



L-Università
ta' Malta



Information Handbook of Policies and Procedures

2024 - 2025

Child Educare Services of the University of Malta |
It-Tajra & Ilwien Childcare Centres



Mission Statement for the UM Child Care Services

The Child Educare Services of the University of Malta
endeavour to provide a safe and healthy environment
in which children grow holistically.

The staff, in collaboration with parents and other stakeholders,
is committed to ensure a creative environment
conducive to learning through play and to instil in children
an inquisitive attitude and love for learning.

Staff

Head of the Child Educare Services: Ms Johanna Gatt

Manager Ms Abigail Church

Staff at It-Tajra

Centre Coordinator Ms Amy Pons

Child Care Educators
Ms Erica Pace
Ms Yomeny Nunez Caceres
Ms Ayako Troisi
Ms Milica Bajic
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Child Care Attendants
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Ms Cettina Demicoli
Ms Andrea Purmaricra

Staff at Ilwien

Centre Coordinator Ms Frederique Duca

Child Care Educators
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Ms Joanne Zerafa
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Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/um.childcare>

Vision and Rationale

As stated in our Mission Statement above, our main aim is the overall development of each and every child in an equitable way. Staff training and the programme we provide are all geared at having the required professionalism to cater for each individual in a way that befits him/her most. A healthy relationship with parents is considered necessary in order to make sure that the child experiences continuity from home to school and vice versa.

Opening days and hours

Our Centres operate all year round, from Monday to Friday, between 07.30 to 17.00.

Summer working hours start from 16th June until 30th September. During this period childcare centres operate from 7:30 till 13:30.

The Centres do not operate on weekends, on national/public holidays falling during the week, and on the 26th December, on the 2nd January, on Easter Monday, the 16th August, for professional development days, normally one day per term, and for a week in September (days will be advised accordingly), for general refurbishment and cleaning in preparation for the new scholastic year. Parents will also be advised in advance when the centre will not open due to team building and/or continuous professional development of staff.

Child Admission and Dismissal Policy

Admission

If there are signs of illness, the children should not attend the childcare centre. If parents are also sick or have temperature, they should not send their children to childcare unless the child looks totally fine.

Parents/guardians (or an authorised adult) are to personally escort the child to the centre where they are required to sign and fob him/her in, daily. Signing in and out of the child is being done electronically via the mobile application which parents need to install beforehand on their mobile.

Pushchairs and any kind of baby carriers are not allowed in the centre at any time and cannot be left on the premises until pick up time.

Non-essential belongings such as personal toys etc are prohibited. If the use of educational material, which is specifically designed to stimulate children with disabilities or special needs, is needed from home, it will only be allowed after discussion with the parents concerned.

Greeting Time

It is of utmost importance that all children are properly greeted by our Educators. Therefore, **ALL** children attending the morning session are to be at the centre **not later than 08:45**. Children who need to take breakfast need to be at the centre by 08:30 latest.

Kindly refrain from accompanying your child to the centre **later than 09:00** since late arrivals disrupt circle time. Moreover, it is utterly important for your child's development to have time for 'free play' before circle time that starts at 09:00.

Once inside the Centre

The Educator will take out all the items in your child's bag so kindly ensure that you only send labelled food containers, a water bottle and any milk bottles according to your child's needs. The child's educator/attendant will change child's outdoor to indoor shoes. Cloths or toys are

not allowed inside the Centre for sanitary reasons unless discussed otherwise with the educator. If any resources are required, the Educator will let you know and you can provide these in a bag which will be returned to you. Children will keep to their assigned group and educator.

Dismissal

Parents are asked to pick up their child on time. Release of child from care must be authorised. **No person will be given the benefit of the doubt.** On collecting the child, any person who is not on the official Pick-up Authorisation form sent online at the beginning of the year, must provide identification, after notification, as described below, by the parent/guardian.

When a person not on the official Pick-up Authorisation Sheet is authorised to collect the child, parents/guardians need to notify the Centre by means of a signed letter, e-mail or phone call, giving the person's name, I.D, number and relationship to the child. At pickup time the person concerned must present his/her I.D. card.

Before leaving the Centre, the child needs to be signed for and fobbed out.

In the case that a parent/guardian fails to collect his/her child, an adult is to remain with the child, while informing the Head of services. The educator/head contacts the parents/guardians concerned by telephone. Meanwhile, the child is never to be left unattended. Should the parents not answer the phone the emergency numbers are called. In case that a contact is not made with any of the relatives by 17:15, the head will contact Aġenzija Appoġġ or the Police.

Attendance

In any case that the child will not be coming to the centre, due to sickness or for any other reason, it is always important to advise the educator or coordinator on the day or beforehand. All children who are sick need to provide a medical certificate on return.

If in any case you forget to sign in or fob the child in or out, it is important to let the coordinator know so that the free child care scheme will be updated accordingly, since this will have an effect on the absence hours.

Custody and access

The Centres are to be informed of any court order that accepts a particular parent or individual having access and/or communication with the child. A copy of the order must be provided and will be kept in the child's personal file for future reference.

Fees and Payment Policy

Children up to the age of three can benefit from the Free Child Care Scheme. Any 'billable' hours will be invoiced at the end of each month if applicable and paid online **within 10 days of the issue date**.

