

# PARENT INFORMATION *BOOKLET*

**Thank you for enquiring about using  
Child Care with  
Alpine Family Day Care.**

**Please read through this booklet and phone if you need  
clarification on anything at all.**

*MANAGER*  
Jenny Kromar

*TEAM LEADER*

**Kate Kovesy**  
Tues & Thursday

## **CHILD CARE MANAGER**

The role of the Manager is to co-ordinate Family Day Care and Centre Based Care. The Manager is responsible for the financial aspects, funding, and the Departmental rules and regulations. They work closely with the Committee of Management and the four Team Leaders from all of these child care service.

## **THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Management Committee is made up of up to 10; parent representatives from each service (Family Day Care, Mountain View, Lake View & Lyndhurst Children's Centres, and Mt Beauty & Bright Kindergartens) and 3 Shire appointed directors, and a Councillor.

Parents are encouraged to nominate for election to the Committee of Management at the Annual General Meeting each November. It is important that parents participate in the decision-making processes that affect the care of their children. Management Committee Meetings are held bi-monthly, alternating between Bright and Myrtleford. At the AGM Members to the Management Committee are appointed.

## **THE TEAM LEADER**

The role of the Team Leader is to support the Manager in the day to day running of the Family Day Care Service and helping to maintain the quality care. This is achieved through assisting in the recruitment of prospective Care Providers/Educators, safety checks on the educator's homes, maintaining quality care in the home environment, placement of children needing care, annual assessment of educators and supporting both educators, and the families they care for.

The Team Leader will visit new educators, or an educator with new children in care, on a regular basis until the new educators is happy and confident in their new role or the child is settled. Visits then become 3 to 4 weekly, and are both scheduled and unscheduled. During this time contact is also made via the phone to discuss any relevant matters. The purpose of the visits is to offer support, encouragement and assistance to the educators. It is an opportunity to sort out any problems, which arise and suggest relevant play activities, toys and equipment for the children.

The Team Leader will place children needing care and run weekly playgroups. (This depends on numbers at the time.) Training for educators and staff is also an important part of this role. Other responsibilities are keeping accurate records regarding Family Day Care. If there are any issues relating to your children, fees, educator, care hours/problems or any other complaints please ring the office to discuss in more detail.

## **THE CARE PROVIDER/EDUCATOR**

The educator is registered with Alpine Family Day Care Scheme. He/she has been carefully selected and recruited through a thorough application process. During the application process they are required to undergo a police security clearance check and a Working With Children Check. Police checks are checked bi-annually. There are regular visits to the educator plus annual checks that ensure the educator adequately meet the National Standards, Regulations 2009 and Quality Assurance.

All prospective educators, their partner and any person over 17 years of age living in the home undergo police checks. The home of the educator is checked regularly for safety and hygiene.

Regulations allow an educator to care for up to 4 pre-school aged children at one time. However, the maximum number of children allowed in care at one time (that are under 12 years of age) is seven. This means 4 pre-schoolers/babies and 3 school age children. The limit of pre-schoolers is four. A child is considered "school age" from the week that they start school. These numbers include the educator's own pre-school/babies and school age children.

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

The Child Care industry in Australia is consistently in the process of reviewing current practices, and also looking at ways to deliver a high quality service. The National Quality Improvement and Accreditation System has been introduced and all Childcare services are expected to meet Accreditation standards.

The broad objective of Quality Assurance is to ensure that all children have stimulating, positive experiences and interactions, which will foster all aspects of their development. To have good outcomes, it is necessary to reflect and continuously improve on the way we deliver quality care to children and their families. Our aim is to provide quality care for all children everyday at all times.

All educators actively take part in the process of Accreditation. Our Scheme has been through QA during both 2003, 2006, and again in August 2008. Alpine Family Day Care is a nationally accredited Scheme.

### **The 6 Quality Areas**

Six Quality Areas, each of which defines a particular aspect of quality care, underpin Australia's process for quality improvement in Family Day Care. To be accredited a Scheme must comply with a specified standard. A combined process of self-study and external review determines compliance with the Quality Areas. Family Day Care Schemes that meet the required standards will receive a Certificate of Accreditation, which will be valid for a period of two and a half years.

