

# STATES OF JERSEY



## **PROPOSED GOVERNMENT PLAN 2022 - 2025 (P.90/2021) :SIXTEENTH AMENDMENT (P.90/2021 AMD.(16)) – COMMENTS**

### **NURSERY EDUCATION FUNDING INCREASE**

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**Presented to the States on 13th December 2021  
by the Council of Ministers**

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**STATES GREFFE**

## COMMENTS

The Minister for Children and Education rejects this amendment on the grounds that, although he fundamentally agrees that funding for 3–4-year-olds is important and needs to be sustainable, this amendment is not accurately costed or considered.

Through informed analysis and demographic projections, including the potential impact of net inward migration, we will continue to identify and assess the level of funding required and plan accordingly. This will be in the form of well-informed bids into the next Government Plan that accurately reflect the financial package required to maintain our universal offer of 30 hours of nursery education for all children whose parents wish this.

This will take account of the many variables that must be considered, including:

1. The number of children within the private and voluntary sector nurseries.
2. The number of children in the school nursery classes.
3. The hourly rate that is to be reviewed annually, considering Jersey's RPI (Retail Price Index) and Index of Average Earnings figures as per the NEF (Nursery Education Fund) partnership agreement.

Through the Best Start Programme of work, we have a clear priority plan for our short, medium, and long term aims that support the intentions of the Early Years Policy Development Board. Through consultation, engagement, and collaboration, we will put forward timely and appropriate business cases for future funding needs.

In addition, Members are reminded of appendices 3 and 4 to the draft Government Plan, whereby the previously agreed growth (under putting children first) of approximately £35 million per annum is demonstrated in greater detail.

### Financial Implications

The amendment as proposed increases Consolidated Fund Expenditure by £2 million in 2022. In total it increases expenditure by £8.2 million over the period of the Plan. If accepted this amendment will result in lower surpluses in 2023-2025 years of the plan, preventing them being available to be applied to reduce borrowing for Covid.

In respect of 2022 (subject to the outcome of other amendments) this amendment would result in a negative balance on the Consolidated Fund, because the amendment does not propose a funding source for this expenditure. This would mean the Government Plan could not be approved by the Assembly under Article 14 of the Public Finances Law, and the debate would need to be suspended to enable an amendment to be prepared in order to balance the Plan for 2022 before final approval.

### **Statement under Standing Order 37A [Presentation of comment relating to a proposition]:**

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These comments were submitted to the States Greffe after the noon deadline as set out in Standing Order 37A due to the requirement to undertake final due diligence and review processes.