Children not on the Free Child Care Scheme will be invoiced six weeks in advance according to the rates below. Any extra hours after 13:30 will be added to the following month's invoice. *In the case that invoices are not being paid on time, the Centre reserves the right to terminate the service.* Kindly refer to our Invoices and Payments Policy for more detail.

Fees for children not on the Free Child Care Scheme for the scholastic year 2024 – 2025.

Morning Session (07:30 – 13:30)

5 days a week €200 per month

3 days a week €120 per month

Rate between 13:30 and 17:00

€2 per hour

Fees for children not on the Free Child Care Scheme for the scholastic year 2025 – 2026.

Morning Session (07:30 – 13:30)

5 days a week €300 per month

3 days a week €180 per month

Rate between 13:30 and 17:00

€2 per hour

All payments are to be settled online within 10 days of the date of issue.

Please follow the instructions below on how to settle invoices online:

Payments by BOV:

Log into BOV

Click on 'My Payments' on the top taskbar

Choose 'Pay a bill'

'Send Bill Payment to...'

"The payment details are..."

Parent's Name and Surname: input your name as quoted on your invoice:

ID No/ Date of birth input the invoice number:

Mailing Address not essential but you can include your email address

Amount input *amount due*

Click Next and authorise.

Payments by HSBC:

Name of account Holder: University of Malta

Address of Account Holder: Tal-Qroqq, Msida, Malta

E-mail address: fees.accounts@um.edu.mt

Bank: HSBC Malta plc

Account no: 085 031458 002

Sort Code: 44853

Swift Code: MMEBMTMT

IBAN:MT84MMEB44853000000085031458002

Address: 52, Msida Seafront, Msida

Transition from Home to the Centre

The Manager or Coordinator, together with the parents, decide on a day when the child is to start attending the centre. On the day, an adult is to accompany the child who stays at the centre with his/her educator for one hour. The following day the child is brought to the centre and stays with the educator for one hour on his/her own. On the third day, the parent is advised to bring the child for more than one hour depending on the child's behaviour on the previous days. Ideally, by the end of the week the child would be able to stay for approximately four hours at the centre.

What to provide on the first day

Three packs of wipes

One Kitchen Roll and a box of tissues

Nappies and cream

Plastic apron to use during painting or messy play

Spare change of clothes (socks, underwear, undervests, tops and bottoms which are easy to take off)

1 Family photo

2 Photos of your child (1 portrait and 1 full length)

A pair of gardening boots for children attending Ilwien

2 small sheets and 2 small blankets in case that your child needs to nap after 13.30. We will be sending these back regularly to be washed.

30 euro per term for the cooking activities.

All items must be clearly labelled.

Curriculum, Educational Program and the Child's Learning Experience

The National Learning Outcomes Framework is used as a guideline for preparation of activities. Educators plan activities, however emphasis is done on the emergent curriculum. This implies rigorous observation and note taking of children's interests, improvements and needs, and activities are changed/modified/updated accordingly.

Thus, our Kinder classes aim at providing a learning experience that instils in children curiosity and a love for learning. Activities are planned based on the children's interests and development, while guided by the Learning Outcomes Framework for children between ages 0 to 7, basically, levels 1, 2 and 3.

The above is done through play, storytelling, role play, hands on activities related to everyday life.

Children's progress and assessments are recorded online daily, and parents have access to the written observations on a daily basis. Moreover, during parents' individual meetings, held twice a year, each child's educator discusses the child's journal and development with the respective parents. The way forward for each child is mapped out together with the parents.

Behaviour Management Policy

The Child Care Centres are committed to a philosophy of using positive guidance, redirection, and encouragement for children to use appropriate behaviour, setting clear, consistent rules and fostering the children's ability to become self-disciplined.

Aggressive physical behaviour toward children or staff is unacceptable. In the case that parents or caregivers behave in a way that shows physical or verbal aggression towards anyone of the staff members or any other service user; or in the case that staff feel that they are being threatened or harrassed be it online or in person; the Centre reserves the right to terminate the service immediately.

At the Centres, positive language is to be used at all times. Physical restraint will not be used except as necessary to ensure a child's safety or that of others, and then in the form of holding another person as gently as possible only for as long as necessary in order to control a situation. Using punishment of a physical or psychological nature or punishing a child in association with food, rest or toilet training is prohibited.

Should a violation of the above occur, the Manager will review the infraction with the person involved and outline acceptable methods to be used. If further incidents occur or if intentional harm is caused to any child it will result in the immediate dismissal from the centre.

Behaviour of children that compromises the safety or welfare of anyone involved in the programme, that damages property or interferes with the smooth running of the programme is unacceptable and will be managed firmly and consistently, in accordance with the procedures below:

- Talking with the child
- Re-direction to another activity
- Time-out

Time-out will be used if other management techniques are ineffective. The period of time-out will just be long enough to enable the child to regain self-control. The Childcare educators will monitor effectiveness of time-out and seek help of the Manager when approved behaviour management strategies do not seem to be working. For clarity, Time-out at the Centre means that the child sits down in the same room and close to his/her peers and the Educator. The child will stop participating in the game or activity and will sit down or move away in order to become emotionally regulated enough to rejoin the activity. They will not be sent to another room by themselves.

