

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ON UNIVERSITY PREMISES PROCEDURE

Policy Name – Children and Young People on University Premises	
Version number: 1	
Policy Owner	Policy Author/Reviewer
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Approving body	Date of approval
Vice Chancellor/SLT	May 2025
	Equality Screened
	In progress
	Next Review date
	May 2027
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Originally Issued	June 2014 (UUHSW42)	Contact	HSW
Latest Issue	May 2025	Status	Current
Approved by	Vice Chancellor/SLT	Next review date	May 2027
The current version is available on the Health, Safety and Wellbeing website at: Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policies and Procedures - Ulster University			

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children and young people when on campus.

2. SCOPE AND COMMENCEMENT

These arrangements apply on all occasions when children and young people are present on University premises and are effective from May 2025.

3. BACKGROUND

Ulster University aims to be a welcoming and inclusive environment for all and welcomes children and young people onto campus. However, we also recognise that some spaces or activities are unsuitable for children and young people. This procedure is designed to protect children and young people on campus. The University is predominantly an adult environment. This procedure is designed to ensure that risks to children and young people are minimised and that, where appropriate, they can take advantage of the spaces or activities available. This procedure is intended to clarify where children and young people are permitted to be present on our premises to ensure that we provide a welcoming and safe environment, whilst maintaining a professional environment for work and study and also meeting our legal obligations in relation to health and safety.

The University has a range of flexible working arrangements to assist new and expectant parents. Facilities are provided on each campus for rest and to encourage breastfeeding:- Belfast BA-02-A3-001, there is also a mother and baby room in BC-00-406; Coleraine H128A; and Magee MD015B, although the University supports breastfeeding in any low risk area.

4. DEFINITIONS

Child/children	Anyone who has not yet reached the official age at which they may leave school, just before or just after their 16th birthday; often referred to as the minimum school leaving age. Young people Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (hseni.gov.uk)
Young Person	Anyone who is over the minimum school leaving age but has not attained the age of 18. Young people Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (hseni.gov.uk)

University Premises	Includes all buildings, grounds, roadways, carparks, vehicles and other means of transport.
Supervising Adult	An adult who brings a child or young person onto University premises.
Planned Event	An official event or occasion for which arrangements to deal with children and young people have been specifically considered, for example Open Days and community events.

5. KEY LEGAL REQUIREMENT

- Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

Please refer to the main Health, Safety and Wellbeing policy on the University's website for responsibilities, using the link below:

https://www.ulster.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/125647/Health-Safety-and-Wellbeing-Policy.pdf

7. PLANNED EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The University hosts a range of visits and on and off-campus activities involving children and young people. This procedure sets out the general arrangements to be followed to ensure that any potential risks to children and young people are identified and minimised while they are on University premises or engaged in, or affected by, University activities. Planned events will follow all required risk assessment and child protection procedures.

In relation to University IT facilities, staff and students must follow Acceptable Use of Information Technology Code of Practice 5.3 and Electronic Information Assurance and Information Security Management System Policy 2.3. See also User Account and Access Policy 1.4:

[Electronic Information Assurance Policy \(ulster.ac.uk\)](#)
[Electronic Information Assurance and Information Security Management System Policy \(ulster.ac.uk\)](#)
[User Account and Access Policy \(ulster.ac.uk\)](#)

The supervising adult is responsible for ensuring that they follow University procedures for safe evacuation of the child/children and young people in their care in an emergency. If assistance may be required, University staff

should be informed to allow arrangements to be planned in advance of the activity.

8. OTHER OCCASIONS WHEN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE MAY BE PRESENT

Whilst we have suggested a low, medium or high risk rating for some areas below, it is important to note that the risk rating can change depending on activities in that area. Therefore the overall risk rating is best determined using the risk assessment procedure (see Resources below). If you are unsure, please contact the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team for assistance.

8.1 Visiting the Library and social spaces (low risk)

We welcome children and young people into low-risk open areas such as the library, cafes and reception areas.

When visiting single occupancy offices and other social spaces, they must remain supervised at all times.

8.2 Risk assessments and arrangements for children and young people visiting the University (other than library and social spaces)

Children and young persons are more vulnerable to hazardous environments due to factors such as inexperience, developing levels of maturity and a lack of knowledge and awareness of existing or potential risks. Subsequently, situations which involve children and young people on campus should be risk assessed with these factors in mind.

Advance permission is not required to access the Library and social spaces, for example the ground floor of Block BC in Belfast. However, wherever possible, permission must be sought in advance (see next paragraph) before bringing a child or young person to other areas of the University Campus so that an appropriate risk assessment can be undertaken. This arrangement applies to both formal and informal visits.

