PARENTS AND FAMILIES POLICY

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1 Aim

1.1 To include parents and families in decision making and administrative processes.
1.2 To be involved with the service’s Nominated Supervisor and Children’s Services Manager in providing feedback and suggestions on day to day activities of the centre, within Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services policy guidelines
1.3 To encourage if possible a level of parent participation in the guidance of the organisation
1.4 The Kids' Uni Policies and Procedures apply to Kids' Uni North, Kids’ Uni South, South Coast Workers Child Care Centre, Kids Uni After School Care and Vacation Care (also known as Kids’ Uni OOSH).

2 Structure

2.1 Children’s Services are a Business Unit of Wollongong UniCentre. UniCentre have established a subcommittee of the board. The committee is known as the Children’s Services Consultative Committee (CSCC). This committee consists of the UniCentre General Manager, Children’s Services Manager, one UniCentre board representative and one parent representative from each child care service. Meetings are held twice a year or as required.

2.2 The CSCC has its own subcommittee consisting of parent reps who convene parent meetings quarterly and provide feedback up to the CSCC. The Subcommittee is known as the Parent Club

3 Implementation

2.1 Facilitating the existence of parent Club meetings (quarterly meetings).
2.2 Ensuring parent representation on the Children’s Services consultative Committee (sub committee of Wollongong Unicentre Board) so there is direct input into decision making aspects of the children’s services (twice yearly or ‘as needed’ meetings).
2.3 Survey of parents conducted annually. Use feedback to develop better partnerships with parents.
2.4 Parent feedback sought on policies being reviewed; menus; communication methods; and general operational matters.
2.5 Parent information sessions held throughout the year (eg. transition to school; nutrition, language development).
2.6 Mid year parent/staff meetings held on a one-on-one basis with all parents who wish to participate.
2.7 Communicating regularly with parents and families on their children’s physical, emotional, social, language and intellectual development (chats, communication books, notices, pamphlets, parents lending library, newsletters, children’s portfolios)

2.8 Support and assistance to be given to parents and families to facilitate effective parenting

2.9 Parents are not to be discriminated against on the basis of ethnicity, gender, race or cultural grounds.

2.10 Extended members of the family are also encouraged to participate in the partnerships being developed – need to respect the importance of these family members in children’s lives.

2.11 Respecting the rights of parents and families

4 Responsibilities of the Parent Club Committee

3.1 Participate in recruitment of service educators and other staff in accordance with Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services and Staff Selection Policy and EEO guidelines.

3.2 Provide representatives (one per service for equity purposes) on the Committee to participate in policy development, general feedback and parent surveys.

3.3 Keep parents informed of parent club matters.

3.4 Assist with fund raising for children’s equipment if possible.

5 Structure

4.1 The Parent Club Committee is elected at a General Meeting (annual / biannual): President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a minimum of 3 committee members. The maximum number should be 10 members.

4.2 The Children’s Services Manager holds an ex-officio position on the Committee, and is required to attend Parent Club Committee meetings.

4.3 The Parent Club Committee, once elected, decides upon the frequency of meetings (with a minimum of at least one per year).

4.4 At these meetings the following reports must be submitted to the Committee:
   i. Minutes from previous meeting
   ii. Verbal reports from:
      a. Presidents report
      b. Treasurers report
      c. Manager’s report

6 Parent Club General Meetings

5.1 The following reports must be presented:
   i. President’s report
   ii. Manager’s report
   iii. Fund raising Accounts
iv. General financial statement

5.2 Parent Club Committee memberships are declared vacant.

5.3 Positions to include: President, Secretary and Treasurer and a minimum of 3 members, maximum of 10 members. Nominations for these positions are to be called for in writing for a period of 1 month before the General Meeting.

5.4 Nominations will be accepted at the meeting.

5.5 Notice of the General Meeting must be given to all parents 1 month in advance.

7 Constitution of the Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services Parents Club

6.1 Name

i. The Club shall be known as the Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services Parent’s Club.

6.2 Interpretation

i. The Club shall mean the Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services Parent’s Club.

ii. The Executive shall mean the Executive Committee of the Parent’s Club.

iii. The Wollongong UniCentre shall mean Wollongong UniCentre Ltd.

iv. The Committee shall consist of:
   a. 3 Executive Parents’ Club Committee Representatives (president, treasurer, secretary);
   b. Manager, Children’s Services;
   c. Additional parent members as seconded by the executive

v. Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services user shall mean a parent who has enrolled one or more of his or her children at a Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services facility by paying enrollment fees.

6.3 Aims

i. The aim of the Club shall be to provide some feedback and suggestions on activities of the centres within the Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services policy guidelines.

6.4 Membership

i. Full membership shall be open to all parents who have paid their annual enrolment fee and who have maintained their child care fees up-to-date.

6.5 Records

i. The Manager/Nominee shall ensure that a permanent record of the activities of the club is maintained and that a copy of reports of the Club activities are kept on file in central Admin (of Kids Uni).

ii. The Treasurer shall operate the bank accounts and control the disposal of the funds of the Club in conjunction with either the President, Vice-President or Manager/Nominee in accordance with guidelines approved by the Committee.
iii. Any other Office Bearers or other representatives of the Club shall assume such other duties that the Club may from time to time determine.

iv. Any representative of the club, other than the President, on the Committee may be replaced at any time by a decision of a properly constituted meeting of the Executive.

v. The Executive shall represent the Club with a level of high diligence.