Should the behaviour of an individual child become unacceptable, the Centre would discuss this with the parents/guardians and work together to deal with this particular behaviour.

Reporting suspicions of child abuse and whistleblowing.

All children get bumps, bruises and scrapes as part of the growing up. It is important, however, that your child's Educator is informed about any unusual injuries or conditions.

Due to substantial hours of care we are providing, it is possible for members of staff to become aware of problems, even before this is noticed by the parents/guardians. Should any member of staff have concerns for the welfare of any child they will immediately take the matter up with the Manager for further action. In the case when another member of staff is suspected of being responsible for the abuse, the Manager will be informed immediately and procedures in line with the Child Protection Policy by Aġenzija Appoġġ are followed. In case when any member of staff or stakeholder does not feel comfortable with approaching the Manager directly, they are free to report directly to Aġenzija Appoġġ about their concerns (Aġenzija Appoġġ contact number 2295 9000) . No member of staff or stakeholder shall be discriminated or taken action against for speaking out. In the case that any stakeholder feels dissatisfied or concerned with the way the situation is being dealt with, they are free to pursue this concern with the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education within the Ministry for Education

and Employment (MEDE contact number 2598 0000). The following link provides more detailed information about the Complaints Procedures in Childcare services:

<https://education.gov.mt/en/childcareservices/Pages/Complaints-Procedure.aspx#:~:text=A%20complainant%20should%20initially%20level,and%20Employment%2C%20complete%20with%20supporting>

Health and Safety Policy

Medical Records

It is of utmost importance that the Medical History Form sent online at the beginning of each year is filled correctly. A child's life may depend on staff having correct information. Any allergies or chronic illnesses should be recorded and discussed with the child's educator. This enables our staff to see to the needs of every child at the Centres to the best of their ability. Medical records are kept confidential and are discarded as soon as the child stops attending the centre.

Medication

The child care centre members of staff do not administer medicine. This is also applicable to medicine purchased over the counter.

Control of infectious diseases

Parents are to check for symptoms and signs of infection daily. If the child displays any of these symptoms/signs below he/she may possibly have an infectious illness and should not be sent to school since this illness may be transmissible.

- A temperature of 37.2°C or higher
- Sore Throat
- New uncontrolled cough (for students with a chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their 'usual' cough)
- Diarrhoea, vomiting, abdominal pain
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever

Should there be an occurrence of any one of the symptoms above, the child should be assessed by a doctor. The doctor's advice is to be followed rigorously and the centre needs to be presented with the certificate issued by the doctor. No child who had/has symptoms will be admitted unless a health certificate is submitted.

All staff and children attending the child care centre must have the requisite immunisation as specified by the Department of Health.

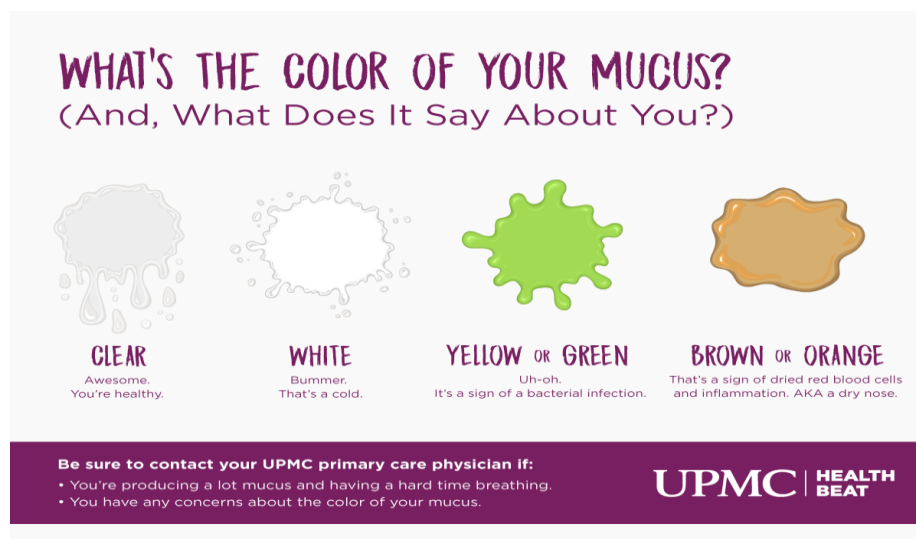
Members of staff and other persons with an infectious disease will not be permitted to have contact with the children in the centre nor be permitted to work in a capacity where such disease could be transmitted to the children.

Children who are observed ill upon arrival will not be admitted. Arrangements for immediate pick-up should be catered for if a child becomes ill during the day and cannot be suitably cared for at the Centre. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, the emergency numbers will be contacted.

A member of staff will keep children who are ill or injured under observation until they are picked up, in order to minimise any potential risk to him/herself and/or other children.

