

ABOUT US

WELCOME TO KIDS' UNI

Welcome and thank you for enrolling your child with Kids' Uni.

We look forward to establishing an ongoing relationship with you, whether this is your first child enrolling, or if you have had other children enrolled with us previously.

OUR HISTORY

Kids' Uni commenced when a parent co-operative began to operate child minding on the University of Wollongong campus in a disused hockey shed during the early 1970s.

Stage 2 of Kids' Uni was opened in March 1984 with two rooms catering for children 0 – 5 years of age and is now known as Kids' Uni North.

Our after school service for school children was held in the then Union Board Room and offered both After School and Vacation Care before it was relocated to Innovation Campus. This service closed at the end of 2019 to make way for the addition of another long day care space located at Innovation Campus.

Stage 3 of Kids' Uni on Wollongong campus opened in June 1994 to accommodate this rapidly expanding program and a bus service was introduced to pick up children from nearby schools for After School Care.

The next stage was the opening of Kids' Uni South in February 1997 to provide for increasing demand for childcare places.

In 2007 UOW Pulse (formerly Wollongong UniCentre) entered into a management agreement with the Board of South Coast Workers Child Care Centre (SCWCCC, Ellen Street, Wollongong). In June 2008 UOW Pulse acquired SCWCCC with the view to provide high quality care and education for children in the city centre. In 2017, SCWCCC changed its name to Kids' Uni CBD.

In 2019, Kids' Uni iC Long Day Care, and also our Kids' Uni Early Intervention Service opened their doors to meet the growing needs of the campus and broader community.

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of UOW Pulse consists of both appointed and elected Directors, as governed by the UOW Pulse Constitution. The Board determines policy and by-laws for the operation of the company. The Board is comprised of a variety of professionals who are committed to providing high quality services for the campus and its community, including Childrens Services. The Board of UOW Pulse meets six times per year.

OUR ORGANISATION

Kids' Uni is operated by UOW Pulse Ltd. We have a strong commitment to high quality care and education for children.

We are committed to ongoing evaluation and continual improvement. We value and respect the professionalism of educators by resourcing professional development, providing good working conditions and encouraging staff to participate in managerial decision-making.

At Kids' Uni we are advocate for families and children. Our management will work with families, form partnerships and collaborate in decision-making.

OUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Our philosophy is developed with a commitment to excellence in the provision of early childhood education and care for children aged 6 weeks to 6 years.

Developed by educators and families, it encompasses all aspects of our work with children and families. Our philosophical beliefs guide our practices and draw attention to the educational theory that sits behind our work with your children.

Our individualised service philosophies are displayed within the services and are reviewed annually.

OUR SERVICES

Kids' Uni operates three Early Education and Care centres catering for children aged 6 weeks to 6 years, and one long day care centre catering for children aged 3 to 6 years. We cater for approximately 220 children across our Education and Care centres each day.

Our Early Intervention Service is located on Wollongong Campus and caters for children with additional needs. This is a clinic that caters for children by appointment only. The service includes speech therapy, occupational therapy, and intervention for children with autism using the Early Start Denver model approach.

KIDS' UNI CENTRE OPERATING HOURS

Kids' Uni North, Kids' Uni South and Kids' Uni CBD: 7.30 am – 6.00 pm

Kids' Uni iC: 8:00am – 6:00pm

Kids' Uni Early Intervention: by appointment only.

Our centres operate 50 weeks per year.

All Education and Care services offer occasional care when positions are available.

Please contact administration staff in the General Office for enquiries ph: 4221 8035.

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK (NQF)

The National Quality Framework (NQF) aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in early education and care services and school age care.

It is doing this through the introduction of the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations, the National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care and the National Quality Rating and Assessment process.

The central focus of the NQF is on the outcomes for children. All Australian education and care services must provide educational programs that are based on our National Curriculum, the Early Years Learning Framework. This framework outlines the principles, practices and outcomes that need to guide our educational programs.

