

Good afternoon all,

I understand that you are collating feedback on the proposed cuts to the NEF scheme.

I have already fed through some comments a few weeks back, but would just like to add a few more, following further information I have read in the newspapers/heard at the scrutiny hearing last Wednesday.

- 1) There has been reference that the NEF funding is not actually part of Education's budget/Education are not responsible for this so should not be able to dictate what happens to this funding. I don't know the situation, but if there is any truth in this whatsoever, then I feel that this proposal should be withdrawn immediately. If it is not their money, they should not have any influence over what to do with it.
- 2) I just wanted to note my frustration again at the way this whole issue has been communication by Education. They have released an important announcement to the public, more or less out of the blue, without it seems taking into account/substantive research into how this would affect families. By saying "we have 6 months to think about the detail" is absolutely shocking – if I made a suggestion at my workplace without any backup to support my view, I would be demoted. What is happening is that families are being left in absolute limbo for the next 6 months until a final decision is made – therefore, we don't have 18 months to prepare as they suggest (as we don't know what the final plan is), we only have 12 months, and that in some cases is not sufficient time to save up to cover the costs when losing the 20 hours. £75k joint income is average – I don't live an extravagant lifestyle – my husband and I pay the bills, mortgage and maybe have a treat to a take away once or twice a month – as my husband is in manual work, his month salary varies quite considerably month to month - there are some months whereby we can save £200, and some months where we are down to 0. Even if we did manage to save the £200 per month, over a year, that is only £2,400 and what is the cost per child for this NEF – around £3,600 from memory?
- 3) It is absolutely not fair to only impact private nurseries – it should be all nurseries or nothing. By allowing it in the states nurseries, you are inevitably going to have a swarm of people trying to get places. I live in St Mary which does not have a states nursery. I heard last week that Education are looking to put something in place here, but I do not know what and would this be in time for Sept 2017 anyway? I have no idea what my options are – can I enrol my son into another parish states nursery? Not that I would particularly want to – this would mean my son moving from his nursery (we can only afford 3 days per week at a push and would hope to increase his days to 4 day with the NEF allowance as both my husband and I work full time) where he is settled, to another nursery for the sake of a year, to then move him again to my parish primary school. There has been no practical guidance issued on this whatsoever.

I really hope that this proposal is abolished, but know that in reality it probably won't be – fingers crossed it gets debated in the states and thrown out. If not, then there needs to be some meaningful, practical guidance available to parents – giving up work is not an option.

Thanks to Scrutiny for taking this matter forward.

Kind regards