



Policy on Children

October 2024



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The purpose of this policy is to lay out rules and guide-lines for both behaviour and safety for all children visiting the College. In this policy a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years (consistent with the definition in the Children Act 2004). As a postgraduate college, Linacre does not normally admit any student under the age of 18, and therefore does not have a safeguarding policy for children. This means that the College cannot act *in loco parentis* for any child, and any child brought onto the college site must be supervised by and are the responsibility of a parent, carer or guardian at all times.

Many of our College members and guests have children. Children are welcome in most parts of the College and at most events when accompanied by their parents or an adult with parental responsibility. Anyone bringing a child into the College should remember that this is a place of work, quiet study and residence and they should ensure that their child behaves in a way which does not disrupt these activities. If you would like to discuss any particular concerns or needs prior to a visit to College please contact equalities@linacre.ox.ac.uk.

Dining Hall

Children are welcome to eat in the Dining Hall at lunch time and ordinary evening meals. There are three high chairs available for infants. There are baby changing facilities in the toilets adjacent to the Dining Hall.

We do not feel it is appropriate to bring children under the age of 14 to formal guest night dinners as the emphasis at these events is on adult conversation. Often College members are bringing guests into College for this purpose and even a well-behaved child is a distraction. The exception to this rule is for babies up to six months of age, who are allowed to remain with their parent / guardian.

Children of graduands are welcome at their graduation lunch in College. Children aged seven and over are welcome to attend the Degree Ceremony in the Sheldonian Theatre, and they will require their own ticket.

Common Room

Children are welcome in the large Common Room until 8 pm, but must be accompanied at all times by a parent or by someone with parental responsibility. This is in respect to the licencing objective of protecting children from harm where the premise is primarily for the sale of alcohol for consumption.

It is illegal for someone under 18 to buy an alcoholic drink from the College bar, or for the bar staff to sell alcohol to someone who is 18 or over but who then gives the alcohol to someone under 18.

The bar staff may refuse to serve alcohol to any intoxicated persons, including those who are parents, carers or guardians with responsibility for a child/ren on the college site or in the Common Room.

Library and Study Spaces

Children should not be taken into the Library or the Study Spaces in the OC Tanner and Abraham Buildings at any time.



College Gardens

Children and their parents are welcome to enjoy the College gardens. You are asked to remember that many offices and study-bedrooms overlook the gardens and noisy games can be disruptive for those trying to work. Please do not leave children unsupervised in the gardens.

Children as overnight guests

Children may stay as overnight guests in both student and college guest rooms. The normal rule of no more than three consecutive nights as an overnight guest in a student room applies. Overnight guests in College rooms who are less than 18 years of age must be accompanied at all times by a parent, carer or guardian i.e. they cannot occupy their own room.

Parents/carers are responsible for the behaviour of children in their care. Babies who cry frequently, particularly at night, are likely to disturb those living and working around them. It would therefore not be appropriate for children of this age to be overnight guests in College.

Children younger than five years should use a mattress protector when sleeping in a College bed. This will be provided, on request by the Housekeeping Department.

Children are only permitted to live with their parents in the Annexe at Neil Fraser-Bell House and the Flat at West Grove.

Unsupervised children on site.

Linacre college is committed to promoting the safety and welfare of children at all times. Although the College is a very safe environment, children younger than 14 years should never be left unsupervised on the College site. This includes leaving them to sleep in a student or guest room whilst the parents attend an event.

In line with Government and NSPC guidance, and with consideration to 'Fraser competence' which is widely referred to within health and social care settings:

- Children under the age of 14 yrs of age must not be left unsupervised by an adult. Linacre recognises that college accommodation does not have the same familiarity as a child's own home which may in itself create anxiety and distress. Parents are welcome to arrange babysitting/child minding services. Registered providers can be identified via: Childcare.co.uk
- Children aged 14 to 16 years (inclusive) can be left unattended in their room however they must be checked on regularly by those with parental responsibility during the course of the evening.
- Children under the age of 14 yrs can be supervised by a sibling over the age of 14 yrs however they cannot legally have parental responsibility. A parent is therefore still required to check on all of the children regularly during the course of the evening.
- Children >17 yrs of age can be left unattended in the guest room.
The guest's/children's name and their College host's/parent's contact details (including a mobile phone number) must be left with the Staff at the College Reception. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children know where they will be and be contactable by them.

External Conferences and Events

It is the responsibility of those organising Conferences, Summer Schools and Events using Linacre College facilities, to undertake their own safeguarding and criminal records checks for the wellbeing of children who attend their event. It is



recommended that event organisers arrange a point of contact for safety, questions and coordination of activities for children during their event.

Criminal Records/DBS Checks

Roles subject to criminal records check for working with vulnerable people currently include the Senior Tutor, Welfare Lead and Junior Deans.

College staff needing to attend buildings where children temporarily stay (as above) will do so in pairs with advanced notice of arrival.

Whistleblowing

Safeguarding concerns regarding staff members, staff or student's children should be reported to the Welfare Lead, Senior Tutor or Principal.