

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

KCSIE & NMS Consultation plus Safer Recruitment Advice

With safeguarding always the top of our agenda at AEGIS, we are keen to discuss some new updates in this issue of the AEGIS Standard.

Just last week we have had a further update to KCSIE to reflect the changes to safer recruitment processes since leaving the EU following Brexit. Working together to safeguard children also had a minor update in December. This is certainly a good time to update your downloaded versions.

We also now have the KCSIE 2021 consultation to view as well as the Boarding NMS consultation - any feedback you want to give must be submitted by 23rd February 2021.

It has been a pleasure to see so many of you at our various AEGIS training events. Due to the popularity of the courses, we aim to expand this offering going forward.

The Trustees have enjoyed seeing great feedback that has been given to our fantastic staff. They really do have your back. It certainly has been very busy at AEGIS 'virtual' HQ.

Over recent months more questions have arisen over safer recruitment procedures. Essentially this is where safeguarding starts when we are caring for children and so it would be good to reflect on a few pieces of advice.

1. Plan appropriate safeguarding related questions for interviews.
2. Follow up on references, a phone call is advised.
3. Are references fit for purpose for the applicant's role and do they include information about their suitability to work with children?
4. How often is the DBS updated? The update service is ideal as DBS checks can be reviewed regularly.



Throughout the COVID-19 period we also need to be mindful that life for many has changed. It is certainly a time to check in with your host families to see that they are ok. Has anything changed for them? Domestic abuse and violence has had a horrific rise with many forced to suffer in silence.

I hope that by the next newsletter we are entering a much less restricted lifestyle, although sense tells me that the aftermath of the virus will be around for years to come. Lighter evenings have now started and Easter not too far away. I hope your students start to flood back as we work together to support the international students and their safe return. The effect upon them essentially highlights that they are vulnerable young people who need us more than ever.

We hope you enjoy catching up on AEGIS news. Thank you to all who contributed.

Adam Lubbock - AEGIS Chair

INSPECTIONS UPDATE

from AEGIS Head of Inspections, Jackie Scotney.

I am sure you will all agree that 2020 was quite a challenging year. We took time to review our processes and are looking forward to 2021 when we will continue to roll out our new inspection models for the Preliminary and Gold standards of accreditation. The accreditation process has been streamlined whilst still retaining the rigor that AEGIS is renowned for. This is working well, and as a result the membership of AEGIS has grown considerably over the last year.

AEGIS makes use of an independent inspection team to undertake the accreditation process. All inspectors are freelance contractors, including the Head of Inspections. This helps maintain impartiality and the integrity of the accreditation process.



What is the difference between the new Preliminary accreditation and Gold Standard?

AEGIS wanted to become more inclusive for new or smaller guardianship organisations and as a result produced the preliminary accreditation that enables organisations that currently have no students, or a small number of students to gain industry recognition for the systems that they have in place. Rigorous checks are undertaken, with a specific focus on safeguarding practice, policies, and key documentation.

Gold standard is designed for experienced and well-established organisations. The process includes seeking the views of students, parents, homestays and schools, along with an in-depth meeting to check that the organisation meets the AEGIS Quality Standards.

We are long standing members of AEGIS and are due for re-accreditation. What should we expect?

All guardianship organisations who were fully accredited as members under the previous model are Gold Standard members. Re-accreditation is a combination of the Preliminary and Gold Standard inspections that run simultaneously for an in-depth inspection of the guardianship organisation.

We have gained Preliminary accreditation and now think we are ready for Gold Standard, what do we need to do?

Please contact Sharon in the AEGIS office when you are ready to proceed. As part of the Gold Standard accreditation, inspectors will be checking implementation of the published policies and documents. You will be sent a helpful checklist that outlines the evidence you will be expected to share to demonstrate how you meet the Quality Standards.

If you have any further questions regarding the accreditation process, please do not hesitate to contact the AEGIS office for further details.

With best wishes for the coming year, Jackie

Find out more here or contact sharon@aegisuk.net **We are always happy to help!**

CAMBRIDGE GUARDIAN ANGELS

A Host's Account

Cambridge Guardian Angels asked if we could take a student at the beginning of the first lockdown. We were happy to, knowing the company's care and good communications. Tiffany came to us at the end of March and we expected that she would return to her school after Easter. She left us at the beginning of September!

