
Students Under 18 & Child Protection Policy

Status: Approved

Approval date: August 2024

Review date: August 2025

Audience: Public

Responsible person: Student Support Manager

Approved by: Institute Management Board

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1.0 Introduction

This Under 18's policy covers students applying for accommodation at the Institute's Malmesbury Campus, whose 18th birthday falls after the first day of the Licence Agreement for the year of entry to the Institute and for students under the age of 18 in temporary residence for short courses such as the Physics Summer School. The purpose of the policy is to promote and safeguard the welfare of individuals who are under the age of 18 years whilst living in Dyson owned or managed accommodation.

The Dyson Institute is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people under 18 and vulnerable adults, who seek to access programmes at the Institute. Under 18s living in England are considered by law to be children, which means the Institute has additional responsibilities until the date at which they turn 18. The policy will cease to apply to students once they reach their 18th birthday.

The Dyson Institute follows Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance on health and safety considerations for young people in the workplace where a student is under 18 years of age.

The Institute is an adult environment and as such treats all its students as independent, mature individuals, and students who are under the age of 18 years will be treated in the same way. Applicants who are under 18 should be aware that they are applying to study in an adult environment and there may be a small number of limitations for them whilst they are under 18. However, the Institute provides excellent pastoral support and takes proactive steps to broaden the activities to promote inclusivity. Student Support Advisors (SSAs) meet regularly with the students to offer coaching and support with a broad range of issues: settling into their new life at Dyson, learning differences, disabilities, study skills, dealing with stress, etc.

The Institute is not obliged, nor is it able, to take on the usual rights, responsibilities, and authority that parents/guardians have in relation to a child, and it will not act in *loco parentis* in relation to students who are under the age of 18 years. Until the student reaches their 18th birthday, the Institute will share information with parents as required to support the student's success and wellbeing.

The nature of the Institute environment does inevitably mean that students under 18 years of age come into unsupervised contact with a wide variety of people who are 18 years or older during the course of their programme, residence in Institute accommodation, or any other organised activities. This includes contact with staff and fellow students. This contact does not fall within the statutory requirements for criminal record checks to be undertaken and, accordingly, there is no obligation for such checks to be carried out for all Institute staff, including those who are assigned as tutors and members of staff or students working within the Dyson Institute Village.

The usual personal and academic support arrangements will apply to students who are under 18 years. Students under the age of 18 will have a named member of staff as a student support advisor and priority access to the student support team. Each student has an allocated Student Support Advisor (SSA) who is the first port of call for support and can act as Early Help. All students will have standard one to ones and the opportunities for additional support one to ones as required. DISC proactively tailor a range of activities to provide enrichment opportunities for Institute students which are accessible to students aged 17 and above. Some activities will remain accessible to over 18s only due to legal requirements.

2.0 Contracts

A person of 16 or 17 has the status to enter into necessary contracts e.g., for education and accommodation, but until their 18th birthday will not be legally competent to enter into all legal contracts. In circumstances where a person must be aged 18 or over to be legally competent to enter into a contract the Institute requires a student's parents/guardians to honour all obligations (under any contracts with the Institute) that the student enters into prior to their 18th birthday.

3.0 The Dyson Institute Village & Estates

If students under the age of 18 attend the Dyson Institute to take part in the summer school they will be given contact details of the student support team who can provide on-site support as required as well as signposting information. All other temporary residents will meet with members of the safeguarding team on commencement of their stay.

Institute residences are intended for the use of adults and special arrangements cannot be made for students under the age of 18 years. Therefore, unless the young person will reach the age of 18 during their first year, they will not have access to Institute accommodation.

The Institute does not assume parental responsibility for a student under the age of 18. Students are expected to have the necessary skills to study and live independently alongside people from a wide variety of backgrounds, as individual supervision is not provided. Places in Institute residences are offered on the understanding that the student will be able to adapt to living away from home and be responsible for themselves in all practical matters. Highly trained security staff are on site 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and provide out of hours support to students on site. Student support advisors are available on every site throughout the week and accessible online within office hours. Students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) must complete the consent forms below and confirm that they have the maturity to study in an adult environment. Both forms will need to be completed prior to enrolment. If the parent(s) do not live in the UK, they need to appoint a UK guardian who:

- Lives in the UK;
- Is over the age of 18;
- Is able to speak English;
- Is easy to contact in an emergency;
- Has a UK address and phone number;
- Is not registered student or member of staff at Dyson or the Dyson Institute.

[Under 18 student consent form](#)

[Parent/Guardian Under 18 consent form](#)

The Institute Village may provide social events where a film or documentary with a British Board of Film Classification of 18 years of age is shown. Legislation prohibits persons under the age of 18 from viewing 18-rated films in licensed cinemas. There are no educational reasons for viewing a programme of this nature on an engineering programme. Certificate 18 is suitable only for adults, therefore students under the age of 18 years should not attend DISC events showing movies with that certificate. Whilst under 18s are in residence, the DISC will promote engagement in activities which are appropriate.

