

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Purpose and scope of the Policy

Faculty of Philosophy of Vilnius University (University) is committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment exists for all staff, students and visitors to the University. The University recognises that there are a number of circumstances in which children and young people will come into University premises or otherwise have contact with University staff or students. University aims to provide a safe environment for children and young persons (i.e. those aged under 18), to make sure the University Members – staff and students – do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and report any concerns about children's safety to the appropriate authorities.

There is no legislation in this area that is directly specifically at Higher Education Institutions but the main legislation is the Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child of Republic of Lithuania and the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child.

The Policy provides generic guidance for all members of the University community and for departments which do not have their own specific policy.

2. Areas of Risk

There are a number of activities undertaken or facilitated by the University which bring children into contact with University staff and students or onto University premises. The following are identified as activities which present key areas of risk:

- Organised visits, summer schools and other outreach activities on University premises;
- Outreach activities undertaken in schools and other venues away from University premises;
- Children of University staff or students brought onto University premises;
- Children attending University premises for sporting, social or other purposes;
- Children being the subjects of research by University staff or students.

3. Child Protection Procedures

The University recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children for whom it is responsible from time to time, and to work closely with statutory and voluntary local agencies to ensure that children are not put at risk of harm or abuse. The University recognises that abuse can take many forms and may be physical, sexual or emotional or may arise through neglect.

All incidents of alleged misconduct concerning children, any failure to safeguard and promote their welfare or any act of omission or commission that exposes children to the risk of significant harm will be taken seriously by the University.

The University will refer concerns that a child might be at risk of significant harm to Children's Social Care Services and/or the Police.

All actions on child safeguarding are taken in the best interests of the child, which are paramount.

4. Guidelines for University Members who are in contact with children

University Members should actively seek to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their care or for whom they have a responsibility. To assist in carrying out this duty, University Members should:

- Demonstrate respect for children's' dignity, privacy and right to be protected from harm;
- Maintain age and culturally appropriate relationships with children;
- Work with children in a fair, open and honest way;

- Respond positively to concerns raised by children without rushing to judgement;
- Always working in an open environment with children;
- Avoiding unaccompanied journeys with a child.