



UTS CHILD CARE INC



FAMILY HANDBOOK



Acknowledgement of Country

UTSCC acknowledges the Gadigal of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians upon whose ancestral lands UTSCC now stand. We are committed to incorporating a lens of indigenous culture and understanding within the children and ourselves and to continue to strengthen partnerships with local elders and organisations within our community.

Contents

Welcome to UTS Child Care!	3	Meal Times	15
Who We Are	4	Immunisation	16
Our Philosophy	5	Medications	17
Our Approach	6	Medical Conditions	17
The National Quality Framework	7	Incidents and Injuries	17
Child Safe Organisation	8	Celebrations and Involvement in the Service	18
Starting at UTSCC	9	Transitioning to a New Room	19
The Multiple Attachments Approach	11	Preschool Program	20
Arrival and Departures	12	Fees, Financial and Administration Support	21
Communication	13		
Capturing Your Child's Learning and Development	14		



Welcome to UTS Child Care!

We are thrilled to embark on this journey with your child and your family. At UTS Child Care (UTSCC), we welcome the opportunity to build a lasting connection, celebrate curiosity and growth, and find joy in the wonder of your child's early years.

As early childhood professionals, we deeply value the trust you place in us. We are committed to creating a safe, nurturing environment that fosters your child's happiness and development. Through meaningful partnerships, we honour the uniqueness of your family and support your child's journey with a focus on learning, wellbeing, and safety.

This handbook provides an overview of UTSCC, our procedures, and what you can expect as you join our vibrant early childhood community.

Thank you for being a part of UTSCC.

Who We Are

UTSCC is a not for profit organisation operating two early childhood services for children aged up to five years – **Blackfriars Children’s Centre** and **Magic Pudding Child Care Centre**.

Our history spans over 30 years, commencing in the late 1970s, with the UTS Students Association providing child care at UTS as a child minding cooperative where student parents cared for each other’s children to enable lecture and tutorial attendance to occur.

We are supported by a volunteer Board of Directors responsible for the governance and strategic direction of UTSCC while the day to day operations are the responsibility of the CEO and the service Directors and their teams. The Board consists of parent representatives from each service and representatives from UTS, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and ActivateUTS.

As part of our commitment to fostering a strong and engaged community, all families enrolled at UTSCC automatically become members of UTS Child Care. We warmly invite you to join us at our Annual General Meeting each year, where you can learn more about our operations, share your feedback, and contribute to the ongoing development of our centre. Your involvement is valued and helps us continue to provide high-quality care and support for all our children and families.

We welcome all families to UTSCC. This includes community members, employees of the ABC and employees and students of UTS. We would especially like to welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to our services.



Our Philosophy

We value the first five years of childhood as a unique time of joy, learning, development, and the formation of relationships and self-awareness.

We believe every child's first five years should be filled with joy, driven by the wonder and excitement of learning, and the opportunity to develop rich relationships within nurturing environments.

We are dedicated to supporting your child's unique journey in becoming confident and self-aware individuals. By empowering children, we help them grow strong in their identity, proud of who they are, and ready to explore their curiosities as capable, self-initiated learners.

We are honoured to be entrusted with the care, support, and nurturing of your child's individuality. Our organisation's vision, mission, and values provide a strong ethical foundation for our decisions, both operationally and pedagogically. We are committed to living these values and continually striving for excellence in all our interactions with children and families.

Our Educators feel honoured and privileged to share this special time in your child's life.

Vision Our dream

A world where children are valued, safe and empowered to thrive.

Purpose Our "why"

To create experiences for children that foster joy, spark curiosity, and build strong foundations for lifelong learning.

Mission Our "how"

We provide accessible, high-quality early education and care through innovative and nurturing environments. Our spaces are safe, joyful, and designed to inspire curiosity. We build strong relationships with our partners and the community to support children's growth and development.

Our Values

Joy

We create, honour, and recognise moments of wonder each day.

Curiosity

We remain open minded, ask questions, research, and reflect, experiment and explore to deepen our understanding of each other and our world.

Connection

We seek and nurture collaboration and connection with each other and our community.

Growth

We are always learning, adapting, evolving, and striving for excellence so that our people thrive now, and into the future.

Safety

We foster an environment of shared responsibility and accountability for safety, where everyone can feel secure, confident, and supported.

Our Approach

Our early childhood professionals are well-versed in the latest research and theories on child development. We recognise that play is essential for children to explore and understand their world, and we embrace this with a curious and open-minded approach.

