

unifiedknowledge Practice - Policy & Guidance: **Co-operative and Extended Parental Supervision**

All unifiedknowledge Practices invite registered parents to engage in *Co-operative and Extended Parental Supervision* service, this underpins and blends with the educational objectives of the Practice. Some unifiedknowledge Practice courses require it as a fundamental aspect of the service agreement, thus overstanding (creative knowledge) of this policy and guidance is very important.

The policy is designed to compliment our Child Protection Policy. Schools Of Unified Learning's Child Protection Policy must be known and observed by all parents, staff and other parties directly relating to unifiedknowledge Practice (school) operations, it supersedes this Co-operative and Extended Parental Supervision Policy and Guidance statement.

Parental supervision is a parenting technique that involves looking after, or monitoring a child's activities and the environment (*gzat*) they are in. By the term '*parent*' we also include the *principal guardian* if the actual parent is not present.

unifiedknowledge Practice (Schools Of Unified Learning's approach to education) recognises a parent's right and need to share parental supervision and educational responsibilities for young children. Firstly there is an experience of personal, family and community development during these shared responsibilities, this is good in One's Self-development. Importantly we also know that younger children are generally incapable of looking after themselves consistently, and are generally not mature (competent) enough in making consistently informed decisions for their own well-being. For these reasons and more, they require supervision; observation, guidance and/or advice by their parents or another adult in loco parentis. We embrace this responsibility within a broader panAfrican ethos of education (bringing out the best from the learner in the context of community).

It is our observation that often in standard schooling (Western) there is a growing trend of schooling institutions degrading their main role and character to that of a child minding service rather than maintaining the fuller priority of its educational role which encompasses a duty of care. This trend appears to be related to issues of behaviour management and finances, the degradation (decay) of service tends to be a subtle and chronic process rooted in the history of how modern Western schooling started. We operate in a different way and course

Agreement to this policy is required during our school's enrolment process. With that all enrolled children over the age of 4 years and 9 months old are to be co-operatively supervised within the principles of this policy during the total period of Practice activities. *With all ages and at all times parents retain full responsibility to ensure that their child/ren (and the children in general) are receiving the best parental supervision.*

If at any time a person has a supervision concern the Teacher-in-Charge, designated Child Protection Officer or Practice management must be notified promptly. We take all matters of supervision and protection seriously and view these issues in the very broadest contexts (*hashima tehwagi asab*).

Key policy and guidance points:

1. At the most basic form, parental supervision is required to keep children from hurting themselves or others; to keep them safe from harm and dangerous situations. Very small children require continual supervision and care; lack of this constitutes neglect. Staying Safe: it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that no one is subjected to hurt; physically or mentally.
2. Maintaining the Freedom to be One's Self: It is our strongest intention that *Co-operative and Extended Parental Supervision* is not felt as *pressure* or *intrusion* by the young people or families gathered. That would be counter-productive. Where concerns are not serious or immediately dangerous it is wise to address matters in moderate and transparent ways. The Teacher-in-Charge or Practice management must be notified of any concerns. We encourage a learning environment where this is easy to do. Moderate matters can be managed with discretion and without overt formality if that is not required. At the same time all concerns must be raised promptly.
3. During the period of practice (learning) only enrolled parents/family members and authorised teaching staff should be allowed to enter the Practice space. To facilitate Co-operative and Extended Parental Supervision parents may sit-in on learning sessions; provisions, agreed protocols and the logistics for this will be facilitated by the Teacher-In-Charge and the Practice management.
4. Whilst it is natural for parents and family to gather at our Centres and enjoy social time together we do, as a matter of policy, call on all parents to be constantly 'present'; meaning aware. Parents are required to listen to and watch what is happening in the whole Practice space.
5. Unless it is part of a structured and managed learning process a child is not to be left in the care of older children. Older children are still children and often lack the judgement and common sense adults generally have. If this situation should occur, every effort must be made to notify an adult and establish appropriate supervision.
6. Our Equal Opportunities Policy affirms that negative discrimination on the grounds of race, sexuality, religion, gender, disability or age is unacceptable. It must be accepted by all enrolling families that our Practice spaces are environments (*gzat*) where this kind of behaviour, including verbal abuse, is not tolerated and is challenged by all of us (collectively) if it should occur.
7. For many young people teasing and challenging each other are common societal norms. Watch out if your child (or a child) expresses or experiences this, or tries to take up an inappropriate challenge. We require that parents are ready, willing and able to remind children of the lines (and dynamics) between confidence, fear, caution, bullying and negative / positive language.

8. Whilst everyone is responsible for supervising their own child at all times (embracing the ethos of *Co-operative and Extended Parental Supervision*) occasionally, the nature of some self-challenging activities can result in minor disputes and missed understandings amongst some youngsters. We consider challenge management a natural, normal and a vital part of childhood development and these situations present the skilled teacher / parent with precious opportunities to bring about profound learning experiences for all present. On the rare occasions when ad-hoc guidance is required, we rely on the nearest adult to intervene, call for assistance from another adult, defuse the situation and/or assist the youngster in re-establishing harmony and well-being in the space.
9. When Outside Ensure Constant Parental Supervision: Whilst every care is taken to be aware of safety and suitability of all equipment used by the children it is the responsibility of the parent to assess the safety of equipment not provided by the School. Playground equipment safety and environmental awareness is crucial to prevent injuries to children. Check that the ground surface, swings, slides and climbing/adventure equipment are working properly and are fit for the intended purpose. Please report any concerns to the Teacher-in-Charge or the Practice management who will in turn make a report to the appropriate caretakers. Any damage sustained to equipment or the environment we use must be reported immediately in order to prevent present or future injury to users. Ensure there is constant adult supervision when children are playing in playgrounds and open areas.
10. The School advises that it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure safe transition to and from the Practice Centre (school). We view this as apart of the overall School safety (*hashima tehwagi asab*) and it should be taken seriously by both parents and children. We recommend that parents, for their part, teach children to understand and practice group movement skills, road safety, public (ie. bus, train) transport safety as well as to observe School Ground Rules and the Village Values.

If children are to leave the Practice Centre with someone other than the registered person, notification of this should be given in writing in the first instance and in the case of an emergency by telephone call from the parent to the School. Mobile phone texts will not be accepted.

Knowing that children can take good care of themselves on the way to school, coming home from school or during school related excursions will give parents (and the community) peace of mind.