

GUIDANCE FOR THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN ON CAMPUS

Introduction

The safety of children on campus is vitally important to Goldsmiths. When children are on campus they could be vulnerable to risks which they may not appreciate. Some risks regarded as every day and trivial by adults may be significant risks to children.

Allowing children to be brought on campus can be interpreted as approval and acceptance of the child's presence on campus. Although a parent or guardian may accept responsibility for the safety of the child, Goldsmiths still retains a degree of responsibility once the child is allowed on campus.

In the majority of cases the children will always be welcomed, will not come to any harm and will cause no disruption.

However, potential issues arising from the presence of children include:

- The nature of some of the work and buildings on campus pose potential danger to children, who are necessarily less experienced at assessing dangers than adults
- Perceived inequality of opportunity e.g. the fortunate staff member with single occupancy workspace enabling supervision of children;
- Objection of staff and students to the presence of children at their place of work or study because of potential or actual noise or other disruption.
- Impact of the distraction of supervising children on the quality of work of students or staff concerned

This guidance aims to balance the needs of the children, parents, and Goldsmiths staff and students. It is intended to ensure that the community spirit and family friendly ethos of Goldsmiths is maintained but provides a basis for developing or reviewing arrangements and promoting staff awareness, thereby managing risk.

Scope of this guidance

For the purposes of this policy a child is defined as a person who has not yet attained the age of 16 years.

This Policy applies mainly to children being brought on to site by staff, students or visitors. It applies to both informal visits, and when children can be considered to be formal visitors or users of a facility, such as:

- Organised and supervised events and visits, e.g. Open Days and school visits;
- Participation in research activities;
- Organised and supervised work shadowing;
- Nursery;
- Use of the Curzon cinema;

The general rule is that children are welcome. However, the need for vigilance remains with regard to their welfare and children should not be left unsupervised.

It is acknowledged that uninvited and unsupervised children are at times present on campus. Goldsmiths undertakes, so far as is reasonably practicable, to make buildings and grounds of as low a risk to children as is consistent with its access/security needs. Otherwise this Policy does not apply to uninvited children.

Children in the work and learning space (including the Library)

Children must only be brought into Goldsmiths under supervision of a parent, guardian or designated carer and, unless formal alternative arrangements have been made (such as work shadowing opportunities) should remain under the supervision of that individual while on campus.

There will be occasions when members of staff and students may bring babies / children into offices / workspaces to introduce them to colleagues / fellow students. This will always be welcomed by Goldsmiths. However, it is not expected that children will be present in lectures / tutorials or workspaces on a routine basis, and students/staff should make alternative plans for their regular childcare needs

When children are in the work and learning space including the Library, and if any disruption (noise, loud horseplay, crying, etc.) impacts on work, study or learning experience, then a member of staff can politely request the parent or carer to leave the vicinity in consideration of other students and staff.

If there is no alternative to bringing children to work (and all other options have been explored such as utilising annual leave, time off for dependents), and the Head of Department has agreed this, then the children should be restricted to general areas, such as the refectory, cafes and offices.

If students have child care difficulties, in the first instance they should seek advice and support from the Student Centre.

If staff have child care difficulties, in the first instance they should speak to their Manager / Head of Department. However, staff can also seek general advice and guidance from the staff assistance programme.

<https://goldmine.gold.ac.uk/Working/Pages/YourWellbeing.aspx>

Risk Awareness

Even in low risk areas special consideration should be given to the potential for slips trips and falls, especially from stairs and landings (being mindful that many older buildings may have steep stairs or gaps in the banisters which might allow young children to pass through, or where climbing may be attempted). Windows which may be accessible to children should be of restricted opening and any low level glazing protected against breakage, or resist breakage.

Supervision

The duty of parents/guardians towards the children they bring on site is to supervise them such that they are always in their immediate vicinity, close enough for accidents to be prevented and to prevent hazardous situations from arising, including being able to intervene if necessary. Parents must be made aware of these duties. Children must not be left unsupervised. Particular care must be taken when children are negotiating staircases, raised walkways and other uneven surfaces. This duty to supervise cannot be delegated to another person.

Accidents

Any accident or near-miss incident involving a child must be reported to Health and Safety using the Goldsmiths accident report form:

<https://www.gold.ac.uk/students/health-and-safety/accident-reporting/>.

Key Contacts

- Student Centre
- Governance
- Health and Safety
- Human Resources

Work Experience and Work Shadowing

Work experience and shadowing placements will be line with guidance and regulations for organisations such as the Health and Safety Executive.