Our educators use their contemporary knowledge and theoretical insights to guide curriculum decisions, ensuring our play-based approach remains effective in fostering active learning.

Equally important is our commitment to engaging with children in a meaningful way. We prioritise building strong relationships, communicating effectively, and interacting with children in ways that support their individual growth and development. By connecting with each child on a personal level, we create an environment where they feel valued, understood, and inspired to explore and learn.



The National Quality Framework

UTSCC is an approved service provider and is required to comply with the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations* administered by the NSW Department of Education.

Our services strive for excellence against the seven *National Quality Standards (NQS)* through critical self reflection and participation in the Assessment and Rating process.

Additional information can be found at:

- <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education>
- <https://www.startingblocks.gov.au>
- <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework>

Continuous Improvement

UTSCC values feedback from families.

We have regular surveys and annual surveys that seek feedback on service provision under the seven areas of the National Quality Standard.

We also provide opportunities for families to meet with the educational team throughout the year seeking feedback and input on your child's educational program and the curriculum.

Should you hold any concerns about an aspect of service provision, the service Director will be happy to hear from you and work through your concern.

For further information on our feedback and grievances policy and process please refer to the Feedback Policy that can found in the family information area or on *Storypark*.

If you feel your concern has not been able to be resolved, you are welcome to contact the Regulatory Authority in NSW which is the Department of Education Early Childhood Education Directorate:

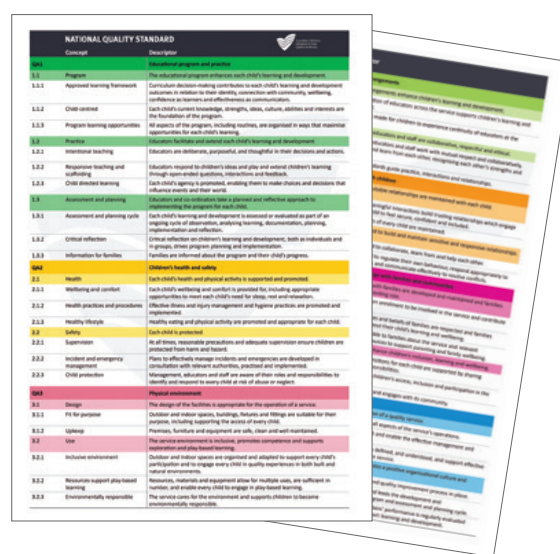
- **1800 619 113 (toll free)**
- **ececd@det.nsw.edu.au**

Each service has a *Quality Improvement Plan* that outlines our strengths and areas we are continuing to work on. The *Quality Improvement Plan* is updated regularly and is available in the family information area.

You can find out more here:

- <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/information-for-parents-and-carers>
- <https://acecqa.gov.au>

A copy of the *Education and Care National Regulations and Law* along with our service policies are available in the family information area at each service or the links available on *Storypark*.



Concept	Description
1.1 Program	The educational program includes each child's learning and development outcomes to address their identity, connections with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
1.1.1	Approved learning frameworks
1.1.2	Child-centred
1.1.3	Program learning opportunities
1.2 Practice	Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.
1.2.1	Intentional teaching
1.2.2	Responsive teaching and scaffolding
1.2.3	Child directed learning
1.3 Assessment and planning	Educators and/or children have a planned and reflective approach to responding to the individual child.
1.3.1	Assessment and planning cycle
1.3.2	Critical reflection
1.3.3	Information for families
2.1 Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort
2.1.2	Healthy practices and procedures
2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle
2.2 Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management
2.2.3	Child protection
3.1 Design	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.
3.1.1	Fit for purpose
3.1.2	Usability
3.1.3	Use
3.2	Indoor environment
3.2.1	Resource management
3.2.2	Health and safety
3.2.3	Environmental responsibility



Child Safe Organisation

UTSCC is a child-safe organisation, deeply committed to protecting children and young people from harm. We take our responsibility seriously and are dedicated to fostering a culture that actively keeps children safe, and prevents any harm to children.

Our commitment to child safety is reflected in our practices:

- Acting in the best interests of children, with their protection from harm as our top priority.
- Maintaining a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse.
- Upholding and respecting the rights of all children.
- Promptly addressing any concerns about child safety raised by children, parents, and carers.
- Ensuring that reporting abuse is never obstructed or discouraged.

