

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
BY DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 1ST NOVEMBER 2016**

Question

Does the Minister still intend to introduce means-testing for parents accessing the Nursery Education Fund?

Answer

Yes.

As Members will be aware from the comments made during the MTFP debate, payments made from the Nursery Education Fund are exceeding the budget by approximately £0.5m. This problem has to be addressed. Savings will be generated by focusing the NEF grant of £3,914 per child on families that need it most and this will make a significant contribution to the Education Department's work to stay within the cash limit set in the MTFP. The NEF grant, which is discretionary rather than statutory, will still be a very significant payment and will still be received by the majority of families.

During the MTFP debate States Members approved an amendment to means test the nursery classes in States schools in the same way as private sector nurseries.

I argued against that amendment because I thought, along with officers and head teachers, that it would damage the coherence and quality of the Island's education system. Whilst my Department and I still take that view, we recognise that the proposition has been approved. As a result, the Education Department and ministerial team will be working with the Early Years Childhood Partnership in the coming weeks to review our early years provision and the implementation of this States decision.