Staff members or students who wish to bring their children or young people on to campus while they are engaging in an activity at the University, such as teaching or attending a lecture/seminar, must first get the approval of their Line Manager, Head of School or Course Director. The child or young person must be directly supervised by the staff member or student at all times.

On receiving such a request, the relevant Course Director, Line Manager or Head of School will consider the type of activity being undertaken, the needs of other staff/students and any relevant health and safety or safeguarding requirements.

The assessment will determine which of the following applies:

- a. Whether the current controls are sufficient to minimise the risk to the child or young person (this will be the case for using the library and low-risk

areas/activities);

b. Whether any additional controls are required and are possible (this should be considered for medium risk areas/activities – see ‘Other Areas and Activities (medium risk)’ below);

c. Permission will be refused if the risk is too high and cannot be mitigated (see ‘High-risk activities’ below).

In areas where accompanied children and young people are permitted, either routinely or by special arrangement, the parent, guardian or supervising adult must ensure that the child or young person remains with them at all times and does not disrupt the work/study. 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 area users. 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.

If there are concerns about the safety of the child or young person or their behaviour, the parent, guardian or supervising adult may be asked to leave and future visits may be refused.

Under no circumstances may contractors bring a child or young person onto University premises.

9. OTHER AREAS AND ACTIVITIES (MEDIUM RISK)

Examples of medium-risk areas and activities include:

- workshops
- studios
- seminar rooms
- multi-occupancy offices
- kitchens
- any other area where significant risk is present.

- 9.1 It is reasonable for staff and students to expect that children and young people will not normally be present in multi-occupancy office and teaching spaces. As such, staff or students with children and young people will ordinarily be expected to make suitable childcare arrangements, thus enabling them to fully partake in activities as an employee or student of the University.
- 9.2. However, it is recognised that there may be planned events which children and young people are invited to attend or exceptional circumstances which cause a parent or guardian to request that a child or young person temporarily accompanies them.
- 9.3. Wherever possible, such requests should be made prior to arrival at the premises to the relevant member of staff (lecturer, manager, head

of school or director of professional service) in ample time for a risk assessment to be undertaken.

- 9.4. Children and young people are not allowed in medium-risk areas unless a risk assessment has been completed to ensure appropriate health and safety and/or safeguarding controls are in place. In exceptional circumstances, brief visits may occur during which the child or young person must also be directly supervised by the staff member or student at all times.

10. HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES

Children and young people must not accompany staff or students into plant rooms or laboratories/workshops that are in use with the exception of children and young people taking part in research studies which have been through University risk assessment and ethical approval processes.

11. UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Due to the open nature of our premises, unaccompanied children and young people can gain access to our campuses, e.g. as a short cut or to use facilities in low risk areas. In these circumstances it is the University's duty to ensure that access can only be gained to low risk areas. If children and young people are observed to be unaccompanied and/or entering a higher risk area, e.g. laboratories, workshops, studios, kitchens or other hazardous areas, or behaving in a way that is likely to cause a danger to themselves or others, then staff should make the appropriate intervention, whether providing support or challenging where necessary. Where it is considered that this action could exacerbate the situation, the matter should be reported to security staff as soon as possible, who may consequently contact the emergency services.

12. ACCIDENTS AND SAFEGUARDING

- 12.1. Any accident or near-miss involving a child or young person on University premises must be reported to Reception.
- 12.2. Safeguarding incidents or concerns should be reported in accordance with the following policy: [Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk of Harm Policy and Procedures \(ulster.ac.uk\)](https://www.ulster.ac.uk/safeguarding).

13. YOUNG PEOPLE

Work Experience

- 13.1. Any employee authorised to take on a work experience student aged 16-18 years old should complete a risk assessment of the work that will be undertaken in advance of any start date. The school or college sending the student may also ask for one of their own risk assessment forms to be completed.

Enrolment to Study

- 13.2. There may be young persons aged 16-18 years old that are enrolled to study at the University.
- 13.3. As set out above, children and young persons are more vulnerable to hazardous environments due to factors such as inexperience, developing levels of maturity and a lack of knowledge and awareness of existing or potential risks. A risk assessment should therefore be conducted to ensure that special consideration is given to risks and arrangements required for a young person enrolled to study at the University.

14 RESOURCES

Risk Assessment Procedure: [Risk Assessment \(ulster.ac.uk\)](http://ulster.ac.uk)

Flexible Working Policy: [Work-Life Balance - Ulster University](#)

[Young people | Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)