

Charles Darwin University

Child Care Centre

Parent Handbook



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MISSION STATEMENT

The Charles Darwin University Child Care Centre exists to provide a caring service in an educationally stimulating environment for the young children of (primarily) University students and staff, with the primary focus, on the individual child and his/her family.

The centre's encourages an 'OPEN DOOR PHILOSOPHY' where all family members are welcome to visit the centre at any time throughout the day.



ABOUT THE CENTRE

The Charles Darwin University Child Care Centre is administered by the Finance and Asset Services Division of the University.

The Centre is licensed for 50 children from preferably 6 weeks to 5 years and is for use by the students and staff of the University. If during the child's placement, parents complete courses and/or are no longer working for the University, the child's continued placement cannot be guaranteed.

The groupings are as follows:

Babies to approximately 12 months	10 children
Toddlers 12 months to approximately 2 years	10 children
2 to 3's	10 children
3 to 5's	20 children

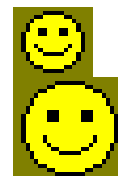
The Centre's policy is that children remain in their designated group until they are developmentally ready to move on to the next group. The room size will depend of the need of families. From time to time room capacity will change and this will be reflected by required, staff: child ratio's at all times.

This is only a general break down, and is dependant on the needs of the clients and the centre at the time.

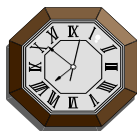
CHILD CARE CENTRE STAFF

Positions of staff at the centre:

- Manager *Qualified*
- Child Care Worker Level 4 *Qualified* (5 positions)
- Child Care Worker Level 2 (4 positions)
- Child Care Support Worker Level 2 (Cook)



It is the Centre's policy to employ staff who are qualified and experienced in the care and education of children. All staff are required to hold a current Senior First Aid Certificate and a current Fire Awareness Certificate and are required to attend in-service and training sessions to enhance their skills for working with young children. Relief staff may be employed at these times to enable staff to attend these sessions. Relief staff may also be employed when permanent staff are on rostered days off, sick leave or holidays.



HOURS OF OPERATION

The Centre is open between the hours of 7.30am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday. The Centre is closed on public holidays and for two weeks over the Christmas/New Year period. There is a Late Fee of \$5.00 per minute after 6pm.



ENROLMENTS

Full-time, daily and casual care is provided and children attend on their specified days and times only. Permanent changes in enrolment may not be possible until vacancies occur. **Public holidays cannot be substituted for alternate days as the Centre maintains only permanent bookings.** Parents may request an extra day due to their work commitments. This extra day will be added to the already booked days. An interview will be conducted with each family prior to admission at which time parents will complete all necessary documentation for enrolment.

STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

Throughout the year we have visits from students attending school and University along with volunteer workers interested in the field of early childhood. Making the Centre available to interested parties heightens the children's awareness of the community in which we live. Children enjoy the company of new and interesting people in their lives and therefore we feel it is an important part of the program to include students and volunteers where possible. The Centre is a learning environment for all. All volunteers or students are to have undergone a police clearance before commencing at the child care centre.

WHAT A GOOD CHILDCARE OFFERS



- Lots of affection and enjoyable adult company
- Opportunities to play with their friends and the toys they like
- Time to follow their interests, to explore and learn and to discover new toys, equipment, games and friends
- Time and places to be quiet, to relax and rest or be alone
- Freedom to express their feelings
- Clear and reasonable expectations of behaviour that is respectful of others
- Predictable timing of important events like snacks, lunch, sleep and going home
- A variety of different spaces are good for children
 - room for active, noisy play
 - places to sit quietly and get away from others for awhile
 - somewhere cosy to listen to stories and music
- A locker for each child to keep clothes and belongings
- Lots of natural light and fresh air
- A pleasant outlook to other rooms or the playground
- Attractive displays of children's paintings, creative work and photos
- A playground with many different types of equipment and places for children to explore alone and with friends
- Appropriate levels of staffing to ensure regulatory staff: children ratios are met
- Confident, positive staff who enjoy and are proud of their work
- Staff who are warm and positive towards children and fellow staff
- Staff who relate to children at their eye level
- Staff who care for all children equally, welcoming their different family and cultural backgrounds
- Staff who give praise, recognition and encouragement to all children and to each other
- Staff who are happy for you to pop into the Centre at any time and without an appointment



