

# Policy on the admission of children to University premises

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Updated July 2007 following consultation with senior managers and the trades unions

Updated version (amendments from Estates, HR and Secretary's office) published July 2014 following consultation with the Students Union, Student Services, Safety and Environment and the trades unions.

December 2014 to facilitate work experience.

November 2016: terminology updates

September 2019: Moorgate removed from S9

# Policy on the admission of children to University premises

## Introduction

The University's premises are primarily a place for study and work, they are not public buildings. As such, University buildings have not been designed to take into account the measures required to keep children<sup>1</sup> safe and without harm and there are many hazards present, both in the layout of the buildings, the wider estate and in the equipment and machinery contained within this.

The University recognises that it has a statutory responsibility to identify and control risks, including those which may affect any University visitors and to ensure safe evacuation during emergencies.

Requiring adults to exercise proper supervision of their children while on University premises will not be sufficient to relieve the University of the statutory responsibility to protect visitors (of whatever age) from foreseeable risks to their health and safety. Where young children are concerned, the foreseeable risks are naturally greater than they are for adults<sup>2</sup>. Consequently the protective measures deemed reasonably practicable will need to be identified through a risk assessment carried out within the last six months by the relevant line manager in the school/department and signed off by the head of school/ director or their nominee or approved via a local school/department approved process, prior to the admission of children onto University premises.

### 1. Policy

Children are prohibited from University premises other than in circumstances as outlined in section 6 'Exceptions'.

### 2. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of every adult who brings a child on to the University premises to ensure the safety of the child and to ensure that another's safety is not reduced as a consequence.

It is the adult's responsibility to ensure that the child remains with them at **all** times that they are on University premises, without exception. Adults bringing children onto University premises are required to complete and sign a 'Children on University premises' form (see Appendix 1) at the reception desk which confirms their responsibilities. This form will be retained at the reception desk.

Any problems which arise in respect of a child which has been brought onto University premises should be reported to the reception desk in the first instance. Staff at reception should contact the adult responsible (from the completed 'Children on University premises' form) and require them to take any necessary action regarding the child. Breaches of this

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<sup>1</sup> A person under the age of 18

<sup>2</sup> A person aged 18 or over

procedure could potentially result in investigation under the relevant conduct/disciplinary procedure.

The following staff working in regulated activity<sup>3</sup> must have had a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check undertaken and approved by the University within the last three years.

- Any member of University staff who has responsibility for bringing a child or vulnerable adult on to the University premises as part of their duties and responsibilities;
- Any member of University staff who subsequently takes responsibility for those children or vulnerable adults as part of their duties and responsibilities; and
- Any member of staff who is in a relative position of trust<sup>1</sup> or who has unrestricted access to children or vulnerable adults as part of their normal duties and responsibilities.
- If the above conditions cannot be met, the child/children **must not**, under any circumstances, be brought onto University premises.

### 3. Application

The policy applies to staff, students, contractors and visitors to the University who may wish to bring children onto the premises.

### 4. Definition

A child is defined by the Criminal Justice Court Service Act as someone who is under 18 year of age. This policy refers to children who might visit the University, not to any staff employed at the University who might be under the age of 18.

### 5. Exceptions

Children are permitted on University premises in the following situations, subject to the provision of effective supervision by a responsible adult and a suitable and sufficient risk assessment having been undertaken:

- a) designated pre-arranged work experience opportunities offered at the University;

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<sup>3</sup> The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) states that Regulated Activity for Children is defined as:

A full definition of regulated activity can be found in Part V of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The summary below is from the DBS.

Regulated activity relating to children comprises only:

- i. Unsupervised activities: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or provide advice/guidance on well-being, or drive a vehicle only for children;
- ii. Work for a limited range of establishments ('specified places'), with opportunity for contact: for example, schools, children's homes, childcare premises. Not work by supervised volunteers;
- iii. Work under (i) or (ii) is regulated activity only if done frequently or intensively.
- iv. Relevant personal care, for example washing or dressing; or health care by or supervised by a professional;
- v. Registered child-minding; and foster-carers.

- b) facilities specifically designed for children;
- c) events open to the general public (these might include theatre productions, exhibitions, open days etc.);
- d) facilities which are open to children (this might include sports facilities and external business hires);
- e) organized educational visits by children; and
- f) during a brief visit to areas defined as low risk by a risk assessment.

In exceptional circumstances, a member of staff or student may be allowed to bring their own children or children in their care to their normal place of work and/or study provided that:

- Their child is under constant supervision by a parent or guardian.
- Their child will not enter any laboratory, workshop, studio, computer room, library or media facility or any other area containing learning resources, laboratory substances or equipment or media or computing equipment and teaching areas;
- The work area has been risk assessed and deemed safe for supervised children;
- The Head of School/Director has given prior approval to the request and supporting risk assessment (in the case of staff); or reception staff are happy to grant access (in the case of students);
- The child does not disturb the work of others.
- The parent or guardian has recently signed a 'Child on premises form' which will be available at each relevant building reception.

If the conditions described under section 6 above cannot be met, the child / children **must not**, under any circumstances, be brought onto University premises.