The 6 Quality Areas are:-

1. Interactions
2. Physical Environment
3. Children's Experiences, Learning and Development
4. Health, Hygiene, safety and well-being
5. Carers and Co-ordination Unit Staff
6. Management and Administration

### **Parent Participation In Accreditation**

The Manager, Team leader and educators will drive the Accreditation process. Every parent is encouraged to participate in the process, as parent involvement and feedback is vital for the continual improvement of our service valid for a period of two and a half years.

## **FAMILIES REQUESTING CARE**

Family Day Care is a universal service and is therefore available to all families living or working within the Alpine Shire, providing there are vacancies, and that the family fits the "Priority of Access". A "Priority of Access" set out by the Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs is as follows. The Family Assistance Office will request information from the parent about their working or non-working status.

**FIRST PRIORITY:** a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect

**SECOND PRIORITY:** a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 14 of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*.

**THIRD PRIORITY:** any other child.

Within these main categories, priority should also be given to the following children:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children in families which include a disabled person
- children in families on low incomes
- children in families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents.

Please advise the Family Day Care Co-ordination Unit if your circumstances change. Your child's place may require reviewing.

## **YOUR INTERVIEW WITH THE CARE PROVIDER/EDUCATOR**

Your first visit with an educator is important for everyone. This time should be used for you and your child to get to know the educator. You can observe the educator's way of relating to your child as well as imparting information about the interactions your child is used to. The educator's aim will be to have consistent care; taking into account all the children he/she may care for as well as his/her own children. Where possible you will be given a choice of educators to visit and select from. It is always your choice who you leave your children with.



## **SETTLING IN**

Separation problems can occur and the settling in period can be difficult for not only the child, but also the parents and educator. The needs of all three should be considered and good communication between yourself and the educator is essential. Educators appreciate that parting with children can be a very emotional experience for the parents. At the same time, helping small children adjust to new surroundings gives the educator the opportunity to exercise all their skills.

## **A WORD ABOUT ATTACHMENT**

For Family Day Care to work well it is necessary for children to form an attachment to their Care Provider/Educator. Occasionally a very young child may refer to the educator as “Mummy” or “Daddy”. This in no way means that your child looks upon the educator as a parent. Educators know that if a child is really upset he/she may ask for their parents, no matter how loving the educator is.

Your child's ability to relate well to the educator is an indication of his/her security and independence. The importance of an open relationship of sharing cannot be overstressed. We hope you will feel as welcome in your educator's home as your child does.

## **ALTERNATE CARE PROVIDER/EDUCATOR**

When an educator is unable to care for the Family Day Care children because of sickness, annual holidays or some other reason, another educator (or the Child Care Centre) is offered temporarily to you, however only if there are vacancies. The educator must give adequate notice to both yourself and the Family Day Care co-ordinating unit, where possible.

No child can be given to another educator without the knowledge of the parent and Co-ordinating unit.

Some educators register their partner or close neighbour as a back up carer. This is only to be used in an emergency situation, pick up from school, kinder, etc. This person is not the educator but part a back up situation.

## **PLAYGROUP**

Family Day Care operates a playgroup once a week during the school terms. However, this does depend on numbers of carers and children in those areas at the time. Educators are encouraged to attend these, in order for children to gain valuable educational and stimulating activities in a large group situation. Playgroups are also seen as a support role and are a wonderful network system for the educators.

There is a fee of \$1.00 per child per session for playgroup, which is paid directly to the educators. This is not part of your normal child care fee, and does not attract Child Care Benefits.

## **TIMESHEETS**

Weekly timesheets are for each individual child and are filled in by the Educators. You must sign your child/ren in and out each day they attend, any absences and also sign at the bottom of the timesheets. This is to say they are a true and correct record of the care provided. This is a Departmental licensing law. All Family Day Care Schemes are responsible to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for keeping accurate records of the hours of care provided for all children. Each carer is encouraged to calculate the weekly fees so money can be collected from the parents on a weekly basis. Timesheets are sent into the office on a weekly basis where they are processed, checked and filed.

