

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
BY DEPUTY L.M.C. DOUBLET OF ST. SAVIOUR
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 31ST OCTOBER 2017**

Question

1. In determining the £5.15 per hour rate that is paid to private nursery providers from the Nursery Education Fund, can the Minister advise how this sum was calculated and which, if any, of the following overheads were factored into this estimate, providing a detailed breakdown where applicable?
 - a. Rent
 - b. Utilities – water, electricity, telephone and post
 - c. Rates
 - d. Staff Costs/Training
 - e. Insurance
 - f. Cleaning
 - g. Equipment/Consumables

2. What consultation, if any, was originally undertaken with private nursery providers to determine this rate and has this been revisited in recent times and if not, why not?

Answer

1. The hourly rate for the Nursery Education Fund (NEF) was originally set in 2009 when the fund was set up to assist parents in Jersey. The figure was reached in consultation with nursery owners at the time and was broadly based on a reasonable average hourly rate.

Until the academic year 2014-15 the hourly rate was increased annually in line with the non-staff inflation that was added to the Education Department's non-staff budgets. Since 2015-16 the hourly rate has remained at £5.15 in order to meet the Department's commitment to the savings programme that has taken place across the public sector.

It is important to note that the NEF is a discretionary grant which is funded from a fixed budget, and which is currently overspending because of a rise in the number of children and the number of private nurseries in the scheme. Despite this, the Department is meeting these cost pressures from other areas of its budget to ensure places remain available to children in the pre-school year.

NEF hourly rates

Year	NEF Hourly Rate
2009/10	£4.55
2010/11	£4.66
2011/12	£4.78
2012/13	£4.90
2013/14	£5.02
2014/15	£5.15
2015/16	£5.15
2016/17	£5.15
2017/18	£5.15

2. The original NEF hourly rate was agreed following consultation with the private and voluntary sector nurseries for the commencement of the NEF in 2009-10. As stated in the answer to question 1, increases to this hourly rate have been made in line with non-staff inflation until 2014/15. Due to increased budgetary pressures within the both the NEF budget and across the education service as a whole this rate has been held at £5.15.

A number of meetings have been held over the past 12 months between officers of the Education Department and representatives of the private nursery sector to determine the NEF hourly rate for the current academic year and discuss other issues. It is hoped that consultation with private nursery owners will continue to take place in future.