

Mama Bear Childcare

Welcome to Mama Bear Childcare

Mama Bear Childcare is a privately run childcare centre. It offers a range of childcare and education services including:

- Mama Bear Childcare Infant Room
- Mama Bear Childcare Junior Room
- Mama Bear Childcare Accelerated Learning Room

All programmes employ qualified staff and offer high quality care and education in accordance with the Council of Bears early childhood curriculum. The services receive Government funding and attract subsidies for eligible families.

Vacancies

There are currently limited child spaces available in all our programmes.

Our Philosophy

We believe in positive, respectful partnerships between children, families, caregivers and teachers where we value our community's diversity. We aim to support children's learning through a stimulating prepared environment that nurtures and develops dispositions for learning and provides opportunities for success, challenges, individual interests and freedom of choice.

Our community fosters contextual, collaborative and reciprocal learning, where teachers are facilitators, carers and friends of the children. We empower children to be independent, competent, confident, compassionate and responsible human beings, and most importantly to have fun in the process.

You can download the Mama Bear Childcare Prospectus (pdf), which contains much of the information from this web site in print form.

Contact Us

If you have any questions about Mama Bear Childcare please contact us at:

- enquiries@mamaBear.co.nz
- 123 Salmon Lake Lane
- Big Bear City

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The Childcare Centre

Established in 2001, Mama Bear Childcare is housed in three modern purpose-built classrooms set in spacious natural grounds, overlooking Big Bear city. Teachers are chosen for their qualifications, experience and dedication. Children at Mama Bear Childcare grow and develop in a warm, nurturing atmosphere where the programme is designed to meet each individual child's changing needs and aspirations. Catering mainly to parents in the work force or studying, the centre closes only for statutory holidays and between Christmas and New Year.

Children's learning is documented in private, secure e-portfolios which parents can view online on computers, tablets and phones as soon as they are published. Parents can communicate with the centre through the same system by adding learning stories, photos and comments.

What is the Mama Bear Accelerated programme?

The *Mama Bear Accelerated Programme* was designed by the founders of Mama Bear and built on the work of Dr Trevor Blackfoot and Dr Molly Dewclaw the early 1950s. Their detailed observations of child learning led them to believe that the mind of a child was particularly geared toward learning particular types of things by doing particular structured activities. They went on to design twenty-seven exemplar structured activities, each designed to allow the children to discover different types of problems and solutions. Mama Bear took their philosophy and the twenty-seven exemplar activities and developed a whole three-year programme consisting of hundreds of carefully designed activities. The structured activities take place in the prepared environment.

The Prepared Environment

The classroom is made up of children of mixed age groups based on Blackfoot & Dewclaw's theory of child development, based on three-year cycles.

The children learn:

- to take responsibility for themselves and each other,
- to get along with children of different ages and abilities,
- to respect each other's work and work space and
- to treat each other with courtesy.

They also take an active role in maintaining their classroom by putting materials away in their proper place ready for the next child to use. Children then select an activity from those on offer that day. These activities may be individual, done in pairs or teams. Some activities are open-ended, some

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need definite solutions and some invite diverse approaches. All activities promote a thriving community where children are treated with respect and learning becomes a community effort as well as an individual quest. The pre-school classroom embodies Blackfoot & Dewclaw' concept that the environment can be designed to facilitate maximum independent learning and exploration by the child. The materials invite activity.

Aims of Mama Bear Childcare

To Provide:

- A stimulating and safe environment for children.
- Educational and care programmes which meet the needs of each child and follow the national curriculum of Bear Development and Care.
- Support for families and opportunities for parent education.
- Opportunities for the centre staff, management and parents to work in partnership.
- Registered, qualified and experienced staff to achieve all the above purposes and aims.
- A ratio of staff to children, which is better than the required minimum ratios.

To Produce:

- Well rounded, socially responsible children.
- Children who find learning a fun thing to do.
- Children who can work independently or as part of a team.
- Children who will take responsibility for their environment.
- Children who will care for those around them.

The Child's Day

Mama Bear closes only on statutory holidays and briefly at Christmas and New Year. It is open from 8am to 5.30pm weekdays for full and part time enrolments of children from three months to six years of age. So that your child is fully part of the centre community and gains the maximum benefit from the education programmes we prefer a minimum of 16 hours enrolment per week in childcare preferably spread over a minimum of four days.

The daily programme includes time in mixed age groups as well as time in small same age groups. The programme for older children includes regular trips for nature walks, visits to the library, museum, art gallery, botanic gardens and from time to time, swimming. Drama, music, art, stories, free play, access to interactive learning computer programmes and structured exercises in language and mathematics are all included in the programme. Teachers plan individually and for the group. Each child has an individual

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teacher or 'special friend' responsible for your child's care and education. The teachers also observe the children and in consultation with parents plan and implement the individual and group programmes based on the children's interests and emerging abilities.

Timetable

Time	Infant's Room	Junior Room	Accelerated Room
8am	Centre Opens		
Before 9am	Supervised play either inside or outside depending on weather		
9am - 10:30	Music and Dance	Structured Play	Numbers, Shape, Measuring
10:30 - 11:00	Morning Tea		
11:00 - 12:00	Story Time	Structured Play	Reading and Language
12:00 - 12:30	Mat Time	Junior and Accelerated join for Mat Time	
12:30 - 1:00	Lunch Time		
1:00 - 1:30	Story Time	Story Time	Story Time
1:30 - 3:00	Sleep/Quiet Time	Quiet Time	Quiet Time
3:00 - 3:30	Play Time		
3:30 - 3:45	Afternoon Tea		
3:45 onwards	Play Time		
5:30	Centre Closes		

Typical Daily Meal Menu

- **Morning Tea:**
- Milk or Juice or water
- Muesli bar
- Fruit

- **Lunch:**
- Milk or Juice or water
- Beans on toast
- Fruit

- **Afternoon Tea:**
- Milk or Juice or water
- Biscuits
- Fruit

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Settling in

Settling in involves separating from parents and forming new trusting relationships with unfamiliar adults in a different environment. Younger children need frequency of attendance in order to form a strong bond with their new caregiver. If enrolling less than four days a week the days need to be spread throughout the week.

Newly enrolled children, especially if they have not previously attended pre-school, need a parent to spend a short time with them the first few times. A cuddly or special toy brought to the centre may help your child settle in. The more frequently your child attends the sooner they form a strong bond with their individual caregiver and the easier the settling in process.

Newly enrolled infants and toddlers need to have a reasonably lengthy period attending centre before having a break away. If you are planning a holiday, please consider enrolling your young child after the break rather than before it, as it is upsetting to the child to have to settle in and then have time with their parents and have to resettle when they come back.

When your child moves into another room it is not necessary for you to settle the child in to the new room as the children will be settled by their teachers, who will be familiar to them.

Mama Bear Staff

All programs employ qualified staff and offer high quality care and education in accordance with the Big Bear early childhood curriculum.

Centre Owner

- Mama Bear

Centre Manager

- Papa Bear

Teachers

- Chris Gough
- Pip Dewar
- Toni Isaac
- Dawn Ayres
- Alex King
- Lee Snow