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Centre provides a nurturing environment with programs that are developmentally appropriate and enable children to learn, grow and live creatively. We recognise the importance of the parental role and our primary focus is on the individual child within the context of his/her family. Programs are largely unstructured and based on self selection of materials and experiences in order to meet the needs of the individual child as well as the needs of the group. We endeavour to provide as wide a selection of developmentally appropriate materials and resources as possible and children are encouraged to participate in all areas of the program. We recognise that children learn through playing. We endorse the concept of cross-cultural and non-discriminatory programs.

A program is displayed in each child's playroom. Parents are free to comment on and contribute to the program. Our general aims and objectives are:

- To provide a safe, comfortable and caring environment directed towards meeting each child's developmental needs
- Support and enhance the child's home life by respecting the needs, composition and relationships with family groups
- To encourage and plan for interaction among all age groups within the Centre, to support sibling relationships and to promote caring and tolerance both individually and as a group
- Promote the development of positive attitudes towards self and others
- Maintain regular communication with parents, including the exchange of information concerning the child's development
- Encourage participation by parents and the community in the activities of the Centre
- Hold regular staff meetings, open discussions and informal communication sessions, so that all staff members interact and participate in planning and evaluating the program
- Provide opportunities for staff to develop and further their own skills and abilities in relation to preparing, planning and implementing developmentally appropriate programs for children
- Integrate learning and education about human diversity which includes culture, ethnicity, gender and disabilities and guide children towards valuing and respecting such diversity
- Help children realise their full potential



BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Children are at all times encouraged to act in a manner which promotes harmony, well-being and respect for themselves, others and the environment. Stern punishment, smacking or debasement of children is not permitted, nor is any other form of punishment which results in the humiliation or frightening of a child. Children are guided positively towards more acceptable behaviour by being given choices which are acceptable, thereby promoting self-discipline as a learning experience. While pointing out the consequences of their actions, children must be taught gently and firmly to control their own behaviour. They must be given a minimum of clear guidelines as too many rules confuse. Reminders are given as memories are short as they develop these skills. Children are encouraged to settle their own disputes with positive adult guidance.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff have certain responsibilities to the families who use the service. These include:

- A commitment to encourage a full staff/parent partnership
- To provide a quality program to encourage the development of young children
- To follow policies about safety, hygiene and the well-being of children as set out in the Centre Operating Plan
- To incorporate, whenever possible, parents' concerns and preferences with the care of their children
- To convey information about a child to the parent
- To adhere to the Australian Early Childhood Association Code of Ethics for Early Childhood Staff
- To adhere to the principles underlying the National Childcare Accreditation System in which this Centre participates
- To abide by the Mandatory Reporting policy and procedures under the current Community Welfare Act and the Care & Protection of Children Act – Where any person who believes that a child is suffering (or has suffered) maltreatment is required to report this fact to either an officer from Family and Children's Services NT or a member of the police force.



NUTRITION

The Centre provides morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and a late afternoon tea. Children are also able to have breakfast at the Centre up to 8.30am if it is provided by parents.

Drinks are provided at each meal- time and cold water is freely available at all times.

Food at the Centre is selected on the basis of providing children with a balanced diet, which is low-fat and free of salt and preservatives.

Parents are welcome to offer suggestions and recipes which are family favourites or special to their culture. Please note any special dietary requirements on the enrolment form and also inform the Child Care Centre Support Worker - Cook. **Please do not bring any sweets, cordial or soft drinks to the Centre** (special occasions accepted).



EXCURSIONS

The program endeavours to provide meaningful experiences for children. Not all situations can be provided for in the Centre however, so from time to time excursions are organised.

For safety reasons we aim for an adult: child ratio of 1:3. It is not compulsory for children to attend these excursions, but we believe they are beneficial for young children. If you have any hesitation please air your concern with the Manager. Parents are encouraged to be involved. If any other family member is interested, they are welcome to lend a helping hand as well!