Tiffany arrived wearing a mask and gloves and was very nervous about coronavirus but she soon settled in. Initially we delivered meals to her room and allocated a bathroom for her personal use while she was in quarantine. We felt so sorry for her but she appreciated Chinese food and computer technology allowed her easy contact with home, catch up on school work and entertainment. As she came out of quarantine she integrated more in to the family, making special friends with our Labrador 'Dexter'. He proved a useful ally in our effort to encourage Tiffany to exercise as she walked him through the nearby valley gardens with us and enjoyed lengthy ball games with him.

Over summer we operate our own Victorian train on a local heritage railway and it was our pleasure to welcome Tiffany on to Queen Victoria's railway carriage for an afternoon tea while travelling through the Yorkshire countryside. She took some lovely photographs!



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“She truly became one of the family, a lovely personable girl and the five months flew by. I cried when she left, felt like another daughter is leaving us. We wished her well with her education and hope that her academic life will be more stable.”

AEGIS MEMBER GUARDIANSHIP ORGANISATION NEWS

EDINBURGH GUARDIAN ANGELS

Jochen Liebergeld

My name is Jochen. I come from Germany. I go to Loretto School. I love it there. At the beginning my family and I were really excited about coming to Scotland as we like to travel in our camper van. We had great plans to travel through Scotland.

In August the Austrians went into lockdown. My parents then worried that Germany would do the same thing and that I would not get into Scotland. We did not know what to do and we did not know if I could come to Scotland early and come to the care of my guardian. But my guardian said that I was welcome anytime. She talked a lot with my Dad as quarantine laws were changing all the time. My Dad organised a flight to Edinburgh as soon as possible and my guardian met me at the airport and took me to a host family. The family were really nice. Their house was lovely. I had a very nice room with my own TV and the food was really great.

Then again in 2021 Covid problems appear again. Scotland is in lockdown again. My Guardian phoned me on Monday to tell me and my parents that schools were closing until Feb 1st. But lucky for me Loretto School is still welcoming the overseas students and I can still stay there with online learning. I arrived to school today and my found that although I could quarantine in school, I really wanted to go to my regular host family for the 10 days and then return to school. So my guardian arranged for me to go to my host family immediately where I could relax in my comfy bedroom where I have left a lot of my own things as it feels like a second home.



UKGUARDIANSHIP

Homestay Excellence

The 2020 Christmas holidays were a challenging time for all but it was made easier by the flexibility and helpfulness of a number of our amazing host families. Many of our students stayed in the UK for the holidays and were feeling upset and anxious about not being able to travel home to see their families and friends. Our host families opened up their homes to the students, welcomed them into their Christmas celebrations and went above and beyond to ensure they felt welcome and happy.

Janet in Manchester supported Shirley while she was studying for exams and provided transfers to and from school to minimise the risk of infection. She also waited in her car for 2 hours until Shirley received her Covid test results to make sure she was safe and able to stay at school.

Sofia in London offered to host Lily at the last minute when her school decided not to re-open the boarding house. The family have been very flexible and cooperative with all the rule changes and even offered to host Lily long term under private fostering arrangements with the Local Authority.

Lloyd in Leeds hosted Danny and Jency and included them in his Christmas and New Year celebrations. He accepted Jency in the middle of her Covid isolation as requested by the school. He put extra safety measures in place to protect everyone in the household but also made sure Jency felt welcomed.



PIPPA'S GUARDIANS

Christmas is all about children, families and spending special time together creating memories

With a global pandemic impacting on international travel, Christmas 2020 presented guardianship organisations with new challenges as we all strived to do the very best for our students. The goal for us was to provide the best Christmas experience possible for the children who were unable to return home to their families. We were lucky to have the support of our wonderful host families, but we felt that something extra special was also needed.

The Pippa's Guardians Christmas Camp was the brainchild of Ben and Louise Hughes who wanted to provide the perfect British 'family' Christmas for international students. Their aim was to give students a memorable experience in a Covid-19 safe environment that allowed them the freedom to enjoy a blend of relaxation, study and fun activities. Providing an opportunity to make new friendships and create those special memories was always a high priority.

