

***Welcome to Yarm Gwanga, the on-campus  
U.N.E. child care centre***

**phone (02) 6773 3173**

**The Licensee of Yarm Gwanga is  
The University of New England's**

**Acting Director of Finance**

***Mr Warick Angelini***

**The Authorised Supervisor is**

***Ms Galia Urquhart***

**The licence capacity of the Centre is**

***Fifty-six (56)***

***Twenty (20) - eight weeks to under two years of age***

***Sixteen (16) - two years to three years of age***

***Twenty (20) - three years to under six years of age***

**The Licensing Authority**

**The Department of Community Services is the licensing authority for child care services in New South Wales.**

**The local office in Armidale is situated at:**

**92 Jessie Street  
Armidale NSW 2350**

**ph: (02) 67725544**

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# PHILOSOPHY OF THE CENTRE

## Children

- To provide a nurturing, sensitive and educational environment which welcomes children from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- To plan a program in conjunction with families and specialist educators to meet the individual needs of each child.
- To encourage socially responsible behaviour towards others and to develop positive feelings of self worth.
- To have predictable routines for the day and to offer consistent care within a flexible framework.
- To provide a safe, hygienic and secure environment.

## Family and Community

- To value the uniqueness of all members of the Yarm Gwanga community - children, families, staff, and visitors.
- To providing a welcoming atmosphere where families will feel encouraged to participate in the life of the centre and feel a sense of belonging.
- To develop mutual respect and support and encourage active communication and involvement in the program at a level comfortable to the individual parents.
- To actively participate in all relevant aspects of community life.
- To provide awareness and information on current Early Childhood issues, standards and practices.

## Staff

- The Staff of Yarm Gwanga are committed to effective communication, and to support and respect each other.
- Staff share a desire to work well as a team, to accept each other's opinions and to value each other's different working styles.
- Staff strive to value each families input and respect the uniqueness of each family unit.
- Staff desire families to respect and value the work undertaken by them with their children.
- Staff desire security within their work environment.
- Yarm Gwanga has a team of experienced and qualified staff to care for your child.

## **Long Term Aims for Children at Yarm Gwanga**

- To provide a healthy, stimulating, safe and nurturing environment.
- To provide a high quality program which is based on current educational theory and practice and acknowledges that each child has their own learning style, special talents, interests and needs.
- To provide a wide range of experiences which represent the diversity of Australian culture and are based on anti biased curriculum.
- To provide a variety of experiences that allow for spontaneous as well as planned activities to assist children's development.
- To offer an integrated creative arts program which is linked to the whole program and which includes a diversity of cultural and ethnic experiences.
- To work with parents in partnership so as to promote in the children healthy self esteem which we believe is vital for positive physical, intellectual and social growth.
- To offer a nutritious diet that offers a variety of foods which are culturally appropriate, includes special dietary considerations and is well balanced.
- To provide a pleasant and social environment in which the children develop an interest and enjoyment in meal times.
- To maintain high standards of personal hygiene and centre hygiene.
- To only discuss with appropriate adults, and in a positive, caring and professional manner, matters related to the development of the children in our care.
- To create an environment which enhances each child's physical, emotional, social and intellectual development.
- To encourage the development of children's respect for the rights of others and to treat all living things with kindness.
- To encourage the development of children's respect for personal belongings and the centre environment.

## **STAFFING**

The team at Yarm Gwanga consists of experienced and qualified staff to care for you and your child.

1 Director/ Early Childhood Teacher  
1 Early Childhood Teacher  
3 Group Leaders  
4 Child Care Workers  
1 Part time Cook and 1 General Assistant

Please see notice board for staff names.

## **Ratios**

The Centre provides staff: child ratios as outlined in the Centre Based and Mobile Child Care Service Regulations (No. 2) 1996. The Centre's ratios are as follows:

1 staff: 5 Infants under two years

1 staff: 8 children aged 2 - 3

1 staff: 10 children aged 3 - 5.