Children should **not attend** if they are showing signs of any infectious disease. No child should attend the Centre if suffering from:

- ✓ **A fever of more than 37.2 degrees:** It is advisable for your child to stay home, fever free for at least 24 hours by which time activity level and appetite should be back to normal. It is important that you watch for secondary infections, such as tonsillitis and ear infections following a fever. **If your child has been prescribed antibiotics for an acute illness,** he/she should be kept at home for at least 24 hours.
- ✓ **Runny nose:** A child with excessive runny nose at the beginning of a cold is most contagious. It is best for the child to be kept at home when exhibiting a more than normal runny nose. Please refer to chart below for guidance.



- ✓ **Diarrhoea:** A child who has watery stools should not return to the Centre until s/he has been free from diarrhoea for 24 hours. If however, your child has an allergy or condition that causes diarrhoea, please alert your child's Educator to this.
- ✓ **Vomiting:** A child who has been vomiting should be kept at home until the vomiting has stopped, micro-organisms that cause vomiting and diarrhoea are highly contagious and will spread throughout the Centre rapidly.
- ✓ **Contagious conjunctivitis:** This is an eye infection, characterised by redness, a yellow discharge and watery eyes. This condition requires specific medical treatment and your child may not return to the Centre until the discharge has cleared.
- ✓ **Impetigo:** This is contagious skin infection characterised by crusty sores that usually appear first on the face area. This condition requires specific medical treatment and your child should be kept home until sores have healed.

- ✓ **Head lice:** Your child should be secluded until treatment has commenced. Check all members of the family.
- ✓ **Herpes Simplex:** These painful sores usually appear around the mouth and with possible fever. This condition requires medical treatment if the infection is severe or if the sores become secondarily infected. Children are to be kept away from the Centre until all sores are healed.
- ✓ **Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease:** This is a highly contagious infection. It consists of small lesions that tend to spread quickly on the side of the tongue, inside the mouth and around the cheek region. Also, lesions may appear on hands, feet and legs and occasionally on the buttocks. Children are to be kept away from the Centre until s/he has recovered from the infection

When children in the centre have been exposed to an infectious disease, prompt notice will be given to the parents/guardians and to all members of staff who also may have been exposed. Toilet Centres, furnishings, toys or other articles that may have been used by the child will be disinfected immediately.

PLEASE NOTE: Children who are reported sick with an infectious disease will only be allowed back at the Centre once staff has been shown a Certificate of Clearance from the family doctor.

Healthy Eating Policy

Healthy nutrition education is integrated in the curriculum. We advise: yoghurt, fruit, vegetables, bread, pasta, soup, cereals, water and milk. Fruit needs to be peeled, pitted and cut into small pieces in order to avoid choking hazards. This applies also to food that may be of choking hazard. **ALL FOOD ITEMS AND CONTAINERS NEED TO BE ADEQUATELY LABELLED.** Any food that is not labelled with the child's name will not be served but returned in the child's bag.

Soft drinks, nectars and sweets **are not allowed.**

Children under 5 should avoid whole nuts due to **potential choking risk**. Peanuts and tree nuts can cause allergic reactions for some children. Therefore, no nuts or related items are allowed e.g. Nutella spreads, Pesto, Monte yogurts and cereal bars with nuts. Grapes, cherry tomatoes, sausages, or any other food item that fits exactly the size of a child's oesophagus, need to be cut in half or more to avoid a choking accident. Apples or any other fruit with a hard peel, also needs to be peeled and deseeded from home.

The centre accepts different dietary requirements. The staff takes care that individual dietary requirements are respected and records of special requirements (and allergies) are kept.

Children with reaction and allergies to certain food are kept away from the indicated food. The educator and an attendant participate in feeding and are always present during the meals.

A fridge is available for storage. At the arrival of every child, the attendants take care that the food is safely stored in the fridge.

Food leftovers are kept in the fridge and thrown away after the parent is informed. Expired food items will not be served and will be returned to the parents/guardians.

The food is heated in the microwave, in a ceramic bowl, on the appropriate temperature (75° C). The food containers brought by parents are stored in the refrigerator. When preparing the meals, the attendants place the content of the food container into the ceramic bowl and heat the food in the microwave. After the heating, the food is placed in child's plate.

All children have designated meal periods of sufficient length to enjoy healthy food with friends. Adequate space is provided to accommodate all children and pleasant surroundings that reflect the value of the social aspects of eating.

The staff helps the children in feeding and teach the children how to use cutlery.

The stay in the centre covers breakfast time (if child arrives before 08:45), snack time and lunch time.

Staff and the community who practice healthy eating are encouraged to serve as role models in the dining areas.

Hygiene policy

- ✓ **The Centre:**
 - The main area of the centre must be washed three times daily, before children start arriving at the Centre and after lunchtimes.
 - The children's bathroom must be cleaned twice daily, before children start arriving at the Centre and after the mid-day lunch.
 - All areas that are frequently used such as taps, tables and doorknobs are also to be cleaned regularly.
 - Plastic and wooden toys that children use frequently should be washed at least once weekly to prevent cross infection.
 - Sand in the sand-pits must be sterilised as deemed necessary and water used in the water table/wading pool must be disposed of after a child or a group of children have used it.