The beautiful setting of Westonbirt School and access to their extensive grounds and facilities, enabled us to deliver an incredible holiday. Mornings of private study were followed by afternoons offering a huge variety of indoor and outdoor activities, and new experiences. Evening entertainment filled the air with laughter and no two days were ever the same. Christmas Day celebrations with the whole Hughes family highlighted how the team had gone above and beyond to deliver the camp to the highest standards. The sparkling fireworks party on New Year's Eve welcomed 2021 in style.

The final goodbyes at the end of the camp were emotional and the glowing feedback received from students and their parents was truly heart-warming.



BRIGHT WORLD GUARDIANSHIPS

The Warmth of a Foreign Land by Mrs Wang

Mrs Wang, a Bright World parent, tells the story of how she became worried when her son was delayed coming through UK Border Control and how we as guardians helped.

Last summer, all the parents of international students had been discussing whether to send their children back to the UK, for the start of the school year in September. Many of them chose to keep their children in China at an international school.

However, Nobel firmly chose to return to England to continue his studies. He said that he missed school and dreamed about his friend Alex.

This time Nobel flew alone, as is now 12 years old. Bright World had arranged for Nobel to be collected on arrival and had the necessary papers a week earlier. Before and after Nobel boarded the plane, they emailed repeatedly to make sure he was on safely board.

The plane landed on time in England, but Nobel had still not met his driver 3 hours later. His guardian called us to ask if Nobel had contacted us. For an instant, our minds flashed out a myriad of dangerous scenes like those seen in the movies, and we were very worried. But the voice on the other end of the line was very calm and explained that they would try to call Nobel right away and that they would call back in a minute.

Thank God, the phone rang and Nobel was at UK immigration. For a full minute, the Bright World duty manager seemed to be on a timer, calling every second, knowing Nobel's location, and contacting him in person.



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“I want to thank you Bright World for being there for us.

The virus is ruthless, but we have human love!”

Mrs Wang

QUEST GUARDIANS

Not the Queen's speech but the Queen's Gambit

Over the Christmas period Quest hosted more than 80 students in host families. Being part of a family at Christmas gives international students a real insight into households' traditions at Christmas. Be it swimming in the sea at Christmas (!), playing a family game on Christmas Eve, or sitting around the fire to listen to the infamous Carols from King's. This year's Christmas will have felt different in many ways due to the lockdown. As usual, our host families have gone above and beyond; presents purchased, exceptional food ordered, to letters to Father Christmas sent up the chimney.

Many students helped make gingerbread houses and tree decorations and even prepare Christmas dinner. It has been touching to see how much love and care is shown towards our overseas students. However, Christmas holidays have also been a chance to learn something new – playing Chess! Phoebe, in year 6, was determined to learn, and win! Throughout the holiday, the apprentice became master! With no hint of a 'Queen's Gambit' being played, she achieved a 'stalemate'. See her delighted face and quick checking of the rules on the internet! Christmas is about kindness. Acts of kindness shape a smile. Quest's host families have been terrific this holiday, and the smiles from so many students do not need words to affirm this.



So, besides the turkey, wrapping paper debris and COVID briefings, we can see one small example on the positive impact an engaging family can have on the students they host. A happy and engaged child who has a new spark of curiosity. As they say, 'chess is for life, not just for Christmas'.

