

This Information Sheet provides guidance regarding the arrangements that Colleges / Professional Services must put in place to ensure no child is placed at risk when on University premises or property, or when participating in University led activities. This is in support of Sections 14.1, 14.3 and 14.4 (Children and Young Persons) of the University's Health and Safety Policy which all Colleges and Professional Services must adhere to.

## DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are pertinent to health and safety legislation only.

- **Child(ren):** A child is anyone who has not yet reached the official minimum school leaving age (MSLA). Pupils will reach the MSLA in the school year in which they turn 16.
- **Young Person:** A Young Person is anyone above the MSLA who is not yet 18.

When referring to 'safeguarding' a different definition is used and a child is anyone under the age of 18. Further information can be found under safeguarding [here](#).

## UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

In relation to children, the University Health and Safety Policy (Section 14) states:

14.1 The University recognises its extended duty for ensuring the well-being and safety of children and young people when on University premises or property, or when participating in University-led activities. This extended duty must be taken into account by every person who is involved to any extent with the supervision or control of children and young persons and when planning activities and conducting Risk Assessments.

14.3 Each College or Professional Service allowing or inviting children onto its premises or to participate in activates, is required to ensure a suitable and sufficient Risk Assessment has been produced and adequate controls put in place.

14.4 The Property & Campus Services Department is required to consider risks to children in all proposals, designs, developments and maintenance of buildings and external areas; producing Risk Assessments as appropriate to the risks.

## 1. BACKGROUND AND INFORMATION

The University has a general duty through Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, and its subordinate Regulations, to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the safety of children whilst on University property and whilst participating in University-led activities.

Across the University it is commonplace to work with children, or have children visiting to participate in a range of activities. Examples of these include:

- Research.
- Teacher training practice / practical.
- School visits (includes sporting activities).
- Work and student experience.
- Play groups and crèche.
- Children accompany authorized visitors.
- Temporary childcare issues of staff and students.
- Children staying in Halls of Residence as part of an event.
- Children attending University functions and events.

There is little doubt that children require supervision whenever they are on University premises and that some controls may be required whilst they are in areas that may potentially be hazardous to them.

This Information Sheet seeks to provide guidance on what should be considered if planning to bring children onto University property and whilst children are participating in College / School / Professional Service led activities.

## **2. GENERAL DUTIES OF COLLEGES AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (SERVICE)**

Colleges and Services must put in place suitable arrangements to ensure the health and safety of any child visiting their areas of responsibility. This includes children attending a formal, planned event and visits arising from an informal situation e.g. staff or students with childcare issues.

To ensure suitability it is essential consideration is given to the fact that children will not have the level of maturity to understand the potential risks of a University setting.

General arrangements can include:

- a) Suitable controls to manage any risks.
- b) A suitable and sufficient Risk Assessment and/or Local Rules<sup>1</sup> that:
  - i. Outlines the purpose for permitting children.
  - ii. Identifies the hazards associated with the areas visited by children (e.g. building characteristics, circulation areas) and the activities children are to participate.
  - iii. Considers a child's immaturity, inexperience and lack of awareness of risks.
  - iv. Stipulates the numbers of children permitted.
  - v. States prohibited areas / activities / materials / equipment.
  - vi. Details the controls required to manage risk.
  - vii. Identifies the health and safety information to be given to children and Supervisors.
  - viii. Identifies emergency and contingency arrangements.
- c) Appropriate and sufficient adult supervision<sup>2</sup> at all times, which:
  - i. Complies with, where applicable, Local Authority Standards and requirements.
  - ii. Reflects the supervision needed to safely evacuate and control children in an emergency as well as for the visit / activity.
- d) 'Permissions' (in accordance with GDPR) authorising a child to participate in a University led activity (includes filming / photographing of children) where required<sup>3</sup>.
- e) Information for staff, students and others (as appropriate) regarding their responsibilities, in relation to children visiting University premises.
- f) Follow the specific requirements of [Human Resources](#) if offering Work Experience.

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<sup>1</sup> Local Rules should be no more than a list of common sense statements that clearly communicates the 'dos and don'ts' of an area, building or activity

<sup>2</sup> May include Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks. Contact Human Resources for further information

<sup>3</sup> Permission must be suitable for purpose and the activity to be undertaken. Further advice should be sought from the Insurance Officer and in some cases the relevant Ethics Committee

### **3. CHILDREN ON UNIVERSITY GROUNDS (includes unauthorised)**

The majority of University grounds, car parks and roads are open to the public so children can use areas as a playground or as a short cut. Although the University is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of anyone on its property, Property and Campus Services has a general responsibility to do everything it can to keep areas where public access is permitted and / or customary, fit for purpose and without significant risk.

### **4. CHILDREN VISITING SCIENCE LABORATORIES AND WORKSHOPS**

Laboratories and Workshops are inherently higher risk working environments and must be treated as potentially hazardous for all children. Children should only be invited into such areas as part of an approved Work Experience Placement or a formal University event such as a Summer School, Open Day, etc. Children would not normally be permitted to visit these areas during informal situations.

