

Rising above compliance competitors: 1Place Childcare software a 'tremendous' tool for Bay Explorers.

A growing Queensland childcare organisation has eyes on the burgeoning horizon since bringing on 1Place Childcare to manage compliance across its three regional centres in Queensland.

Bay Explorers is a family-owned and run service with a vision to deliver exceptional quality Early Childhood Education and care through its state-of-the-art facilities.

Owner Sandi Black says, since opening their first centre in 2013, their focus has always been to provide families with the best possible childcare experience.

This is evident in the vast outdoor playscapes at each centre, large, airy home-like rooms, and their commitment to collaborative partnerships with families so all children

have the best possible chance to grow, create, discover, play and learn in their own individual ways.

Serving 400-plus families and employing a team of 80, their focus on quality led Sandi to seek a better solution for compliance administration.

"Although we'd always managed well, we wanted to do better," says Sandi.

Finding 1Place Childcare, with its ability to replace most paper in classrooms with a single device – an iPad – was "enlightening" for Sandi.

"They had already perceived and addressed the problem through clever IT-based solutions, giving us the ability to do away with archive boxes."



Doing better and saving costs: Compliance beyond legislation

Just as their centres boast twice the amount of land required per child than legislated, giving children an increased sense of freedom, Bay Explorers takes compliance to the next level so team members can spend more time focused on the children.

Coming from an IT background, Sandi couldn't understand why the childcare industry was so reliant on paper.

"It's commonplace to have a room full of archive boxes but just because you're keeping it doesn't mean you can find the information you need."

She says paper-based processes make it difficult for childcare centres to understand the data they're recording, "because reviewing a record means opening a box and looking at information on paper".

Furthermore, the "tremendous" costs of paper storage, scanning and disposal are not sufficiently understood, says Sandi.

"Some of these records need to be kept for decades to comply with legislation and regulations, and when you look at the volume of archive boxes required to keep records for over 400 children a year, it can be overwhelming."

With 1Place Childcare, not only does Bay Explorers have secure digital storage for their client records that's immediately accessible but the costs associated with paper record keeping have become obsolete.

"All of our records are securely stored online and incredibly accessible so we continue to meet legislative regulations but without the headaches that came with paper records."

Sandi also credits 1Place Childcare for helping them service parents' needs in areas that they really care about, such as incident forms.

1Place now holds data from all medical-related incidents, giving the organisation and parents complete transparency of the health and wellbeing of the children.

"They used to be a piece of paper but it's nowhere near as professional as a digital document with all the information you want to have at your fingertips. And it remains available if a parent needs to review weeks later."



Digital reporting improves procedures, creating efficiencies

1Place's ability to generate reports from the data has helped Bay Explorers identify trends that were previously only anecdotal observations from team members, says Sandi.

"Reporting is a tremendous tool for the directors to have, giving us insight into what's happening at any given time across the service."

With heightened hygiene awareness amid Covid, 1Place gave directors immediate visibility on cleaning regularity.

"We have a person on the floor checking and also someone at the computer so we can see that everything has happened in accordance with our policies and procedures wherever we are."

1Place has also strengthened the maintenance process, providing management with more clarity on issues that arise and reducing the spend on fixes.

"We now have much more granular detail on what's happening, working and not working at the centres, and a much more immediate way of prioritising what needs to be fixed and closing the loop," says Sandi.

"So instead of letting the maintenance man loose for a week and then getting a large bill, it's now quite specifically a list of problems that require closing off with invoicing to match."

“ It turns out, although the whole profession runs on paper, they don't love it. They just haven't found another way of doing things. ”

SANDI BLACK
OWNER, BAY EXPLORERS

1Place Childcare builds comradery among team

Sandi says her team members embraced 1Place overnight, relieved to have a logical, efficient, easy-to-use solution to something they have to do multiple times a day.

"It turns out, although the whole profession runs on paper, they don't love it. They just haven't found another way of doing things."

She says 1Place Childcare is utilised from the moment the first person opens the door in the morning to when the last person locks up at night.

The software's adaptive checklists guide staff as they carry out open and close checklists, cleaning, auditory processes, fire drills, maintenance and respond to incidents.

"It's all now managed consistently across all of our classrooms," says Sandi.

As part of the checklists, team members are invited to do a shout-out to their comrades.

"We took the opportunity to take compliance beyond basic reportage because team members often see fabulous things throughout the day and don't necessarily have a moment to reflect that back to management or the fellow team member," she says.

Sandi says the unexpected thanks and appreciation received through the platform has led to a lot of positivity among her teams and a stronger team environment.

"It creates a collegiate atmosphere. We're all in it together and adding the shout-out reminds everyone that we're doing all of these things for the team and the service."

1Place Childcare has strengthened communication between team members too, by giving someone stepping into a learning environment immediate clarity on completed and outstanding tasks.

"It's all there for a person to see," says Sandi.

Agile compliance software that grows with the organisation

Having tried out numerous compliance software solutions, Sandi says they ended up with 1Place because it rose above the other options.

She says the 1Place team is helpful and always available.

"It's an evolving platform. It's not static and the 1Place team understands our business priorities and continues to meet our needs as they develop.

"The sky's the limit. It comes down to identifying problems, challenges or inefficiencies and pairing them with 1Place to resolve them."