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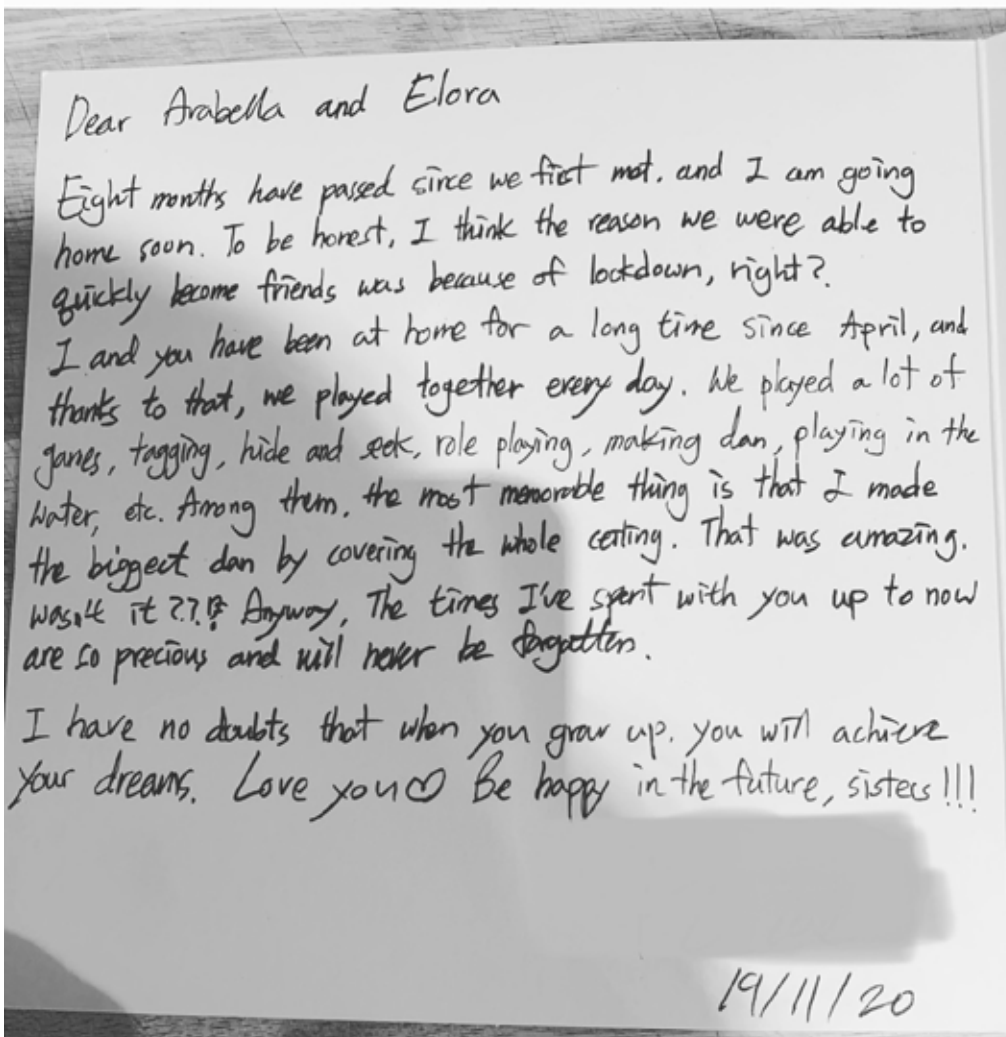
"Thank you to all our families for superb Christmas hosting."

Quest Guardians

YES GUARDIANS

A thank you from Kitea

At YES Guardians we love to host students in our own family home in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. Lots of people ask us what it's like hosting international students in our own home. This thank you card from Kitea, a South Korean student, explains it all really. It enriches our own lives as well as that of our daughters. We have the most culturally aware 4 and 6 year old girls and they are going to have friends for life all over the world.



AEGIS MEMBER GUARDIANSHIP ORGANISATION NEWS

CONNEXCEL LTD

Festive camp for overseas students declared a major success

A camp run by Connexcel at a Haberdashers' Monmouth, for overseas students who could not travel home during the Christmas holidays, has been declared a success: "We would like to say a big thank you to our team as well as the school's staff members who worked hard during the Christmas holidays to help make the camp successful in challenging times" Julie Morse, Connexcel.

Despite not being able to spend time with their families, the boys and girls had a fantastic time at the camp. The students utilised the outstanding facilities at the school to take part in an array of activities ranging from roller skating to playing golf, from knitting to festive paper-cutting, as well as being provided with study support. A similar camp had been held before by the company for boarding students at the school during the October half-term.

The Principal at the school, Mr James Murphy-O'Connor, said: "Both organisations share a common desire to support the parents and children. As a family of schools, we are proud to have hosted such a successful Christmas Camp for our students."



AEGIS MEMBER SCHOOLS NEWS



SEDBERGH SCHOOL

As one of only a few remaining 'full' boarding schools in the UK, Sedbergh School is very fortunate to be able to welcome students from all over the world. Offering a safe environment to our pupils is paramount and by working alongside AEGIS it allows us develop relationships with parents and guardianship organisations in order to ensure the welfare of our international students.