Some campus buildings, including Dyson Institute Village grounds are open to escorted visitors. Dyson campus is not open to members of the public. Individual supervision is not provided, and students may encounter visitors who enter the premises in their normal course of their business. There is a high level of security presence and protocol to support and promote safety on site. Students under the age of 18 will not be expected to escort business visitors.

4.0 Social Activity

Students are treated as adults and are expected to attend teaching activity and to both live and study independently without formal supervision. The Institute environment provides peer groups of mixed group adults.

Participating in social activity on and off campus is at the discretion of the students and the Institute is not able to take additional responsibility for a student who is under the age of 18 years in relation to such activities. The Institute and DISC will clearly communicate any age restrictions of activities and work to offer and promote engagement on age-appropriate enrichment and social activities.

The Dyson Institute Student Committee manage multiple events throughout the year. Some events are age-restricted, for example access to nightclubs or require parental permission for under 18s (for example indoor climbing walls) these will be clearly identified as such.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they abide the law on the consumption, sale, and supply of alcohol (see The Licensing Act, 2003).

5.0 Field trips and off-campus learning activities

Programmes may involve excursions, field trips, or other periods of study or activity away from the Institute (some of which may be residential trips). Subject to discharging the Institute's duties under Health and Safety law, the Institute is not able to take any additional responsibility for a student who is under the age of 18 years in relation to such activities. Where activities require the young person to be off campus overnight the organiser must be made aware that an under 18-year-old will be participating and take appropriate child protection measures. This should include a risk assessment. International travel as part of any programme will not be permitted for students under 18.

6.0 Library

It is unlawful to supply e.g., sell or lend, an age-restricted video recording to a person under the age restriction. Consequently, students will not be allowed to borrow DVDs/Blu-ray or other video recordings classified as adult to students who are under 18 or access them from the digital library.

7.0 Alcohol and tobacco

It is illegal for alcohol and/or tobacco, E-cigarettes and Vapes to be sold to or bought by students who are under the age of 18 years. The Institute will take reasonable steps to seek to ensure that the law is not broken in relation to licensed premises under the Institute's control but cannot undertake to supervise any individual student (The Licensing Act, 2003).

8.0 Holding Office

All students are encouraged to participate in DISC (Dyson Institute Student Committee) activities and its clubs and societies. However, students who are under 18 years old are not allowed to hold office, for example, they may not be secretary or treasurer to DISC because some positions required them to have legal responsibilities.

9.0 Relationships with staff

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is a criminal offence for any person in a position of trust (which may include members of Institute staff) to engage in sexual activity with someone who is under 18 years.

Read in conjunction with the Staff Student Relationship Policy and Safeguarding and Prevent policy.

Any employee at the Institute who comes into contact with children is considered to be in a position of trust, whether or not they meet the strict legal definition, and any sexual activity between an employee and a child with whom the employee has come into contact through activities carried out in the course of his or her employment will be treated as a very serious disciplinary matter.

Anyone who meets the legal definition of “position of trust” under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and who engages in any sexual activity with a person under 18 is also committing a criminal offence, and such cases will be reported to the Police and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The Institute has a legal duty to report to the DBS any individual whom it believes ought to be placed on the list of individuals barred from working with children.

10.0 Child Protection (to be read in conjunction with Safeguarding and Prevent policy)

As a matter of law in England, a person under the age of 18 is a child. The Institute has a safeguarding team and a [Safeguarding and Prevent Policy](#) and will report any suspicions or allegations of abuse of children to the to the Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (MASH – Multi-agency safeguarding hub). Child protection forms part of the Institutes Safeguarding responsibilities. The Institute has a responsibility to protect those under the age of 18 years from abuse and will report any suspicions or allegations of abuse of children to the appropriate Social Services officer. Any such suspicions or allegations will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will contact the appropriate authorities.

Key guidance for child protection:

- Children’s Act (2004)
- Education Act (2002)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Prevent Duty (2023)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff (2012)

- Wiltshire SVPP child protection and Safeguarding procedures and the Institute also places due regard for its responsibilities under Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) to protect children from maltreatment; prevent impairment of children's health or development; protect children's circumstances to ensure they can grow up where there is safe and effective care; and take appropriate action for children to have the best outcomes.

All staff are trained in how to respond if a child or young person begins describing possible harm. All Institute staff, and Dyson Technology workplace rotation line managers and technical mentors undergo Safeguarding and Prevent training and annual updates. The curriculum includes reading KCSIE (2023) Part 1 and the Institute Safeguarding and Prevent policy and procedures.

All child safeguarding concerns, disclosures or allegations of abuse shall be reported immediately to the Safeguarding team using the online portal [HERE](#) or via email DIETsafeguarding@dyson.com. Where a child may be at immediate risk of harm or abuse, a member of the safeguarding team must be notified verbally straight away, and a report submitted via the portal or email as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.

It is the responsibility of the safeguarding team to maintain accurate records for all concerns and incidents raised and action taken.

10.1 The Institute Management Board has the responsibility for oversight of the Institute's Child Protection and the Institute's Safeguarding and Prevent Policy, with delegated responsibility to the Designated Safeguarding Lead with direction from the Board and Strategic Safeguarding Sponsor.

