

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING
BY DEPUTY K.L. MOORE OF ST. MARY, ST. OUVEN AND ST. PETER
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 28th OCTOBER 2024
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 4th NOVEMBER 2024**

Question

“Further to the announcement relating to a pilot scheme for 2–3-year-olds with additional needs at d’Auvergne Primary School (d’Auvergne), will the Minister advise –

- (a) what financial analysis was completed on the funding required to provide the pilot, as opposed to establishing a separate facility;
- (b) whether a tendering process or expressions of interest were requested in relation to offering the pilot or service;
- (c) from which budget will the initial funding be allocated for Jersey Child Care Trust (JCCT) to provide the service at d’Auvergne;
- (d) will the space required for the pilot be rented by JCCT, and if so, will this be on a commercial basis;
- (e) what research, if any, has been undertaken to validate that the pilot scheme can provide the necessary care for 2-year-olds in a school environment; and
- (f) what further training, if any, will teachers need to support the pilot?”

Answer

The pilot nursery for 2–3-year-olds at d’Auvergne Primary School is one of a number of pilot projects which are progressing and will continue previous and current Ministerial aspirations to improve early years outcomes for children with additional needs.

The pilot has enabled places to be offered to families who were unable to access the private and voluntary sector. If approved, the proposed Government budget 2025/8 will enable further investment in the sector informed, in part, by the learning gained from this and other pilot projects.

- (a) An assessment of the costs of the pilot provision was completed. This showed that in year one, i.e. with one-off set up costs, the provision was marginally more expensive than increasing capacity in an established provision. However, in year two and beyond, ongoing costs were estimated to be at least 20% less. Based on this analysis the Minister initiated the pilot. To an extent, this assessment was academic as there was no capacity in established provisions for children to attend.
- (b) An exemption (under the public finance manual) from open tender was approved for this pilot provision.
- (c) Funding is being provided from the Education budget.
- (d) There is no rental charge being levied.
- (e) The published [review of evidence](#) on Optimizing Early Childhood Education and Childcare (2023) emphasised that it is not clear that school and maintained settings are intrinsically better for child development than private and voluntary settings – or vice versa. What happens in the setting, and who attends it, are more important than how the setting is owned/funded.¹

The pilot offers a better understanding of approaches to future partnerships between a school setting and a not-for-profit provider who can work together to meet previously unmet childcare needs. Whilst physically

¹ Messages for Jersey from the UK and international evidence on optimising early childhood education and childcare (ECEC), June 2023

located in a school the provision is delivered by staff with appropriate experience and qualifications in Early Years along with an age-appropriate environment and set of resources.

(f) The nursery is being provided by JCCT who do not employ teachers.