

Glen Osmond Farm



▲ The cottages at Glen Osmond Farm in Woodend

Getaways as a whole family are rare and difficult for Belinda and Craig Mullan. Their eight-year-old son Jack has cerebral palsy, epilepsy and visual impairment. He also requires a wheelchair for mobility.

But with the help of a new service offered by Very Special Kids, they recently enjoyed a relaxing five-day break at Woodend's Glen Osmond Farm along with their six-year-old daughter Lucy.

Glen Osmond Farm features two purpose-built holiday cottages that can sleep up to eight people in three bedrooms. There is also a big wooden barn for entertainment and amazing views across to Mount Macedon and for as far as the eye can see. And best of all, there is no charge for families to use the cottages.

Janet and Bernard Hawkins initiated the project donating 26 hectares of their land. "We have been lucky enough to live in a tranquil and peaceful area and are thrilled that this is now available to Very Special Kids families," Janet said.

The Mullan family thoroughly enjoyed their time at Glen Osmond Farm, as well as exploring the town of Woodend and the famous Hanging Rock, which is just a short drive away.

"What struck me first was how easy it was to get to Woodend. It's really close to the city and it's an easy drive. The layout of the accommodation is a perfect getaway cottage, with everything you could possibly need. There is a hoist for the high-low bed and the bathroom facility is fantastic," Craig said.

Belinda added that the cottages are "just beautiful and it's pretty special to be able to have a holiday that we are not charged for. We haven't had a break for a while, so for us to come away as a family is awesome. And the facilities make things so easy with Jack."

"It just relieves you of so many things that you would normally have to think in advance about, such as 'will it be wheelchair accessible, will there be stairs, will the toileting and bathing be easy?' It's all sorted and you don't even have to think about that."

"The barn and surrounds are fantastic too. The kids have seen so many animals – heaps of kangaroos, Mr Fox, ducks down at the pond, a wedge-tailed eagle and lots more. The barn is an amazing building and great fun for both children and adults, with activities such as table tennis, billiards, skittles and there is even a piano."

"We are extremely thankful to Janet and Bernard Hawkins, the Woodend community and Very Special Kids for making this amazing escape possible for us and other families in a similar situation to ours," Belinda said.



▲ The Mullan family having fun in the barn