Our child-safe practices are guided by the *Office of the Children's Guardian Child Safe Standards*, and *UTSCC Child Safe Action Plan*. A copy of the *Child Safe Action Plan* is available in the parent area of each service, and on *StoryPark*.

All UTSCC staff are mandatory reporters and are required to report any concerns regarding child safety or wellbeing to the appropriate child protection authorities.

To ensure we are keeping children safe, we adhere to strict e-safety and safeguarding standards, for securely taking, storing and sharing images and videos.

In line with our commitment to safety, any unauthorised photography or video recording of children at our services is strictly prohibited.

We understand that you may want to capture and share memories of your child's time at UTSCC with family and friends. **However, we kindly ask that you refrain from taking and/or sharing photos or videos taken at UTSCC to help us ensure the safety of all the children in our care.**

Starting at UTSCC

The Orientation Process

We acknowledge and respect that settling into a new environment can be challenging and unpredictable for both the child and the family, particularly if this is your first time in an early childhood setting. To assist the transition into our service, we will gather valuable information from you about how to best support your child's time with us. This information will indicate your family's preferences and child's unique needs to make their transition smooth and comfortable. We will draw on this information as you begin the orientation process. To assist with your orientation and child's transition, we have some suggestions that will support children to settle and feel safe and secure in their new environment:

- We recommend a minimum of three orientation visits for you and your child prior to commencing with us. This will enable your child to become familiar with the environment and educators who will be caring for them.
- Once your child has started at the service, we recommend the first few days are shorter to allow your child a shorter time to be without you. It will be helpful to know what time you will return to collect the child each day for the first few weeks so we can reassure and prepare them for your reunion.
- We welcome you to call during the day to check in and see how your child is going.





Settling Your Child

On your child's first day and for the few weeks that follow, your child will feel very anxious at separation time and saying goodbye to you. This is developmentally normal and to be expected at any age.

Drawing on contemporary attachment theory practices, UTSCC educational teams will support children's morning transitions using the Secure Beginnings Approach. This collaborative approach recognises the overwhelming feelings that arise during goodbyes and the importance of being received into an environment that is predictable, calm, still, safe and secure. Families and educators will work together using dialogue to assist a smooth and secure transition into the environment.

Suggestions to support your child to settle:

- **Introduce them to the service in the same way each visit.** Create a routine and ritual as part of the drop off process. Talk about the service, the educators, the other children they might know and the activities your child will be taking part in.
- **Be calm and confident when dropping off your child;** they will take your emotional lead.
- **Participate in a Secure Beginnings Approach** and be sure to say goodbye to your child every time before you leave (they can become more anxious if you don't). We strongly discourage a drop and run approach as this significantly unsettles the child creating a sense of distrust.
- **Physical considerations** include supporting the child to unpack their belongings, guiding sunscreen application, and ensuring the child feels comfortable by suggesting a toilet visit or undertaking nappy change.
- **Emotional considerations** include a goodbye ritual guided by the secure beginnings pedagogical practice. Head over to an educator who is waiting for you and transition the child into the attentive welcoming space of that educator. This will ensure the goodbye is respectful, peaceful and predictable for the child.
- **Ensure there is adequate time to transition your child to an educator.** When ready to leave, families will say goodbye to their child and remind them who is picking them up.

We acknowledge and respect that settling into a new environment can be **challenging and unpredictable** for both the child and the family.

The Multiple Attachments Approach

Our team understand the significance of secure relationships and the capacity of children to form multiple attachments, as supported by Schaffer's research. In our culturally diverse UTSCC community, it is common for extended family members to be actively involved in child-rearing practices.

In recognition of these varied cultural practices, we acknowledge that children thrive in a safe and emotionally secure environment. To support this, we advocate for a multiple attachment approach.

While a child may develop a preference for a particular educator, all educators are committed to building responsive and attuned relationships. **This ensures that, even in the absence of one educator, your child will continue to feel secure and supported through their connections with the entire team.**

Multiple Educator Attachments

are recognised and honoured as a culturally and contextually relevant approach to meeting children's emotional needs in a responsive manner.



Arrival and Departures

Our services have a secure access in place to ensure the safety of your child while they are in our care.

Each of our services have different secure entrances either a swipe card or a code. Your individual code or access card will be issued on confirmation of your enrolment. Please do not share your unique code or access swipe with any else. This ensures our premises, the children and staff remain safe. If you lose your swipe card or forget your code please speak to the Administrator or service Director so we can allocate a new one. There is a charge for lost cards.

