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OUR VISION (What we want to achieve)
To provide an inclusive, safe, stimulating and caring environment for our community by nurturing each individual’s sense of belonging, being and becoming

OUR VALUES (The things we hold important)
At University Preschool & Child Care Centre we embrace the child and value:

- The period of childhood as a unique and important stage of life;
- Play as being integral to the way in which children learn;
- The child’s family, cultural heritage and the wider community and the import role they play in the development of the child;
- Opportunities to work collaboratively with families & community to enrich the children’s lives and their learning, and give support to each child & family
- The environment and the role it plays in stimulating the imagination, promoting creativity and enhancing aesthetic development and an appreciation of nature

ABOUT THE CENTRE

Background
In 1967, ANU staff members requested the ANU General Staff Association to investigate a proposal to establish a child care centre on campus. At the time, there was a lack of child care places in the ACT, particularly for babies. The Centre opened in March 1969, as a result of the University agreeing to make space available on campus. The ongoing growth and development of the Centre has been due largely to the community contribution of many people over the years. Financial assistance, by way of loans for alterations, was made available by several staff associations on campus, as well as voluntary contributions by parents and interested persons. Over the years, the Centre has also been successful in obtaining Commonwealth Upgrading Grants to improve areas of the Centre, such as the playgrounds.

Environment
The Centre is located on the campus of The Australian National University by the shores of Lake Burley Griffin. The Centre occupies two buildings with spacious rooms and playgrounds. The layout of the buildings allows for six age groupings of children. The buildings are of historical interest in the Canberra region and are heritage listed. We aim to create a comfortable atmosphere that offers acceptance and support, and an environment that nurtures the development and care of each child.

Incorporation
The University Preschool and Child Care Centre Incorporated is an association incorporated under the ACT Associations Incorporation Ordinance 1953. Parents whose children are currently enrolled in the Centre are members of the Association with voting rights. An audit of the Association’s financial records occurs annually. The financial records and the results of the audit are presented to the Annual General Meeting each March. Copies of these documents are then lodged with the ACT Office of the Registrar-General, along with details about the members of the management Committee.

Provider Approval
UPCCC has been granted approval to operate as a Provider of a Child Care service under the Education and Care Services National Law (ACT) Act 2011 and are subject to the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, which specify certain conditions that must be met such as: staff/child ratios; staffing qualifications; health and safety measures; buildings and facilities; insurance; programs and activities for the children; and the Management of the Centre. Compliance checks of the Centre are conducted annually by an appointed Child Care Adviser.

Any family that is concerned about any of the practices, policies or procedures of the Centre may contact Children’s Services on 6207 1114
**National Quality Framework (NQF)**

The National Quality Framework took effect on 1 January 2012 replacing existing state and territory licensing and national quality assurance processes. The NQF aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvements in education and care services through the National Quality Standards which comprise seven quality areas, Educational program and practice; Children’s health and safety; Physical environment; Staffing arrangements; Relationships with children; Collaborative partnership with families and communities; Leadership and service management. Reviews are conducted at the Centre annually and randomly by an appointed Child Care Adviser.

**STAFF**

All staff at University Preschool and Child Care Centre hold relevant qualifications and have extensive experience working with children.

Our Management Committee recognises the importance of ongoing professional development to ensuring that our staff are knowledgeable about current thinking and best practice in early childhood care and education.

Throughout the year Staff regularly attend professional and the Centre closes for one day a year so that all staff can participate in a day of professional development tailored to the needs of the staff and centre.

All permanent staff hold current first aid certificates

During the hours of operation, the Centre maintains educator/child ratios of:

- 1 educator to every 4 children under the age of two years
- 1 educator to every 5 children aged over two years to three years;
- 1 educator to every 11 children aged three years and over.

All educators hold a minimum of Certificate 3 in Children’s Services or are studying towards this and one in every two educators holds or is studying towards one of the following qualifications:

- a Diploma in Children’s Services; or
- an Advanced Diploma in Children’s Services; or
- a Bachelor of Education Early Childhood (4 year degree); or
- a Bachelor of Teaching Birth to 5 years (3 year degree).

A minimum of two educators, one of, whom must be qualified, is in attendance at the Centre at the beginning and end of each day.

**Staff Meetings and Staff Development**

These are held at least every six weeks and provision is made for staff development. It is important that staff are allocated time for information sharing and keeping up to date with current child rearing practices and theories.

Each year the centre closed for 2 days so that the staff can participate in Staff Development and curriculum development. These are usually the first day for the year and the last Friday of the end of term three school holidays.

