

CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

Draft LTCCP 2009-19

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Submissions close on 16 April 2009

I do NOT wish to present my submission at the hearing, and ask that this written submission be considered

Are you completing this submission:

For yourself

If you are representing, how many people do you represent?

Name:

Esther Smith

Organisation Name:

Organisation Role:

Contact Address:

20 Pembroke St
Avondale
Christchurch

Postcode:

8061

Daytime Phone:

9421389

Evening Phone:

Email:

Email Address for copy of submission:

esther.smith@paradise.net.nz

Date:

16 April 2009

Your Submission:

I am writing with regard to the "Statement of proposal for the future of the council's involvement in three early learning centres", in particular the proposed changes to the QEII Preschool.

I note the preferred option of the Council is to outsource the provision of the QEII Preschool. I would like to DISCOURAGE the council from making this change, and instead maintain the status quo, for the following reasons:
1) QEII Preschool is one of the few early learning centres in the east of Christchurch that does not operate on a sessional basis. For parents like me who only want their children in preschool for small amounts of time I have always appreciated the flexibility of this service, that I can decide the amount of time my child spends at preschool, and for children under three, can pay for only that time accordingly. If the running were to be outsourced I would ask that you make provision for the "flexi-time" arrangement to continue.

2) I note that if the running of the preschool were to be outsourced Council would no longer actively manage it. One of the things I have always appreciated about the QEII Preschool is the feeling of accountability in all its procedures and actions which is brought about by it being under the umbrella of an organisation that is well aware of its responsibility to the wider community and the good of Christchurch now and in future generations. I feel this makes for a safe and well run preschool, not one focussed on monetary gain; not one given to putting the needs of other stakeholders before the needs of the children.

3) The staff at QEII preschool appear to be happy with the way the preschool is managed and run. The number of teachers and other staff who have worked there for many years, providing wonderful stability, reflects this. I think the staff reflect the stability and accountability spoken of in my second

point.

4) One of the reasons offered in the proposal for not maintaining the status quo is that "the early learning centres are not seen as core Council business". I would beg to differ. Given the number of children now attending preschool education in some form, it seems to me that the Council would be making a mistake to not continue to be actively involved in this area. The children of today are the future inhabitants of Christchurch. By maintaining a stake in early childhood education the Council will be ensuring that there will be at least a pocket of people within the wider council workings actively considering the good of this small but important group of Christchurch residents.

As for the third option presented: "to close the QEII Preschool", I agree with the Council that this is not the best option. I do not believe that this little square of land could be better used in any other way. There is not a glut of preschools in eastern Christchurch, the fact that the waiting list for QEII Preschool is exceedingly long is evidence of this. The length of the waiting list is also evidence of a well-run preschool with plenty of parents recommending it. I do not think the running of it should be outsourced. I think it should stay how it is.