## **Relief Staff**

When permanent staff are absent due to professional development, or leave entitlements relief staff are employed. Relief staff will have the appropriate qualifications, experience and interest in working with young children, and within the philosophy of Yarm Gwanga. It is also part of the Director's role to relieve staff for leave or program duties in each room.

## **Students and Volunteers**

Throughout the year TAFE, university and high school students attend the Centre for approved practical experiences. These students or volunteers are always supervised by permanent staff and given a copy of the staff handbook as a guide. TAFE students usually take written observations and photographs of the children. Parent permission is sought before these activities are undertaken. Parents are notified when students or volunteers will be present in the Centre.

## **Staff Interaction With Children**

Staff are committed to building a positive relationship with parents and children at Yarm Gwanga. In an effort to nurture in children a positive self image staff will role model positive language and behaviour, help children develop skills in solving problems and gain a sense of their own power and capability.

Staff will act in a professional manner at all times with parents and children thus eliminating personal bias. Children will be treated fairly and equally by all staff at all times, and children's ability, gender, religion, culture, economic status and family structure will be respected.

Regulatory staff / child ratios will be maintained so that children can be given the assistance they need to develop skills and enjoy learning experiences while attending Yarm Gwanga.

In the case of a child who is continually finding it difficult to cope, staff will discuss their observations and concerns with parents at an appropriate time and in an appropriate venue (privacy is paramount). Feedback from parents will be utilised in strategies formulated for children. If problems still occur it may be advisable to refer parent and child to a specialist for further assessments and assistance with strategies. This specialist advice can then be utilised within the program at Yarm Gwanga. If a child has a high support needs due to disability then every effort will be made to gain a support worker for the child to enable continued enrolment in the Centre. At the time of enrolment parents will be expected to disclose any specialist attention a child has or is receiving so that a mutual agreement can be reached on the most appropriate care available to the family.

# CENTRE HOURS

## Hours of Operation

The Centre operates from 8.30 am to 5.30 pm, Monday to Friday. The Centre is closed on NSW public holidays and for two (2) weeks over the Christmas holiday breaks. No child is to be left unattended at the centre outside these hours.

During residential school periods only the Centre will be open 8.30 am to 5.30 pm Saturdays and Sundays to cater to the care needs of residential students only.

## Session Times

	Full Day Care:	8.30 am-5.30 pm
Sessional Care:	Morning session:	8.30am - 1.30 pm
	Afternoon session:	1.30 pm - 5.30 pm

For the sake of the children in care, and their program, a regular pattern of attendance is preferable.

Children who arrive late to a session may miss out on particularly enjoyable indoor or outdoor activities. It is very unsettling for some children to be brought in at packing up or transition times. Please consult the daily timetables in each room to avoid disruption to your child and the remainder of the group of children.

## Priority of access guidelines

The Commonwealth has determined priority of access guidelines for childcare centres. These guidelines embody the principles and philosophy underlying the Commonwealth's involvement in childcare. The centre accepts enrolments of children from students and staff of the University, and the Armidale community depending on the availability of appropriate child care places.

## Application for Child Care

### Waiting List

- Parents who are interested in placing a child's name on the waiting list should contact the Director on 02-67733173 and request a waiting list application form. This should then be completed and returned to the Centre before a child's name can be placed on the list.
- As there is a heavy demand for places in the Centre, especially in the under two year old age group, parents are asked to notify the Centre of any changes to the information recorded on our waiting list, including whether a child still requires care.

## Enrolment of Children

- As this is a very important time in a family's life, parents are asked to make time to come in and chat with the Director and Staff before enrolling a child in the program. At this time the policies of the Centre can be discussed, the Parent Handbook can be read and your questions answered. It is also a good opportunity to observe the program offered at the Centre by spending time in the room that with your child.
- Enrolment forms are part of this process and must be completed in full before a child can be admitted to the Centre. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the director of updated information on the enrolment form as changes occurs.
- Immunisation Records for your child / children will be required at this time; the Centre must sight original record (see Health Section in this Booklet).
- Depending on the availability of care, children may be enrolled at any time throughout the year.

## **Delivery and Collection of Children**

The Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health has stipulated that parents are responsible for signing their children in and out everyday. Absences must be recorded and signed as well.