**Director**

The Centre Director is employed full-time. The Director is responsible for all business relating to the day-to-day running of the service. If you have matters you would like to discuss, please contact the Director. The Director ensures that regular newsletters and notices go out to parents to keep communication and information flowing.
ADMINISTRATION

The Director administers the Centre with the assistance of the Assistant Director/Educational Leader and the Administration Assistant on a day-to-day basis. The Management Committee monitors the annual budget and fees are set with a view to maintaining quality and affordable child care for families. The Management Committee continually evaluates policies, programs and practices and parents are kept up-to-date by way of Newsletters, Minutes of Meetings and Reports, which are distributed via email to all families and included in the monthly Centre Newsletter. Parents have a mail pocket in their child’s room. The Director in consultation with educators and parents manages the waiting list and movements of children from one group to another. To maintain the Centre’s financial viability as a non-profit organisation, the filling of vacant places holds priority. Several factors must be considered before children already in the Centre can be moved to another group. The Director has discretion in this matter.

The Centre Management has a duty of care to all members of the Association. This duty of care is addressed through:

- The Centre Handbook (this publication)
- Centre Policies
- Insurance Policies
- Centre Administration Records
- Display of Certificates and Licences.

Child Care Benefit (CCB) & Child Care Rebate (CCR)

Eligible Parents with children enrolled in the Centre are able to apply for fee assistance in the form of Child Care Benefit (CCB) or Child Care Rebate (CCR). To be eligible for assistance you must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident working or studying, or be in receipt of a scholarship or education grant paid through the Commonwealth Government. Further information about this is available through the Centre Administration.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Management Committee comprises representatives of both parents and staff. The Centre encourages parent involvement in decisions on policy and curriculum issues. The Committee aims to create a comfortable and supportive environment for parents and strives for open communication and partnerships between parents and staff.

The Committee recognises that there is a strong need to:

- Maintain a high standard of qualified and experienced staff;
- Monitor staff employment conditions and meet award requirements as a minimum;
- Monitor staff performance and evaluate curriculum;
- Ensure that staff development through both in-house training and outsource training is available;
- Involve staff in decision making process for the Centre; and
- Create a supportive, enthusiastic and positive atmosphere for the staff, which encourages personal initiative and co-operation.

The Centre, as a voluntary association, has a written constitution that establishes the Association, provides for membership, and creates a Board to manage the affairs of the Association. The Board is called the Management Committee and comprises:

- President;
- Vice-President;
- Treasurer;
- Secretary;
- Public Officer;
- Director;
- Assistant Director;
- 4 staff representatives; and
- Other parent members.
The Committee is responsible for the affairs of the Centre and works closely with the Director. The Committee usually meets monthly and has several sub-committees to carry on continuing work. The sub-committees often co-opt parents and staff as members. The Committee sets fees and approves major expenditure. The Committee also selects the Director, Assistant Director and Section Leaders. It is ultimately responsible for solving any serious problems in staff relations, staff-parent relations, and parent-Centre relations.

Annual General Meeting

This is held every March and all parents are invited to attend. Office bearers of the Management Committee present reports. The Director also presents a report. Parents are invited to nominate for a vacant position on the Management Committee.

Educational Program

Sections

The children are grouped together in sections – Nursery, Toddler & Preschool that reflect the age and development of the children. Each section has 2 rooms a younger and older room and each room has two educators – one person with early childhood qualifications or a Diploma in Children’s Services and the other with or studying towards a Certificate 3 in Children’s Services. Children progress through the Centre as they develop, and as places become available. When determining moves consideration is given to gentle change and progression and the friendships a child has established with other children and Educators which are important for developing a strong sense of identity, self-confidence and security. A child’s behaviour may also be used as an indicator that they are ready for the more challenging experiences that an older group can provide. Before any move discussions will take place between parents, the educators involved and the Director in order to determine the suitability of a move.

The daily Journal is always displayed in the rooms for the information of parents. In addition, parents will receive a written information sheet containing a summary of the routine of the Section.

Curriculum

Each section aims to provide a program of challenging and appropriate experiences for each age group. Qualified staff plan and implement a play-based indoor/outdoor program. The Curriculum is based on the Early Years Learning Framework – Belonging, Being & Becoming, a Vision for Children’s Learning. This is a National Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood which was adopted in July 2009. As part of the programme planning process staff record observations to ensure each child’s individual needs and interests are being met. These observations and samples of the older children’s work are available for parents at all times, and are passed onto parents when their child leaves the Centre. The Nursery Section keeps individual record books for each child, so that parents can read about their child’s day at the Centre every day, with information, such as feeding and sleeping routines also noted.

Children’s learning

We recognise that children learn concepts through self-initiated play and materials. Time is provided for the children to select their own activities during the day. Self-help skills are encouraged, developing the child’s confidence and competence in managing their environment.