Kids' Uni services have undergone (and will continue to undergo) an assessment and rating process, which is conducted by an external Government department. We are proud to report that 100% of Kids' Uni Services have been rated as Exceeding National Quality Standards, the highest possible outcome. The national average is just 33% (*Source: Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority ACECQA*).

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The framework provides us with the National Quality Standards – with 7 Quality Areas of focus. Within the seven quality areas there are standards, with elements to describe the outcomes that contribute to the standard being achieved.

The elements guide our practices and planning for improvement. Each Kids' Uni centre has a quality improvement plan, consistent with the standards of the NQF which ensures we are setting goals within the quality areas and working towards continual improvement

If you would like more information regarding the National Quality Framework, speak with any Kids' Uni educator or Director or visit the ACECQA website – www.acecqa.com.au

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Our Early Childhood services are approved by the Department of Education and incorporate best practices as outlined in the National Quality Framework.

There is a focus on learning through play, as well as intentional and spontaneous teaching moments in both large and small group times throughout the day.

A typical day in an Early Childhood Education and Care service may include water-sand play and block play, music and movement, language, art and craft, science and dramatic play. Numeracy and literacy experiences are also embedded into our program throughout the day.

Experiences and environments are set up to foster each child's social, emotional, physical and language development.

Children are grouped by age or stage of development and programs are individually catered to meet their needs, extend their learning and development as well as incorporate their interests.

CHILDREN

All children are active contributors to their play and learning. They are continually growing, developing relationships and understanding their world.

We see each child as unique and we design educational programs according to their needs and interests as individuals.

Children have a voice in decision making within our programs and influence our environments. Our educational program directions are guided by children's interests and family input.

We aim to:

Provide an environment where children's rights are respected.

Recognise that each child is competent and capable.

Encourage children to see themselves as valued, powerful constructors of their community.

Be guided by current practice and research.

Create environments that are calm, nurturing and reflect children's homes and communities.

Embrace inclusive practices for all children.

Foster reciprocal relationships with children, parents, educators, management and the community.

Provide guidance for positive behaviour using strategies that build children's confidence, independence, self-esteem and resilience.

ENVIRONMENT

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The physical environment is a major contributor to a child's experience at the service. We endeavour to ensure that our environment conveys a strong message of welcome to our children, families and the community. Our indoor and outdoor environments are designed to promote and provide inclusive experiences for learning through play.

OUR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Our Educational Programs are designed to be responsive to every child, their family and their individual needs.

We provide opportunities for children to learn, interact and explore as an individual and as part of a group.

All service programs reflect current research and practice and provide educators with opportunities to extend children's learning through diverse and engaging environments.

We aim to:

- Implement the principles, practices and outcomes of the National Curriculum document, The Early Years Learning Framework
- Encourage our children to construct knowledge through exploration and relationships.
- Assist children's sense of agency through choices within their environment
- Provide resources and experiences to enhance the development of the whole child.
- Have a wide range of resources and materials which are used to foster self-expression, learning and communication.
- Implement programs which reflect a whole of community approach to children's development.
- Provide documentation designed to support parents to share in the child's day and for children to revisit and reflect upon their experiences.

EDUCATORS

Our educators are highly skilled with a commitment to professional development.

Our educators are diverse in their skills, backgrounds, experiences and knowledge. Each educator is committed to establishing relationships of trust with children and their families in order to provide the best outcomes for every child.

We invest in the employment of University trained Teachers in each of our Early Childhood environments as we recognise the Early Years are critical for children's development. Additional teachers are employed in support roles within our services to focus purely on pedagogy, curriculum and inclusion.

All Educators:

- Hold a formal qualification in Early Childhood Education and Care
- Are trained in First Aid, Anaphylaxis, Asthma and Child Protection.
- Are committed to participating in professional development based on current research and best practice.

We aim to:

- Be a co-researcher and co-constructor in the learning process with your children.
- Strive towards excellence and commonly-shared professional standards and practices
- Maintain a high level of open communication and a harmonious work environment.
- Empower and encourage families to act in partnership to create family centred practice.
- Maintain high professional standards through research, networking, training and development.