## **CHILD CARE BENEFITS**

**Child Care Benefits is available to eligible families who have contacted the Family Allowance Office. Child Care Benefits entitle parents to a reduction in the cost of their child care fees. All parents are encouraged to apply for Child Care Benefits. To register your child for this rebate you need to call 136150 and state our services Reference Number 407-196-3309T. If you already have Child Care Benefits or/and you use a different child care service, you still need to register with FAO and state that you are about to commence care with Alpine Family Day Care. This needs to be done for you to be eligible for Child Care Benefits.**

Your child's immunisation must be up to date to receive Child Care Benefits. Your assessment is reviewed annually through FAO, and also periodically when your circumstances change.

## **24 & 50 HOURS OF ELIGIBLE CARE**

When you apply for Child Care Benefits you also need to inform FAO of your working status. Usually if you are a non-working parent you are eligible for up to 24 hours of rebatable care each week. Most working families are eligible for up to 50 hours of rebatable care.

If you require more hours, you need to notify FAO, otherwise you will be paying full fee after your eligible 24 or 50 hours.

## **CHILD CARE TAX REBATE**

The child care tax rebate will cover 50% of out of pocket child care expenses incurred, up to a maximum rebate of \$7,500 per child per year. The tax rebate is not a cash in hand refund. This amount will be paid quarterly, with the first payments due from October 2008. Please ring the Family Allowance Office if you require more information about the Child Care Tax Rebate.



## **FEES**

*Please read your Fee Schedule. These are reviewed annually and commence at the start of the financial year.*

**It is important that you pay on a weekly basis directly to the Care Provider/Educator.**

Charges are set for hourly rates, out of core hour times, school age children, under & over 3 year old rates, weekend, overnight and 24-hour care. Enclosed is a fee schedule. Please read carefully. We review the fees each financial year, and you will be sent a copy prior to any changes to the fees.

The Care Provider/Educator calculates your weekly fees. Please pay your fees on a weekly basis. A educator should not have to ask for money; therefore please make your fee payment on a regular day each week. The portion of the fee you do not pay (Child Care Benefits) is reimbursed to the educator on a fortnightly basis from the main Family Day Care office in Bright.

## **AMINISTRATION LEVY**

This levy is part of your hourly fee which assists in the day-to-day running of our child care service. It contributes to WorkCover, photocopying, equipment such as cots, highchairs etc, art & craft materials, equipment & educational play items for activity boxes and other general office running costs.

## **CANCELLATION OF CARE**

One weeks notice is required when ceasing your child care.

## **HOLIDAYS & ABSENCES**

When a permanent or casual booking is made the carer allocates those days and times for your child/ren. If your child is absent for any reason you still need to pay the normal fee. If you wish to cancel or change a booking, one week's notice is necessary.

Carers are not obligated to keep a position open for your child once the booking ceases. For example: if you go on holidays you can choose to pay for your absences and your child's booking is kept for when you return. However, if you choose to cancel, then the carer has a vacancy that she is free to fill if another child needs care.

## **ABSENCES**

If your child is absent, or fewer hours are used for that day, normal fee for booked hours are still payable to the carer.

### **Allowable absences:**

Each child is allowed 42 absences across all services in a financial year. Allowable absences can be taken for any reason. Once the child has reached 42 allowable absence days all future absences will be charged at the full rate unless they are for specific reason with supporting documentation.

It is up to all parents to contact Alpine Family Day Care on 57 501367 to keep tally of the number of allowable absences used.

### **Approved absences:**

- CCB continues to be payable for absences taken for the following reasons.
- Illness (with a medical certificate) (this includes parent and siblings as well)
- Non-immunisation
- Rostered days off
- Rotating shift work
- Temporary closure of a school or pupil-free days (not school holidays)
- Public holidays (if you are available to work)
- Periods of local emergency
- Court ordered shared custody
- Attendance at preschool

There is no limit on the number of days for approved absence days providing they are taken for specific reasons. Supporting documentation must be provided for all approved absences in the form of a letter from your employer, doctor or social worker, or Statuary Declaration. These can be sent into the office by mail or through your Care Provider/Educator.