If an excursion is planned, a note will be displayed adjacent to the sign in/out sheets in each room. You **must** sign next to your child's name if you wish for him or her to attend.



DAILY REQUIREMENTS

Children do get dirty as they participate in activities. It is recommended that comfortable, easy to wash play clothes are worn.

All items brought into the Centre should be clearly named and be recognisable by the child. Parents are asked to check their child's belongings each afternoon. Lost and unnamed articles will be placed in a "Lost Property Box" in the front foyer. Please check this frequently.

Please provide *each day*:

- 2 changes (or more) of clothing including underwear
- Enough nappies, trainer pants, etc. for each day (if applicable) plus plastic shopping bags for storage of the above

Please note:

- Sun hats (are provided by the centre and remain the child care centre's property). When children leave, the hats will be allocated to another child. Hats are washed weekly and are not shared between children. The nursery is an exception. Parents must provide appropriate hats.



HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

With a large number of children at the Centre at any one time, it is inevitable that children will come into contact with a variety of ailments and may have regular colds.

However, if your child has a contagious illness such as conjunctivitis, diarrhoea, vomiting, etc, for the health and safety of other children and the staff, he/she will not be able to attend the Centre. Please refer to the attached - Schedule 1.

It is suggested that parents arrange alternative care to cover the times their child is unable to attend the Centre.

It is advisable that all children receive vaccinations as per the Territory Health Department's recommendations. This will help to ensure your child's well-being. We require proof of your child's immunisation record. If this has not been provided, they will be excluded from the Centre should there be an outbreak of a disease that requires exclusion.

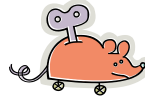
For further information, please refer to our Health and Safety Policies and Procedures in the Centre's Operating Plan.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Any special days for your child such as birthdays and any other significant days are acknowledged at the Centre. Cultural days that have special meaning to your family also will be incorporated into the program. Please make arrangements with the Staff before the day if we need to do any special preparation.

TOYS AND SPECIAL BELONGINGS



We request that you do not bring these into the Centre as they can be easily lost or broken. Staff cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage.



PARENT INFORMATION

Each child will be allocated a “pocket” where all ongoing information will be supplied, including the Centre’s newsletter, fee statements and receipts.

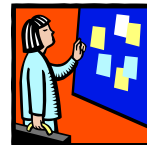
Check notice-boards in your child’s room regularly for items of common interest and announcements. Each room provides an information board for parent’s to peruse.

Communication book, for parents and staff, to share information.

Incident/accident book, for minor accidents, that occur during the day. Parents are required to sign the book acknowledging they are aware of the incident.

Medication book - this book is to ensure the correct medication is given to a child with parent’s authorization. *Only Prescribed Medication* can be administered by staff. Parents and care-givers are required to sign the book in acknowledgement.

The Manager and staff are also happy to talk with parents on a daily basis. Should you have any concerns relating to any aspect of the service or programs, they can be referred to the immediate staff member in charge of your child’s group and/or the Centre’s Manager.



PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

To enable the Centre to run smoothly and to be of benefit to all, parents are asked to:

- Fill in the sign in/out sheets. This is a legal document and is located in each child’s playroom
- Occasionally notices are placed adjacent to the sign in/out sheets eg. excursion notices. Please read and sign these
- Convey daily information regarding your child to the appropriate staff member or leave a message in the diary located in each room
- Please notify the Centre if your child will not be attending
- Fill in the medication form located in each child’s playroom should this be necessary. We do not supply any medication. **Please note that all medication must be handed to a staff member for safe storage and NOT kept in a child’s bag, or fridge in the Children’s Dining Room**
- Label your child’s clothing. This helps relief staff who may not “recognise” certain clothing
- Pay fees when they are due. Please discuss this with the Manager should this not be possible and make alternative arrangements
- Please notify staff when you are leaving or collecting your child. If a child is to be collected by someone other than parents or an “authorised” person, prior notification must be given. **An unauthorised person will not be permitted to collect your child**
- Keep enrolment details up-to-date, including emergency contacts
- Observe the Centre’s hours of operation. A late fee of \$5 per minute will be applicable
- Attend monthly Parent Group/Accreditation Meetings and any social functions as organised by this committee
- Assist in the collection of resource materials for prop boxes, collage, etc
- Share special skills eg. music, story telling, cooking, puppet making

CHILD CARE BENEFIT

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is a payment made by the Australian Government to families to assist with the cost of childcare. This is available to all eligible families on a means tested basis.