The Centre recognises the cultural diversity in Australia and aims to provide opportunities for the children to learn about and respect other cultures. The Centre does not discriminate on the basis of gender, ethnic background, religion or social origin.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

There are various ways you can become involved in the Centre:

- Stand for election to the Management Committee;
- Offer your skills and knowledge in a variety of practical ways;
- Participate as a member of sub-committees;
- Contribute to the diversity of experiences for the children attending the Centre;
- Introduce your cultural traditions and celebrations;
- Attend the Parent Evenings that are held throughout the year;
Parent/ Educator Interactions

The relationship between parents and educators is one of partnership in child rearing and care based on mutual respect, courtesy and understanding. Difficulties can arise due to misunderstandings or pressures, and it is our aim to ensure that the relationship is maintained through supportive and considerate discussion. Confidentiality is essential in this environment to protect the privacy of individuals. Staff and parents are requested to maintain this at all times.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

If a serious problem arises, first speak to the people concerned to attempt to resolve the problem. If this is not successful, speak to the Director who will arrange to speak to everyone concerned in the issue and assist with resolution. If this too is unsuccessful, the Director, at your request and with your permission, can take the matter up with a Disputes Sub-Committee comprising the Director, a staff representative, and a parent representative. In the event that the Disputes Sub-Committee is unable to resolve the problem, the full Management Committee becomes involved. (This would occur only if the parties refused to accept the decision of the Disputes Sub-Committee, or if a general policy decision is required.) If this happens, the parties are given the opportunity to present their views at a meeting of the Management Committee before any final decision is made.

The Management Committee reserves the right to exclude any parent or child from the Centre, who persistently shows a lack of respect for staff, persistently breaches or disregards the Policies and Practices of the Centre, or whose behaviour is threatening or endangering the safety and wellbeing of others in attendance. In the event of such an occurrence, two weeks notice in writing will be given, with an outline of the basis on which the decision was made.

If parents feel that their grievance is not being dealt with appropriately they should seek help from an external body.

Human Rights Commission – Complaints
Phone 6205 2222
Fax 6207 1034
TTY 6205 1666
Email human.rights@act.gov.au
Website: www.hrc.act.gov.au

Children’s Policy and Regulation Unit
Office for Children Youth & Family Support
Phone 6207 1114
Fax: 6207 1128
Email:ocyfschildrensserv@act.gov.au
Post: GPO Box 158 Canberra City 2601

OUR COMMUNITY

The Centre aims to maintain a sense of community among the busy daily routines. We have an “Open Door Policy” and welcome our families to visit at any time. We also invite you to build happy memories and positive relationships by participating in the social activities held throughout each year. These occasions take place as community teas, parent/staff evenings, a Christmas Party, small fetes, fundraising, working bees and a number of other incidental events. We welcome your family to the Centre.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Centre is open 51 weeks per year, five days a week, between the hours of 7:45am and 5:45pm. For one week over Christmas and New Year, the Centre is closed.

FEES

Payment of Fees

Parents are required to pay for the full 51 weeks of operation while their child is enrolled at the Centre. There are no concessions for holiday breaks.
Two full weeks written notice is required when children will be leaving the Centre. This should be addressed to the Director. If written notice is not received, fees will automatically apply. If required, children of school age can continue their care until the starting school date. Arrangements can be made through the Centre Administration.

Salary Sacrificing

Parents who are members of ANU staff are able to take advantage of salary sacrificing from 1 January 1998. Arrangements can be made through the Centre Administration.

Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate

This is available through Centrelink. Information on determining eligibility and information on applying can be found on the Department of Human Services Website. The benefits are assessed according to income and can be paid directly to the Centre to reduce your fee payment or received as a lump sum.

WAITING LIST

The Centre maintains an enrolment waiting list for children. Applications can be made by filling in an application form on the Website or by visiting the Centre and completing an application form. Priority of access guidelines are in place. ANU staff and students are given priority over parents working, studying, or looking for work in the wider community. Siblings of children already in attendance and children of UPCCC staff are also given priority.

STARTING AT THE CENTRE

To acquaint you and your child with the Centre, we suggest that you organise a brief visit before commencing. Take this time to become acquainted with the Educators who will be caring for your child, the Centre routines and the general environment. This is also a time to familiarise the Educators with your child’s personal needs and routines. We recommend that you organise as many brief visits as possible prior to starting, especially if your child will be in one of the under 3 year old groups. On the first day, it is a good idea to stay at least for the first hour. We suggest that you advise the staff member in charge when you are intending to leave and they will assist you. It is not unusual for both parents and children to experience some separation anxiety at first. Experience has shown that it is in the best interests of the child to make the separation calmly and briefly.

Arriving and Departing With Your Children

On arrival, please hand your child over to a known Educator. Never leave your children at the Centre without informing an Educator. You are also legally required to sign your children in and out of our care, and a book is provided for this in each area. Children will not be released to any adult who is not nominated on the enrolment form. If you require someone to pick your child up who is not nominated, a letter of authority signed by you is required. The Director must sight this written authority or the staff member in charge of the Section before the child can be released. This also applies in an emergency. Further details relating to this matter are explained on the enrolment form in the Parent Permission Section. As a child care provider we must always act within our duty of care to protect the child.