## **PUBLIC HOLIDAYS**

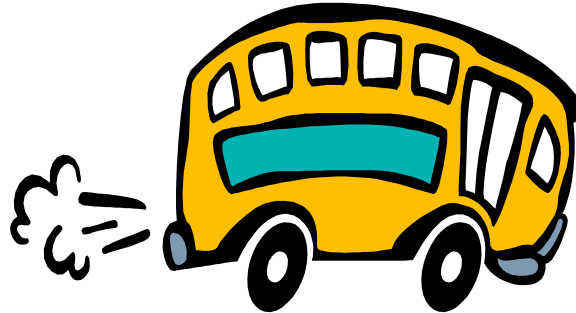
Some Care Providers/Educators do choose to work on Public Holidays. Please check with your carer. If you require care on a public holiday you will be charged the Public Holiday rate. See your current Fee Schedule. If you do not require care on a public holiday however that day is your booked day, then an absent rate will be charged. This only applies when your carer is available to work but you choose not to use the care on that public holiday. If your carer takes the public holiday off then you will not be required to pay any child care fees for that day.

## **MEALS**

Parents are to provide snacks and meals for the children throughout the day, unless prior arrangement with the educator is made. If she does supply food, parents will then be charged for the food accordingly. All meals & snacks need to be substantial, healthy and nourishing. Drinks of water or milk are to be accessible always to children. Care Providers/Educators are not expected to provide fruit juice. See fee schedule for costing.

## TRAVEL

Refer to the fee schedule.



## MEDICATION

When medication is administered, the following needs to be done:

- The child's parent must give written consent.
- Medication must be in the original container with the original label.
- The medication must be marked with the right child's name.
- **Only prescribed medication can be administered.** Panadol, Dimitap, etc are **not** to be given to any child unless it is prescribed.
- You must follow Alpine Children's Services infectious diseases guidelines. Sick or infectious children should be excluded from care. Ask your Care Provider/Educator to see the policy.

## MEDICAL ATTENTION

Should medical attention be necessary for your child one of the following will be undertaken: -

1. If your child seems off colour, you will be contacted to take your child to the doctor.
2. If your child has an accident that is not life threatening, you will be contacted where possible, the co-ordinating staff will assist with the other children or take the injured child to the doctor.
3. If the injury is considered to be life threatening, an ambulance will be called. While the child is being attended to you will be contacted. The Co-ordination Unit will also be called. It is your responsibility to have current Ambulance cover.



## SICK CHILDREN

If your child is sick please keep them at home. This aids in slowing the spread of infection. Care Providers/Educators have a duty of care to all children in their care in providing a safe and healthy environment. They also do not want the risk of falling sick themselves.

## **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

When sharing a caring role, certain responsibilities should be undertaken to ensure the best possible environment for the children.

### **PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN FAMILY DAY CARE FOR THEIR CHILD**

- **ALWAYS SEND A COMPLETE CHANGE OF CLOTHES**
- **ADEQUATE CLOTHING** :- warm clothing and gumboots (slippers or shoes for inside) in winter, clothes with short sleeves, sun hat and sunscreen in summer.
- **NAPPIES** (disposable or cloth) :- adequate and extra, plus plastics to cover the whole day. Also, “wet ones”, cream and powder for changes.
- **OLD CLOTHES** :- for messy activities and play.
- **BABY FORMULA** :- please have enough formula made up for the time the child is in care.
- **FRUIT JUICE** : - if you wish your child to have fruit juice, please supply it to the Care Provider.
- **CHILD'S TOY** :- if your child has a special toy or dummy for sleep, please remember to take it with you.
- **FOOD**:- all meals & snacks need to be substantial, healthy and nourishing. Bring in an appropriate container to be easily stored in the fridge.