All children must arrive at the Centre, and be collected from the Centre, accompanied by a responsible adult. Contact must be made with a member of staff by this adult.

## **Persons Authorised to Deliver and Collect Children**

At the time of enrolment, you will be asked to specify the adults who are able to pick up or deliver your children to the Centre. The list of people with access may be changed by written notification to the Director. Children will not be permitted to leave the Centre with anyone not nominated by the parent as having access.

When custody disputes occur, it is particularly important to keep this list updated. If the Courts have issued custody orders, to one or both parents, the Centre must also have a copy of these orders.

We ask you to adhere to these arrangements for your child's protection.

## **Fees**

### **Introduction**

- Fees are required to be paid in full and kept two weeks in advance at all times.
- No money is to be handed to staff. All money is to be placed in an envelope with the family name, description of contents on the outside of the envelope and placed in the fee box which is located outside the Kindy Koala Room
- Invoices/Receipts will be issued fortnightly and placed in your child's pocket.
- Any alteration in care arrangements - days / hours must be discussed with the Director.
- Failure to pay fees can result in a child's enrolment being cancelled
- Parents wishing to terminate a child's enrolment must give two weeks notice in writing or pay two weeks fees in lieu of notice. The two weeks closure of the centre over the Christmas break

is a non-payment period and is not accepted as the two weeks notice of withdrawal. Notice of withdrawal must be given either two weeks prior or two weeks after this closure period

## **Salary Packaging**

If you are a permanent employee of the University of New England, you have the opportunity to participate in a salary packaging scheme which allows you to receive part of your remuneration in the form of benefits rather than salary. The cost of child care at Yarm Gwanga may be incorporated into a salary package. There is no Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) on child care at Yarm Gwanga. You need to have your child booked into Yarm Gwanga for **AT LEAST** one permanent day, casual care will not be salary packaged.

## **Public Holiday**

If your child normally attends the Centre on a day that falls as public holiday, normal payment is required for that day.

## **Overtime**

The centre closes at 5.30pm; children must be picked up prior to this. Parents will be charged a fee of \$15.00 per 1/4 hour or part there of. A separate account will be issued and payable immediately without Child Care Benefit being applied.

## **Absences**

The Centre must be notified by 10am if your child is unable to attend the Centre for any reason. This allows for catering purposes and for those children wanting to attend that day on a casual basis. No reduction in fees will be allowed where your child is absent for any reason, including sickness.

## **Residential School Care**

Bookings for enrolment of children into the Centre for residential schools must be made one month in advance of the residential school period.

Fees are to be paid in full prior to the commencement of the residential school.

Once your child/children have set booked days you are liable for full fee payment for the period of the booking, even if you withdraw from or fail to attend your residential school.

Weekend care is available only during the residential school periods and only for residential students.

## **Yarm Gwanga Vacation Care**

Open 8.30 to 5.30, Monday to Friday during Residential schools and school holidays, at a cost of \$25 per day. Yarm Gwanga Vacation Care is held on campus at ST Mark's Chapel. The qualified and motivated staff provide a stimulating and developmentally appropriate program which caters for

children from kindergarten to year 6. The program which includes a weekly excursion, is available for perusal prior to each vacation care period. A two-course lunch is provided, as is afternoon tea. We require that parents bring fresh fruit for the morning tea platters. Please contact us at any time on 67735020 during vacation care periods and 67733173 during school terms.

## **Child Care Benefit**

### **Introduction**

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is a payment made to families to assist with the costs of childcare. Families using approved childcare are able to choose to receive CCB through fee reductions or as a lump sum payment after the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has processed their tax returns.

For families choosing to receive CCB as a fee reduction, the level of fee reduction is based on their estimated taxable income for the year in which the care was received. Their actual entitlement will be calculated once actual incomes are known, after the ATO processes their tax returns. The difference between entitlement and fee reductions received will be paid to or recovered by the FAO (Family Assistance Office)

### **Allowable Absences and Approved Absences**

Allowable Absence Days - CCB is paid for up to 30 allowable absence days for each child per financial year across all approved long day care centres, family day care, schemes and specialised outside school hours care services. Allowable absence days can be taken for any reason.

