



Frome Electorate Office

Hon Geoff Brock MP, Member for Frome



Wednesday 31st January 2018

\$200,000 Grant for Child Care places in Balaklava

Geoff is extremely pleased that after years of lobbying and consistently working with all stakeholders that the Balaklava Community Children's Centre has now been offered a \$200,000 State Government grant this week, to support a much-needed redevelopment giving families increased access to the local service.

The existing childcare centre is at capacity with an established waitlist for places and a need for flexible spaces to support early intervention and playgroup activities.

The Regional Development Fund grant has been offered to help finance construction of a brand new, purpose-built extension and the redevelopment of the current facility at Scotland Street to increase places from 59 to 90.

Balaklava Community Children's Centre currently provides services for 125 families and is the only childcare facility in the Wakefield Regional Council area.

Plans for the \$550,000 project include an extra room for childcare including a sleep area and a strengthened Out of School Hours program, age-appropriate toilets and amenities for people with disabilities, staff room, laundry with secure chemical store, verandah extension and a space to enable families to access early intervention advice.

Playgroup and parent/carer workshops will serve as an outreach resource for the community. It also provides two outreach playgroups to the community.

It is a rural, integrated, vertically-grouped and not-for-profit organisation that provides learning and care for children aged between six weeks and 12 years.

Having childcare available is a critical part of attracting workers to the regions. This project has the support of three regional businesses that have indicated expanded childcare services in the region would offer greater flexibility for their workforce.

Dale Gathercole director of the Balaklava Community Children's Centre said "Our vision is to make a real difference to the children living in the region, continuing to

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provide learning and care which exceed the National Quality Standards, whilst strengthening partnerships with local families.

Being offered a Regional Development Fund grant puts us in a strong position to help address not only the current waiting list, but also to expand services, while providing much needed early intervention within our new and improved facilities.”

I congratulate Dale, the staff and Governing Council for continuing to focus on the needs of children in the community and maintain drive for a project that will benefit many families in the future.