If allowing children into these areas the Risk Assessment and Local Rules must consider:

- a) The general risks associated with a child's immaturity and inexperience.
- b) The nature, degree and duration of any potential exposure to physical, biological and chemical agents (includes those in the area/location).
- c) The form, range and use of work equipment; both the way it is handled and other general aspects e.g. benches being too high, equipment weight requiring some strength to use it.
- d) Specific restrictions / prohibitions that apply to the use of some substances and items of machinery and equipment – see *Young Persons at Work Policy Note*.
- e) How controls are assured and how children can be kept away from potentially dangerous areas, equipment or substances.
- f) The activities within the workshop or laboratory that may cause harm.
- g) The level of supervision required.

### **5. ADDITIONAL DUTIES OF SOME PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Some Services will regularly have large groups of children visiting their areas, possibly for long periods, or during which they have sole / or a significant level of responsibility for the children during their visit. The following details these and other considerations to apply:

<b>Commercial Services</b>	Must ensure that general risks to children visiting University premises because of a Conference booking and alike, are considered with suitable Risk Assessments or Local Rules put in place.  This process includes communicating all relevant information to those persons responsible for supervising the children whilst at the University.  Examples include external organisations booking a University venue for an event children will attend, children staying in Halls as part of a Summer School.
<b>Nursery (Tir Na n-Og)</b>	Must have suitable risk assessments and Local Rules for children attending the University Nursery and any additional activities / areas the children will undertake / visit whilst in the care of the Nursery. This includes compliance with required standards regarding the level and competence of supervisors, access and egress arrangements to and from their buildings and other general environmental considerations.

<b>Student Opportunities (Students' Union)</b>	Must make sure suitable arrangements are in place for any Union activity, both staff and student led (e.g. Clubs, Societies, Volunteering) that children will attend. Arrangements include, Local Rules, Risk Assessments, compliance with required standards regarding the level and competence of those supervising activities and other general considerations to ensure the health and safety of children (e.g. transport, buildings, materials and equipment).
<b>Sports</b>	Must ensure risks of children attending Sports led activities are considered with suitable Risk Assessments and Local Rules in place.  In addition, work with other University departments and / or 3 <sup>rd</sup> parties using Sports facilities for events children will attend, confirming suitable controls are in place to safeguard a child's health and safety. For example, Risk Assessments, supervision, DBS Checks.
<b>Grounds (PACS)</b>	University grounds are generally open areas, making it impossible to prevent access to the public and children. The University, through PACS, will do all that is reasonable to make sure these areas are fit for purpose and do not pose a risk.
<b>Buildings &amp; design (PACS)</b>	Must consider during maintenance and design the likelihood of children visiting and using buildings, with a particular focus on stairways and balustrades. Designing maintenance, refurbishments and new-builds with children in mind should be the 'norm'.

## 6. UNSUPERVISED CHILDREN

In general, unsupervised children are not permitted within University buildings unless agreed as part of a University organised / supervised activity and following a suitable Risk Assessment. Services whose facilities and operations are open to the public (e.g. Pontio) will ensure relevant risks are considered in their local operational Risk Assessments.

## 7. CHILDREN OF STAFF

Any member of staff bringing their child onto University premises must be aware that they are responsible for the supervision and safety of the child at all times. This includes following all Local Rules (for example prior approval from their Line Manager) and Risk Assessments that Colleges / Services who allow or invite children onto their premises must establish.

## 8. CHILDREN OF STUDENTS AND VISITORS

Students with children must comply with the Student Pregnancy and Maternity Policy and with any Local Rules, Risk Assessments etc established by the College / School / Service they are visiting.

## 9. CHILDREN OF CONTRACTORS

Contractors working at the University must not bring children onto University premises unless previously agreed in writing with the relevant Head of School / Service and if participating in Work Experience with the Contractor treating the child as one of their employees.

The Contractor, and University School / Service in control of the Contractor, is then responsible for ensuring their Risk Assessment(s) takes into account, University controls and restrictions which may impact on the safety of the child whilst at the University.

## CHILDREN VISITING **///** BUILDING<sup>4</sup>

Children are only permitted within certain areas of the **///** building following authorization from **///** and in accordance with these Local Rules and associated Risk Assessments.

Please be aware the **///** building is not designed for children, nor does the School / Service activity lend itself to providing an entirely safe environment for children unless suitable controls, identified through the activity Risk Assessment and Local Rules are in place.

Within **///** the following are classed as 'Prohibited / Controlled' areas and activities.

<b>PROHIBITED:</b> Children must not enter these areas or undertake these activities	<i>List Prohibited Areas:</i>	<i>List Prohibited Activities:</i>
<b>CONTROLLED:</b> Children may enter areas / undertake activities only as part of a formal event and subject to a Risk Assessment and suitable adult supervision ratios	<i>List Controlled Areas:</i>	<i>List Controlled Activities:</i>

### **Group Visits:**

- Only authorized children permitted within the areas detailed above.
- All controls identified in the Risk Assessment and Local Rules must be implemented by the person responsible for the visit.
- Appropriate adult supervision, which meets necessary ratios and other statutory requirements (e.g. DBS Checks) must be in place.
- Others must be notified of the event as required.

### **Children of Staff and Students:**

- Staff or students may not visit with their child(ren) until approved by, respectively, **///**.
- Once approved the child(ren) must be supervised at all times and in accordance with the restrictions detailed in *Prohibited / Controlled* above.
- Staff / students must not bring their child(ren) onto University premises outside of normal hours ie 8am – 6pm, Monday to Friday unless prior approval given by **///**

<sup>4</sup> Insert relevant information in areas highlighted in green