Allowable Absences include holidays and sickness but do not include the following: (CCB will be paid for these and are not counted towards the 30 day limit)

- Illness (with a medical certificate)
- Non-immunisation
- Rostered days off
- Rotating shift work
- Temporary closure of a school or pupil free days
- Public holidays
- Periods of local emergency
- Court order shared custody
- Attendance at a preschool

Once the child has reached 30 allowable absence days CCB is not paid for any further absences, unless the absences are taken for an approved absence.

## **Daily Program**

Quality care by trained staff ensures that through activities and experiences, your children enhance their social, emotional, physical and intellectual development.

An educational program is provided for all children catering to the needs of individual children in care.

The progress of all children is monitored, thus providing staff with guidelines for individual needs. The program is available in each playroom for viewing.

## **Developmental Planning for Children's Individual Needs**

Parents are advised at the time of enrolment that staff will work with their child on an individual basis. This means that planning is undertaken with individual children's developmental needs a priority. Staff complete developmental checklists and anecdotal records from observations of the children in their care. The main areas checked and observed are gross and fine motor skills, language and cognitive skills (thinking, memory etc), social and emotional skills. Parents observations of their children are also an integral part of this process and thus communication between staff and parents is extremely important. Daily Diaries, daily verbal feedback, and comments, parent / staff interviews and social functions are mechanisms utilised to ensure that this process remains alive and develops further.

## **Special Needs**

If a child has a high support need due to disability then every effort will be made to gain a support worker for the child to enable continued enrolment in the Centre. At the time of enrolment parents will be expected to disclose any specialist attention a child has or is receiving so that a mutual agreement can be reached on the most appropriate care available to the family.

## **Parent Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to discuss children's needs, interests and skills with staff on a daily basis. Appointments can be made with the Director to discuss any concerns you have about your child's program. Interviews can be arranged with staff and parents to discuss children's development, at a time, which is suitable to both.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the activities of the Centre, e.g. communicate to staff in the diaries provided, attend open days and join in celebrations. If anyone has a little time to volunteer an hour or so to assist us with activities for the children such as multicultural activities, reading, playing an instrument or repairing toys and equipment, you are most welcome to come and discuss your skills and availability with the staff.

Special religious medical or cultural requirements (e.g. diet, celebrations or medical) must be notified by parents at the time of enrolment of the child into the Centre so that these requirements can be considered in the program.

Parents are invited to participate in the formulation of policies, procedures, and curriculum guidelines for the Centre by passing on ideas to staff verbally and in writing. Questionnaires will be circulated throughout the year giving parents the opportunity to comment on the program offered at the Centre.

## **Clothing**

Children should be sent in casual "play" clothes as our activities often involve messy play (paint, clay etc)

A spare set of clothes should be sent each day, or left at the Centre. These clothes need to be size and season appropriate. If your child is toilet training more than one set of spare clothes will be required.

Shoes with soles that grip are a good idea for children who will be climbing. Thongs are not really appropriate.

A hat in the summer, and a warm coat and beanie in the winter are also essential. All clothing (and other belongings) must be clearly labelled.

## Nappies

Sufficient disposable nappies must be provided for each session that the baby attends (a minimum of 8-10 nappies).

## Toilet Training

When your child displays readiness to use the toilet or potty at home please discuss the issue of toilet training the child at the centre with staff before commencing the procedure at Yarm. Children can experience difficulties establishing a regular routine especially in childcare and thus open communication between parents and staff is essential.

**Children undertaking toilet training require:**

- 1. nappies and or pull up nappies are a helpful aid;**
- 2. training pants throughout the process.**
- 3. plenty of spare clothes for the accidents!**

**Please Note:** Parents are asked to donate a large box of tissues and a bottle of sunscreen to the Centre at the beginning of each year or their enrolment.

## Meals

"Our goal is to provide children who attend, for a full day, with at least 50% of their daily recommended dietary intake of nutritious and culturally appropriate food in a safe hygienic environment".

