

Deputy Catherine Curtis
Chair, Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

By Email: c.curtis@gov.je



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Dear Chair

The Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey (OCCJ) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panels' review of the Government's Proposed Budget 2025-2028.

Whilst we have not been able to undertake a detailed analysis of the draft budget proposals, we note that the 2025 budget outlines some measures aimed at alleviating cost pressures and enhancing support for islanders, which should have a positive impact on children. These include increases in tax allowances, the expansion of early years provision, and support for the living wage transition.

However, we also note that, to ensure longer term financial sustainability, the proposed budget also introduces a packaging of significant cuts across government departments. The OCCJ is concerned about the impact of these cuts on the delivery of services and support for children and their families across all government departments. As such we would urge the Panel to consider raising questions about the short-term and long-term impacts of the proposed cuts on both existing and forthcoming strategies and plans, including:

- the transformation and improvement plans for Children's Social Care
- the implementation of the Inclusion Review recommendations
- the Youth Justice Strategy

Finally, we wish to draw the Panel's attention to our own budget, which is being substantially reduced as part of the proposed budget cuts, at a time when costs are increasing. The application of cuts to our budget will impact on the ability of the OCCJ to deliver on our statutory duties and functions and raises questions about the adequate resourcing of the office, which is required under the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2019. We ask that the Panel consider raising questions in relation to this also.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Carmel Corrigan
Commissioner for Children and Young People Jersey