**PARENTS MUST ALSO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR**

- Seeing their child clean, fed and in good health.
- Contacting the Care Provider/Educator if the usual routine alters.
- Letting the Care Provider/Educator know if the child is unhappy, eg an unsettled night, missed breakfast, an incident at home, if the child has been sick in the night.
- Ensuring that the payment agreement is adhered to. Educators should never have to ask for money. Arrange a regular payday, on a weekly basis, and have the correct money.
- Talking over concerns immediately and honestly.
- Not be disapproving of the Educator in the presence of the child, either in manner or word.
- When a child is sick or infectious, they must **not** be taken to the Educator's home.
- Ensure that you sign your child in and out each day, and daily absences on the timesheet.
- With signing the timesheet at the end of the caring week this states that you agree the times of care are true and correct.
- Contact the co-ordinating staff if the hours of care need to change.
- Reviewing your Child Care Benefits when necessary.
- Dropping off and picking children up within the booked time. All overnight, 24 hours and emergency must come through the office. Parents need to ring the office for this type of care to be approved.
- Keeping details of enrolment form up to date, eg. contact phone numbers and change of address.
- Stating work status for "Priority of Access" on enrolment form. Understand that working families have priority for child care over non-working families.



## **CARE PROVIDER/EDUCATOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Encourage parents to ask questions about the way you relate to children, such as the limits you set and the expectations you will have for the individual children.
- Letting the parents know about anything that has happened during the day that may influence the child's behaviour when they go home.
- Caring for children in a similar way to the parents.
- Being a good model without overwhelming the parents.
- Clearly stating, without being dogmatic, their expectations of parents, eg. Adhering to time agreements, payments and procedures with sick children.
- Respecting ideas that may be difficult from your own, eg. cultural or religious differences.
- Not being disapproving of parents in the children's presence, either in manner or word.
- Issuing a receipt to the parents when they pay each week.
- Provide light but nutritious meals and snacks and providing drinks at regular intervals.
- Keeping all animals in a clean condition and having them in a separate area to the children.
- Provide suitable space and clean bedding for the children that need a sleep.
- Abiding by the non-smoking policy while children are in their care.
- Abiding by the sun policy while children are in their care.
- Administering medication in the correct manner and not giving non-prescription medication.
- Never leaving a child unattended or in the care of someone who is not a registered Care Provider.
- Use firm and friendly techniques for children, no form of corporal punishment is allowed.
- Maintain high safety standards according to our policy.
- Notify the office if you change your vehicle.
- Abide by all traffic authority regulations.
- Children in care are the primary focus of the day and all other activities can only be undertaken with the children's well being ensured.
- Information relating to the children in care and their families is strictly confidential.
- All records must be maintained as requested by the office.
- Attend at least 3 training/seminars a year.
- Notify the office of any police charge relating to yourself or any other adults living in your home that could place the children at risk.
- Let the office know of any significant changes, new information or dissatisfaction relating to a placement, which may affect the care, you are offering.
- Notify the office of any changes to their health or home environment that may affect them caring for children.

## **COMPLAINTS**

Any complaints can be directed to the Grievance Officer at Alpine Children's Service.

PO. Box 297

## POLICY DOCUMENT

Alpine Family Day Care and each individual Care Provider/Educator has a comprehensive policy document relating to Family Day Care. If parents would like to view or borrow a copy, you are encouraged to do so.



## USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

ALPINE FAMILY DAY CARE		5750 1367 Phone 5755 1970 Fax
MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH CENTRE <i>Sue Toleman</i>		0417147120
ALPINE SHIRE		5755 0555
BRIGHT HOSPITAL		5750 1050
MYRTLEFORD HOSPITAL		5751 9300
MT.BEAUTY HOSPITAL		5754 3500
FAMILY ALLOWANCE OFFICE		136150
ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL		03 9345 5522
POISONS INFORMATION		131126 03 9345 5678
MEDICAL CLINICS		
	❖ BRIGHT	5750 1000
	❖ MYRTLEFORD	5751 1000
	❖ MT.BEAUTY	5754 4003
	❖ MT.BEAUTY	5754 1909
FAMILY DAY CARE VICTORIA		03 9686 9797