✓ **Child hygiene**

It is important to make sure that the child is brought to the centre washed and in clean clothes. Staff shall wash, or assist the child to wash his/her hands:

- On arrival at the Centre
- Any time the child's hands become soiled
- After using toilet Centres or nappy changing
- Before meals or snacks
- After meals or snacks
- Before and after participating in food activities
- After playing in water that has been used by more than one person
- After coming in from outdoor areas
- Before going home

Children's hand washing will be taught and supervised.

Each child must be provided with disposable water towels or other means of drying the hands (examples, a mechanical drying device). If paper towels are used, these shall be discarded after each use.

Toilet tissue, dispensed in a hygienic manner shall be available at every toilet.

Liquid soap shall be used for hand washing and shall be conveniently available at every hand-washing basin.

Members of staff shall ensure that children do not share personal or grooming items. All children's toilet articles must be clearly labelled with their names and kept in a hygienic condition.

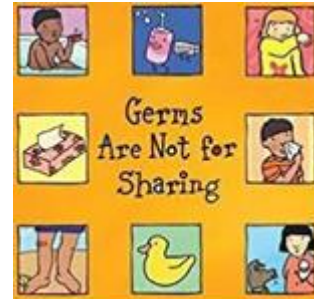
Each child shall have a supply of clean clothing to be changed promptly. Clothing needs to be comfortable, it might get stained with paint or food colouring or even during outdoor play. It also needs to be easy to take off and put on again and dungarees, belts, scarves, small accessories and jewellery need to be avoided. A lot of buttons or dungarees are not accepted as they are not practical for nappy changing or toileting practice.

✓ **Adult hygiene**

Members of staff shall wash their hands prior to commencing their duties. All members of staff must wash their hands thoroughly with soap under warm running water and

dried with disposable towels or other mechanical drying device whenever their hands become contaminated, including but not limited to:

- After napping changing
- After helping a child with toileting
- After personal toileting
- After wiping a child's or their own nose
- After attending to an ill child
- Before handling food utensils
- Before and after serving or preparing food
- Before and after First Aid



Staff's clothing must be changed immediately when soiled.

Toileting / potty training policy

Planning how to help the child to use the toilet for bowel and bladder control starts from home and is supported at the centre. This training shall never be forced, and shall be handled with consistency within the centre and so far, as feasible, between the centre and the home. The child's responses shall be discussed with the parents/guardians.

- **Potties**

Due to hygiene reasons we do not accept potties from home but we will use the small toilets provided.

- **Training pants & panties**

We ask, where it is possible, to send the child in panties or for short term use pull ups (not to make an advert) but the ideal ones are like the picture below, or similar, since they open up from the sides and reduce time for potty training and to be changed.



A child shall never be forced to remain on the toilet for a prolonged period of time and there shall never be punishment given for failure to conform or for wet or soiled clothing.

A supply of clothing shall be provided by the parents/guardians in order to keep children dry, clean and fully clothed during the training process.

- **Care of diapers**

Disposable diapers provided by the parents/guardians shall be brought to the centre in unopened packages, stored separately off the floor, and labelled with the child's name.

After nappy changing, and prior to disposal, each soiled diaper will be placed in a plastic bag and sealed.

Diapers will be disposed of after each nappy changing routine.

Please avoid dressing your child in dungarees and complicated clothes (lots of buttons or belts).

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policy

Our Centres will strive to offer the best possible service to cater for varying needs, however there may be some cases where the Centre isn't the best possible option for the child due to some limitations. A thorough risk assessment will be especially carried out to identify any potential hazards or concerns that are relevant to specific conditions and to confirm that the Centre is equipped in view of these difficulties / requirements.

Inclusion means **children of all abilities have equal access to and participate meaningfully in child care programs**. All children need support to reduce or eliminate barriers so they can learn and fully engage in experiences with their peers. Adaptations and strategies are specific to each child and the Centre will require any and all information that the parents have available before enrolment. Where needed, a detailed educational or medical plan shall be devised between the parents, the centre and a medical professional in order to ensure the safety of the child. Any procedures for managing medication (which is a task that falls on to the availability of a

nurse and not the Childcare Educator), medical emergencies, addressing any special considerations, and managing challenging behaviours, need to be outlined in this plan.

Participation in inclusive high-quality early childhood settings enhances all children's early learning experiences. In an inclusive setting there is an awareness and respect for each child's individual strengths and areas of difficulty. Inclusive settings engage in meaningful collaboration with parents/guardians and other professionals to ensure access, equality and full participation for all children.

Inclusion also implies recruiting staff from different countries, religions and cultures. This is considered as an asset to our settings, since these individuals bring with them the wealth of different experiences, cultures and backgrounds.

https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MEDE/Documents/A%20Policy%20on%20Inclusive%20Education%20in%20Schools%20-%20Route%20to%20Quality%20Inclusion%E2%80%8B.pdf

Accident policy

Every effort will be made to keep the children at the Child Care centre safe and free from injury. Children will be supervised at all times and indoor and outdoor play areas and equipment are inspected daily for hazards.

Childcare educators are periodically trained in child First Aid and CPR.

