

YOUNG LEARNER POLICY

PLUS recognises that the safeguarding of children is of the utmost importance. This is particularly so in the context of younger students who can be more vulnerable. This policy outlines guidelines and recommendations as well as the measures and considerations in place for their care and supervision.

Definition

At PLUS, young learners are defined as students aged 10 and 11 years old.

Guidelines for agents

Requirements

- Young learners require close attention and supervision from their assigned Group Leaders at all times. This includes always being aware of their whereabouts and remaining vigilant on signs of distress, discomfort, or any unusual behaviour.
- We expect that Group Leaders are adequately prepared for their role and have been trained on understanding and managing the specific needs of younger learners as well as child welfare and protection.
- All groups with young learners must maintain a suitable staff-to-student ratio which allows Group Leaders to provide personalised attention and close supervision.
- It is essential to clearly communicate the location of the Group Leader's bedroom to the children, ensuring they know where to go in case of any issues.
- Group Leaders are to ensure that young learners are not left alone with any person over 18, except during lesson time.
- Each of our summer centres has a recommended age range which is linked to the host institution's policies and beyond our control. If you wish to enrol young learners that fall outside the recommended age ranges, kindly seek confirmation from your sales representative.
- When the child needs to use the bathroom outside of their personal accommodation, the Group Leader is to keep a vigilant eye on their entrance and exit to the bathroom.
- There must be no hazards including sharp objects, cleaning products or scalding hot water the child could harm themselves on in their accommodation room. Group Leaders are required to ensure that this requirement is met upon arrival.

Recommendations and best practices

- It is recommended that Group Leaders travelling with young learners have proven previous experience working with children and that they are trained in first aid.
- We recommend a ratio of 1 adult to 10 children in groups with young learners. We recognise that variations may be appropriate depending on factors such as total group size and number of young learners, presence of older siblings, and type of programme and accommodation.
- We encourage placing young learners in centres that align with recommended age ranges, where there are higher chances of having peers in the same age group and where our team will endeavour to design programmes which cater to their needs.
- It is advisable that young learners are accommodated in ensuite rooms. Twin rooms are also encouraged for this age group.
- It is advised that Group Leaders set up a buddy system whereby each young learner is paired with an older student buddy for guidance and support. Buddy systems are encouraged especially during excursions, where each young learner should be paired with a responsible older student or another young learner.
- It is recommended that Group Leader are prepared to facilitate direct communication with parents or guardians during the camp.

PLUS care guidelines

Essential protocols

- Young learners are not to be grouped with students 18 and above.
- PLUS will only accept young learners if they are part of a group and accompanied by Group Leaders.
- Accommodation arrangements must ensure that young learners are not housed in a room with anyone more than 2 years older.
- Teachers will be notified in advance about the presence of young learners in their classes.
- Teachers must immediately report to the Course Director if a young learner is absent from a lesson.
- All PLUS staff will receive training focused on the specific needs of young learners, including engagement, safeguarding, and safety.
- Comprehensive risk assessments and emergency evacuation procedures will be prepared, both taking into account the presence of young learners.

Recommended practices and procedures

- PLUS will prioritise housing young learners as close to their Group Leaders as possible for increased safety and oversight and separate from older students.
- In the absence of ensuite bedrooms, PLUS will endeavour to arrange separate bathroom facilities for young learners and older students as much as practicalities allow.
- Wherever feasible, young learners will not be placed in the same classrooms as students over 14 to ensure age-appropriate learning environments.
- Efforts will be made, within practical limits, to group young learners together in both lessons and activities.
- The leisure and academic programmes will consider and endeavour to integrate the unique needs and interests of young learners.
- Wherever possible, staff with experience in working with younger children will be allocated to centres with young learners.