Children may only be signed out by an authorised person, as nominated on your child's enrolment form.

Each authorised person is set up on the service's electronic sign in device using their unique mobile phone number to identify them. Please ensure each authorised contact uses their own number to sign in and out as this is a form of electronic signature and is required under *Child Care Subsidy Regulations*.

It is your responsibility to sign in and out each day, reflecting accurately with the time as this is critical for compliance with government regulations and in the event there is an emergency so we know who is at the service. Please speak to a team member should you need help.

We expect families to ensure their child greets familiar educator before the parent/adult leaves.

At departure time please let a team member know you are leaving if they have not already acknowledged you. This helps keep track of children's departures.

Late Collections

Our operating hours are registered with the Regulatory Authority and are part of the conditions of our service approval. If you are late to collect your child a late fee applies and information on the late fee is available in our fee policy.

We ask families to arrive at least 10 minutes prior to our closing time of 6pm. This allows us to prepare your child for your arrival and have time to share information about your child with you. If you are unable to make it before closing time we ask you to contact us so we can prepare and reassure your child that you are on your way.

Regular occurrences of late pick up may result in your child's enrolment being terminated.

Emergency Contacts

In the event of an emergency we rely on accurate details. Please see your service Director or administrator whenever there is a change to your contact details, authorised nominees or emergency contacts.



Please ensure your emergency contacts remain **up-to-date at all times**.

Communication

Please inform the service Director or Administrator when:

- Your child is sick or is going on holidays.
- Your contact details change.
- Your Child Care Subsidy rate has changed or has been cancelled.
- Custody or access arrangements have altered.
- You have an NDIS Plan.
- Someone different will be collecting your child.
- Your child's immunisation is updated.
- You have a suggestion or feedback.
- You wish to change the days that your child attends the service.



Please keep us **updated of any changes** to your child's attendance.

WHAT TO BRING EACH DAY

- A full set of **labelled spare clothing** – this allows children to be fully immersed in experiences such as water play with the safety of a fresh set of clothing should they need it.
 - A **sun safe hat** – wide brimmed or legionnaires is best. Caps do not meet sun safe requirements so please keep them at home. Should your child not have the appropriate hat for the day, they will be required to play in shaded areas only or be given a spare hat.
 - **Sun safe clothing** – shoulders, backs and tummies protected from possible exposure to the sun.
 - Appropriate **shoes** for running, climbing and for when we venture out on excursions.
 - **Wet weather clothing.** We encourage children to experience all weather conditions with appropriate clothing such as gumboots, rain coats and warm jackets and hats in winter.
 - **Labelled bottles** and **formula/breast milk** as required.
 - A **set of sheets, cot sheet** and a **blanket** or **sleep suit** for your child's rest time.
 - **Comfort item** (eg. dummy, wrap, soft toy).
 - Your **UTSCC wetbag** provided at enrolment for your child's wet clothing.
- PLEASE LABEL ALL OF YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS.**



Capturing Your Child's Learning and Development

Your child's learning, development, and participation in the educational program will be captured and shared in various ways, including through room displays, daily conversations, and our online platform, *Storypark*. During your orientation visits, we will provide you with detailed information about *Storypark*. You will receive thoughtfully compiled and analysed documentation from your child's educators, showcasing their progress through a variety of documentation and assessment tools.

The educational team will share individual learning as well as group learning experiences.

We value the importance of a shared approach to your child's learning and will seek information about your child's learning styles and preferences, current interest and family events to assist in goal setting throughout the year. We welcome goals you have for your child and will include them in our curriculum planning.

We value the opportunity to work in partnership with families on the shaping of the daily program as an extension of the child's experiences outside of the service.

At UTSCC we are dedicated to following the national model code for the responsible use of photos and videos. We ensure that all images and videos are taken using service-issued devices to protect privacy and maintain security. Personal devices are not used to capture images to uphold our high standards of safety. We celebrate your child's milestones and daily activities with care, always seeking your consent before sharing any images or videos. We kindly ask all families to respect and adhere to these practices, helping us create a safe and supportive environment for every child. Your cooperation ensures that we can continue to document and share your child's experiences in a manner that is both respectful and secure.



Meal Times

We believe one of the most important aspects of our educational curriculum involves the nutritional meals we provide for children each day. Our cooks provide a well-balanced menu that reflects the *Australian Nutritional Requirements* for children which are checked annually by a certified nutritionist. We offer a seasonal menu that rotates each week with a four-week cycle.

