

Derek and I, trading as Little Footsteps are the current leasees of 49 Taylors Pass Road.

We are making this submission because although initially this lease was to be short term, having now established a presence in the community, we believe that extending the lease will have significant benefits for the community and the Council, as described below.

Little Footsteps is a locally owned and operated business which provides an essential service for the community. Our preschool is a small mixed age service which provides an atypical option for those parents who prefer siblings to be cared for together in a single space (not separated into age-based classrooms). We employ over 20 local people and support our local suppliers.

Community : during the two months we have been on this site, we have established a symbiotic relationship with Alzheimers Marlborough. They have been trying to build relationships with neighbouring education services for some time now, without success. As neighbours we are able to visit each other on a regular basis, either planned or spontaneously. By supporting this relationship with the Alzheimers Marlborough members, our tamariki are being provided with a safe and authentic environment to extend care and kindness (manaakitanga) from within our centre into the wider community. The social benefits for both Little Footsteps children and Alzheimers Marlborough members are immense as they observe and/or participate in play, read together and share activities.

Please see attached

- *letter from D Warnick: Day Programme Co-ordinator, Alzheimers Marlborough*
- *photo of our 4 yr olds on a visit to Alzheimers Marlborough*

There is no early childhood service provider within 1.5 km's of 49 Taylor Pass Road. With the residential development of Taylor Pass, the existing centre has become more essential now as of its proximatey, and the demand is growing.

Because the location of this service is within a residential community, the children's interactions with the wider community are many and varied providing a variety of sensory and learning experiences. They interact daily with dog walkers and their dogs and with the neighbours who share garden produce and tips with them to name a few.

The feedback we have had from the community has been extremely positive and supportive.

(Please see attached correspondence from the community supporting this submission).

Property/Buildings : The proposed transfer of some of the property to Alzheimers Marlborough – we understand the purpose and certainly are supportive.

The property is purpose built as an early childhood centre, it has been licensed by the Ministry of Education and has Resource Consent. Any improvements will not be a cost for the Council as they would be completed in consultation with the Property Manager and paid for by Little Footsteps. Little Footsteps currently pays market rate rental and we, based on the proposed changes for Alzheimers Marlborough would expect to continue to pay market rate. Admittedly, to provide Little Footsteps with a consecutive lease would mean security for us as a small private business we then can invest in. The Council too, is then assured of a continual income stream.

The natural environment has proved extremely beneficial for those tamariki with higher learning needs who struggle in constricted environments.

The site is ideal for us to be able to continue to develop our relationship with the ECE pilot Enviroschools, a Council led initiative, which aims to shape an environmentally aware community for the future.

In summary : Marlborough population is growing and there is already pressure on the number of early childhood places available. Building new centres requires investors, land and time. Making it possible to continue to use this building as an early childhood centre will assist in meeting the immediate community needs.

Little Footsteps has found a place in this community which has provided benefits to the tamariki and whānau who access the service and the community. The full extent of these benefits are only being realised now. Little Footsteps is not a corporate. We are small and our licenses are small. Our teacher to child ratio are generous. We focus on the individuals, no-one is lost.

We are asking for the opportunity to be able to continue to provide a service within and for this community.