## 6. Exclusions

The following areas of the University are deemed unsuitable for children to visit except as part of pre-arranged work experience or as part of an approved, supervised visit. Approval should be sought from the relevant head or director in advance.

- Libraries or media areas.
- Lectures and seminars;
- Any area identified by risk assessment as hazardous to children
- Art and design workshops
- Science laboratories and engineering workshops
- Architecture and design workshops
- Any areas with hazardous equipment, chemicals or processes.

Except as indicated above, children should not use University equipment such as computers and video or DVD players at any time.

The parents or guardians of children who have previously been disruptive or who do not follow these guidelines will be asked to leave and can be refused access in the future.

## 7. Risk assessment

Before any child can be brought into any University building, an assessment must be undertaken within the last six months by the relevant line manager (signed off by the head/director) to ensure that the potential hazards have been identified and assessed and the appropriate control measures implemented for that visit. The Estates reception desks will retain the up to date risk assessment forms for each building/area.

It must be borne in mind that the legal duty owed to a child is greater than that owed to an adult and the risk assessment must take this into account, particularly when identifying potential hazards and the suitability of a particular control measure.

A suitable and sufficient risk assessment will therefore need to consider the following:

- a) **Age:** The age of children is an important consideration (especially when assessing the risks identified in the 'all areas' section below).
- b) **High risk work areas:** (laboratories, workshops, kitchens and studios). The risk of injury and how this is to be effectively controlled.
- c) **All areas:** The risk of falls from stairs, landings and windows. The risk of injury from glass and glazing (the results of building surveys undertaken by Estates must be used in the risk assessment exercise).
- d) **Supervision:** The provision of effective supervision. The level and type of supervision will be dependent on the degree of risk.
- e) **Information:** The provision of relevant information e.g. notices posters, leaflets and verbal instructions.

The assessment must reach a conclusion regarding whether or not the risk control measures are considered effective. If the risk control measures **are not** considered effective then children **must not be admitted**.

## **8. Other matters**

The University takes seriously its obligations under the Equality Act. If it is necessary for a member of staff or student to bring their child onto University premises, in accordance with this policy, for the purposes of breastfeeding, they should be directed to the reception staff in the following locations:

- Calcutta House
- Central House
- Goulston Street
- The Learning Centre
- Science Centre
- Tower Building

Reception staff will be able to direct them to an appropriate designated location, which will normally be a first aid room.

# Appendix 1

## Children on University premises form

**It is the University's policy that children visiting the University will not normally be admitted to buildings**

I, the undersigned have read the University's policy on the admission of children to University premises. I will take full responsibility for the conduct of:

Name of child:

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Building(s) to which access is  
.....required

.....

Room or rooms to be accessed

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Date of visit

.....

Time visit commenced

.....

Time visit to be finished by

.....

I undertake to comply with the University's policy on the admission of children to University premises at all times while on University premises.

I hereby indemnify the University against any claims arising directly or indirectly from any action or negligence by the child(ren) in my care, or any claims by or on behalf of the child against the University.

### If member of staff

Name ..... Job title .....

Line manager ..... School/dept .....

Extension ..... Mobile No .....

### If student

Name ..... Year of  
..... course .....

Home address .....

.....

**Signed** ..... **Print name** .....

**Date**

## Appendix 2

### Standards relevant to the safety of children

This is an extract from some of the standards relevant to the safety of children. Risk assessment must be based on advice given in building surveys undertaken by estate planning services.

#### Falls (especially from staircases and landings)

- Guarding is required to prevent falls from a distance likely to cause injury (for example guarding is required on stairs where there are 2 or more risers).
- Guarding is not suitable for children under 5 years old if it has spaces which allow a sphere of greater than 100mm to pass through it.
- Guarding is not suitable for children if it encourages climbing (for example if it has horizontal rails).
- Guarding should be 1100mm high on landings and 900 - 1000mm high on stairs.
- Guarding within 530mm in front of fixed theatre or gallery seating should be either 800mm high **or** may be 750mm high **if** it has a sill which renders the total dimension at least 975mm. Where there is a risk of children falling from windows then openings should not open more than 100mm.

#### Glazing

Glass in critical areas must **either** resist breakage **or** break safely **or** be protected against breakage (ie be guarded).

Critical areas are:

- From floor level to 800mm in internal and external walls and partitions
- From floor level to 1500mm in a door or side panel close to the door  
Glass in small panes is exempt from this requirement.

The smaller dimension of small panes must be less than 250mm and the total area must be less than 0.5m<sup>2</sup>.

The glass must be not less than 6mm thick unless it is leaded glass in which case 4mm thick is acceptable. Glazing in critical areas should be manifest in order to avoid accidental contact.

#### Childcare

Provision of non-domestic childcare to under 8-year olds for more than 2 hours a day and more than 5 days a year must be **registered** with Ofsted. If the provision is 5 days or less per year it must be **notified** to Ofsted.

Advice on childcare is available from Ofsted and from local authorities. Note that temporary crèche facilities may be provided by the local authority.