In the centre there shall be immediately available:

- ✓ a telephone set
- ✓ a list of emergency telephone numbers, including the name and telephone number of a doctor and a dentist for emergency referral
- ✓ a list of telephone numbers of the children's parents/guardians and their respective emergency contact numbers
- ✓ the Red Cross First Aid Manual or its equivalent
- ✓ a properly maintained First Aid Kit

In the case of any accident that involves a child in care, the Educator must act according to his/her First Aid training. After First Aid is given, the child's condition is noted. The child is then either asked to rest or join again in the daily routine. Parents/guardians are notified accordingly and asked to sign.

In case of a child bumping his/her head, the Educator will watch the child for the next two hours, after which s/he may request for the child to be collected and taken to a doctor as a precaution.

In the case of a **serious accident/death** of a child, staff must proceed as below:

- ✓ The Educator first on the scene must assess the situation.
- ✓ The Head of Services must be notified and an ambulance called immediately.
- ✓ The Educator first on site must start first aid procedures. CPR will begin as soon as the accident and the child are assessed. This will continue until the child has recovered or until an ambulance has arrived to take over.
- ✓ The remaining Childcare educators must arrange for the care of all other children, keeping adequate staff ratios and by moving the children away from the scene of the accident.
- ✓ A member of staff will contact the parents/guardians but will not disclose any information about the condition of the child except that the child has been taken to hospital and that the Head of Services will meet them there.
- ✓ In case of death, the police must also be notified.
- ✓ The Educator responsible for the child and the Educator first on site (if not the same person) must stay at the centre until the Head of Services has returned.
- ✓ On the return of the Head of Services, the adults involved must complete a full and very detailed report of the accident. These details will be recorded in the Accident Book.

The report must include:

- ✓ Child's first name and surname.
- ✓ Time and date of the accident.
- ✓ Full details of the accident (when, where, how). If another child is involved, the other child's name must not be included in the report and is to be referred to as the 'second child'.
- ✓ The names of all members of staff present at the time of the accident.
- ✓ A drawing of the area where the accident happened, stating the position of all members of staff at the time of the accident in relation to the position of the child.
- ✓ An account of what all the members of staff were doing at the time of the account.

The Educator and parents/guardians must sign the report and a copy is given to the parents/guardians and the police (in case of death).

Uncollected Child Policy

An uncollected child is defined as a child who remains in our care beyond the facility's operating hours without being picked up by a designated caregiver. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children in our care and to maintain the smooth operation of the facility.

- Upon the facility's closing time, staff members will attempt to contact the child's caregivers and emergency contact persons in the case that the former can't be reached.
- In the case where none of the above are in a position to be reached, the staff members will proceed with contacting the local authorities and child protection services.
- A record of the event will be kept by the member of staff and shared with the relevant third parties.

Lost child policy

This policy sets out procedures for dealing with the unlikely event of a missing child.

For added safety, staff will make sure that the second door leading to the Centre is always closed and that the gates leading to outdoor areas are closed when children are playing outside.

In the event of a member of staff fearing that a child has gone missing, the following procedures will be followed:

- ✓ Childcare educators will lead their children to their designated areas.
- ✓ Childcare educators will count and check the names of the children present against list of signed in children.
- ✓ The manager/members of staff will check all indoor and outdoor areas.

In event of a child being lost, the manager/member of staff will:

- ✓ Contact Campus Precincts Office
- ✓ Contact the parent/guardians and ask them to bring along a recent photograph of the child (if the Centre does not already have one)

- ✓ Contact the police

Evacuation policy

In order for both staff and children to become familiar with the procedure, fire drills are carried out once per term. Fire drills must be reported in the Centre's Fire Drill Log Book as follows:

- ✓ Date and time of drill
- ✓ Name and surname of members of staff present
- ✓ Number of children present
- ✓ Time for whole fire drill execution

Both in real fire situations and during fire drills, all members of staff must rigorously follow the steps below:

- ✓ As soon as the fire alarm is sounded, both staff and children must immediately stop what they are doing and move slowly to the nearest emergency exit. Familiar songs and stories are useful in order to keep the children calm.
- ✓ **Under no circumstances are children to be left unattended.**
- ✓ The Manager / Coordinator first calls the fire brigade and ensures that all children and staff are evacuating the premises to the designated Assembly Point.
- ✓ Starting from the groups closest to the emergency exit, each Educator will lead (crawling in case of fumes) the children through the Fire Exit and then slowly walk to the Emergency Assembly Point.
- ✓ The Support Workers will aid those groups with the youngest children or anyone who needs physical assistance.
- ✓ **Nobody is to stop to collect his/her personal belongings.**
- ✓ The Manager / Coordinator will then check that all areas in the centre are clear, closing the doors and windows on the way out.
- ✓ The Manager / Coordinator will carry out a roll call at the Assembly Point. If any person or child is unaccounted for, this will be reported directly to the Chief Fire Officer so that a search is carried out.

No one will be permitted to re-enter the building until given the go ahead by the Chief Officer.

In the case of an Emergency Evacuation, no parent/guardian is permitted to enter the Centre and collect his/her child. Children can only be collected from the Emergency Assembly Point.

Where possible, fire wardens will try putting out the fire, on condition that nobody is put at risk.