The Centre provides a nutritious two course lunch each day for all children attending the morning or full day sessions. These meals are based on "Caring For Children: A practical guide to meeting the food and nutrition needs of children in care", produced by Central Coast Area Health Service, NSW, 1992.

Morning and afternoon tea is also offered to all children each day. Parents are asked to bring a piece of ripe fruit each day for each child in care. For the Babies, Toddlers and Kindy rooms the fruit can be left in the kitchen each morning for collection and preparation to share at morning tea with the preschoolers leaving theirs in their room. The Centre provides water, 50:50 diluted juice, and milk for the children to drink throughout the day.

Where children have special dietary requirements including allergies, discussions are held between parents, Director and Cook as to how these can be accommodated. All special requirements need to be written on the enrolment form or an attachment and given to the Director at the time of enrolment. If children cannot eat the meals provided or a nutritious and economical substitute, parents will be asked to provide the child's meal in a container clearly marked with the child's full name.

If infants require formula or milk bottles, parents are asked to provide the formula already prepared, in non-glass bottles **clearly marked with the infants full name** to be left in the infants' room fridge.

Drinking Water is always available to children throughout their day at Yarm Gwanga.

A seasonal menu is displayed in each room, along with a chart outlining whether children ate or slept. Parents will be informed if it is believed their child is not eating or drinking enough throughout the day.

Staff involved in the preparation or serving of food for the children are expected to follow hygienic practices such as:

- 1) wash hands with soap and water
- 2) use serving utensils
- 3) wear rubber gloves if handling food
- 4) cover or refrigerate food to prevent contamination
- 5) undertake a basic food preparation, safety and nutrition course if undertaking Cook's position permanently.

## **Sleep / Rest Time**

Parents are asked to provide the following items when your child commences at the Centre. All items are to be clearly marked with your child's name.

1 single bed sheet (seasonally appropriate) or 2 cot sheets for infants 0 - 2 years

1 small blanket

The sheet will be sent home each week for washing and must be returned the following week on your child's 1st day of attendance for the week. A fine of \$5.00 is to be paid to the Centre if the sheet has been forgotten 3 times to cover the cost of washing Yarm sheets each time your sheet has been forgotten.

**All** children at the Centre are encouraged to have a sleep/rest in the middle of the day. A nappy is to be provided for children who need a nappy when sleeping.

If you would like your child to rest only for a specified amount of time please let the staff in your child's room know. There is a communication diary in each room for written messages.

Quiet activities are always available to resting children.

Children in the Pre-School group are not encouraged to have dummies/bottles at rest time. A soft toy may be brought from home for rest time, other toys are discouraged in fear of breakages or losing them.

## Birthdays

Birthdays are a special day for a child, and we like to help them celebrate their day.

You may like to send a cake along on your child's birthday, so that he/she can celebrate their birthday among friends and parents at the Centre, at morning or afternoon tea.

## Excursions

Excursions, which enhance the children's experiences, are included in the program.

At the time of enrolment, parents are asked to sign a blanket permission note for approval for walking excursions within the University campus.

Excursions off campus, and those involving transport, require written parental consent at the time. These excursions will be notified before the time concerned.

## Health

### Immunisations

To receive Child Care Benefit parents must provide proof of their child's immunisation status.

Proof of immunisation (Blue Book or equivalent) is required by the Centre upon enrolment (or as your child is immunised).

**All children who attend the Centre should be immunised to ensure their own health as well as those of other children.**

### Unimmunised Children

Parents will be notified when there is a current outbreak of an infectious disease at the Centre. It is strongly recommended that if a child is not immunised against the illness that the child be kept home for the protection of other children attending the Centre and his/her own protection.

### Sick Children / Communicable Diseases

**The Centre cannot provide care for sick children.**

If you suspect your child of having an illness or infectious condition you are required to keep your child at home. This will protect the other children and the staff from unnecessary exposure to illness.