Forming part of our environmental education program, gardening and connecting to nature offer children opportunities to be active participants in the preparation of the meals by using the produce and herbs grown in the vegetable garden to be included in the meals.

UTSCC is allergy aware and accommodates the unique dietary requirements of your child.

Please keep us informed of dietary needs through your child's enrolment form. Should needs change throughout your child's time with us please notify the service Director and the educators in writing.

Please be aware we are a peanut free environment and do not provide peanut products to children.

You can find the menu for the week displayed at the entrance to the service and a copy of our nutrition policy is available in the family information area.



Please ensure dietary requirements are kept **up-to-date at all times.**

Supporting Breastfeeding

We support mothers who are breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is able to occur in the family lounge area which provides a calm quiet space for this time with your child.

Please speak to the service Director and the educators to arrange the times to come in throughout the day.



Immunisation

It is a requirement for families claiming Child Care Subsidy to meet the immunisation requirements below:

- The child is immunised in accordance with the standard vaccination schedule or are on an eligible catch up vaccination schedule according to the Australian Immunisation Handbook.
- They have an approved exemption from the requirements.

Child care centres are required to maintain an up to date register of immunisations for children attending the service to meet their Child Care Subsidy obligations.

Please ensure your child's updated record is sent through as you receive them. This can be requested at any time via the Australian Immunisation Register or by visiting Services NSW.

If your child is not fully immunised due to medical reasons, or has missed a vaccination and is on a recognised catch up schedule, your doctor is required to complete the relevant documentation and a record shared with us.

Should there be an outbreak of a vaccine preventable illness, those not immunised may be excluded from the service.

Child Illness and the Management of Infectious Diseases

Throughout childhood, children are prone to illness as their immune systems develops. UTSCC follows the recommendations for the management of infectious diseases provided in *Staying Healthy in Child Care* to guide decisions around health and hygiene practices, and minimum exclusion periods which apply when a child is unwell.

If there is an outbreak of an infectious disease within the service we will provide a notice to families advising them of the outbreak.

We are also guided by NSW Health authorities in the event a significant contamination or outbreak occurs with the service.

Should your child become unwell during the day, we will call you and we may ask you to collect your child so they can rest and recover comfortably at home. Dependent on the nature of the illness we may also request you seek medical attention and provide a medical clearance before your child returns to the service. It is expected that your child is collected within an hour.

If your child has a temperature **above 38 degrees** we ask that you notify us and keep your child at home for a period of **24 hours**.

This ensures we can minimise any possible outbreaks of illness across the service.

Please speak to your service Director should you have questions on how we maintain a safe and hygienic environment. You may also wish to access UTSCC policies, available via the *About* tab on *Storypark*.



A NOTE ABOUT FEVER

Should your child presents with a temperature above 38 degrees you will be asked to collect your child from the service.

We will follow the recommended first aid response by removing excessive clothing and providing your child with plenty of fluids to make them feel comfortable. Paracetamol will only be administered with authorisation from the parent.

Medications

We understand there may be times when your child is required to have medication administered while at the service. Please note that for this to occur:

- A *Medication Authorisation Form* must be completed by the child's parent and/or guardian.
- Medication must be in its original container, with a pharmacy dispensing label with your child's name, date of birth and expiry date listed.
- Medication is handed to a member of the team and never left in a child's bag.



Medication will be stored in a locked container inaccessible to children.
Please do not leave medication on a shelf or in your child's bag.

Medical Conditions

Should your child have a medical condition such as asthma, anaphylaxis, or diabetes, we will be required to maintain an up-to-date medical management plan from their treating physician. Your service Director will also assist in completing a *Risk Minimisation & Communication Plan* to support your child's wellbeing within our service.

Please ensure the required medication is always at the service and kept in date. Similarly, if there are any changes to your child's medical needs, please keep the Director informed.



For the safety of all children, we ask that no food be brought into the service. Please pay particular attention to ensure food is not left in your child's bag or pram.

Incidents and Injuries

UTSCC has a duty of care to provide a safe environment for children attending the service as required under the *Education and Care National Regulation*.

In the event a serious injury occurs to a child that requires them to attend or ought to attend a medical practitioner we are required to notify the Regulatory Authority and provide them with information regarding the incident including the parent and child's details and contact information.

In the event your child has an injury at the service the team will comfort your child and apply the appropriate first aid. The incident will then be recorded and you will be notified immediately by the educator or service Director to discuss if further medical assistance is required.

