

Unite Students Under 18s policy

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Introduction

This policy is created to ensure that Unite Students, staff and contractors and Group Clients, staff and contractors understand their responsibilities when accommodating children in residences.

Students, including those under the age of 18 but over the age of 16 are accommodated by Unite Students as part of our summer and core tenancy business.

Groups of students including those under the age of 16 are accommodated by Unite Students as part of our summer business (June to August) and only as part of groups where there is appropriate supervision supplied by the Group Client. Children under the age of 16 are prohibited from booking a room directly with Unite Students.

The policy document below has been created to ensure the safety of children in our residences and Unite Students' staff.

Definitions

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

For the purpose of this guidance document:

- The term 'child' will be used to describe all children and young people under the age of 18 years old staying in unite Students' residences.
- The term 'staff' will be used to describe those employed on a contract of employment at Unite Students including those working on a voluntary/unpaid basis.
- The term 'Group Client' will be used to describe all 3rd party clients agreeing to enter in to a Nomination Agreement or License to Occupy where members of the group are under the age of 18.

1. Scope

All staff at Unite Students and Group Clients, contractors and staff when making provision for children, young people and vulnerable adults must ensure that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- all concerns are reported as quickly as possible to the City and Area Managers
- City and Area Managers must undertake to escalate concerns as quickly as possible to the Health and Safety and Brand Standards Teams

1.1 Purpose of Guidance

Unite Students has a duty of care to safeguard all children from harm who use our accommodation. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

All Group Clients working with Unite Students will ensure the safety and protection of all children that use our accommodation through adherence to Unite Students' policies, The Children Act 1989 and The Children Care Act 2004.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 years (The Children Act 1989).

1.2 Limitations

Groups of students including children under the age of 16 will only be accepted during the summer period (June to August), by prior consent of the relevant Area Manager where:

- The Group Client has provided Unite Students with copies of their child safeguarding procedures and Unite Students has approved them
- The Group Client has carried out a thorough risk assessment of the group, including details of any students with medical conditions, disabilities and welfare issues/risks, and provided a copy to Unite Students
- Unite Students has undertaken a risk assessment of the property and approved the property as being fit to accommodate children

2. The Group Client accepts:

- That Unite Students core operations provide services to adults and university students over the age of 18
- During specific periods of the year Unite Students operate these services for children. It is not a requirement of Unite Students to have staff Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked, unless they are Security or Housekeeping Staff who have specific duties.

3. The Group Client's nominated Supervisor/s and/or Group Leaders will:

Provide Unite Students with rooming lists to ensure that Unite Students' staffs are aware of the need to follow Child Protection & Safeguarding Guidance.

4. Unite Students will:

Accommodate under 18 year olds in areas of our residences which are not occupied by adults. As a minimum, students under the age of 18 will not be accommodated on floors/levels of our properties with adults during the summer period (June to August) unless as part of a core tenancy (academic or full year) booking. If it is not possible to segregate the students, Unite reserves the right to not proceed with the booking.

5. DBS Checking:

Unite Students' housekeeping, security and maintenance staff are DBS checked. However, children living in Unite residences may come in to contact with Unite staff and contractors who may not be DBS checked. As such, Group Clients undertake that all communication with Unite Students staff is by their Group Leaders and Supervisors, unless in the case of an emergency.

6. Health and Safety

The Unite Students Health and Safety Management system is built on a suite of policies, procedures and guidance documents emanating from our Group H&S Policy ensuring that hazards are correctly identified and controlled. Additionally, that our people are provided with the right levels of competence to ensure that they manage safety correctly within our business and that all statutory obligations are met.

For each safety matter, a suite of arrangements are in place that outline the activities required to meet our legal obligations as well as best practice measures to reduce risk as far as reasonably practicable. Where necessary, these arrangements are supported and validated by qualified third parties to ensure that we are robust in our approach e.g. fire safety and water risk management.

Further details can be found within the Unite Students Group Health and Safety Policy

7. Legal Background

- Family Law Reform Act 1969
- The Law of Property Act 1925
- The Trust of Land and Appointment of Trustees Act 1996
- Children's Care Act 2004

8. Cross References

- Tenancy Agreement
- Group Health and Safety Policy
- Tenancy Policy
- Hotel booking
- Short Term Lets / Group bookings