

# Melanie Trenow

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## Shire of Denmark<sup>1</sup>

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Dear Kevina,

**This letter outlines my proposal to open a Family Day Care Centre at my home, 38 Buckley Street, Denmark, in January 2014. I hope to gain the Shire of Denmark's permission for this development as soon as possible. Thank you in advance for your careful consideration.**

Firstly, I would like to assure the Shire that there is a strong demand in Denmark for the type of childcare service I will offer. In the initial stages of my planning, I surveyed residents and had an overwhelmingly positive response. Currently, there is no Family Day Care service in operation in Denmark. Family Daycare differs from existing daycare services in Denmark because it is intentionally small (7 children max, depending on ages as described below) and offers a relaxed home environment with lots of one on one attention for each child.

In order to gain the required registration to operate a Family Day Care (FDC) I am required to be registered with an approved FDC scheme. I am registered with Wanslea Family Services, Albany, who will ensure that I meet national childcare regulations. Wanslea operates two FDC services in 5 locations across the state, supporting more than 100 FDC educators. Wanslea have a rigorous registration and approval process, which operates under the National Quality Framework and includes the Education and Care Services National Regulations, The Early Years Learning Framework and National Quality Standards, including Food Health and Safety. As part of Wanslea's policies and procedures required for FDC registration and membership I will be subjected to regular announced and unannounced visits by Wanslea staff, as well as possible spot checks from ECRU (Education & Care Regulatory Unit). If you need to speak to Wanslea for further clarification please contact Jackie McInnes or Sarah Spink at Wanslea Family Services (08) 9842 9988.

My Family Day Care service will operate 5 days (Monday - Friday) per week from 8am - 5pm. As stipulated by Wanslea, I may care for up to 4 children under four years and 3 children of school age (as in before and after school care). These numbers include my own children, of which I have 2 - one of school age and one under the age of 4. My role as an educator is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in the FDC environment and to provide for each child's education and care needs. I will provide play-based early childhood programs based on the Early Years Learning Framework. Please see my mission and vision statement for more details on the educational aspects of my FDC.

Safety is obviously a vitally important aspect of operating a FDC. In order to be registered I have to provide proof of safety in the following areas: windows and glass, exits, fencing and gates, smoke detectors, nappy change area, tools and dangerous

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materials, shade, children's furniture, toys and equipment and home presentation. The biggest modification we will have to make to our existing environment before I can open the FDC is to our fences. We have obtained quotes for improving our fence to meet stipulations (minimum of 1.2m fence and gates which children cannot climb through or over). Work will begin on the fences ASAP and will be completed well before final registration and opening. Other safety considerations include: an evacuation plan, emergency pack, clear exits, kitchen safety, hygiene, transport, electrics and power safety and so on. Please see attached Residence/Approved Venue Assessment Form to see the points that will be addressed before final approval is granted through Wanslea.

It is also important the Shire is aware that I have the relevant qualifications to provide quality childcare. I am a qualified primary school teacher with 5 years experience (Graduate Diploma of Primary Education, 2008) and I am specializing in Early Childhood Education and Care through Murdoch. I am also in the process of updating my certificates in: Applied First Aid, Asthma Emergency Management Training, and Anaphylaxis Emergency Management Training. It is also a requirement of registration that my partner, Kellan Reynolds, and myself, have up-to-date National Police Clearances and Working With Children Checks.

Please note that only designated areas of the house and garden will be accessed by children in the FDC. Please see the attached floor and site plan which illustrates the areas that will be utilized during operational hours, and which areas will be closed to children's access. I have discussed my intentions to open a FDC with my neighbors, who have all been supportive of this idea.

Please find attached:

- Site and floor plan with FDC access areas clearly illustrated
- Mission and Vision statement
- Shire of Denmark Planning Consent Application Form (Appendix III)
- Residence/Approved Venue Self-Assessment Form indicating safety considerations

I hope that this covers everything that the Shire requires in order to grant approval. For any further questions or clarification please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Melanie Trenow



## **My Vision**

I have a vision for a relaxed, inviting and nurturing home environment in which children are happy to play and explore. I want to create a “daily rhythm” which incorporates my kitchen garden, chickens and music teaching experience to foster children’s wellbeing and learning. I want to create an environment that recognises the uniqueness of each individual child and appreciates diversity.

My philosophy aligns with that of Reggio Emilia in that I recognise children as social beings from birth, full of curiosity and imagination, and having the potential and desire to find connections and meaning in all that they experience. I acknowledge their ability to reflect upon and contribute to their own learning through their many languages of expression and communication.

I recognise that all children have a right to be heard, to be respected, and to feel a sense of belonging to their family, early-learning centre, school and community.

