



Annual Report 2017



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Message from the General Manager



“As an organisation we strive to provide high quality education and care services to improve the outcomes for young children in the Alpine Shire.”

There is significant evidence that shows the importance of investing in the first five years of a child’s life. This investment has a huge impact on their later learning and life outcomes. One in five of Australia’s children start school developmentally vulnerable and this can be reduced by giving more children access to quality early learning

Alpine Children’s Services (ACS) mission is to provide high quality early childhood education and care in the Alpine shire. We play a critical role in providing children with a solid foundation for successful lives.

It is essential to extend our appreciation to the valuable team of early childhood teachers and educators. The educators are committed to providing the best possible early childhood education and care services to the children, families and our communities.

Appreciation must also be extended to the ACS Board who lead the success of the organisation.

Highlights include:

- Commencement of Bright Outside School Hours Care;
- Transfer of the management of Tawonga Kindergarten to ACS;
- Lake View Children’s Centre & Myrtleford Outside School Hours Care rated as ‘Exceeding’ the National Quality Framework;
- Improved governance, risk management and integrity; and
- Small surplus after two years of deficit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Griffiths'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jenny Griffiths, General Manager

What did we plan to do in 2017?

1. Implement the new ACS Finance & Administration structure.

- *The new finance and administration structure was successfully implemented in 2017.*
- *The new role of 'Business Manager' has ensured key finance operations are effectively delivered.*

2. Improve communication from ACS to the team of staff, families and our communities.

- *Storypark, an online platform for communication of children's learning, was successfully trialed. Family feedback was very positive, and the platform has since been implemented across all ACS centres.*
- *Each centre coordinator provides a weekly FYI for their teams, providing information on changes to enrolment, staffing, policies, professional development opportunities and activities across ACS. Staff feedback has been very positive.*
- *ACS has strengthened the relationship with the local newspaper, and there was an average of nearly one article in the newspaper each month.*

3. Improve capacity of Early Years' Networks in each community to connect with each other and provide positive transitions for children.

- *ACS drives three very successful Early Years' Networks across the Alpine Shire: Upper Kiewa Valley, Upper Ovens Valley and Myrtleford & District.*
- *The Myrtleford & District Network met for the first time in Term Four in 2017 and the group committed to applying for the 2018 Bastow Institute's Continuity of Early Learning project.*

4. Continue to improve outdoor play spaces at each centre.

- *Each centre has a small working party with a dedicated budget to ensure improvements to the quality of the outdoor play spaces.*
- *2017 improvements include: new natural climbing feature at Lake View Children's Centre, new play space at Alpine View Children's Centre for cubby house building, fairy/dinosaur play space and a range of other improvements at Mountain View Children's Centre.*

5. Continue to improve governance, risk management and integrity.

- *ACS developed a new budget process, improved the ACS Board finance report, completed a significant review of the ACS asset register, implemented a range of activities to reduce risk of financial fraud and improved payroll processes.*

6. Investigate opportunities for service expansion.

- *ACS successfully took over the management of the Bright Outside School Hours Care services and the Tawonga Kindergarten.*

What are our key focuses for 2018?

1. Develop the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan
2. Implement a new timesheet & rostering system to improve efficiency
3. Review the ACS fee structure in terms of equity, affordability and ACS sustainability
4. Implement a policy renewal program
5. Finalise the ACS Enterprise Agreement
6. Develop and implement ACS Communication Strategy
7. Improve capacity of Early Years' Networks in each community to connect with each other and provide positive transitions for children.
8. Continue to improve outdoor play spaces at each centre.
9. Continue to improve governance, risk management and integrity.
10. Investigate opportunities for service expansion.
11. Host the ACS Early Years Conference & Family Evening

