the Senior Management Team as well as all students sponsored under this route. It will also be of interest to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), the Home Office, and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI).

Amendments to this policy

This policy has been written on the basis of the current UKVI Child Student and Student Route policy published to date by the Home Office UK Visas and Immigration. This policy will be subject to regular change based on Government policy changes.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. On 18 February 2009, St Bede's School Trust (which covers Bede's Prep School based in Eastbourne and Bede's Senior School based in Upper Dicker), obtained approval as a UKVI sponsor to facilitate recruitment of overseas students and staff (migrants outside of the EEA and Switzerland who required study visas). Our sponsor reference is QWJENV346. The students were sponsored on the Points Based System in categories of Tier 4 (Child) and Tier 4 (General).
- 1.2. On 5th October 2020 Tier 4 was superseded by the UKVI Student Route and encompasses the changes due to Brexit and the need to sponsor all non-UK students. As before, there are two routes that Bede's can use to sponsor students; "Child Student" which replaces Tier 4 (Child) and "Student" which replaces Tier 4 (General). The Sponsor Licence allows Bede's to issue Confirmation of Acceptance to Study (CAS) to all non-UK students who require a study visa to join courses at Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) level 2 and 3.
- 1.3. In order to retain its licence, St Bede's School Trust has to fulfil certain criteria relating to the recruitment, arrival, monitoring and reporting of students sponsored on this route. This policy outlines the school's intent to comply with UKVI requirements and to minimise the risk in respect of the status of all Non-UK students. For more detailed information please see the Government's Student Sponsor Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/student-sponsor-guidance>
- 1.4. Responsibility for the monitoring of the School's continued compliance with the scope of its licence rests with the UKVI Compliance Manager and the Director of Admissions and Marketing.

- 1.5. The School's operational guidance specifies the actions required by the UKVI Compliance Manager to ensure that Bede's is fulfilling its sponsorship duties and safeguarding the School's UKVI sponsor licence.

2. Responsibilities and Training

- 2.1. The Headmaster/CEO is the Authorising Officer on the sponsor licence. This role has overall responsibility for the School's sponsor licence, including oversight of the actions of staff who use the Home Office Sponsor Management System (SMS). All applications to renew the Schools licences under the Points Based System, regardless of the route, are made under the Authorising Officer's name.
- 2.2. The Senior School Registrar is the Key Contact listed on the sponsor licence. The key contact is the main point of contact for the Home Office UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). The role is responsible for overall authorisation of users required to access the Home Office's Sponsor Management System (SMS).
- 2.3. St Bede's School Trust, Sussex has a single licence, which allows Bede's Prep School and Bede's Senior School to sponsor students.
- 2.4. The UKVI Compliance Manager is responsible for monitoring the Child Student and Student Route regulations at a national level and proposing changes in internal policy and procedures to ensure that the School's status as a student sponsor remains secure.
- 2.5. The UKVI Compliance Manager and the Director of Marketing and Admissions have responsibility for ensuring that the relevant staff across the School comply with operational procedures and are supported in doing so. The UKVI Compliance Manager will prepare staff for Home Office audits and will ensure sponsor licence responsibilities are upheld.
- 2.6. The UKVI Compliance Manager will manage the annual sponsor licence service, including the annual Basic Compliance (BCA), annual CAS allocation and four-year licence renewal process, in collaboration with relevant staff across the both schools.
- 2.7. The Director of Admissions and Marketing will co-ordinate relevant local and sector level training for staff who require it.

3. Parental Responsibility

- 3.1. The parent is responsible for meeting the requirements of their UKVI Child Student and Student visa, in accordance with current Home office UKVI Student Route sponsorship policy and guidance. The UKVI Compliance Manager will provide information, advice and guidance to students on the UKVI Student Route, throughout their student journey, to ensure they are aware of their responsibility to abide by the conditions of their UKVI student route leave. Any student in breach of the sponsorship conditions will be withdrawn from the school.

4. Use of Agents

- 4.1. The UKVI states that where overseas agents are used to help recruit overseas students, that we maintain a close relationship with those agents, and monitor the retention pattern of students coming into the country through an agency link. It is also

a requirement to regularly inform the Home Office names and contact details of agencies used at Bede's. The UKVI Compliance Manager will keep records through a spreadsheet and update as necessary.

5. Confirmation of Acceptance to Study (CAS)

5.1. Confirmation of Acceptance to Study (CAS) are issued to students in the support of them obtaining a visa for courses. They are actioned by the UKVI Compliance Manager through the Sponsor Management System (SMS) which is the UKVI online system.

5.2. Only nominated staff are authorised to use the SMS. There are two levels, Level 1 (authoriser) and Level 2 (Data Entry). There are strict Criteria, which must be met in order to issue the CAS, which is a virtual document. The student will be assessed by the Admissions Team and offered a place. A CAS will not be issued until a Parental Consent letter, completed Educational Guardian form has been received and parents' credentials, and ID has been verified in order to protect the School against potential trafficking and ensure safeguarding. The UKVI Compliance Manager will then issue the CAS.

5.3. ACAS will be issued at the School's discretion and in line with the UKVI criteria.

5.4. UKVI constantly monitor the level of CAS issued against the levels of CAS requested by Bede's annually. UKVI also monitor statistics assessed at the Basic Compliance assessment (BCA) annually which are as follows:

Refusal rate of less than 10% (where a student has a visa refused)

Enrolment rate of at least 90%

Course Completion rate of at least 85%

Failure to meet these targets can impact heavily on the School's sponsor licence and therefore this data is closely monitored by the Pupil Records Manager.

5.5. A CAS is valid for 6 months and applicant applying for entry clearance can apply for their visa 6 months before the start of their course. If a CAS is not used within the 6 months then the CAS will expire and a new CAS will need to be issued in line with the schools CAS issuance policy.