Outings Policy

Dates of Outings will be notified to parents in advance. Outings come at an additional cost. A Consent form which includes fees pertaining to the venue, description of event and special instructions, is to be completed and returned with the respective fee. Parents may be invited to attend at times. There might be outings for which an adult NEEDS to attend. In the case when there is an outing for the whole Centre, but you do not wish your child to join, the Centre will be closed so an alternative arrangement needs to be planned from the parents' end.

Child's Personal Records

Child's personal records: A 'record' is any material on which written, drawn, printed, spoken, visual or electronic information is recorded or preserved. A child's profile includes the Pick-up Authorisation form, Medical History forms and Image Using Consent form. It is used to organise a child's records so that we have immediate access to information most frequently required by medical providers who may work with a child.

Data Protection

Your child

Your child's personal records are stored securely and kept strictly confidential. They are accessible on a need-to-know basis to those UM employees who are required to process them by virtue of their roles and responsibilities (our Centre Manager and our childcare assistants), and to Assessors appointed by the Department in the case of accidents or suspicions of abuse. We retain your child's personal records throughout the duration of your child's time with us, and you may request to see these records at any time.

Photos and videos

Photos will be taken in order to follow and record each child's progress. These will be included in each child's learning journal which will eventually be given and discussed with parents.

We may also occasionally take photos or videos of children following our programmes to be included in our Public Facebook pages. We will only take and publish photos of children in accordance with the consent provided by you as the responsible parent or legal guardian. You may update your preferences or withdraw such consent at any time by sending us an email on tajra@um.edu.mt or ilwien.jc@um.edu.mt accordingly.

Your data

Our Centre also processes your personal data when you register your child for any programme we offer. This is necessary for administrative purposes and for the provision of our services. You provide this data to us through our enrolment, registration and consent forms, or if you reach out to us with any enquiries and voluntarily provide us with further information about you. Your data is accessible to UM employees required to process it by virtue of their roles and responsibilities. It is not disclosed to third parties unless this is required by law or unless you have requested or consent to such disclosures. We retain the information you provide on our Application for Enrolment form for a maximum period of 3 years, so that we are able to contact you and offer your child a place on one of our programmes as soon as this becomes available. This information may be erased at any time upon your request, if you are no longer interested in our services. Information collected for administrative purposes through our registration forms is retained throughout the duration of your child's time with us.

The Centre processes additional personal data about you if you apply for the Government's Free Childcare Scheme. We process such data, which includes the Jobsplus Application for Free Childcare and any supporting documents you are required to attach thereto (including payslips and employment contracts) on behalf of the Government and of Jobsplus, and do so in accordance with any instructions issued in this regard by the Government and/or Jobsplus at all times.

Your rights

You may ask to access your data held and processed by us at any time. You may ask for it to be corrected if it is inaccurate and you may also ask that it is forwarded to a third party. You may, in certain circumstances, request that we erase your personal data, object to our processing of such data or request that we restrict such processing. Where our processing of your personal data is based on your consent, such as in relation to photos of your child, you may withdraw this consent at any time by sending us an email. If you have any further queries or wish to express any concerns about our processing of your or your child's personal data, you are welcome to contact us or the University's Data Protection Officer on dpo@um.edu.mt. To access your data that is processed by the Centre on the Government and Jobsplus' behalf, you are invited to contact the Jobsplus Free Childcare Scheme Office directly. To lodge an official complaint, kindly contact the Office for the Information and Data Protection Commissioner, Malta.

Working in partnership with parents/guardians

Success in the development of children is influenced by the involvement of their parents/guardians. Parents /guardians should be seen as fundamental partners in a child's development. They also determine the child's home environment, where children spend the majority of their time. Engaging and working with parents /guardians is one of the most vital

parts of providing children with an excellent education. Parents/guardians are the greatest resource to the teachers. We openly solicit their active involvement and suggestions on how to better serve their child. Ideas and activities that can be done at home in order to reinforce what is done during the day at our centres may be given to parents in order for their child to enhance his/her learning process.

Illumine is used as a daily means of communication and feedback to parents. Apart from being able to access the child's activities carried out during the day, parents/guardians also have online access to observations, injury reports, photos and their child's progress. Parents, in turn, can send their own feedback, concerns and home observations online via the same programme.

Apart from the online access, parents/guardians collecting their child from class can take the time to communicate with the child's educator in order to discuss the child's day or any other concerns.

Twice a year parents are invited by the school for individual meetings with their child's educator. During these meetings educator and parents go over the child's journal and discuss the child's overall learning experience and together map the way forward.

Suggestions and complaints policy

Parents/Guardians can forward their suggestions, concerns and complaints at any point in time. Parents can either directly call the manager or send an e-mail. All suggestions, concerns and complaints will be dealt with and treated in strictest confidence. If Administration feels that there should be a follow-up meeting regarding any suggestion, concern or complaint, the parents/guardians will be contacted and a meeting set in order to discuss the matters further.

Administration is obliged to write and sign feedback given to the parent. A copy is forwarded to the respective parents/guardians while the original is filed. Meanwhile, parents/guardians have the right to appeal against school decisions. In the eventuality of such an appeal, the issue will be discussed at a higher level, namely during a meeting called by the Chairperson of the Executive Committee for the Child Educare Services.