We are delighted to be a member of AEGIS as it provides us access to their high level of experience of working with guardianship companies and it is reassuring to know that our pupils are safe when they are not on campus and staying with guardians around the country during the holidays. Should we ever need advice, we know that AEGIS are there to provide any support we require.

Throughout the current pandemic, AEGIS has provided the independent sector with an outstanding level of support and advice which has enabled schools to ensure the welfare and safety of international students. At Sedbergh, our campus has remained open for students who were unable to return home and we have provided an exceptional level of remote learning and live lessons with onsite activities and programmes, which has been very well received by our families.

At Sedbergh, we are very fortunate to be able to provide our international students at both the prep and senior school the opportunity to learn and develop in a safe environment between the Yorkshire Dales and Lake District National Park. With only 15% of our 760 pupils being international – we are able to deliver a genuine and traditional British boarding school experience where pupils can challenge themselves, discover hidden talents and make lifelong friends.





REDDAM HOUSE SCHOOL

Enrolling in Reddam House School was supposed to be an endeavour intrinsically, although, the worldwide pandemic made it seem like the goal of settling in the new environment further strenuous. Nevertheless, once I have arrived in the Reddam House and having already been part of the Boarding Experience for a whole semester, I feel accustomed to the school. The process was not effortless. I had to accustom to a new culture and get to know new people from all around the world. Before arriving at Reddam I would have never thought that I would get to know and befriend this diverse group of people, and although this environment is quite different from the one at my country, I have never felt homesick as Reddam House has become my second home.

One must also acknowledge the immense effort of teachers and staff members trying to lift the spirits of students, however, both sides seem to have succeeded in this undertaking. Although teachers and school staff members might not always be in the spotlight, they are providing one of the most selfless services- to raise and educate the new generation, and for that, I am deeply thankful to the Reddam House.

Giorgi Khabuliani, Year 12, full time boarder from Georgia





REPTON SCHOOL

Repton and Repton Prep have continued to offer an outstanding academic and co-curricular Remote Learning Programme for pupils throughout this latest lockdown, providing dedicated pastoral support to our overseas pupils. Housemasters are staying in close contact with pupils and parents who live outside the UK to ensure that they remain engaged in learning at times that are practical and are fully versed in the latest Covid restrictions in the UK. As well as a full timetable of lessons, international pupils are involved in House events with friends and Housemasters, fitness regimes and co-curricular enrichment to keep the Repton community as strong as ever.

For all year groups, Repton and Repton Prep offer pupils the option of attending live lessons or receiving recordings, with support from teachers at times that suit them. Headmaster of Repton Prep, Rob Relton, highlighted the dedication of 10-year-old Andrea who lives in Hong Kong, explaining: "Andrea and her parents agreed that remaining in touch with her friends was vital to her wellbeing and being part of the daily Microsoft Teams live lessons would ensure she remains on track with her learning and engaged with the School community. With this in mind, the structure of their day has adapted to the UK time zone. Andrea has shown an outstanding attitude throughout her lessons, being fully engaged and adopting a cheery disposition that is an inspiration to us all. We are enormously proud of her and are lending her continued pastoral support until she can return to school."



TRAINING

For AEGIS members

The following courses are coming up over the next few months:

Designated Safeguarding Lead Training for Guardians

Thursday 25th and Friday 26th February, 09.30 – 12.30 Includes safeguarding and child protection culture, the national and local scene including statutory guidance, AEGIS inspection and safeguarding, thresholds of child protection and early help, and much more.

Agent/Consultant Guardianship and Safeguarding Training

AEGIS recently offered two free training sessions for agents and consultants on safeguarding and educational guardianship which will be held in February and March. The response was overwhelming and both sessions are now fully booked. The training will cover:

- Why safeguarding is so important
- Overview of the safeguarding culture in the UK and current system
- Update on guardianship regulations
- Potential risks & case studies
- What AEGIS accreditation involves

If you are an agent/consultant interested in such training in future, please do let us know via info@aegisuk.net so we can plan future dates.

ONLINE SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

For guardianship organisations and homestays

Safeguarding training is an important part of the necessary awareness and understanding that is required when caring for children. It is an important part of our safeguarding culture. The course replicates the essential ingredients recommended within safeguarding training and is made bespoke to the guardianship and homestay setting.

All staff and homestays who care for children should complete training at this level every few years and AEGIS recommends every 2 to 3 years. In addition to this training all staff and homestays should be reading Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education and receive update training at least annually.



