Reviewer's report

**Title:** Tumour stromal cells derived from paediatric malignancies display MSC-like properties and impair NK cell cytotoxicity

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**Reviewer:** Ralph Reisfeld

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Key findings obtained in a series of well controlled experiments were that tumor stromal cells isolated from pediatric tumors can inhibit tumors infiltrating immune effector cells. In this regard, the altered expression of NK cell receptors is suggested to be due to such tumor stroma rather than to tumor cells. In fact, the intensive recruitment of stromal cells to tumors and the subsequent impairment of invading immune cells is proposed to be part of an immune escape strategy of pediatric tumors.

The experiments are generally well designed and controlled and reveal a crucial role of pediatric tumor stromal cells in impeding the function of immune cells, strongly suggesting that the tumor stroma indeed is a key target for the design of improved immunotherapeutic approaches of pediatric tumors.

The data appear to be sound while the discussion and conclusions are well balanced. The authors also clearly acknowledge work of others upon which they are building. In general, this is a well written manuscript presenting novel data.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.