Parents/Guardians also reserve the right to contact the Ministry for Education and Employment should the need arise. The following link provides more detailed information about the Complaints Procedures in Childcare services:

<https://education.gov.mt/en/childcareservices/Pages/Complaints -Procedure.aspx>

Staff recruitment, development and mentoring

Staff recruitment

It is the University's policy to give access to its job opportunities through the University's website and advertisements in the local press. Interviews are conducted by a selection board to ensure that the selection criteria are met and for the individual to present their competence and personal qualities. All applications are given fair and equal treatment throughout the selection process.

Staff development

Staff Professional Development is offered through Workshops and Courses. Parents may occasionally be asked to keep their child at home for the educators to be able to take part in seminars. Moreover, a Resource Fund from the University is granted for personal development.

Staff mentoring

Mentoring is carried out by the Manager or Centre's Coordinator. Regular staff meetings and meetings with individual educators are held to further discuss the operations of the centre. Staff information files are kept in the manager's office.

Staff Records Keeping

Staff records are maintained in the manager's office and only the manager and HR have access to them. Records of individuals who no longer work with the UM Child Care Services are securely disposed of.

Code of Ethics

High integrity and competence of employees

The relationship between staff members and children (together with their parents/guardians) is considered as a very important and sensitive one in our school community. It is built on strong foundations, mutual respect and trust as well as on high ethical standards. Same applies to the relationship between early years educators and other members of our school community that includes, the administration, childcare attendants, other professionals and parents/guardians. Members of staff work in a collaborative manner towards respecting the uniqueness and diversity of the learning community.

Commitment to constant quest of quality

Our intention is to encourage staff members to adopt an informed approach to their teaching and its contexts and to reflect on the good and correct practices as professionals. In order to uphold our commitment towards constant quest of quality, childcare assistants/attendants

shall endeavour to be a role model and act within the community in a manner which enhances the prestige of the profession for the children's benefit. Main factor in creating a learning experience which engage, motivate and challenge students in an inclusive setting with a lifelong learning perspective.

Prohibition of unethical behaviour both on a personal and professional basis

Staff members are obliged to follow behaviour management and safety policies and guidelines as directed by the school. It is very important that all employees act appropriately towards the children when exercising care in their language, gestures and attitudes, ensuring that they do not act in such a manner that is embarrassing or disparaging and ensuring that they do not use abusive language or offensive names or make inappropriate remarks.

Fairness & equity

All staff members are given equal rights and equal hearing when needed.

Non-discrimination on any grounds whatsoever

Members of staff work in a collegiate and cooperative manner amongst themselves and other professionals in multi-disciplinary teams. This is enforced through demonstration of respect for diversity, maintain fairness and promote equality irrespective of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, appearance, age, language or different needs / abilities; while contributing to the creation of a fair and inclusive school environment; addressing discrimination, stereotyping and bullying. These principles are definitely upheld by the management during the selection process of employment.

Subordination of individual interests to that of the employing of the school

The Educare management works towards the integration of every individual's goal with the school's mission in such a manner so that both the objectives are accomplished with efficiency and effectiveness.

Dress code

Every staff member is required to wear the school's polo shirt and any pair of trousers so that everyone wears the same outfit and be easily recognisable by parents, guardians and children.

Avoidance of conflicts of interest whether real or perceived

Early years employees should perform their duties honestly and impartially and avoid situations which might compromise their integrity or otherwise lead to conflicts of interest. Therefore, observe the principles of fairness and impartiality, get involved in no preferential

treatment whether by access to goods and services or access to ‘inside information’, unless parents/guardians may wish to give appreciation gifts during Easter, Christmas time...

Where an actual or potential conflict of interest arises employees should follow the procedure for reporting such conflict to the school’s management team or Human resources at the UM.

Internal Quality Assurance Policy

Staff, who needs to be adequately qualified, is mentored and supervised by the Head of services. The Head of Services vets the schemes of work, daily planning, and does spot checks in class to make sure that the required level of work is maintained. A formal visit to each class is periodically carried out, a report, which is then discussed with the member of staff is written.

Each new member of staff is given the school’s policies and procedures manual and is expected to read and follow all that is explained.

Regular staff meetings are carried out during which difficulties being encountered are discussed, staff and student needs analysed and the way forward is decided on.

With regards to a school development plan, consultation with stakeholders takes place in order to elicit as much information, needs, strengths and weaknesses as much as possible. These are then prioritised and a plan for the coming year is drawn up. Apart from general consultation with stakeholders via discussions, questionnaires, etc, there are plans to set up a consultative committee made up of representatives of parents, members of staff, and professionals.

Applicable Policies launched by MFED

A National Curriculum Framework for all

<https://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Resources/The-NCF/Documents/NCF.pdf>

Learning Outcomes Framework – Early Years

<https://www.schoolslearningoutcomes.edu.mt/en/subjects/early-years>

Early Childhood Education and Care (0 – 7 years) National Policy Framework for Malta and Gozo

<https://education.gov.mt/en/dqse/Documents/publications/NPF%20Early%20Childhood%20Education%20and%20Care%20ENG%20-%20A4%20Oct21.pdf>