**Excluding sick children is an important way of preventing the introduction or re-introduction of infection into the Centre.**

Parents will be contacted if a child is observed by staff to be unable to continue with their program of activities due to illness. If parents are unable to be contacted the 'emergency contact' person, designated by parents on the enrolment form will be asked to collect the child.

If your child is sent home from the Centre unwell he / she should not return to the Centre until they have fully recovered, or are no longer infectious to the other children and staff.

**It is always advisable when using a child care centre to have a "support" person to care for your child when they are too ill to attend 'group care'.**

The exclusion periods for communicable diseases and Yarm Gwanga's health and hygiene policies are based upon the policy document 'Staying Healthy in Childcare' published by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

## **Medication**

**The first dose of any medication will not be given by the centre staff to any child. It is advisable that your child remain away from the centre 24 hours following commencement of medication.**

**Antibiotics** - When your child is sick and prescribed antibiotics it is advisable for them to be kept in a quiet environment like home, for a day or two until they are feeling able to cope with the busy child care centre. Please phone the Director to discuss your child's individual care if you are unsure whether they should return to the Centre.

**Administering Medication** - It is a legal requirement under The Centre Based and Mobile Child Care Service Regulation (No. 2) 1996 that parents record instructions for staff in relation to administering medication to a child in care.

There is a folder located in each room for parents to record instructions for their child's medication (please ask staff if you cannot locate it).

Each time a child requires medication parents **MUST** record the following information:

- a) the **name** of the medication
- b) the **date, time and dosage** to be administered
- c) the parent's signature giving permission to staff to administer the medication.

Each time staff give medication the following information must be recorded:

- a) the signature of the staff person administering medication
- b) the signature of the staff person who checked the dosage.

Always verbally notify staff that your child requires medication and remember **NEVER LEAVE MEDICATION IN YOUR CHILD'S BAG**. As well, always enter this information in the Communication Diary as a back up to the verbal notification.

Prescribed medication will only be given to a child if the prescribed medication is in its original package with the child's name, current date and dose/times to be given. Over the counter medication also needs to be in its original packaging and staff will adhere to all written instructions on packaging unless it is accompanied by medical advice.

## **Accidents**

If your child has the misfortune to have an accident while at the centre our procedure is to apply First Aid treatment (all staff have Senior First Aid Certificates); phone the Ambulance if serious and then phone parents. If parents cannot get to the centre to go with the child to Hospital a member of staff will accompany the child and wait with the child for parents to arrive. If your child has had a minor accident we will still phone you to inform you of your child's condition, so you do not get a fright when collecting a child with for example a bump on the head. An accident report is written by staff on all accidents or incidents that occur at the centre. This report will specify what happened, the first aid treatment given, and will be signed by the witnessing staff member, director and parent.

## MANAGEMENT

**The daily management of the centre is the responsibility of the Director**, issues such as enrolments, fees, staffing, program supervision, maintenance, publicity, equipment and liaison with Governments and UNE management come under the role of Director.

Yarm Gwanga is managed by the University of New England. Parents are involved in every aspect of the program including the creation and implementation of Yarm Gwanga's policies and procedures, through the Yarm Gwanga Parent Advisory Committee. This committee consists of seven parent users. Parent users elect this committee at the AGM. All parents are encouraged to attend and participate in the Annual General Meeting held in early march each year. The Committee is accessible to all parents at all times. The list of names of current committee members is available on the notice board in the foyer.

Please become part of the life of the centre and nominate for the Advisory Committee, nominations are circulated in February of each year, all nominations are welcome.

## Grievances

Problems are best resolved by **open communication** and at Yarm we have found that if parents have a problem or issue concerning the care of their child, these are best raised with the staff in the child's room so that a negotiated solution can be found between the parties directly involved.

If a solution cannot be reached please advise the Director and a meeting can be arranged to discuss the issues. The meeting can involve any staff concerned and parents as well as the Director, or can be between parents and Director only. Any negotiated solutions reached at these meetings will be recorded with a copy given to all parties involved. If solutions are not reached then a letter can be forwarded to the President of the Advisory Committee for further attention.

**If further information is required, please read the Policy Handbook kept in the foyer and speak with the Director and staff about your child's care.**