Following great feedback over our safeguarding training package, we are pleased to confirm that bulk order discounts are available.

Individual course cost for members is £20

- Buy 5 and receive 10% discount (£18)
- Buy 10 and receive 20% discount (£16)
- Buy 20 and receive 25% discount (£15)
- Buy 30 and receive 30% discount (£14)
- Buy 50 and receive a 50% discount (£10)

[Find out more about the course here](#)

Stay connected with



Online Conferences



ST Alphitos Online

StudyTravel launched a series of boutique online agent conferences, last year. The ST Alphitos Online, have proved a great success and are continuing for 2021.

These online events enable educators, guardianship organisations and agents to forge new connections and keep in touch with existing contacts, particularly while travel restrictions are in place.

Each ST Alphito focuses either on a study destination (city, region or country) or a specific student market, and is held over a four-hour period, allowing participants to schedule up to twelve 20-minute online meetings.

ST Alphe Conferences - Online

With international travel currently on hold, StudyTravel Alphe Conferences are now taking place online. ST Alphe Conferences - Online are high quality, 2-day StudyTravel events with live support from the amazing ST Team that you know and love.

Upcoming events for UK secondary schools and guardianships:

ST/alphe conferences - Online

ST Alphe Secondary Focus, Hong Kong, 10th -11th March

ST Alphe Secondary Focus, London, 21st - 22nd April

ST Alphe Secondary Focus, Frankfurt, 1st - 3rd October*

**TBC online or in-person*

ST/alphitos

Secondary Focus UK - Europe,
3rd February

Secondary Focus UK - Europe,
16th June

Secondary Focus UK - Asia,
30th June

Click here for more details on StudyTravel Online events.

For more information or to book, contact Ash Rees, Manager, ST Alphe Conferences on:

ash@studytravel.network

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PRIVATE FOSTERING

A reminder for our members



The closure of schools means many international students are staying in homestays.

An arrangement where an international student aged under 16 years (18 if they are disabled) is staying in a homestay while their school is closed, for 28 consecutive days or longer, would fall under a private fostering arrangement.

Schools and guardians are obliged to report arrangements to the local authority where the student is staying.

Full details can be found here along with useful FAQs: [Private Fostering](#)



AEGIS COVID-19 SAFE CHARTER

Updated version

AEGIS has put together a COVID-19 Safe Charter for schools, parents and agents on the response from AEGIS and AEGIS accredited guardians.

[Read the updated charter here](#)

We need your support



AEGIS is a registered charity and, as such, we are reliant on membership subscriptions from schools and accreditation and membership from guardianship organisations.

If you are a school reading this and you are not yet a member then please do get in touch. Membership is low-cost and full of benefits to the school, including use of a special school logo showing your commitment to good guardianship.

See our membership page and enrol today

NEW AEGIS MEMBERS

We welcome the following guardianship organisations and schools to AEGIS since the last newsletter.

Preliminary Accredited Guardianship Organisations

- [Redoor](#)
- [My Guardians](#)
- [Amber Education](#)
- [ACTS](#)
- [Cherry Education Consultancy](#)
- [English Plus Guardianship](#)
- [Compass Culture and Education Ltd](#)
- [Abby Plumb Education Guardian](#)
- [Robin Education](#)
- [South England Exchange](#)
- [QED Education Group](#)
- [YES Guardians](#)

[Full List of Preliminary Accredited Guardianship Organisations](#)

Gold Standard Accredited Guardianship Organisations

- [JD Consultancy](#)
- [Elite Anglo Chinese Services](#)
- [Uniquitor](#)
- [Belgravia Guardians](#)
- [Berkeley Guardians](#)

Gold Standard Accredited Guardianship Organisations - Re-accreditation

- [College Guardians](#)

[Full List of Gold Standard Accredited Guardianship Organisations](#)

Member Schools

- [Ratcliffe College](#)
- [Belhaven Hill School](#)
- [Repton School](#)
- [Oxford International Study Centre](#)
- [Kent College Canterbury](#)
- [Sedbergh School](#)
- [Sibford School](#)

[Full List of Member Schools](#)

Thank you to all our member schools and guardianship organisations for your support.



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Keep up with all our news on our social media channels



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.



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