6.6 Representation of Services

i. Each child care service will have at one parent representative on the committee. Parents may job share the position. As a new service becomes part of Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services an additional parent place will be made available on the committee. No service will have more voting power then another.

6.7 Executive Meetings

i. The Manager/Nominee shall call an Executive Meeting at the request of any two (2) members of the executive.

ii. The executive shall meet at least annually during the academic year.

iii. A quorum for an executive meeting shall be three (3) voting members of the Executive which may be specified from time to time by a General Meeting.

6.8 General Meetings

i. There must be a quorum of five is needed to conduct a general meeting.

6.9 Standing Orders

i. The Standing Orders of the Club shall be those of the Wollongong UniCentre insofar as they may apply.

6.10 Amendment to the Constitution

i. No amendment may be made to this constitution except by a resolution approved of by a two-thirds majority of members present at a General meeting and ratified by the Wollongong UniCentre General Manager.

ii. Proposed amendments shall be given in writing to the Manager at least seven (7) days prior to the General Meeting at which they are to be discussed.

6.11 Dissolution of the Club

i. The Club shall be dissolved if a resolution approved of by a two-thirds majority of members present at a general Meeting called with the item of dissolution as the sole item of business so determines.

ii. The quorum for such a meeting shall not be less than ten (10) members or two-thirds of the membership of the Club.

iii. If the Club is dissolved, the General Manager of the Wollongong UniCentre shall be informed. Any property belonging to the Club shall become the property of the Wollongong UniCentre.
8 Feedback Procedure

7.1 We promote the fact that parents have an important role in Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services and we value their comments.

7.2 We ensure that parents feel free to communicate any feedback (positive or negative) they have in relation to Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services, educators and other staff, management, programs or policies, without fearing any inappropriate consequences.

7.3 We ensure families are made fully aware of the procedures to do this and their rights and responsibilities with respect to this area.

7.4 We will support parent’s right to raise issues/feedback and will help them to make their issues/feedback, clear and try to resolve them.

7.5 Feedback can be informal or formal. It can be anything, which a parent thinks is unfair, relevant or which makes them unhappy with the service.

7.6 Every parent will be provided with clear written guidelines detailing the feedback procedure, in the parent handbook.

7.7 Parents can also provide feedback via the feedback page on the Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services web site.

7.8 Parents can also raise any matter with the relevant parent representative (from the Committee) for each service.

7.9 All confidential conversations with parents will take place in a quiet place away from children, other parents or staff not involved.

7.10 If a parent has a complaint or feedback about the service, they will be encouraged to talk to the Nominated Supervisor who will arrange a time to discuss their concerns and come to a resolution to address the issue.

7.11 If the feedbacks not handled to the parent’s satisfaction at this level they should discuss the issue with the Manager of Children’s Services, whether in writing or verbally. (Contact mfowler@uow.edu.au or 4221 8037)

7.12 The Manager will discuss the issue with the Nominated Supervisor and develop a strategy for resolving the problem. This would be discussed further with the parent or if necessary a meeting will be organised with the Nominated Supervisor and parent to resolve the problem.

7.13 The parent’s complaint is to be recorded and dated to indicate the issue of concern and how it was resolved.

7.14 The Nominated Supervisor or Manager will inform the parent of what has been decided regarding the issue. Educators and other staff will also be informed of any relevant issues that they need to address or be aware of.

7.15 This could be done verbally or if the issue has been dealt with on a more formal basis then the Manager or Nominated Supervisor will write personally to the parent.

7.16 If any feedback or complaint cannot be resolved internally to the consumer’s satisfaction, external option will be offered such as an unbiased third party (such as the General Manager of Wollongong UniCentre).
9 Disclosure of Information in regard to Confidential Issues

Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services

Disclosure of Information in Regard to Confidential Issues

(For Management and Parent Club Committee Members)

To ensure that a high standard of confidentiality is maintained by this organisation in regard to discussion and decision making.

On election to the Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services Management Committee or the Parent Club Committee, all members are required to sign a Disclosure of Information document.

As part of their role on the management Committee or the Parent Club Committee members come in contact with information which must be kept confidential at all times.

It is this Organisation’s policy that all Management Committee and Parent club Committee Members are made aware of the fact that irresponsible discussion or disclosure of confidential information regarding the organisation, staff and in particular, the clients, is contrary to our policy.

Any breach of confidentiality will result in termination of membership.

As acknowledged that you have read this memorandum and understand the policy on Disclosure of Information, would you please place your signature below.

I ____________________________ have read the above and understand the policy on Disclosure of Information.

Signature ________________________________

Witness ________________________________

Date ________________________________
10 Source
Wollongong UniCentre (Human Resources Policies —2007) NSW Ombudsman – Community Services
Wollongong UniCentre Children’s Services Philosophy
United Nations Rights of the Child 1989
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

11 Review
This policy will be reviewed every 3 years and the review will include Management, Employees, Families and Interested Parties.

12 Version Control Table

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<td>Paragraph inserted re application of policies across all centres. Migrated into new QA format. This policy replaces the Feedback Procedure, Management Committee – Aims and Responsibilities, Parent Committee Disclosure of Information, Constitution and Aims and Responsibilities. It also replaces the Parent and Family Policy.</td>
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