INCLUSION, TRAINING AND SUPPORT

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Kids' Uni is committed to working with educators, families and other professionals to assist with the implementation of appropriate support initiatives to enable children with additional needs to access children's services.

Inclusion is a holistic approach, requiring educators to make provisions that allow each child to participate in the program in ways that are engaging, interesting and constructive. We will use experiences and strategies that will match and extend children's abilities, strengths and interests.

We access support from Kids Uni Early Intervention as well as other professional organisations such as Include Me – Inclusion Support Services, Northfields Clinic, Porter Street Development Centre, Community Health Nurses and Dietitians, the Anaphylaxis Support Group, Red Nose, KidSafe and Westmead Children's Hospital.

PROGRAMMING – EARLY CHILDHOOD

Kids' Uni advocates for children to learn through exploration, play and discovery. We believe that children are resourceful and capable learners. At our services children learn alongside their peers, in a safe and well-planned environment.

Educators take time to plan and implement developmentally appropriate experiences for children that promote learning and understanding, as well as challenge and support the development of skills.

Our educators provide a balance of experiences that create a natural rhythm to the day comprising indoor/outdoor, quiet, energetic and group activities.

Whilst at the service, your child will be assigned a primary educator who will develop an individual program to specifically meet your child's emerging strengths and interests, as well as address areas that may need support.

Educators will actively seek your input and feedback concerning this important aspect of your child's experience whilst in our care. Open communication between parents and our educators is essential. We will liaise closely with you about all aspects of your child's development and daily experiences. Your child's educator will provide documentation comprising examples of your child's learning through artwork, observations, photographs and experiences.

Your child's day will be communicated to you in a variety of ways, from displays within the environment, day books, communication diaries or noticeboards and through online private sharing app – Kinderloop, as well as face to face communication with our friendly educators and more.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

Transition to school is embedded in our program, each and every day.

We value social and emotional skills as some of the most important aspects in preparing your child for a successful transition. From very early on we focus on developing relationships with children and ensuring they feel secure and safe in their environment, providing them with the confidence to engage in the environment with ease and independence.

The children are supported to form friendships, beginning to understand fairness and inclusive play, communicate their needs, care for their belongings, develop self-help skills and effectively contribute to experiences in both small and large groups.

We embed literacy and numeracy experiences into our daily program. We focus on social and emotional experiences such as turn taking and following rules of games.

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Additionally, children are encouraged to learn appropriate self-help skills such as toileting procedures, hand washing, dressing themselves, looking after their own belongings and communicating their needs.

Kids Uni also host an annual transition to school information evening for families.

In addition to the above, our program aims to:

- Focus on children's strengths and abilities.
- Have a sensitive acceptance of individual differences in children and a commitment to support the uniqueness of each child.
- Assist children in the use of information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking.
- Extend children's understanding of information technology through use of computers, iPads and Smart Boards. This is achieved by providing experiences and program initiatives that are developmentally appropriate and complement other curriculum strategies.

Some approaches included in the program:

- Group times promoting listening skills and turn taking
- Building confidence in group situations
- Learning numeracy, literacy and pre-reading skills such as exploring phonics and learning book conventions.
- Developing emotional and social skills such as forming connections with other children, interactions and communication
- Sharing and turn taking, learning how to resolve conflict and build resilience in their relationships
- Learning independence skills such as self-dressing, toileting, looking after belongings
- Development of large and fine muscle development (eg balls skills, running, jumping, balancing, pencil grip, cutting, threading etc.)

Transitioning to school can be an exciting but a challenging process for families and for that reason we are available to answer any questions you may have.

ATTENDANCE

ARRIVAL AT THE SERVICE EACH DAY

Our Directors will arrange an orientation meeting with you prior to commencing at the service and show you where to sign your child into the service, where to take your child when you arrive and where to place their belongings.

