



Rhodes Day Care Centre

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Admissions Policy

1. Eligibility of Children and Parents

1.1. The Day Care Centre is a Rhodes University facility and therefore, only available to staff of the University or associated institutes or to students studying at the institution.

1.2. A child may attend the Day Care Centre if:

1.2.1. One of the parents or one of the legal guardians is a staff member of Rhodes University or its associated institutes e.g.

- ◆ Albany Museum,
- ◆ Biopharmaceutics Research Unit,
- ◆ Centre for Social Development,
- ◆ Dictionary Unit for SA English,
- ◆ Electron Microscopy Unit,
- ◆ Hermann Ohlthaver Institute for Aeronomy,
- ◆ Institute for Study of English in Africa,
- ◆ Institute for the Study of Water,
- ◆ Institute of Social and Economic Research,
- ◆ International Library of African Music,
- ◆ Legal Aid Clinic,
- ◆ MTN Centre for Crime Prevention Studies,
- ◆ National English Literary Museum,
- ◆ RUMEP,
- ◆ SA Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity and
- ◆ Southern Ocean Group;

1.2.2. One of the parents or legal guardians is a student at the University, whether full time or part-time.

1.3. Preference is given to the children of staff because:

1.3.1. Students usually only pay for 10 months of the year (i.e.: Feb to end November) when they are in residence at the University

1.3.2. There is less financial security regarding students payment of fees e.g. the Day Care Centre has far less recourse if a student, versus a staff member, defaults on fees.

1.4. Should a parent or legal guardian, during the course of a year (January to December) terminate their employment or studies with the University, the child will be allowed to remain at the Day Care Centre for the remainder of that year, provided that the Management Committee is satisfied that fees will continue to be paid in advance. That the child remain at the Day Care Centre for the remainder of the year, is seen to be in the best interests of the child.

2. Numbers of Children at the Day Care Centre and implications thereof

2.1. The Day Care Centre is registered with the Department of Health and Welfare. A total of 45 children will be accommodated for 2013.

2.2. The Day Care Centre offers full day and half-day allocations. To ensure that running and staff costs can be met the number of full day children is 30 and half-day children

is 15. For this reason, children cannot be accepted into the Day Care Centre on an ad hoc basis e.g. for 6 weeks or 1 afternoon a week over a holiday period.

- 2.3. For every 7 – 10 children in the age group of 3-5 years, there should be at least one caregiver. The younger the children, the more staff are required. The Day Care Centre usually employs 4 permanent staff and one temporary staff member.
- 2.4. To ensure that staff can cope with all 45 children, the maximum amount of children between the ages of 12 months and 24 months is 12.

3. Age of child and other requirements for Admissions

- 3.1. The minimum age for a child being allocated a place at the Day Care Centre is 12 months and s/he must be walking and steady on his/her feet. Should the child not be walking at the time a place is allocated to that child, the parent or legal guardian shall either have to pay full fees until such time as the child is walking, or forfeit the place at the Day Care Centre.
- 3.2. All children under the age of 24 months will only be accepted for a half-day place and must be collected by 1pm.
- 3.3. The maximum age of the child upon entering the Day Care Centre is 4 years old. A child that turns 5 years old during the year may remain at the Day Care Centre till the end of that year.

4. Booking a place at the Day Care Centre

- 4.1. A waiting list is kept of parents who are interested in having their child/ren at the Day Care Centre. The Day Care Centre operates on a first come, first serve basis bearing in mind the ratio of half-day to full-day places and the age of the children (see point 2 above). Staff or students are asked to contact the Co-ordinator of the Day Care Centre who will record your details on the waiting list.
- 4.2. Should a place become available during the year, parents are contacted contingent on:
 - 4.2.1. the place required (half day or full day)
 - 4.2.2. what is available
 - 4.2.3. the age of the child.
- 4.3. At the end of each year, the Management Committee of the Day Care Centre considers the bookings on the waiting list. Should a parent have expressed an interest in having his/her child at the Day Care Centre, should the child be eligible to join the Day Care Centre and should there be a place available, the parents will be contacted by the Co-ordinator and given a registration form.

5. Choosing a half-day or full-day place

- 5.1. When booking one's child into the Day Care Centre, preference for a half or full day place must be made clear and then confirmed in the application form.
- 5.2. It is not usual that parents will be able to change their half-day or full-day status during the course of the year. Changing from full-day to half-day will only be allowed if there is another parent who wishes to change from half-day to full-day. Since children younger than 2 years of age may not remain full day at the Day Care Centre, parents often ask if the child may attend full-day once s/he turns 2 during the course of the year. If a child is turning 2 during the year e.g. in May after which a parent wishes to have a full-day place, then:

though the child is only half-day until May of that year

OR

the parent may elect to enquire about a full-day place once the child turns 2 and take the chance that the Day Care Centre has a full-day place available. The Day Care Centre however, is likely to have its quota of full day children already. Parents are therefore, advised to book a full-day place at the beginning of the year when booking the child into the Day Care Centre.

