Policy: Children on campus

Purpose

To provide an inclusive and safe environment when parents/carers have children on the University campus or join in activities away from campus.

Scope

This policy applies across the University and excludes enrolled students and study tours where students are supervised based on risk.

Definitions

Child/children means people under the age of 18 years of age.

Building Custodian – officer charged by the relevant area with responsibilities for the management of designated buildings.

Parent/carer means the student or staff member who is responsible for the child or children while on University property.

Policy Statement

Rationale

2. The Australian National University is a major community resource accessed by its staff, students, academic and community visitors. The children of these adults and some children of the Canberra community visit the campus and some children live on campus with their parents. The University recognises that parents/carers may occasionally bring their children into the work and teaching environments on campus.

3. The University is committed to promoting inclusive work and study environments that value the diversity of backgrounds and perspectives of the University community as expressed in the Equal opportunity policy. The University supports equal opportunity for staff and students with family responsibilities and provides facilities for children on campus, including childcare centres and parenting rooms.

4. The Children on Campus policy contributes towards assisting parents/carers
in their responsibilities. Principles and procedures for children in the work and teaching environments have been developed to address both the work health and safety requirements and equal opportunity principles.

5. The University recognises that many staff and students have family responsibilities and a range of needs when managing work, study and family responsibilities and that there may be occasions when it may be necessary to bring a child or children into the work and teaching environments on campus.

Principles

6. Children under the supervision of their parent/carer can be on campus in general community areas, for approved University activities, attending child-care and in University accommodation with their parents.

7. The University undertakes all reasonably practicable steps to eliminate or effectively control hazards to children on University grounds and in accessible areas of University buildings, recognizing that parents/carers have the responsibility to supervise their child while the child is on campus.

8. There are occasions when staff and students may need to bring their child into the work or teaching areas when there is a sudden or unexpected difficulty in childcare arrangements and they have been unable to find an alternative childcare arrangement. This arrangement is not intended to substitute for regular child-care.

9. Children when on campus must be under the supervision of an adult who is responsible for the child’s behaviour and safety and will follow University requirements on restricted access and hazardous areas.

10. The University will reasonably consider requests from staff and students to bring their child into the work and teaching environments and will balance the request with work health and safety requirements of the area and the rights of others in their work and study environment.

11. Parents/carers are not to bring a child with an infectious disease onto the campus.

Hazard Control on Campus

12. The University recognises its responsibilities for protecting non-employees, including children, from exposure to risks to their health and safety arising out of University activities. The University Work health and safety policy requires that all hazards on campus are to be eliminated or effectively controlled, as far as is reasonably practicable. Locations which are accessible to children on campus shall be made safe for children.
13. Children are not allowed in locations designated by the University as hazardous or restricted as stated in Appendix A. Responsibilities for management of areas are outlined in the Control of access to hazardous and restricted locations procedures and Safe Work Procedures. Parents/carers are expected to be vigilant in supervising their children at campus. Children can be playful, are naturally curious and may have an adventurous inclination that can lead them into situations which may be hazardous to them while being of no practical risk to adults; for example, climbing over railings or through balusters, and accessing potentially hazardous items or locations such as plant, electrical fittings, ponds, kitchen cupboards, water features, construction sites, animal enclosures, compressed gas or cryogenic liquid storage.

Procedures

In the teaching environment

14. Parents/carers may request that children attend a class when there are sudden and/or unexpected difficulties in childcare arrangements. Normally the request is made to the relevant lecturer prior to the child attending the class. It is expected that parents/carers would ensure that there would be minimal disruption to others caused by their children, where approval is given.

In the work environment (on campus)

15. Parents/carers may request that children attend the workplace when there are sudden and/or unexpected difficulties in childcare arrangements. There may be occasions where a child accompanies a parent to their office for short periods of time. Normally the request is made to the supervisor prior to the child attending the workplace. It is expected that parents/carers would ensure that there would be minimal disruption to others caused by their children, where approval is given.

On campus supervision by non parents/guardians

16. This includes primary or secondary school pupils undertaking a school excursion or attending functions on campus. The teacher in charge of the school group is the supervisor of the children. Where a work experience program has been approved by a secondary school and the University, the supervisor is the University staff member nominated by management to supervise the work experience person.
On campus unaccompanied

17. Children may enter the general community areas on campus on their own volition at any time. University staff members in general should assist children with their enquiries. University Security, on phone extension 52249, is available to provide support to any unescorted child on campus who requires assistance.

Supervisor/lecturer’s responsibility

18. Supervisors and lecturers will reasonably consider requests from staff or students respectively to bring children into a classroom or the workplace in terms of local arrangements, established by the Building Custodian or the University Delegate. Factors to be considered when making a decision on this request include:

- the parent/carers’ needs;
- fellow workers or students requirements;
- the child’s age;
- health and safety of the child;
- duration and frequency requested;
- environment and health and safety issues for the child and others;
- reasons for the request; and
- the subject matter being taught.

Removal of a child from campus

2. The University retains the right to direct a parent/carer to remove their child/children from any area of the campus.

3. A parent/carer may be directed to remove a child from the workplace, classroom or other University space by a lecturer, supervisor or officer of the University if:

- the child’s health or safety is at risk,
- the child is a health or safety risk to others,
- the child’s behaviour is causing undue disruption to the work of staff or students, or
- the presence of a child is inappropriate to the work and study being undertaken.

4. Supervisors/lecturers have the right to refuse permission for parents/carers
to bring a child into any area within the University because of concerns related to health and safety issues or the type of work or study being undertaken, including examinations and meetings.

**Working away from campus**

5. Students and staff involved in activities away from campus such as field placements and field trips, may have family responsibilities. Requests for children to accompany a parent on field trips must be in line with the Working safely away from campus procedure and be made in advance in writing, and directed to the head of the College, Research School or University Centre or immediate supervisor.

6. Requests must include any known health issues associated with the child, a plan to manage any health and safety risks, and must indicate that the request has the support of the field trip leader. The head will make a recommendation to the Director, Human Resources Division who will consider the request in line with the relevant requirements.

**Appendix A**

**Hazardous and Restricted Locations**

1. Control of Access to Hazardous and Restricted Locations [procedures](#).

2. It is a requirement of this policy that persons (other than persons approved by the relevant Budget Unit and with appropriate information, training and supervision) and all children be excluded from locations that are hazardous or otherwise restricted.

3. A **hazardous location** is any location where safety and health hazards potentially exist and would for the purposes of these procedures include (but are not limited to):

   - laboratories
   - animal houses
   - workshops
   - stores
   - plant rooms, switch rooms, valve rooms, lift plant rooms
   - service ducts
   - roofs
- pits
- confined spaces
- commercial kitchens
- commercial laundries
- areas under construction or refurbishment
- cleaners cupboards
- other locations recommended by the local Work Health and Safety Committee and so designated by Budget Unit management
- other locations designated by Facilities and Services

4. **A restricted location** is any location where access is limited because of risks to business function or security and would include for the purposes of these procedures,
   - computer rooms,
   - management offices,
   - records area,
   - stores,
   - other locations so designated by the Building Custodians or Budget Unit management.

5. Also refer to [Safe Work Procedures](#).