ACS Board Members of 2017

Name	Role
Julie Tryhorn	President - Mount Beauty Community Representative
Victoria Schmidt	Vice-President - Alpine View Children's Centre Parent Representative
Claire Mackinlay	Lake View Children's Centre Parent Representative
Richard Stratton	Lake View Children's Centre Parent Representative
Jeanette Mitchell	Alpine View Children's Centre Parent Representative
Heather Green	Alpine Shire Council Representative - January to June
Nathalie Cook	Alpine Shire Council Representative - June to December
Tony Keeble	Alpine Shire Council Councilor Representative
Jenny Griffiths	General Manager - Secretary
Jeanette McLaren	Business Manager - Treasurer

ACS Board January to December 2018



Julie Tryhorn
President
Mount Beauty Community
Representative

Julie Tryhorn has two children, both attending Mount Beauty Primary School. Julie's two children attended Lake View Children's Centre and Julie is now a community representative. Before having children, Julie was a management consultant in the Financial Services Industry for over 20 years and has extensive experience in business management, change management and governance. Julie is looking forward to ensuring children's services in the Alpine Shire continue to meet the needs of each individual community ACS services.



Jane Shepherd
Vice President
Myrtleford Community
Representative

Jane Shepherd lives in Myrtleford and is a community representative on the Board. With two young boys she knows firsthand the importance of having a great childcare service available in the local community. Jane brings to the Board leadership in Corporate Governance, Business analysis, Contract management, Procurement and Supplier Relationship management. Her qualifications include a Masters of Commercial Law, Masters in Information Systems and a Bachelor of Business Management. A passionate advocate for supporting community interests and not for profit organisations, Jane is keen to see Alpine Children's Services and its centres reach "Exceeding" status as determined by the Department of Education and Training.



Victoria Schmidt
Bright Community
Representative

Victoria Schmidt lives in Bright and her two children attend Bright P-12 College. Victoria has run her own marketing consulting business for over 15 years and has an extensive background in the professional services and technology industries. Victoria has been a Director on the Board of Alpine Health since 2016. Victoria also works as a ski instructor at Mt. Hotham in the winter and enjoys bringing her family back to her hometown of Aspen, Colorado for occasional winters there. Victoria's other interests include cycling, mountain biking, tennis and surfing.



Tony Keeble
Alpine Shire Council
Councilor Representative

Tony Keeble has been a councilor for the past six-years and represents the Alpine Shire on the ACS Board. Tony also has four wonderful girls who have all attended Lake View Children's Centre in Mount Beauty. Tony is also the Principal of Outdoor School and is currently studying his PhD in the role of Education and Social Capital in rural communities in Victoria. He has a Master's in Education, a Graduate Diploma in Education and a Degree in Outdoor Education. He also started the joint service of the Mount Beauty Out of School Hour Care at Mount Beauty, Tawonga and Dederang Primary Schools. Tony enjoys everything the Alpine Shire has to offer.



Emma Woolaston
Alpine Shire Council
Representative

Emma Woolaston is the Manager Corporate at the Alpine Shire Council. She has a Bachelor of Science and has spent much of her career in various executive roles at the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, spanning strategy, sales and business management. She recently moved to Wandiligong from Sydney and is loving the active lifestyle as well as the opportunity to work in a community-oriented role.



Jenny Griffiths
General Manager
Secretary

Jenny Griffiths has a Bachelor of Science (Hons, Psychology) and has managed ACS for close to 15 years. During this time ACS has grown in its breadth and quality of services. Jenny completed the Leading People program at the Bastow Institute. Jenny participated in the Alpine Valleys Community Leadership Program in 2015.

Jenny is passionate about providing high quality early childhood education and care services for all children in the Alpine Shire.

Jenny is a keen cyclist and enjoys climbing mountains, whether they are local or further afield in Europe.



Jeanette McLaren
Business Manager
Treasurer

Jeanette McLaren is the treasurer on the ACS Board of Management as part of the position of Business Manager within ACS. She has had a varied career from research chemist, secondary teacher, outdoor educator, bookkeeper, to operations manager of a GP training program based out of Albury. She holds a Graduate Certificate of Business (Management), Bachelor of Science (Hons, Chemistry), Graduate Diploma of Education and Graduate Diploma of Computing. Jeanette will present the financial reports to the Board at the regular monthly meetings.