**Childcare Group Training Pty Ltd**

**ABN: 35 132 438 594**

**gailkirkpatrick@hotmail.com**

**13 Emerson Street Campbelltown NSW 2560**

**Mob: 0438439761**

**13/9/2016**

It is with pleasure that I give this reference for Robyn Key.

Robyn has owned Ruse Childcare centre since 1989.

I have known Robyn for the past 10 years on a professional basis with her centre at Ruse Childcare Centre at Ruse. I have and still continue to be a Trainer and Assessor for her staff undertaking Certificate 111 and Diploma traineeships in Children’s Services. I also have conducted Training sessions for staff also that cover such topics as Child Protection, Behaviour Management and Children with special needs. I am very proud to be associated with Robyn and her Team since Robyn returned to fulltime work since caring for her own children until they went to school.

During this time I have observed her in the following roles:

**Early Childhood Teacher/Director**

When I first met Robyn she had a dual role of Director and Early Childhood Teacher at the centre. Her teaching practices were/ and still are of a high degree of excellence and “sound pedagogical” practices with the most up-to-date knowledge of Child Development. Robyn always adheres to “best practices” in her approach to programing and documentation of the children in her care and has been and continues to be a great role model and mentor to the staff she employs.

Robyn is very passionate about the welfare and safety of the children that have been and are being cared for by the caring staff who have the same passion and dedication to their role as educators at the centre and is directly involved in recruitment and interviewing of prospective staff. These educators who work with/for Robyn have been carefully chosen by Robyn and some long standing staff who are still at the centre based on the attributes and philosophy for the care and education of children.

Robyn and her staff care for the children at the service as though the children were their own and uphold children’s rights as stated in the Early Childhood Code of Ethics.

Robyn has the amazing ability to show respect for everyone around her which include the staff, parents and the children who attend her service.

Robyn is actively involved in administration duties at the centre which include:

Robyn:

* Writes up employment contracts
* Designs staff rosters around the availability of her staff (and takes on a very personal approach to those staff who have children at school) that want to work with hours that allow them to drop their children off at school and to pick them up in the afternoon, which I think is amazing. As an effect of this flexibility and dedication to her staff’s needs she has maintained most of her staff to this day because of the respect they have for Robyn. This aspect is very important to the families of the children who attend the centre of “consistency of Care”.
* Organises the staff pays, Staff Leave (Holidays and Maternity leave)
* Conducts all account keeping roles
* Organises Parent Meetings around times that are convenient for parents around their busy schedules which Robyn willingly and flexibly does to meet the needs of individual children.
* Conducts staff appraisals
* Organizes Professional development for all staff and pays for all this training so the staff are not inconvenienced.
* Conducts staff meetings and writes up staff minutes and has these distributed to staff within 24 hours of the held meeting.
* Takes an active role in liaising with outside agencies and departments when children with special needs are attending her service as she prides herself in offering to the children at her centre the opportunity to fully participate in an inclusive program where all children’s needs are met.

In 2011 Robyn she designed and set up a 100 placement centre at Elderslie. This centre opened in 2012 and was sold in August 2014. Robyn followed the same principles with recruiting staff by personally interviewing all prospective staff to select the educators who had the same philosophy and passion for children as she does.

Robyn designed the outdoor playground with developmentally appropriate activities and also followed the philosophical backgrounds of well-known Child Development Theorists of: Piaget, Vygotsky, Parten, Maslow, Bronfenbrenner and Montessori to create an atmosphere where children were challenged in a supportive and natural environments to develop their self-esteem, skills and knowledge through “hands-on ‘experiences” along with caring and supportive staff to assist the children’s development when the children required this.

The indoors area of the centre was also designed around pedagogical practices of the theorist above so that children could learn to do things for themselves and develop positive self-esteem and respect for themselves and others.

Robyn was directed involved with the writing of the Centre’s Policies and Procedures for the centre at Ruse and Elderslie which were researched and sourced from the most up-to-date research regarding the policies.

Robyn has lead both Teams at Ruse and Elderslie through the Assessment and Rating Process (Accreditation) where both centres achieved a very High Ranking that reflected from the Quality of the Physical environment, Health and Safety, Staffing, Education and Qualification of Staff, Quality Programs, Partnerships with Families and Service Leadership and Management.

Robyn is to me a Visionary Director who has the enthusiasm and passion to make centres a place where staff, children and the families all work together is harmony and with respect for each other. I am very pleased to have had and continue to have a professional relationship with Robyn, but with all of her staff.

Should you require anything else please don’t hesitate to contact me on the details above.

Kindest Regards

Gail Kirkpatrick (Director of Childcare Group Training Pty Ltd, Bachelor of Teaching Birth to Five years and Trainer and Assessor TAE)