In addition to this, we will discuss with you how we can support your child's transition from you to our educators each day. There are times when this can be challenging for children and for families. In our environments, children are learning so many important skills, however we need to remember that children will learn this best with someone to support them. In order to feel ready to go out and explore children need to know there is a person, or people, at the service who will support them and be a secure base, or person, to return to.

At Kid's Uni we have been exploring the *Circle of Security* and using elements of this approach to build safe and secure relationships and environments for children with a focus on our educators being emotionally available to children. You will often find them sitting down at the children's level.

We ask that you take your child to an educator when you are ready to leave. This allows your child to see and hear the transition taking place. The educator may use words such as "*Sally, mum is going to work now. I am here to look after you today until mum returns*".

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Your child will know that there is someone here for them. This generates a feeling of security needed for children to start to explore, play and learn.

MEALS

In our Long Day Care settings where we provide meals (*Kids Uni CBD, Kids Uni North and Kids Uni South*) we are committed to providing children with at least 50% of their daily-recommended dietary intake of nutrients in the form of safe and appetising food as set out in the Dietary Guidelines for Australians and the *Munch and Move* Program.

We promote nutritious food and drinks, as well as culturally appropriate and healthy eating habits. The menu is reviewed and displayed for your reference. Our Cooks are trained in menu planning, as well as safe food handling practices.

At Kids' Uni iC, families provide their children with lunch and afternoon tea. We will provide children with fresh fruit for their morning tea each day. Educators recommend and promote nutritional meals and snacks. In addition, our educators may share with you up-to-date information from recognised health authorities. Children are provided with water at the end of meals in order to support good dental hygiene practices. Water is accessible for children at all times.

We encourage families to contribute to our menu and food experiences and would love for you to chat with our cooks, or educators, at any time.

SUNSCREEN

Please apply sunscreen to your child each morning. Educators will reapply sunscreen every two hours. We supply sunscreen, which is rated SPF 50+ broad spectrum and water resistant.

If your child has a known allergy to sunscreen, please advise the centre Director of the allergy in writing. In this instance, families will be required to discuss appropriate alternative sun protection strategies with the Director.

BOTTLES & BREASTFEEDING

We support breast feeding and bottle feeding at our services and we can provide a quiet and private space if needed to feed your child while you are here. We will seek information from you ensure that we maintain the same routines for you child at our service that you have at home, whenever possible.

Families are required to provide formula, or expressed breast milk, for their child which must be provided in a container / bottle clearly labelled with the child's full name.

For formula, clean bottles must be provided with the required amount of boiled water in each bottle, also clearly labelled with the child's full name.

Enough bottles must be provided for the number of feeds the child will have while at the centre,

CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

Please ensure that your child wears comfortable clothes when attending the service: a top with sleeves and knee-length shorts or skirts for summer and long pants and a jumper/coat for winter.

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Avoid singlet tops, dresses with straps and short skirts in accordance with sun protection recommendation.

Older clothes are preferable as children may get messy as they participate in activities and some staining may occur.

We recommend packing a change of clothes in case of any unforeseen event or a change in the weather. A suggested guideline is:

Babies 6 weeks to 2 years 3 complete changes of clothes per day

Children aged 2 – 5 years 1 complete change of clothes

We provide hats for children for use during outdoor play.

Please ensure that your child has covered in shoes. Thongs or clogs are not advisable as they do not offer adequate protection and support for children when climbing and running.

Don't forget to label all clothing and footwear with your child's name.

EXCURSIONS

Appropriate risk management planning is undertaken to ensure the success of any excursion that we run. We focus on planning to maximise the learning potential of the experience, whilst ensuring the safety of all those involved.

We will request your written consent for your child to attend an excursion.

PARKING ARRANGEMENTS

There are a number of designated parking spots outside each service for parents, designed for quick drop off and pick up periods for 15 minutes.

SECURITY

All of our services have a security system at the entrance door. Parents will be given a pin code for accessing the security system.

It is very important that parents only ever let themselves into a service when accessing the security system. Please do not allow others to enter or exit with you when you arrive or depart the service. The children's safety is paramount to us so we would really appreciate your help.

FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

FAMILIES

Our team respects families as their child's first teacher and provide opportunities for families to influence and contribute to our program and elements of the service.

We aim to:

Recognise and respect parent's knowledge of their children and use that knowledge to foster positive relationships with children.

Encourage collaboration in every area of the centre and respect the family's rights to participate at their desired level.

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Share and exchange resources, information and experiences in formats appropriate to each family.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

Our parents, family members and community representatives are important partners in our **work** to deliver quality outcomes for children and families in our services.

Following are some of the ways in which parents can be involved within our service:

Contributing to the development of educational programs for your child through ideas and suggestions.

Parental feedback on policies that are periodically reviewed.

Sharing skills / interests / experiences / resources that you would like to contribute to the services' program, for example: reading, cooking, gardening, sewing, handy person skills, visual arts, drama, language or musical skills etc.

Assistance with excursions, or at service events such as children's Christmas parties.

Contributing materials such as scrap paper, left over wool or ribbon, cardboard boxes, old wrapping paper, material, old craft supplies etc.

Sharing home recipes.

Attending regular family forums, social gatherings and information sessions.

COMMUNITY

Within Kids' Uni environments, children engage in experiences that reflect diverse cultures and inclusive practice.

Children are supported in adopting values and attitudes that enable them to be effective members of the community. Our services view their role within the wider community as one of advocacy for children.

We aim to:

- Engage in sustainable practice and teach children to respect and care for their environments.
- Network within our community to establish links and access resources, which support the development of our program and the relationships with families, children and educators.
- Work collaboratively with the schools in our community to assist in the successful school transition for children and families from our Early Childhood environment.

PARENT FEEDBACK

Feedback may take the form of compliments, suggestions, enquiries, concerns or complaints. Kids' Uni is committed to the fair and effective resolution of all customer concerns and complaints in a timely manner.

We will make all reasonable attempts to resolve your concerns at the service in an informal manner, through discussions with the Director and Educators. If we are unable to satisfactorily resolve your concern or complaint please follow our grievance procedures that are displayed in our services. Our Children's Services Manager will also be happy to support you. For details, please refer to the UOW Pulse Grievance Policy. A full copy of this policy is available from the Director or it can be accessed from our website at www.kidsuni.uow.edu.au If a resolution has still not been reached then you can contact the Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate with the Department of Education. This Department is responsible for monitoring the regulations that govern our practices in Early Childhood. Contact Phone number is 1800 619 113.

OUR POLICIES

Kids' Uni has many policies and procedures which assist and guide the overall operation of the services. These policies and procedures are available to be viewed on our website and

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are also available within each centre. There are policies around all aspects of our operations and practices.

Families are invited to take part in our policy review process and have input into decision making through our policy development.

kidsuni.uow.edu.au/policiesprocedures

CHILD WELLBEING POLICY

Our service fundamentally believes that all children have the right to a life that is free from harm. We support each child's right to live and learn in a safe and secure environment.

Our service aims to provide an environment that will foster a child's growth and development as per the individual requirements of each child.

The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 states that all people who hold a management position or who are paid workers delivering children's services, are legally obliged to report any child who is at risk of significant harm.

Our service aims to provide regular training to all Educators (along with any volunteers, students etc.) on child wellbeing issues to ensure that, in the sad event that a child has suffered abuse, the service can act quickly in the best interests of the child.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Information collected on your child and family remains confidential. Enrolment forms and accompanying documentation are kept in a secure and locked location.

We have a Privacy Policy that adheres to the Australian Privacy principles. For information on the following we refer you to our policy:

When and in what circumstances we collect personal information.

How we identify and manage a data breach.

How we manage complaints relating to collection and confidentiality of records.

QUERIES & QUESTIONS

If you have any queries or questions regarding your child or the centre speak with the Director (Nominated Supervisor) in the first instance.

Alternatively, you can contact our Main Administration Office or our Children's Services Manager via **email kids_uni@uow.edu.au or phone 02 4221 8035.**
