

Jersey Association Of Child Carer's,
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JE3 4AX.

Deputy F.J.Hill BEM,
Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel,
Scrutiny Office,
States Greffe,
Morier House,
St. Helier,
Jersey,
JE1 1DD.

6th June 2007

Dear Deputy Hill,

In response to the letter received, in relation to, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Early Years Review.

Young children who are settled in a secure environment where their individual needs are being met will be more receptive to early education. This in turn will facilitate them in attaining their full potential. Group care may not always be the best option for some 3-4 year olds, they may not be physically and or emotionally ready or able to cope and thrive in a group environment. Family Day Care is very flexible and particularly suited to continuity of care. In addition, Family Day Carers' can and do support parents in relation to personal circumstances, i.e., special needs and the necessity for regular visits to speech therapy, hospital & physiotherapy. Active & positive partnerships exist, where in some instances the Family Day Carer attends these appointments alongside the parent(s). Family Day Care allows for spontaneous outings and visits which can facilitate a young child's learning, knowledge and understanding of the world around us, maths, science, and literacy, physical, social & emotional development. Children accessing Family Day Care can have as varied and diverse an early education as those in nursery settings. In addition to this they can continue to enjoy childhood whilst being educated in a "family environment" until it is necessary and appropriate to their age & stage of development to enter the structure of a school based system.

It is vital parent's are given a "real" choice in relation to the available early years education for children in the 3-4 year age range. Factors such as cost and hour's of opening will influence parental choice greatly, as will the availability of wrap around care. The choices parents' make in relation to child care provision & early education is largely influenced by cost as opposed to suitability for the individual child. Many parents would like the choice for their child to remain in a home environment however; this is not always possible due to finances, particularly where they have more than one child under school entry age. In today's working environment many parent's work long hours and struggle to find a setting that can accommodate these long hours at a cost they can afford. Family Day Carer's are self employed and due to legal restrictions on age and child to adult ratios it would not be possible or financially viable to have empty places during term time and be expected to cover the short fall in nursery hours.

As Family Day Carer's we are required by our legislative body, E.S.C., to meet the same criteria as nursery staff in relation to compulsory areas of training, i.e., child protection, fire training, H.I.V. & AIDS awareness etc. Some Family Day Carer's hold professional qualifications such as N.N.E.B. / NVQ level 3 and choose to work with children in a home environment whilst continuing

professional development in their own time. Many Family Day Carer's caring for children aged 3-4 years already follow the current Foundation Stage curriculum. As an Association we would ask that, Family Day Carer's who would like to meet the requirements for providing early years education in a home environment be given the opportunity to apply, and if successful offer this service to parents using whichever scheme is decided upon i.e, voucher / grant .

Parents undoubtedly expect a high standard of care and early year's education for their children. Where 20hours free early years education is offered it must be fair and accessible to all parent's their children and all child care providers.

A partnership between the public and private sector should be seen as a positive step forward where the early year's education of all 3-4 year olds is of a uniform high standard, irrespective of the setting it is delivered within. The Islands children are its future, it is essential the people facilitating these children in attaining their full potential work together for a positive, successful and desirable outcome.

In many cases young children can experience three or more changes in their care and education within the first four years of life. Continuity of care and education, where possible, would be far more beneficial to the Islands youngest children...

0-6 mths (Mother and or extended family)

6 mths-2 years (Family Day Carer)

2-3 years (Nursery)

3-4 years (Nursery School)

Thank you for inviting the Jersey Association of Child Carer's to forward a submission in relation to this important and valuable topic.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Karen Ward (Secretary)