

# Children on Campus Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University provides and maintains buildings and spaces that are for use by staff and students, and therefore are not primarily designed for use by children. However, the University recognises that children may often be present on our campuses, accompanied by members of staff or students, or with members of the public. This Policy is intended to clarify where children are permitted to be present on our premises to ensure that we provide a welcoming environment for children, while minimising the impact on staff and students and meeting our legal obligations.
- 1.2 For the purposes of this Policy, a **child** is anyone aged under 18, unless otherwise specified (see 'Work Experience Placements', below for the definitions which are relevant in the context of work activities).
- 1.3 The University arranges or hosts a wide range of visits and on and off-campus activities involving children. This policy sets out the general arrangements to be followed to ensure that risks to children are minimised while they are on University premises or involved in, or affected by, University activities.
- 1.4 University premises include all buildings, grounds, roadways and vehicles within the ownership and/or control of the University.

## 2. General Arrangements

- 2.1 Whilst the University welcomes children onto campus, it does recognise that some spaces or activities are not suitable for children. Therefore, wherever possible, permission must be sought in advance in writing before bringing a child onto the premises, so that an appropriate risk assessment can be undertaken. This arrangement applies to both formal and informal visits. Advance permission is not required for access to low risk open areas (see 'Libraries and Open Access Areas', below).
- 2.2 Upon receiving such a request, the relevant lecturer or manager will consider the type of activity being undertaken, the needs of other staff / students and any relevant health and safety or safeguarding requirements. This assessment will determine whether:
  - a. The current controls are sufficient to minimise the risk to the child (this will be the case for low risk areas / activities – see 'Libraries and Open Access Areas', below); OR
  - b. Whether any additional controls are required and are possible (should be considered for medium risk areas / activities – see 'Other Areas and Activities (Medium Risk)', below); OR
  - c. If the risk is too high and cannot be mitigated or safeguarding arrangements cannot be guaranteed (see 'High Risk Activities', below), permission will be refused.

- 2.3 In areas where accompanied children are permitted, either routinely or by special arrangement, the parent or guardian must ensure that the child remains with them at all times and behaves in a suitable and non-disruptive manner. They should be close enough to the child to react immediately to prevent accidents or inappropriate behaviour, e.g. interfering with equipment, entering prohibited areas, or disturbing other users of the area. Care must also be taken that where permitted, toys, pushchairs or other articles or equipment do not cause obstructions or compromise fire escape routes. These responsibilities cannot be delegated to anyone else.
- 2.4 Children are at no times permitted to use University property in an inappropriate manner, for example, climbing on furniture, and it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to take appropriate care in that regard.
- 2.5 If a child is behaving inappropriately or found to be unaccompanied at any point, the parents or guardian may be asked to remove the child. The parents or guardians of children who have previously been disruptive or who do not follow these requirements will be asked to remove the child and may be refused future access.
- 2.6 Under no circumstances may children accompany staff or students during formal off-campus activities as an employee or student of the University e.g. meetings, visits or field trips.
- 2.7 Under no circumstances may contractors bring a child onto University premises.

### **3. Libraries and Open Access Areas (Low Risk)**

- 3.1 Children accompanied by staff, students and visitors are permitted for short durations into low risk open areas, such as restaurants, reception areas, single occupancy offices and open access IT areas, provided they remain supervised at all times.
- 3.2 In addition, the libraries at all campuses support access for parents and guardians who are University of Greenwich staff, students and alumni.
- 3.3 Access to libraries for children is granted through an online signing in and/or a face-to-face induction before their first visit. Parents only need to be inducted once and for their first child.
- 3.4 Each library has different arrangements regarding suitable spaces and may apply some essential limitations according to the nature of each environment (see Appendix 1).
- 3.5 Each campus has a limited provision of Open Access IT (computer) spaces within its social spaces, and these are accessible to parents and guardians without registration.
- 3.6 Children must be accompanied at all times and must not use University IT themselves during their visit to any library or Open Access IT environment.

Parents/Guardians must not allow the children in their care to use the parent's/guardian's login details to access the University's IT systems.

