

Your Ref: 516/8 (2)

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To whom it may concern,

I thank you for your letter inviting me to submit my comments regarding the Early Years Review, with the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. With regards to the Terms of Reference my comments are as follows.

1a. Long term studies have proved that children do better when they have continuity in their care in their early years.

- Available spaces for all 3-4 year olds island wide to have access to the Foundation stage, be it in private or public sectors.

1b. Parents need to feel that decisions being made for and about their children are being made for the right reasons, not because they are financially restricted.

- Parents need access to good quality care and education which suits their needs too, with regards to working and other family commitments.

1c. Providers of care and education need to be funded equally, with particular regards to private sector providers as many will struggle to remain open, especially when GST comes into effect.

2a. I feel there are many resources in place, although many need additional funding. School nursery classes are funded through taxpayers money, yet on the flip side many users of private sector providers are paying their tax and an additional £2,850 per year (school hours) for their

child to have access to the foundation stage

2b. To provide all 3-4 year olds with the opportunity to access the foundation stage is the only way to stamp out discriminating against those who couldn't get a public sector place whose parents can't afford a private sector place.

• Parents would have a better choice of facilities to choose from.

2c. A partnership between the two sectors would reduce "space sharing", and waiting lists, and I feel it would ease the feeling of having to compete against the public sector for private sector providers.

2d. Many parents have to work and are being encouraged to, and as a working parent myself I expect my children to be able to have continuity of care until their school entry age.

• My contract of employment requires me to work between the hours of 7:45am - 5:45pm Mon-Fri, for 31 hrs p/w whichever hours I am needed. However, my bosses would not be able to offer me a term time school hours contract as there are several of us who have children under 3 yrs, and they would not have sufficient staffing levels to operate the business if we all had a "school time" contract.

3. I think funding for 3-4 year olds will stop private sector providers needing to price themselves virtually out of the market for their 0-3 year olds. I think if this continues, Jersey will lose more of its private nurseries, having a devastating effect on the work force, affecting particularly mums who work.

• With funding, children who attend childcare facilities from a young age, would have continuity of care until they are 4+ years easing the transition to school.

4. I feel there is nothing in place to help middle earning families have affordable access to childcare in the private sector, a single parent on a low income can have access with Child Care Allowance and Welfare, and those in the higher earnings bracket can afford it, but to fund all 3-4 year olds in the private sector too, would give ^{all} families the chance to give their children access to the Foundation stage.

• I also feel that many parents who use private sector care for their children are working, therefore are already paying taxes so subsequently they are paying twice for childcare.

• I believe that only 50% of Jersey's 3-4 year old population will ever be able to claim a space in a public sector nursery class.

I hope my comments will be of use to you with regards to the Early Years Review.

Yours Sincerely