**IF YOU ARE KEEPING YOUR CHILD HOME FOR A DAY.....**

We would you notifying the section/centre that you child will not be attending....such a courtesy call is particularly important if your child is not able to attend for health reasons, as this may be of significance to other children and staff in the centre.

Late Collection of Children

The Centre has a policy relating to late collection of children. Please note that if children are not collected from the Centre before closing time, extra fee loadings will apply and will appear on your next account for fees. Further information about this is available at enrolment.

Change of Personal Details

Please inform the Centre Administration of any changes to your address, telephone numbers and emergency contacts. It is important that we always have current emergency contact numbers.
Personal Belongings

Each child is provided with a locker, hook, or basket for personal belongings. We suggest you provide your child with a soft school bag with at least two changes of clothing, several if they are a baby. Food should be stored in separate small containers for each serving and marked with your child’s name.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

All children at times exhibit what is considered unacceptable behaviour in a group situation. Staff do encourage socially acceptable behaviour and develop empathy using positive reinforcement and setting of clear guidelines and limits. Children are not punished or spoken to harshly – rather staff model appropriate behaviour and introduce older children to simple conflict resolution skills. Children are given strategies to encourage the use of communication to resolve difficulties rather than resorting to unacceptable behaviour such as hitting or biting.

Biting can occur particularly during the toddler stage. Educators take Measures to ensure biting is prevented and ‘biters’ receive firm, but kind, expressions from staff that this is unacceptable. All children wish to ‘belong’ to their social group and will learn in time to modify their behaviour if provided with direct guidance and support. If biting or hitting continues, the child is separated from the rest of the group for a few minutes but remains within view. This is not meant to be a punishment, but act as a ‘conditioner’ that ‘when you bite or hit you won’t be included because it hurts’. The environment in each room is arranged to ensure that harmony prevails as much as possible. Activities are provided which keep children engaged and occupied and allow for self-expression.

If a child’s behaviour is causing above average concern, the Director will contact the parents and arrange a time for discussion, to develop cohesive strategies for managing the behaviour and supporting the child during this period. This is part of the child care partnership between parents and staff.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health Policy

Strict adherence to the Centre’s Health Policies are necessary to keep cross-infection to a minimum. Exclusion protocols apply. These are outlined in our Management of Illness policy and our Outbreaks and Exclusions Policy. When your child appears to be very sick or has a temperature of 38ºC or above, we will contact you immediately and ask you to take your child home and/or seek medical attention. We must act in the best interests of the child in this matter.

All children attending the Centre must be fully immunised. Please advise the Centre if your child has allergies to food or medication.

Medications must always be handed to a section educator and the appropriate Administration of Medication Form filled in and signed by parent. NEVER leave medication in your child’s bag. The Centre is only allowed to administer prescribed drugs. Non-prescribed medications will only be administered if:

1) advised by a medical practitioner;
2) the medication is within the use-by date;
3) the medication does not contain Paracetamol; and
4) multiple medications have been acknowledged in writing by a medical practitioner.

Children must be EXCLUDED from the Centre whilst taking the following medications:

- Flagyl (used in the treatment of Giardia)
- Koapectate

Safety

The Centre must meet standard safety requirements to remain a licensed service. Insurance policies are held by the Centre to cover public liability, worker’s compensation, and professional indemnity, fire and property loss/ damage. Gates, fences and glass panels at the Centre meet the national safety standards.
All chemicals are locked away in an area separate from the children’s play areas. Cleaning materials used in the areas are always kept on high shelves out of reach of the children. Fire and emergency evacuation procedures are posted around the Centre and regular fire and lock-down drills occur throughout the year. The University’s Fire Safety Manager supervises these drills as well as providing training to the Centre staff. In the case of an emergency evacuation, police and emergency services are involved. The police supervise the contact of parents and advise on the whereabouts of children for collection. ANU Security are also involved for assistance and information.

When entering and leaving the Centre ALWAYS check that gates and doors are closed. Once children are signed out of the Centre they are your responsibility – this includes the car-park area.

Please do not allow your children to bring dangerous items to the Centre such as:

- Plastic wrap on food;
- Glass;
- Ropes, laces, capes;
- Toxic substances;
- Medication;
- Small beads;
- Sharp items, including pencils;
- Rubber bands and balloons;
- Matches; or
- Nuts of any description.

Pets

We have a policy regarding Inclusion of Animals in the Centre. If you wish your child to bring a pet to the centre, please discuss this first with the Section Leader for your child’s Section or one of their Educators.