

Summer Newsletter 2009

Katrina's Childminding Services

Activities Update



2008 into 2009 has been an incredibly busy period with children coming and going and sadly we have not had much time to experience new and exciting activities. However, since late 2008 the younger children have been enjoying a weekly visit to soft play and

from March 2009 I have been introducing baking and cooking for the older children to experience on a one to one basis. Our first little cook is Josh who, so far has baked us some fairy cakes and pizza which were both a great hit with his family. The aim behind baking and cooking is to enlighten the children to the fact homemade food can and does taste far better than packet or tinned foods, and that it can be so much fun too. This also encourages the more fickle children to try new and exciting foods and adapting cooking to fit their tastes. Not to forget mentioning that homemade foods can be far healthier than processed foods particularly by limiting sugar, salt and fat intake.

Inspection Update

My annual inspection took place on Monday 27th April 2009. The estimated result of the inspection is a grading of Good for most areas. I am a little disappointed by the result, however, I am determined to better my grading by next year's inspection with your help.

It's been highlighted that though I work closely with yourselves in regard of supporting you and your children and discuss ideas, concerns and action plans. This does not prove anything happens in the eyes of the Care Commission which has affected my overall grading as a result. With these actions being verbally discussed rather than being written down, the Care Commission have no option but to lower my grading result as I have not been able to produce the evidence they require.

This is where you come in. It has been suggested by the inspector that we implement a child's diary system where your child will have an individual book where you can write your concerns, suggestions etc and where I can provide feedback to yourselves. Obviously some parents may find this time consuming or inappropriate depending on your circumstances. Therefore, I ask you to have a think about what sort of system would suit your requirements for recording this information. Please see the back of this newsletter for more information.

Summer is Coming !



We all know what the Scottish summer is like, so here is a little reminder to provide hats, sun cream and changes of clothes for your children as they will be outside as much as possible weather permitting. Should we experience a damp summer then waterproofs and wellies should be provided.



During our excursions the children will require sturdy footwear e.g. trainers particularly for the beach and the castles.



Summer Excursions



It is my expectation to take the children on a few trips out during the School Summer Holiday period. This year's selection is expected to be *Doune Castle, Linlithgow Palace, Blackness Beach (beach combing) & Castle and perhaps Beecraigs Country Park & Deer Park. Obviously, the

excursions are all weather dependent and the destinations are the children's choice. If you have any suggestions for an alternative destination or would like to help out on a trip then please let me know.

**I cannot guarantee that all the destinations can be achieved.*

School Holiday Cover



Please advise me as soon as possible for your requirements for childcare over the holiday periods detailed opposite so that may be able to arrange the summer holiday excursions.

School Holiday Dates



4th May 2009 – Term Time Holiday
18th May 2009 – Staff Development Day
26th June 2009 – Schools close - Summer Holiday
18th August 2009 – Pupils return to school

Your Holidays

Don't forget to let me know when you are taking your annual holidays. A kind reminder that payment for the holiday weeks are paid in advance and not in arrears. Thank you.



Emergency Childcare

I'm now a member of Emergency Childcare. Emergency Childcare provides access to childcare spaces across the country. This service is geared towards people in desperate and urgent need for childcare for various reasons. You can find out more at :

<http://www.emergencychildcare.co.uk>

Grading is Coming

The Care Commission is in the process of rolling out Grading for all childcare services across Scotland. Better information and more involvement will help you to make more informed choices about the care services you want to use. To see how this will help parents find the right and best service that meets their needs please visit the Care Commission's website.

http://www.carecommission.com/images/stories/documents/publications/registrationinspectioncomplaints/grading_is_coming_-_care_services_families_and_carers_leaflet.pdf

Katrina's Childminding Website



For Policy Statements, news, handy hints, recipes, availability, excursions, children's art and much more please visit my website.

www.agfalkirk.co.uk

Know where you stand! You should check the website regularly for policy updates

Pizza

Adult Supervision and Help Required

Base

1½ Cups of Plain Flour
1tblspn of Olive Oil
1dstspn of Italian Mixed Herbs
Water
Salt and Pepper



Topping

1 tin of Campbell's Condensed Tom:
Mozzarella Cheese
1teaspn of Italian Mixed Herbs

Method

1. **Adult to do this bit!** Set your oven to the highest temperature as possible and put the pizza tray into the oven to heat up.
2. Mix all dry ingredients for the base into a large mixing bowl.
3. Make well in the flour and add the olive oil.
4. Gradually add water until the mixture forms a stiff dough and leaves the side of the bowl clean.
5. Turn out onto the work surface and roll out sufficiently to fit your pizza tray.
6. Using the tomato soup, add some to the dough as your tomato paste and spread out to the edges of the dough.
7. Add your desired toppings (see below) and finish with the mozzarella cheese.
8. Sprinkle the Italian Mixed Herbs over the top of the finished pizza.
9. **Adult to do this bit!** Remove the very hot pizza tray from the oven and carefully transfer the pizza onto it and return to the oven.
10. Cook until golden brown and bubbling
11. Serve immediately

Suggested toppings: pepperoni, cooked sausages, cooked bacon, cooked chicken, cooked ham, peppers, tomatoes, salami, mushrooms, onions or different cheeses.