## **My Mission**

- To support local families to return to study and/or work by providing a nurturing, safe and stimulating home environment for the care of their child/ren – the sort of care I want for my own children.
- To document children’s daily experiences and exploration through a visual diary that will be displayed for parents. This is to allow parents to engage in their children’s experiences whilst in care, as well as providing a reflective space for me as an educator.
- To honour the uniqueness and many languages of each child by providing many ways for them to express themselves creatively.
- To incorporate music, cooking, art and craft, out-door exploration, celebrating the seasons, gardening and animal care into the daily rhythm of our day-care.
- To maintain very small groups of children (no more than 4 children – including my own – under 4 years) so that they can truly benefit physically, socially and emotionally from the type of care a family daycare can provide.
- To communicate regularly with parents in order to deepen my understanding of each child and tailor my care to best suit their needs.
- To have a strong focus on learning respectful and useful social skills, as daycare is often the first place that children learn how to behave in a group.
- To establish a financially sound and sustainable small business.

## **My experience as an educator:**

I have worked in schools and playgroups for 10 years, 5 of those as a qualified teacher. My interest in children’s development and education was inspired by my daughter, Maya (now 12). She continues to inspire and challenge me and is



my greatest teacher! My roles have been diverse: education assistant, school kitchen-garden leader, choir leader, classroom teacher, English teacher and classroom music specialist. I am currently studying a Graduate Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care.



**From:** Melanie Trenow

**Sent:** Monday, 16 September 2013 12:00 PM

**To:** Douglas Fotheringham

**Subject:** ICR13921613 - Re: Proposed Family Day Care Centre at No. 38 (Lot 100) Buckley Street, Denmark - Ref A5117 (2013/152)

Hi Doug,

Regarding my proposed family day care please see below as to how the business will operate.

A Family Day Care (FDC) operates as a unique small business as it is intentionally small. Unlike other small businesses there is no intention to grow and it is not the type of business that can be bought and sold. Rather, licensed and trained family day care Educators provide childcare to small groups of children in the Educator's own home. The educator and home environment have to meet specific regulations as stated by the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012. The educator and home environment are rigorously assessed by the approved care provider, Wanslea Family Services. As such, the impact of the business is also very small.

The following addresses the specific questions as you have requested:

**The number of staff:** one only, myself as Educator.

**Maximum number of patrons:** per day a maximum of 5 children depending on ages. The most likely scenario is 3 other children below school age (aged 4 and under) during the day (8am-5pm) with the possibility of 2 older siblings for after-school care. The maximum number of children allowed in FDC by regulations is four under the age of 4 and 3 older children (5-12 years). This includes the educators own children and I have two, Jack currently aged 10 months and Maya aged 12 years. Hence I can care for a maximum of 3 others aged under 4 and 2 others under 12.

**The maximum number of deliveries:**

As FDC is so small, I will not require any major deliveries outside of what we currently receive in our family. The groceries will be collected in my weekly grocery shop and other materials such as art and craft supplies will be bought by myself or delivered via Australia Post approximately once every 2-3 months.

**Details of materials to be stored on site:**

Storage of food will meet National health regulations as required by FDC stipulations. This means the kitchen will be kept in a hygienic and organised manner and food will be stored in the fridge or freezer as required. Other items requiring storage will be toys and art and craft materials which will be stored as required. Home hazards such as cleaning materials, medicines, paints and gardening tools will be locked in appropriate places, out of reach and access of children as required by FDC regulations.

**Waste Disposal arrangements:**

As FDC is so small I don't foresee that there will be a major impact on our waste disposal arrangements. We rarely fill our waste or recycling bins at the moment, as we believe in living with as little environmental impact as possible. Therefore, we use our compost and worm farm to recycle much of our waste. As far as waste goes, because we will have such small numbers, it will be equivalent to having a family of 6 rather than a family of 4 and we won't require much adjustment to our current system.

**Parking arrangements:**

We currently have room on our driveway and verge for parking for up to 3 vehicles at one time Our car is kept parked inside our carport and is not included in this count. I have heard that the Shire intends to remove the fig trees on the other side of our verge soon, which will increase the room for short-term parking on the verge. I don't foresee that there will be major issues with parking and will communicate with clients about safe parking at drop off and pick up times. These times are likely to be staggered, as unlike school, pick up and drop off times will be tailored to meet individual family's requirements for care. As such, it should not impact current traffic too much.

**Playtime hours:** outside playtime hours will be from 9am-11am and from 3pm-4pm although we may use the outside environment at other times depending on program requirements. Outdoor play will always be directly supervised by the educator and the noise levels from 4 to 7 children should not impact on the neighbors in a negative way, especially with the primary school so close by.

I hope this is sufficient to answer the Shire's questions. If there are any points that require further clarification please let me know.

Kind regards,

Melanie Trenow

# Proposed Family Care Centre at No. 38 (Lot 100) Buckley Street, Denmark



Aerial



Front elevation, crossover and driveway