6. Visa Extension (Leave to Remain)

6.1. Where a student is in the UK and is starting a new course with Bede's and they have shown academic progression, a CAS can be issued for extension of a new visa. The CAS issuance policy should be followed and all criteria will need to be met in line with issuing a CAS. The student must still have valid entry clearance at the time of application, and should the application for extension be refused and there is no scope for Administrative Review then the student will need to leave the UK and return to their home country and reapply.

7. Standard Visitor Route

7.1. All students attending St Bede's School Trust Summer School who are visa nationals will need to apply for a Standard visitor visa. Bede's Summer School will be responsible for issuing confirmation of attendance letters to enable them to apply for the visitor visa.

- 7.2. If a student is attending a course for less than 6 months such as one-term pupils at the Prep school, they may also apply for the visitor visa as long as they are genuinely seeking a short period at the school. Where Bede's suspects that they are only applying for this route in order to negate the need to apply for a Child Student visa from the outset in order to give them time to apply for a visa at a later stage, we will not issue the documentation to attain this visa.
- 7.3. Where a student arrives at School to start a course and they have the incorrect visa they will not be allowed to commence the course and will be asked to return to their Country of residence to apply for the correct visa.

8. Passports

- 8.1 A valid passport is required for a pupil to obtain their Child Student Visa. In order for the pupil to travel - whether to return home or participate in a school trip overseas - a valid passport is required which must have at least 6 months before the expiry date. Parents are responsible for ensuring that a pupil's passport is in date and has the recommended validity period remaining prior to any school trips or return home. Parents are responsible for letting the School know of all updated passport details or new issues.

9. Registration

- 9.1. Students are expected to arrive by the start date stated on their CAS, which is their course start date. The student will advise Bede's should there be any unavoidable changes to their arrival date and the circumstances surrounding this.
- 9.2. Bede's is an Alternative Collection Location (ACL), which facilitates the delivery of BRP directly to the school to be kept safe prior to checking them and issuing them to students.
- 9.3. In all cases we recommend the ACL code is used, however if a local Post Office is selected for the delivery of the BRP then the student will need to advise the school that the BRP is required to be collected, and this should be arranged prior to the start of term.
- 9.4. All students will be required to supply their original identity documents to the school before they commence their course. This will be in accordance with current Home Office Sponsor guidance Appendix D
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keep-records-for-sponsorship-appendix-d>
- 9.5. All non-UK students will have to supply evidence of their right to study in the UK and provide this to Bede's before the start of their course. Upon arrival at the school on the start date of their course, all students will be required to provide original documents for these to be retained, copied and certified before being returned to boarding houses for safe keeping until requested or required for travel.
- 9.6. No student will be permitted to commence studies without the correct permissions to study being produced.
- 9.7. Returning non-UK students and students who have transferred to Bede's from another UK establishment will be required to show proof of a previous leave to

enter/remain. They will also need to provide proof that a valid application has been submitted to the Home Office under St Bede's School Trust Licence.

- 9.8. Where at any time within a student's period of leave the leave is curtailed, cancelled or revoked then the student will not be able to register and if they are a current student then they will have to cease studying and return to their country of Residence.

10. Reporting Duties

10.1. In order to comply with Home Office rules Bede's has a duty to report on the SMS certain occurrences concerning the reporting on students. Changes to personal circumstances, failure to enrol or join their course after a holiday, student being delayed in returning, suspension, early course completion, withdrawal, course changes and a student contravening their Child Student/Student sponsor responsibilities and changes in immigration status, must be reported to the School.

10.2. Most circumstances should be reported within 10 working days of the occurrence.

11. Attendance Monitoring

11.1. It is a sponsor's responsibility to regularly check on students' attendance. Attendance will be checked at the beginning of each term to ensure all students have returned and weekly thereafter.

11.2. Pupils must ensure that their attendance levels and engagement with academic studies is satisfactory or risk their Child Student Visa being withdrawn.

11.3. Students who are ill and at home will continue to be monitored and reasons recoded. Bede's will have regular contact with parents and If they are approaching 60 days the required reporting time they will be advised that unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances then sponsorship will be withdrawn.

12. Guardians

12.1 The safety and wellbeing of pupils when they spend time away from school is of the highest level of importance. As a sponsor recruiting children it is the responsibility of the Trust to ensure that suitable care arrangements are in place for pupils whilst they are in the UK and away from school, including arrangements for travel, reception on arrival in the UK and care during school holidays and other periods away from school and the School will actively monitor these arrangements. The specific requirements for guardians are detailed in the Guardian Policy.

12.2 It is the Parent's responsibility to ensure that suitable care arrangements are in place for all Child Student Visa pupils during personal days out and holiday periods where the pupil remains in the UK or returns home. Parents/Guardians are required to inform the School of the details of these arrangements that include the following:

- I. The address(s) where the pupil will be residing
- II. Confirmation of the dates the pupil will be in their care
- III. Name of individual responsible for the pupil's care
- IV. Contact details of the individual responsible for the pupil's care
- V. Details of travel from and return to the School (driver details & flights).

Note: If the pupil is taking part in an official school trip, this will form part of the school day and would not need to be recorded as above.

13. Change of Circumstance

13.1 Keeping contact details up to date with the School. Parents/Guardians should inform the school and the UKV&I of any changes to their personal details that may affect the pupil's visa and/or immigration status. These changes may include name, address, nationality, gender etc. Bede's is required to report any significant changes in a Child Student Visa pupil's course to the UKVI. If any of the following are applicable to the pupil during their study at the School, it is important that Parents/Guardians let the School know straight away, if there is a change of course or change to length of study.