Therefore all families are encouraged to contact the Family Assistance Office (FAO) to process a claim for CCB. The FAO allocates a Customer Reference Number (CRNs), for both the parent/guardian and the child, when the family lodges a claim for CCB as reduced fees or notifies their intent to claim CCB as a lump sum (following the end of the financial year).

Families bring this information to the Centre and a formal enrolment is created for the child. This enrolment provides the link between the family; the service; The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the FAO.

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is paid in certain circumstances when a family is charged for care that the child does not attend.

Under the Child Care Management System (CCCMS) each child is eligible to receive CCB for an initial 42 days of absence per financial year. This can be used for any reason and without proof of circumstances (including public holidays).

Once the initial 42 absence days have been exhausted additional absences may be claimed in certain circumstances:

- Absence, due to illness, of the child, parent or sibling. This MUST be supported by a Medical Certificate.
- An outbreak of infectious disease when the child is not immunised.
- A parent being on a rotating shift or rostered day off.
- A temporary closure of the school or a pupil free day.
- Due to a local emergency, the service is closed or the child is unable to travel to the service.
- Shared custody arrangements due to a court order, a registered parenting plan, a parenting plan or a parenting order.
- Attendance at preschool.
- Exceptional circumstances.



ABOUT THE FEES

Payment of fees: These must be kept one week in advance at all times. Invoices (covering four weeks), will be issued prior to the end of the month and cheque payments are to be put into the fees box in the front foyer.

Secure online payments can be made via <http://www.payonline.cdu.edu.au/> and there is an eftpos machine available for parent's convenience.

Any parent withdrawing their child from the Centre is required to give two weeks paid notice. Fees are charged for all absences from booked care. A Full Fee will be charged for holiday absences.

Please refer to Schedule 3 for more detailed information on fee costs and the policy requirements.

Please note that No cash payments will be accepted. Cash payments can be made at the University cashier situated on the ground floor of Orange 1. Care Benefit

REGULATIONS GOVERNING VACANT CHILDCARE PLACES

Our centre adheres to The Priority of Access Guidelines which must be used to allocate available child care places where there are more families requiring care than the service can offer.

The following priorities must be adhered to when allocating a place:

Priority 1: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect

Priority 2. a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work, training, study test.

Priority 3: any other child.

Priority should also be given for the following categories when positions become available.

1. aboriginal and Torrs Strait Islander families
2. families which include a disabled person
3. families with a individual, low income or on family support. Low income means an adjusted taxable income below \$37,960.
4. Families from non-English speaking background.
5. Socially isolated families
6. Single parent families

SCHEDULE 1 - MEDICAL EXCLUSION LIST

	DISEASE	EXCLUSION FROM THE CENTRE
1	Influenza (type of cold/fever)	Re-admit when child feels well and temperature is normal
2	Gastroenteritis (diarrhoea/vomiting)	Re-admit when diarrhoea/vomiting ceases for at least 24 hours and child is well.
3	Conjunctivitis	Exclude until infection is treated and cleared. Usually 2 days.
4	Impetigo (school sores)	Until the lesions are dry and have been treated.
5	Ringworm	Exclude for 2 days after treatment has commenced.
6	German Measles (Rubella)	Until medical certificate is provided, otherwise exclude one week from onset.
7	Pertussis (Whooping cough)	Should be excluded from the Centre for 4 weeks unless a medical certificate is provided.
8	Measles (Morbilli)	Until medical certificate is provided, otherwise exclude for 2 weeks from onset.
9	Chicken Pox	Exclude until lesions have dried, at least 7 days after the beginning of illness.
10	Mumps	Until medical certificate is supplied, otherwise 2 weeks from onset.
11	Infective Hepatitis	Re-admit on production of a medical certificate.
12	Diphtheria	Re-admit on production of a medical certificate.
13	Polio-myelitis	Re-admit on production of a medical certificate.
14	Head Lice	Re-admit after appropriate treatment and all lice and nits (eggs) are dead.

