



University of Greater Manchester

Health and Safety and Safeguarding Procedure for Children on University of Greater Manchester Premises

Issued by the Quality Transformation Unit
Approved by Board of Governors: TBC

Technical updates of this document take place on an annual basis to reflect changes to the University of Greater Manchester's organisational and management structure and to incorporate earlier, approved amendments to related policies, procedures and regulations.

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Purpose Of Policy

This document outlines the University of Greater Manchester's procedure and provides guidance on ensuring the safety of children people on university premises. University premises include all buildings, facilities, and grounds occupied by staff, students, or visitors for activities connected with the University.

This procedure should be read alongside the University's broader policies on safeguarding, as well as the Health and Safety Manual. These collectively address the University's duty of care to all individuals on site, including children, and the institution's responsibilities under health and safety and safeguarding legislation, including the requirement for appropriate risk assessments.

For the purposes of this document, the legal definition of a 'child' under health and safety legislation is used: a person under school-leaving age (generally under 16 years). Children are particularly vulnerable to hazards due to their lack of experience and awareness of workplace risks. This increased vulnerability is recognised in both common law and statutory guidance, and places a greater duty of care upon the University.

It should also be noted that, under Health and Safety legislation, a 'young person' is defined as someone aged 16 to 18. In Safeguarding legislation, however, anyone under the age of 18 is considered a 'child', with no distinction for those aged 16 to 18. Although students aged 16–18 who are enrolled at the University are therefore not covered by this procedure, the presence on campus of any other young person aged 16–18 may still give rise to safeguarding concerns, if they are left unsupervised.

Exemptions to This Procedure

This procedure does not apply to structured, supervised visits such as:

- School or college group visits
- Open days
- Work experience placements
- Clinical sessions involving minors
- Public lectures or events

However, in all such exempted cases, a risk assessment must still be conducted in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999; such risk assessments should also consider safeguarding children. This assessment must specifically address risks related to the presence of children in potentially unfamiliar or hazardous settings.

University risk assessment templates and guidance can be obtained via the University Health and Safety Manager. Advice on completing a risk assessment is available. Your local Designated Safeguarding Champion should be consulted with regards managing any safeguarding concerns. Completed risk assessments should be provided to the University Health and Safety Manager in a timely manner and well in advance of any activity or event.

Arrangements

The University of Greater Manchester supports educational engagement with children and young people through supervised events and outreach activities. However, most University buildings are not designed for children and may pose risks due to:

- Open stairwells, mezzanines, or loading bays
- Laboratories, workshops, or technical areas
- Corridors where equipment or hazardous materials may be transported

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, children should not be brought into university buildings unless under official circumstances and with a risk assessment in place.

Risk assessments will typically conclude that children must not enter:

- Laboratories or research facilities
- Engineering or technical workshops
- Any area requiring specialist knowledge to navigate safely

When organising educational events involving children, the following must be considered:

- **Safeguarding Training:** All University staff must complete An Introduction to Safeguarding training. Staff must know who their Designated Safeguarding Champion is and how to report safeguarding concerns.
- **Code of Behaviour:** Staff must be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and Good Practice (Appendix 4 of the Safeguarding Policy).
- **Age Appropriateness:** Activities must be age appropriate. Consider whether age restrictions should apply.
- **Safe Spaces:** A designated area must be identified for children who are distressed or in need of support, with responsible staff assigned.
- **Injury Support:** Your risk assessment must demonstrate what plans are in place to assist a child who becomes unwell or injured during an event.

Exceptional Circumstances

The University recognises that many staff and students are parents or have caring responsibilities for children or young people, who may occasionally visit the University. Staff and students should not routinely bring children or young people to campus and it is anticipated these visits would be brief in duration. In these exceptional situations where children or young person are brought onto university premises:

- They must be accompanied and supervised by a parent or legal guardian at all times.
- The University does not provide a creche or child-minding facilities. Staff are not expected to supervise the children of colleagues or students, as this may:
- Be inappropriate or unwelcome
- Require Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

Supervision of children and/or young person must be close, continuous and vigilant, and be undertaken by the parent or guardian.

The parent/guardian is also responsible for:

- Managing the child or young person's behaviour
- Escorting them to toilets or other facilities
- Ensuring the child or young person is included in any evacuation during a fire alarm

Anyone under 18 who is not enrolled on a course of a study and is deemed by staff not to be under adequate supervision will be asked to leave the campus, together with their parent or guardian, and may be prohibited from returning to site. Unsupervised children or young people will be raised as a safeguarding concern and as such incidents may be reported to the appropriate authority.

The University's public liability insurance would normally cover accidents to a child or young person whilst on university premises, however liability could be denied if supervision were to be considered inadequate. The occurrence of an accident would generally indicate the absence of adequate supervision.

Additional Local Controls

Heads of School (HOS) or Departmental Managers may implement further controls, such as:

- Requiring formal approval of individual risk assessments
- Providing standard (generic) risk assessments for recurring scenarios such as open days
- Allowing flexible work from home arrangements for staff with emergency childcare needs subject to the needs of the service and in accordance with HR policies and procedures
- Requiring children to be signed in/out and notifying key staff
- Prohibiting children in designated high-risk areas

Failure to adhere to the Health and Safety and Safeguarding Procedure for Children on University of Greater Manchester Premises may result in action being taken under the University's Non-Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure or the Staff Disciplinary Procedure where appropriate. In addition, any safeguarding concerns for any children or young people arising from non-compliance will be taken seriously and acted upon in accordance with the University's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. This could include referring the matter to appropriate external Safeguarding partners such as child social services.

Children in Classrooms

For health and safety reasons and to minimise disruption, children and young people who are not enrolled with the University are not permitted in teaching spaces, as per the University Health and Safety Manual.

The following non-exhaustive list explains why children and young people who are not enrolled with university are not permitted in teaching spaces:

They may cause unintentional noise or distractions, disrupting lectures, discussions, or assessments.

The learning environment relies on maintaining focus for all students.



Some courses (e.g., medicine, nursing, engineering, laboratory sciences, psychology) involve hazardous materials or sensitive discussions inappropriate for children or young people.

Students have a right to a distraction-free environment.

Allowing children or young people could set a precedent that may be difficult to manage consistently.

Duty of Care

All staff members have a duty of care and should remain vigilant regarding the presence of unsupervised children and young people on campus. If you observe a child or young person who appears to be alone or unsupervised, please report this immediately to Security. Such instances may also raise safeguarding concerns.

In these cases, please seek further advice from your Designated Safeguarding Champion, you can find out who your DSC is by looking in appendix 8 of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure <https://greatermanchester.ac.uk/student-policy-zone/> or contact the University's Safeguarding Team at safeguarding@greatermanchester.ac.uk or 01204 903566.

If you observe children in classrooms this should be reported to the appropriate Head of School.

Summary – Health and Safety and Safeguarding Procedure for Children on University of Greater Manchester Premises

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