

Bringing Children and Young People into the Workplace

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1. Introduction

Newcastle University is a family-friendly institution and we welcome colleagues and students bringing their children (under the age of 16 years) and young people (aged 16-18 years) onto our premises for brief social purposes.

At the same time, the University has a legal duty of care for the health, safety and welfare of our colleagues, students and other visitors, including children and young people, using our facilities or premises. As an institution of higher education and research, our buildings have been designed and built for use mainly by adults and many of the hazards present (e.g. the building layout, the equipment/machinery, the chemical/biological materials) would, in most cases, not be considered child friendly especially because of a child's physical size, inquisitiveness and lack of awareness.

We have developed this policy therefore to balance this duty of care with our desire to be a family friendly employer. We do not want to prevent colleagues or students bringing children and young people onto campus, but we do want to ensure everyone's health and safety.

2. Scope

This policy is only concerned with bringing children and young people onto University premises. It excludes children who are simply travelling across the campus.

It also excludes children and young people who may be present for other reasons such as:

- Attending as a participant in a research activity or as a client/patient
 - Visits organised by the University or other recognised bodies, where significant risks associated with planned activities and foreseeable incidents must be assessed by the organiser
 - When on school organised "work experience" where significant risks associated with planned activities and foreseeable incidents have been assessed and safe working procedures have been produced, if appropriate.
 - When visiting the University as part of an educational experience in liaison with an appropriate University colleague, where they are accompanied by teachers or other colleagues from their own school or nursery, or when attending a formally arranged interview (e.g. for an Apprenticeship vacancy), where a University colleague is responsible for their attendance, safe conduct and appropriate risk assessments.
 - When attending the University sporting facilities, restaurants and shops.
 - "Open" days and similar public events, including accompanying parent(s) to specific ceremonies or events, not involving hazardous activities, areas or equipment
 - Where a mother has arranged for her child to come in for the purpose of breastfeeding
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In each of these situations specific management arrangements(Section 4: Associated

documents) may apply to ensure that potential hazards are identified and controlled as far as is reasonably practicable

3. Implementation

We welcome you bringing your children and young people onto campus for reasons such as:

- Social visits by parents/carers with their newborn baby or newly adopted child to meet with colleagues.
- Accompanying their parent/carer (who is a University colleague or student) on a brief tour for example, to show the child where the parent/carer works.
- Accompanying their parent/carer (who is a University colleague or student) to pick up work in a low risk environment or borrow material from the library or office.

In all these situations, colleagues should be considerate of others and ensure when visiting with their children it isn't disruptive to their work colleagues or to the normal operation of work.

In all instances we would expect colleagues to consider the appropriateness of the environment, for instance we would never expect to see a child in a laboratory environment for health and safety reasons.

Other high risk areas which should be avoided include:

- workshops, studios or other areas where tools or machinery are located or used, even when not currently in use.
- any area where biological materials, radiation, chemicals, dyes, cleaning fluids or other substances covered by COSHH regulations are in use or stored.
- any area where hazardous activities are being undertaken, hazardous equipment is accessible, hazardous substances are being used or if their presence may cause harm to children or young people
- kitchen areas.

The University recognizes that, from time to time, unexpected events happen that mean a child or young person might need to be brought onto work premises for an extended time and for reasons other than the ones mentioned above.

In these circumstances, the parent/carer must ensure:

- that they consult with their line manager or Head of Unit about the acceptability of the child or young person being present in the workplace, or whether alternative arrangements can be made.
- that they are fully supervised by their parent/carer for the time they are on site. Children should not be left unattended at any time regardless of their age.
- that University Health & Safety standards are adhered to at all times.
- that the time the child or young person are on site is kept to a minimum.
- that the child or young person does not use any University equipment.

The University also recognizes that parents/carers may sometimes need to bring their child(ren) onto the University premises on a regular basis, for example, prior to the opening time of a local nursery. There are several social spaces within the University premises that are child-friendly and you are welcome to bring your child here provided they are fully supervised by their parent/carer for the time they are on site. These include:

- Campus Coffee

- Courtyard Restaurant
- Ridley Atrium

Children and young people should therefore not be brought into the work environment for frequent, extended, or regular periods, as an alternative to making longer term arrangements for their care, which may include before and after-school activities, holiday play schemes, arrangements with other parents/child-minders or flexible working arrangements.

The Line Manager or other appropriate senior manager should instruct the parent/carer to remove the child or children immediately from the work area if they have any concerns about the health and safety or supervision of the child or children, or if their presence is causing a distraction for others.

The University’s disciplinary procedures may be followed if a colleague fails to comply with this policy.

4. Associated documents

- [University Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Health & Safety Management Standards](#)
- [What the law says about young people at work](#)

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