NOTE:

Where this is doubt about attendance, the final decision rests with the Manager, who may require a Doctor's Certificate.

Panadol will only be administered to children with a letter from a medical practitioner.

SCHEDULE 2 – IMMUNISATION SCHEDULE

Please refer to the immunisation schedule below.

It is important the centre has up to date records of your child's immunisations.

If a notifiable disease e.g. measles is reported or found within the centre any child without an up to date immunisation record will be excluded from the centre.

Age	Vaccine
Birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis B (hepB)
2 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis B (hepB) • Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough (acellular pertussis) (DTPa) • <i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib) • Polio (inactivated poliomyelitis IPV) • Pneumococcal conjugate (7vPCV) • Rotavirus
4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis B (hepB) • Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough (acellular pertussis) (DTPa) • <i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib) • Polio (inactivated poliomyelitis IPV) • Pneumococcal conjugate (7vPCV) • Rotavirus
6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis B (hepB) • Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough (acellular pertussis) (DTPa) • <i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib) • Polio (inactivated poliomyelitis) (IPV) • Pneumococcal conjugate (7vPCV) • Rotavirus
12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis B (hepB)<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib) • Measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) • Meningococcal C (MenCCV)
12 - 24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis A (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in high risk areas)
18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chickenpox (varicella) (VZV)
18 - 24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pneumococcal polysaccharide (23vPPV) (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in high risk areas) • Hepatitis A (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in high risk areas)
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough (acellular pertussis) (DTPa) • Measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) • Polio (inactivated poliomyelitis) (IPV)
<p>For further information please refer to the website www.immunise.health.gov.au</p>	

SCHEDULE 3 – A SUMMARY OF HOURS, FEES & CONDITIONS

Hours of Operation

7.30am - 6.00pm

Centre Fees and Conditions – valid from January 2010

Weekly fee	\$300 / Student \$5 Discount
Daily fee	\$70
Per hour	\$15

- Childcare Benefit will apply to those families who are eligible. The Centre can provide advice on how to apply for Childcare Benefit with Centre link. Full fees will apply if proof of notice of assessment has not been provided. Advice on allowable absences with Childcare Benefit will also be given.
- As per the Centre Policy, fees (full-time or part-time) must be kept **ONE WEEK** in advance at all times.
- Fees for casual care are to be paid fully in advance i.e. Payment is to be made at the beginning of day of care or week of care.
- Cheque payments can be made via the fee payment box in reception at any time. No Cash payments accepted at the centre but EFTPOS facilities are available and secure online payments can be made via <http://www.payonline.cdu.edu.au/>.
- A late fee of \$5 per minute will be charged for children not collected by 6.00pm. This fee will be waived on the first occasion **only** if the Centre has been notified prior to 5.45pm on that day and there are extenuating circumstances.
- Two weeks notice must be given to the Centre to alter bookings. These will be subject to availability in the age groupings.
- Invoices plus overdue fee reminder letters will be issued weekly to those families whose fee payments are not one week in advance at all times. After 3 weeks of non-payment, parents will be requested to sign for a fourth letter and care for children of these families will cease. Prosecution may occur if accounts are not settled. Student's results may be withheld until all fees are paid in full.
- Please Note***Children having Recreational Leave or Holidays from the centre. Full fees are applicable. Notice must be given to the Manager at least one week prior by filling out the appropriate documentation which can be found in the reception area.
- All un-kept bookings missed through sickness or misfortune must be paid for in full.
- Fees are charged for booked time. Extra time is charged at the hourly rate. Days can not be exchanged if unable to attend. This will be treated as an extra day and daily fees are applicable.