

SUNBURY/ROMSEY



Retiring family day care co-ordinator Robyn Byrne with Gracie, 4.

Picture: DENNIS MANKTELOW

Caring soul retires

DAY-CARE BOSS STEPS DOWN AFTER 34 YEARS

Barry Kennedy

ROBIN Byrne has seen family day care take off as a viable form of childcare over her career.

The Romsey woman is retiring after 34 years as a co-ordinator of family day care programs operated by Sunbury Community Health Centre.

In that time, more than 15,000 children have received the home-based care across Sunbury, the Maced-

on Ranges and Craigieburn.

Ms Byrne said the form of care was ideal for many families and was flexible enough for extra support such as speech pathology, counselling and parents' groups to be formed.

It also provided a viable source of income for educators who could work from home, she said.

"For me, it is an ideal early childhood experience for kids who get to bond with other children their age in a

smaller setting than what's on offer in childcare centres," she said.

Ms Byrne said it was nice to now bump into parents she once knew as children.

The first trial of family day care was in Fitzroy in 1972, and the first Sunbury service opened in 1978.

More than 50 educators are supported by Sunbury Community Health's Family Day Care program.

Details: sunburychc.org.au