



UniverCity Childcare Centre Burnaby, BC

In the heart of Simon Fraser University's sustainable campus community is an unassuming early childhood education facility. However, despite its modesty, this is the world's greenest preschool – it saves as much energy as it uses, collects and recycles more water than it consumes, and has been built and operated using locally-sourced, non-toxic materials.

UniverCity Childcare acts as a living lab for early childhood researchers. Its 50 three- to five-year-old children learn the importance of preserving the planet, through self-directed interactions with their built and natural environments. Building the facility to the scale of a child was important for the design team, as was creating an outdoor landscape that would entice kids to play and explore.

The L-shaped building features exposed steel frames supporting a finely-detailed solid laminated wood roof and exterior wall. Wood was used for its sustainability benefits and warm, aesthetic appeal. Passive design strategies like natural ventilation and ample daylighting proved crucial for meeting the project's stringent environmental targets. Remarkably, the centre cost 18% less to build than comparable childcare centres. It is the seventh building worldwide to register for Living Building Challenge.

Fast + Epp

Status
Completed 2012

Project Cost
\$4 million

Area
5,700 ft² (530 m²)

Architect
HCMA Architecture + Design

Client
SFU Community Trust