- 5.3. Taking up a full-day place can only happen once the child turns two years of age e.g. if the child's birthday is on the 31st of May, s/he may attend the Day Care Centre for the full day from the 1st of June. Occasionally parents approach the Day Care Centre about accepting a child who is younger than 2 years of age. Since no child is accepted for full-day at the beginning of the year unless s/he is 2 years of age, this ruling must be applied rigorously throughout the year.

6. Application Process

- 6.1. In September of each year, parents with children at the Day Care Centre are asked to confirm whether or not, they will continue to have their child/ren at the Day Care Centre. Parents who wish to continue to use the facilities of the Day Care Centre are asked to complete an application form by mid September. Applications received after the date specified will not be considered.
- 6.2. In mid to late September of each year, the Chairperson, Vice-Chair/Treasurer, Co-ordinator and assistant Co-ordinator convene to consider the placements for the following year. Places are allocated in the following order of priority:
 - 6.2.1. All current children who will be returning to the Day Care Centre;
 - 6.2.2. All applications from staff.
 - 6.2.3. Children of other age groups, starting with full-day children, and then going onto half-day children.
 - 6.2.4. Applications from siblings of past and current children of the Day Care Centre;
 - 6.2.5. Children under the age of 24 months to a maximum of 6 places;
 - 6.2.6. Student applications as from point 6.2.3 above.
- 6.3. In mid to late September, the Co-ordinator will contact new parents and children to indicate that there is a place available for the child/ren. If the parent is still interested, s/he will be asked to collect a registration form from the Day Care Centre and return this no later than the date specified in late September. Failure to return registration forms by the specified date will result in the place being offered to someone else.
- 6.4. The Co-ordinator will confirm with prospective parents whether or not their child has a place at the Day Care Centre by early October. All paperwork must be completed and returned in time to ensure that the salaries deduction paperwork is sent to the Salaries Section by the date that the time sheets are due so that the first set of deductions from the payroll can be made in December.

7. Conditions of Registration and Participation in the Day Care Centre

7.1. Upon application

A child will only be formally accepted into the Day Care Centre when:

- 7.1.1. The registration form is completed;
- 7.1.2. The Indemnity Form has been signed. This must be submitted together with the registration form;
- 7.1.3. His/her immunizations are up to date and a copy of the clinic card is provided. This must be submitted together with the registration form;
- 7.1.4. The non-refundable admission fee is paid. An admission fee is charged to cover the costs of administration and for consumables for the Day Care Centre. This fee is non-refundable in the event that an application is

unsuccessful; and

7.1.5. The relevant fees payment forms are submitted.

7.2. Fees

Children will only be placed in the Day Care Centre provided the parent agrees to the following conditions of registration and participation in the Day Care Centre:

7.2.1. All fees must be paid in advance by the 7th of each month.

7.2.2. There are no refunds for absence during the month.

7.2.3. Upon making application, parents are required to sign the necessary paperwork to ensure payment of fees (either salary deduction or bank transfer or payment to cashier).

7.2.4. Parents are required to make their first payment of fees in December in lieu of January. For more detail on the fees, see the attached fee structure.

7.3. Participation and conduct

Admittance into the Day Care Centre and continued participation in the Day Care Centre is conditional on the following requirements being observed by parents:

7.3.1. Hours at the Day Care Centre

In order to run the Day Care Centre efficiently and effectively, parents are asked to respect the following times:

The Day Care Centre opens at 7:30a.m. Children arriving after 9.00a.m will not be admitted as this disrupts the morning programme. Please be considerate of the needs of the other children and the routine of the Day Care Centre. (Unless a prior arrangement has been made)

Half-day children must be collected by 12:55pm and full-day children by 5:10pm. Parents arriving after these times will be fined. Staff work fixed hours and any time worked over and above this is regarded as overtime for which staff, in terms of the relevant labour legislation, must be compensated. The fines are used to pay for this overtime pay. Fines are to be paid by the 7th of each month, directly to the Co-ordinator of the Day Care Centre and a receipt will be issued to you. A fine of R10 per 15 minutes or part thereof will be charged.

Children going to extra mural activities must not be collected between 1.00p.m. and 2.00 p.m. as this is rest time and the fetching of a child disrupts this routine.

Children cannot be fetched and brought back to the Day Care Centre during the day as a matter of routine (e.g. for extra mural activities) as this is disruptive to the routine and other children. Fetching a child and bringing him/her back during the day will only be acceptable in unusual circumstances e.g. if the child needs to go to the doctor or there is a family occasion.

7.3.2. Necessities for your Child

⇒On the first day of school, full day children must bring

- ◆ A dark coloured face cloth or if in nappies, 2 face cloths.
- ◆ 1 box of tissues.
- ◆ 4 toilet rolls and
- ◆ A blanket, pillow and pillowcase (all clearly marked with the child's name) for rest time.