#### **4. Other Areas and Activities (Medium Risk)**

- 4.1 It is reasonable for staff and students to expect that office and teaching spaces will normally be free from children. As such, staff or students with children will ordinarily be expected to make suitable child care arrangements, thus enabling them to properly undertake their formal activities as an employee or student of the University.
  - 4.2 However, it is recognised that there may be planned events which children are invited to attend or exceptional circumstances which cause a parent or guardian to request that a child accompanies them.
  - 4.3 Wherever possible, such requests should be made prior to arrival at the premises, and in writing, to the relevant member of staff (lecturer, manager, head of department, faculty operating officer or director of professional service).
  - 4.4 It is prohibited for a child to be in medium risk areas unless a risk assessment has been completed to ensure appropriate health and safety and/or safeguarding controls are in place. The child must also be accompanied by suitable and sufficient supervision.
  - 4.5 For all formal activities arranged or hosted by the University, such as work experience or children's university, arrangements should comply with legal requirements for health and safety and should follow best practice of recognised bodies, such as national sporting associations. Arrangements may also need to comply with local authority child care requirements and child protection legislation.
  - 4.6 Examples of medium risk areas and activities include:
    - Laboratories
    - Workshops
    - Studios
    - Seminar rooms
    - Multi-occupancy offices<sup>(1)</sup>
    - Kitchens
    - Plant rooms
    - Work experience placements<sup>(2)</sup>
    - Children's university
    - Sports clubs and language schools using University facilities<sup>(3)</sup>
    - Any other area where significant risk is present
- <sup>(1)</sup> Multiple occupancy offices are not normally considered low risk areas, as it cannot be guaranteed that all parts of the office will have been made safe for a child. Exceptionally, children may be brought into these areas with the explicit consent of the office manager or supervisor and the agreement of all occupants of the office.

- (2) Work Experience - Children and young persons on work experience placements are designated as employees for the purposes of health and safety legislation and insurance. Faculties and Offices offering placements must provide children and young persons with at least the same health, safety and welfare protection that they give their own staff (see below for further guidance).
- (3) Prime responsibility for the safety of children where the University is hosting an activity, such as a language school or sports club, rests with the school/club arranging the activity.  
The University's responsibility will be to ensure the premises and any equipment or services provided are fit for purpose. Close liaison will be needed with the school/club arranging the activity to ensure arrangements meet all requirements. Whether arranging or hosting the activity, the University's usual insurance arrangements for visitors will apply to the children and any supervisors taking part.

- 4.7 If it is discovered that a student or employee has brought a child into a medium risk area without express permission, they will be asked to vacate the area immediately and may face disciplinary action under the appropriate University policy.
- 4.8 Parents/guardians should be aware that lecture capture is used for formal on-campus lectures and that any accompanying child's contribution may be recorded unless the parent/guardian has indicated that they do not wish the child to be recorded (see the University's [Lecture Capture Policy](#)).

## 5. Work Experience Placements

- 5.1 Under health and safety law, a **young person** is anyone under 18 years old and a **child** is anyone who has not yet reached the official minimum school leaving age (MSLA). In England, pupils reach the MSLA in the school year in which they turn 16.
- 5.2 Children below the MSLA must not be employed in industrial workplaces, except when on work experience. Work experience cannot be offered to children under 13.
- 5.3 There is a legal requirement for risk assessments to be completed before a child or young person commences a work experience placement. This assessment must detail the appropriate arrangements put in place to prevent harm being caused to or by the child or young person and must take account of their inexperience, immaturity and lack of awareness of existing or potential risks. Consideration must be given to:
- The age, physical size, strength, maturity, any special needs (such as disabilities or dietary restrictions), and expected behaviour of the young person;
  - Assessing the suitability of areas, equipment (including protective equipment) and activities, taking full account of:
    - the layout of the workplace
    - the physical, biological and chemical agents present
    - how the child / young person will handle work equipment

- how the work and processes are organised
- the extent of any training needed
- risks for particular agents, processes and work
- Ensuring competent supervision and clearly defined roles where supervision is shared; providing clear instructions to the child, making sure that these take account of their age and ability to understand correct procedures;
- Ensuring emergency arrangements are in place and understood.

5.4 Information contained in the risk assessment must be provided to the child / young person's parents or guardian prior to the placement starting.

## 6. High Risk Activities

6.1 Under no circumstances may children accompany staff or students during formal off-campus activities as an employee or student of the University e.g. meetings, visits or field trips.