On collection of your child you will be asked to read and sign the record of the incident.

In the event of a serious injury and the child is required to have urgent medical assistance due to the nature of the injury and you are unable to attend the service it may be necessary for us to call an ambulance.

Further information on the management of incidents and injuries can be accessed in the *About* tab in *Storypark* under QA2.



Celebrations and Involvement in the Service

We enjoy hearing about celebrations and events important to you. Please feel free to share these with us in person, or via our online documentation platform, *Storypark*.

If there is a skill or interest you'd like to share with your child's peers and educators, please reach out to the team who would be keen to hear about it.

We will share information about the service with you regularly via *Storypark*.

It is important to us that families feel a sense of belonging at our services and throughout the year we will host events for families to join us and engage in activities in the service. This may be for a special event, celebration, parent workshop or information session or working bee.

Each room has unique ways/traditions to celebrate birthdays or special milestones with children by making the day in ways that do not involve food.

Babysitting

Unfortunately, our educators are not available outside of the service to educate and care for your child.

Transitioning to a New Room

As children grow, their learning and stimulation needs evolve, making it important for them to engage with peers of similar age. This supports their social, emotional, and language development, and keeps their curiosity alive.

When it's time for your child to transition to a new room, we will reach out to you to ensure the process is smooth and supportive.

Before the transition begins, educators from both rooms will collaborate to plan the process, considering your child's specific needs. This plan will be shared with you and will involve gradual visits to the new environment. Initially, a familiar educator will accompany your child, gradually reducing their presence until your child feels comfortable and secure in the new space.

Orientation visits are an essential part of the transition, helping your child establish a sense of belonging in their new learning environment while maintaining their sense of security.





Preschool Program

When your child transitions to our preschool rooms, they will continue to engage in our play based preschool program implemented by bachelor's degree Trained Teachers.

In this room our focus is not to ensure that children are “academically ready” for school in the traditional sense. Instead, our focus is on supporting children’s development in ways that truly prepare them for this new chapter in their lives. We prioritise fostering self-help skills, building confidence to seek assistance when needed, encouraging them to ask questions, and helping them learn to work effectively in a group environment.

Our preschool program provides opportunities for children to engage in numeracy, literacy, environmental education and STEAM experiences where they will problem solve, test theories and think critically and ethically as they proactively engage in community life through excursions and projects of inquiry.

Our services facilitate the collaboration between early education and primary school settings by providing a ‘Transition to School’ report towards the end of the year. This report can be shared with your child’s primary school in the year before they commence, to support a smooth transition.

Fees, Financial and Administration Support

- **Bond** – a bond of two weeks full fees is required to secure a position at one of our services. This is payable within five days of an offer being received. Your bond (minus enrolment fee) is fully refundable at the end of your child’s enrolment, subject to providing the applicable notice period.
- **Fees are payable in arrears each fortnight.** You will be provided a copy of the UTSCC Fee Policy on enrolment which contains important fee information and is updated at least annually.
- **Fees are payable for your child’s enrolment, not attendance.** Any absent days are charged. This does not include public holidays or where we shut down over the Christmas period.
- **Child Care Subsidy (CCS)** – CCS is a payment paid by the government directly to the service. The family is required to pay the gap. It is the responsibility of the family to submit all necessary documentation to Centrelink and communicate with Centrelink where there is believed to be an error with payment. Due to privacy legislation, services are not authorised to speak to Centrelink on a family’s behalf.
- **Allowable Absences** – the government allows for 42 allowable absences per financial year. Should you exceed 42 allowable absences, CCS is not payable except where evidence of an allowable absence is proven. For example, an allowable absence would include absence due to illness which is covered by a medical certificate. Please present the medical certificate to your service administrator.
- **Financial Hardship** – should you be experiencing financial hardship, please speak with your service Director as soon as possible so we can consider ways in which we can support you.
- **Students of UTS** – subsidised fees apply to students of UTS with the presentation of evidence of enrolment.
- **UTS also offers support to low income students** through its *Low Income Student Support (LISS)* program. Please speak to your service Director or administrator for further information.
- **Staff of UTS** – subsidised fees apply to staff of UTS with the presentation of evidence of employment.



Fees are payable in arrears each fortnight. You will be provided a copy of the UTSCC Fee Policy on enrolment which contains important fee information and is updated at least annually.



CONTACT US

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UTS CHILD CARE INC