10.2 Child Protection Officer Guidance issued under sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002 suggests that educational establishments should have, "a senior member of the establishment's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues, providing advice and support to other staff, liaising with the local authority, and working with other agencies". The Institute has two nominated Child Protection Officers – the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Student Support Manager) and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead. The safeguarding officers and referral routes are set out on the Institute's safeguarding SharePoint pages and within the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy.

10.3 Designated Safeguarding Officers Act as the main contact in the Institute for the protection of children and adults at risk. Responsible for making referrals to the Wiltshire LADO, MASH, or other relevant agencies as appropriate.

10.4 Safeguarding Officers act as a point of contact for whom staff or students should report concerns or incidents. They are responsible for escalating concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads as appropriate.

10.5 Student Support Advisors are all trained to level 3 Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

10.6 Individual Staff members are all responsible for familiarising themselves with the relevant safeguarding policies, undertaking mandatory safeguarding training and sharing concerns in a timely manner.

10.7 The Institute is registered with a third party provider for DBS checks and will ensure that a check is required prior to commencement of employment and then every three years thereafter whilst employed with the Institute.

10.8 The Institute will inform parents and guardians that it does not act in the place of a parent.

10.9 Emergency contact details, in particular those of parents and guardians of Under 18 will be held and assumed consent to contact parents where deemed necessary (See section 13)

10.10 It is recommended that staff and students who have access to children and/or adults at risk, including students under 18, take steps to ensure that they do not put themselves in a position where an allegation can be made against them. And recognise the power balances between children and staff, and different levels of seniority of staff and ensure that power and authority are never misused.

10.11 All staff maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' regarding safeguarding and share all concerns including low level concerns with the safeguarding team.

11.0 Medical Treatment

Students under the age of 18 can register with GP in the same way as an 18-year-old student can.

Students under the age of 18 can have their refusal to receive medical treatment overridden by parents and hence, emergency contact details must be provided by students and parents by completion of the consent forms for those under 18 prior to the students' arrival at the Dyson Institute. However, please note that a child from the age of 16 is entitled to consent to medical treatment, and that such consent cannot be overruled by parents.

12.0 Notification

Prior to arrival, of any student under the age of 18 years The Deputy Director (Engineering Integration) will cascade this information to the DSL, Projects and Operations Manager and Undergraduate Experience Officer to ensure that estates / facilities team, and Security are notified, prior to entry to the Institute. The academic tutor, Institute engineer and student support team will also be notified (teaching and other staff will not routinely be made aware of a student's age). A member of the student support team will meet with the under 18 student upon arrival and ensure they understand support available and how to access the student support team and external support services.

13.0 Parental involvement

It is the Institute's usual policy that it deals with students (with whom it has a contractual relationship) and not with parents/guardians. This approach will also apply to students who are under the age of 18 years. The Institute will therefore correspond with students, not parents/guardians in the first instance, unless in an emergency (see point 3 and point 17). Students under the age of 18 still have the right under the Data Protection Act for information about them not to be disclosed without their consent to other persons, including their parents, without their specific written consent. Parents/guardians may contact the student support team through the shared mailbox at studentsupport@dyson.com, please note that safeguarding protocols will apply.

14.0 Data Protection

Where consent is required, students who are under the age of 18 years are considered to be capable of consenting to the processing of their personal data and parental consent will not usually be sought for Institute managed activities.

15.0 Emergency contact

Emergency contact details for parents/guardians are an essential requirement for under 18s prior to arrival and any changes must be notified promptly to the Institute.

Students over the age of 18 are able to provide details of a 'trusted contact', whom must be an adult and not a peer within the Dyson Institute.

16.0 Related policies

- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy (Dyson Institute)
- Sexual Violence, Harassment and Misconduct policy (Dyson Institute)
- Respect at Work Policy (Dyson Technology Ltd)
- Whistleblowing Policy (Dyson Technology Ltd)
- Staff Students relationships policy -breaches in this policy will be dealt with under the Dyson Grievance and Disciplinary policies (Dyson Technology Ltd)
- Health and Safety (Dyson Technology Ltd)
- Dyson Code of Conduct (Dyson Technology Ltd)

All these policies can be found [here](#). Related process documents are saved on the Student Support Hub.

Appendix A: Decision making flow chart to refer to Wiltshire SVPP

Process flow:

Is the person you are concerned about under 18?
 Do you have concerns for the welfare and or safety of the child or young person?
 Are you concerned that a child is at risk of or is experiencing abuse or neglect?
 'Abuse is a deliberate act of ill-treatment that can harm or is likely to harm a child or young person's safety, well-being, and development. Abuse can be physical, sexual, or emotional.'
 'Neglect of a child or young person also constitutes abuse and can be defined as failing to provide or secure for a child or young person the basic needs of physical safety and well-being.'
 What types of abuse or neglect are you concerned about?
 Have you had a conversation with the child about the concerns?
 Have you sought the views and wishes of the child?
 Are there any immediate risks to the child or to others, including unborn children?
 Have you discussed the next steps with the parents?