⇒Each day, the child must bring

- ◆ An adequate supply of food. Please note that nothing that needs to be cooked or warmed up should be provided. **No sweets are to be provided.**

- ◆ If the child is in nappies, at least 6 cloth nappies or 4 disposable nappies must be supplied with nappy lotion/Vaseline. Please note that the Day Care Centre does not wash nappies and soiled cloth nappies are simply placed in a plastic bag.
- ◆ At least one plastic bag for any clothes that get wet or dirty during the course of the day. If your child is in cloth nappies, please supply the Day Care Centre with at least 2 plastic bags per day.
- ◆ A change of clothing. All items of clothing that are easily removed e.g. hats, gloves, jerseys, jackets etc. must be clearly marked with the child's name. The Day Care Centre cannot be held responsible for lost items of clothing that were not marked.

⇒ On a hot day, please provide a hat for your child. Please note that it is the parent's responsibility to apply sun-block on his/her child/ren before coming to school in the morning.

⇒ Please do not allow your child to bring toys, books, jewellery or any such personal items to the Day Care Centre. The Day Care Centre cannot be held responsible if such items are broken or disappear. Any toy brought to the Day Care Centre will be considered a donation to the Day Care Centre.

⇒ For what medication can and cannot be sent with the child, please consult the Health Policy.

7.3.3. **Welfare of the Child and other Children**

The Day Care Centre strives to engender a respect and caring for others in the children. Accordingly,

⇒ If a child bites, scratches or misbehaves in a way that is disruptive to the other children and their well-being, the Co-ordinator of the Day Care Centre will liaise with the parent/s concerned regarding action to be taken. All such behaviour is documented. Should such behaviour persist, the child may be asked to leave the Day Care Centre.

⇒ Sick children should not attend the Day Care Centre. Please consult the Health Policy for more details in this regard.

7.3.4. **Birthdays, Christmas etc.**

A limited number of festive occasion are held at the Day Care Centre.

Regrettably, no birthday parties are allowed at the Day Care Centre as some children are not allowed to eat cake, sweets etc either due to health, lifestyle or religious reasons.

We encourage parents to celebrate their child's birthday by donating a book for the school library. The child name and age is written into the book in memory of the occasion. The book does not have to be new, it can be a second hand one. This is an effort to build up resources for the Day Care Centre.

The Day Care Centre hosts a Christmas party every year. This is not run as a Christian event but rather a celebration of the past year. Parents are asked to supply a gift for their child/ren which is then "delivered" by Father Christmas. Parents will be notified of the date of this event (sometime in November) and if you object to your child's participation, you are requested to keep the child/ren at home on that day.

7.3.5. **Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement is critical to the running of the Day Care Centre. Parents are requested to observe the following:

⇒ Parents are to accompany their child/ren into the Day Care Centre OR hand

the children over to one of the caregivers. Children may not be dropped off in the parking lot and required to make their own way to the Day Care Centre.

- ⇒ Children must be collected by parents/legal guardians coming to the gate of the Day Care Centre.
- ⇒ Parents must be vigilant about closing the gate of the Day Care Centre after they have entered or left the Day Care Centre premises. It is too easy for a child to slip out in the activity of children arriving in the morning.
- ⇒ Only those listed on the application form will be allowed to collect the child from the Day Care Centre unless alternative arrangements have been made. Please notify the Day Care Centre staff in advance if someone other than those stated on the registration form will collect a child on a particular day.
- ⇒ The registration form requires that the parent/guardian identify two emergency contacts. These people must be resident in Grahamstown, must be easily contactable in the event that both parents/guardians cannot be reached and must be able to collect the child immediately from the Day Care Centre if necessary. They will be requested to provide their ID book as proof of identification when collecting the child. If both parents are going to be out of town for the day, please notify the Day Care Centre staff of this in the event that your child is sick or there is some sort of emergency.
- ⇒ Parents who wish to take their child out of the Day Care Centre are required to give one calendar month's written notice. Failure to do so will require that the parent pay the Day Care Centre fees for that month, e.g. if a parent indicates in writing on the 10th of June that she will be removing her child from 1 July, she will still be liable for July's fees. Parents are liable for fees even if the Day Care Centre is able to fill that place within the month. A months notice can only be given before October, after which you will still be liable for the November and December's fees.
- ⇒ Parents are required to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Day Care Centre held in March of each year.
- ⇒ Parents are required to familiarize themselves with the Health Policy of the Day Care Centre and assist the Day Care Centre in the implementation thereof. A copy of this policy is attached.

8. **Holiday periods and Public holidays**

The Day Care Centre is closed for certain periods during the year to allow time for the staff to "recharge their batteries".

- 8.1. The Day Care Centre will be closed for 2 weeks during the June-July Festival period. Dates to be confirmed.
- 8.2. The Day Care Centre will be closed for approximately 4 weeks over the December-January period with the last day being the 14th of December or should this fall on a weekend, the Friday before this. The first day back in the new year will be on the 15th of January or if this falls on a week-end, the first Monday thereafter.
- 8.3. The Day Care Centre will not be open on any public holidays even where the University has indicated that staff shall work on a particular public holiday in lieu of closing down earlier over the Christmas-New year shutdown period.
- 8.4. All Children need to be collected by 1 P.M. on the last day of term.
- 8.5. The Day Care Centre will remain open over the June-July Festival period and over the December-January period (except over the forced shut down period) if there is a demand to remain open and there are sufficient number of children in attendance.