Care Commission

The Care Commission have produced a handy leaflet on how to make a complaint and another explaining who they are and what they do, both of which are available for download from their website:

http://www.carecommission.com/images/stories/documents/publications/leaflets/who_we_are_and_what_we_do_-_easy_read.pdf

http://www.carecommission.com/images/stories/documents/publications/leaflets/how_to_complain_easy_read.pdf

You can also call the Care Commission on 01786 406363

Easter Holidays

I hope you all had a wonderful Easter Holiday. We certainly did ! As you are aware we ventured to the beautiful island of Mull for a week at the beginning of April. We were very fortunate with the weather and only had one or two damp days. Thankfully the heaviest rain came during the night and died away during the day, so at least it didn't stop us from touring and experiencing the island.

The dogs are well and truly exhausted and are in dire need of another holiday to get over this one but they did enjoy themselves on the beach every day.

We were also very fortunate to see plenty of Golden Eagles even from our lodge and we were especially blessed in seeing the Sea Eagles without having to pay for a tour. Sea Eagles are also known as "flying barn doors" and if you ever get to see one you will know why! The Isle of Mull is a fantastic place to visit and a week isn't long enough to see it all. Hopefully, we will get back to visit again in a few years.

Notes for your Diary

Children's Events

10th May - **On the Wild Side** at Jupiter Wildlife Centre, Grangemouth

10th May - 14km **Heritage Trail Walk** on the River Avon.

for both the above event contact Falkirk Council Ranger Service 01324 504950 or rangers@falkirk.gov.uk

10th-24th May - **Falkirk Tryst Festival** 01324 503773 or

theguide@falkirk.gov.uk

4th June - **Under the Carpet** - performance - 3-4yrs £6.50 - Steeple Box Office 01324 506850

Adult Events

July - **Polmont Rail Disaster Dedication Ceremony** -

alan.rodger@falkirk.gov.uk

**I now accept Care4 Vouchers
Please ask for more information**

<https://www.care-4.co.uk/PagesUnAuth/home.aspx>



Swine Influenza

As some of you may already know Swine Flu has come to Falkirk. As it stands at the moment the risk is low however, you should have all received the Question & Answers Sheet which I printed from the Health Protection Agency (HPA). If you don't have a copy you can find the link to the article on the website from the Web Links menu under the category of Health and Hygiene or you can request another copy from myself.

The current level alert from the HPA is Phase 4 which is just one level below pandemic alert. You should remain calm and vigilant until the threat passes.

Full information can be obtained directly from the following Organisations:

World Health Organisation

<http://www.who.int/en/>

Health Protection Agency

<http://www.hpa.org.uk>

Inspection Information

As mentioned at the top of this newsletter, it has been highlighted that I do not record sufficient information in regard to Parental Interaction and Parental Service Interaction therefore, I would be grateful if you could take the time to have your say in this matter.

The suggestions for Parental Interaction are as follows:

Child's Diary System Each child will have a book for you and I to record information on concerns, events, milestones, feedback, praise etc. What are your views on using this method of communication?	Your Comments:
Email Easy to setup and use but could fall by the wayside if both parties do not continue to participate. What are your views on using this method of communication?	Your Comments:
Internet Forum Although complicated to set up it is achievable but this method provides some advantages which include reduction in paper, modern communication, flexibility and easy access. What are your views on using this method of communication?	Your Comments:

I would like to use the following method of communication: **PLEASE VOTE**

Diary System		Internet Forum		Email	
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Parental Service Interaction

Previously I have produced a questionnaire but have found that these are not the best way forward and they usually have a very low return rate.

I would like you to participate in my service and suggestions are welcome to improving the service you are already receiving. Therefore, if you have suggestions on improvements or you would like to be more involved then please feel free to add your comments here:

Please return this sheet to Katrina

Summer Excursions

Would you like to help out on an Outing over the Summer Holiday period?

Yes / No

Do you have any alternative suggestions for destinations for our summer excursions?

Your Comments:

Information Updating

Policy Statements

As part of the Care Commission Inspection I now have to ensure that all parents have confirmed they have read and understood the policies details available on my website. The policy statements are what you can expect from your childminding service and what your childminding service expects from you. You should read the policies regularly for updates. To this end I have enclosed a form for which I would be obliged if you could sign, date and return to me as soon as possible.

Emergency Contact Information

The Emergency Contact Information form contains information regarding your telephone numbers, email etc should I need to contact you in an emergency. This is vital to keep this information up to date, therefore, I have enclosed an Emergency Contact Information Form for which I would be obliged if you could complete and return to me no later than **Thursday 30th April 2009**.

Child Information Sheet

I have also enclosed the Child Information Sheet. This is your way of providing supporting information regarding the care of your child and would appreciate it very if you could also complete this form by **Thursday 30th April 2009**.

Please return this sheet to Katrina

Policy Information

As part of the Care Commission Inspection I now have to ensure that all parents have confirmed they have read and understood the policies details available on my website for you to view at anytime.

I provide my policies openly and publish them on my website for which the address is:

<http://www.agfalkirk.co.uk>

The policy statements are what you can expect from your childminding service and what your childminding service expects from you. You should read the policies regularly for updates. To this end I would be obliged if you could sign, date and return this form to me as soon as possible.

***I/We have read and understood the policies published at www.agfalkirk.co.uk in relation to Katrina Young's Childminding Services.**

Signed Parent/Carer : _____ Date : ____/____/____

Print Name : _____

*Delete as appropriate.

Please return this sheet to Katrina