6.2 In addition, children are prohibited from carrying out any tasks where a significant risk remains, such as:

- Activities beyond their physical or psychological capability;
- Exposure to substances that are toxic, can cause cancer, can damage or harm an unborn child, or can chronically affect human health in any other way;
- Harmful exposure to radiation;
- Extremes of cold, heat, noise or vibration;
- Working with machinery.

6.3 A **young person** who is not a **child** as defined under health and safety legislation (see 'Work Experience Placements', above), can carry out work involving these risks if:

- The work is necessary for their training;
- The work is properly supervised by a competent person;
- The risks are reduced to the lowest level, so far as reasonably practicable.

6.4 Children of any age must not under any circumstances be involved in activities where there is a significant risk of exposure to age-inappropriate content (e.g. violent, disturbing or indecent material) or illegal content.

## 7. Accidents and Safeguarding

7.1 Any accident, safeguarding incident or near-miss involving a child on University premises must be recorded on the [University online incident reporting system](#). Safeguarding incidents or concerns will be managed under the University's [Safeguarding Policy](#).

7.2 If an accident involving a child on University premises results in the child being taken to hospital, a report to the Health and Safety Executive may be necessary as a

requirement of RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013). Such accidents must therefore be reported to the Health & Safety Unit immediately by telephone or in person. All such accidents will be investigated.

## **8. Unaccompanied Children**

8.1 Children must always be accompanied by an adult when on university premises. If a child is left unaccompanied at any time, the University may call the emergency services; unaccompanied children should also be reported as a safeguarding concern (see 'Accidents and Safeguarding', above). Arrangements to prevent trespassing on University premises, both grounds and buildings, must take account of possible access by children.

8.2 An active programme of refurbishment and construction of its buildings is undertaken by the University, and work of this nature can create additional dangers for children. Any precautions regarding access to these areas by trespassers must take into account possible access by children. Suitable precautions must be taken before the work commences and during the work activities, including making clear that access to those areas is strictly forbidden

## **9. Responsibilities**

### **9.1 Faculty Operating Officers (FOOs) and Directors of Professional Services**

- Where a University Faculty, Directorate or Unit directly arranges an activity involving children, it is the responsibility of the FOO or Director to ensure that legal requirements are met and best practice followed.
- Where work experience placements take place, FOOs and Directors should ensure that suitable arrangements are in place as appropriate to the young person(s) attending.

### **9.2 Heads of Department and Local Managers**

- When a request is received, the Head of Department or Local Manager, on a case-by-case basis, as appropriate, will carry out a risk assessment to determine whether to allow or prohibit the child from visiting.

### **9.3 Third Party Hosts**

- Where the University is hosting an activity, such as a language school or sports club, prime responsibility for the safety of the children rests with the school/club arranging the activity.
- The University's responsibility will be to ensure the premises and any equipment or services provided are fit for purpose. Close liaison will be needed with the school/club arranging the activity to ensure arrangements meet all requirements. Whether arranging or hosting the activity, the University's usual insurance

arrangements for visitors will apply to the children and any supervisors taking part.

#### 9.4 Parents or Guardians

- During visits to University premises the adult accompanying the child is responsible for their supervision at all times.

### 10. **Reference Documents**

- University Lecture Capture Policy and Guidance
- INDG364 The Right Start, Work Experience for Young People: Health & safety basics for employers
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings; October 2015
- Work Experience: a guide for employers
- University Safeguarding Policy

Approved by: Provost's Group, 2 September 2019

Policy owner: University Secretary

Date of next review: September 2020

## **Appendix 1: campus libraries**

Each campus library is a different physical environment and local arrangements are agreed by the Local Safety Officer and Operational Manager to ensure that a suitable service can be delivered for all users. These adaptations are:

- Avery Hill – Mansion Library
  - No access by children to the silent study room
- Greenwich - Stockwell Street Library
  - No access by children to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor silent study room
  - No access by children to the Postgraduate Research study room
- Medway – Drill Hall Library
  - No use by children of study spaces in the silent study zone

The libraries also host workshops and one-to-one meetings with academic support staff. Students should not bring children to such events or meetings without prior agreement of the event organiser or meeting host.