

Childcare Facility (Chelmsford campus)

Proposed by: Nicola Sell

Seconded by: Francesca Rust

As a parent of three young children, childcare is extremely expensive and new rules have prevented us being entitled to childcare element on student finance, despite being told otherwise. This has made life difficult for us and resulted in my partner handing in his resignation to look after our children. This rang alarm bells in the fact that Cambridge offer childcare facilities but Chelmsford does not. I wanted to look into this further and see if any proposals can be made to apply for a crèche/nursery on campus at a low cost affordable to students. My other idea is that the University offer a bursary on individual circumstance to pay for childcare at a nursery of student choice as it is not always practical to bring children along (as in my case, my eldest is at school). Obviously I do not know the full details to why there are no policies in place to support students with children regarding childcare. I am more than happy to take this on as a role to try and get as much done as possible to make it easier for students with children.

Union Notes:

1. Cambridge campus currently has Crèche Facilities
2. Chelmsford campus currently does not have Crèche facilities
3. There are no current means of financing this for low/basic level income families.
4. The University are looking to increase their part time provision on the Chelmsford campus
5. Most part-time students are working, have family commitments and are 'time poor'
6. Chelmsford campus has childcare facilities previously

Union Believes:

1. Students with children should have access to child care facilities at University if travelling with them or where necessary they need to bring their child(ren) to for some time;
2. The Student Union values accessibility, inclusiveness and being supportive of all students in its Mission & Values statement. By campaigning of this issue the Student Union would be deserving of these values in every context possible.
3. Creation means of assistance and/or support from Student Services Money Advice Service to support students in dealing with financial implications incurred from requiring child care facilities.

Union Resolves:

1. Petition to Estates and Facilities department to look into cost effective measures to put in place this facility for any campus that does not currently have it.
2. Actively seek current students' opinions and feedback to how their experiences can be enhanced without the negative or stressful impact towards the worrying concern for extra costs.
3. In-line with policies of Student Services Money Advice Service, Student Finance England, create and/or support the financial assistance to enable students to proactively continue their studies.
4. Work with the University to develop a time-table suited to student needs and acknowledges the change in demographic of Chelmsford students.