

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION  
BY DEPUTY J.A.N. LE FONDRÉ OF ST. LAWRENCE  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 15TH NOVEMBER 2016**

**Question**

Will the Minister advise whether it has been agreed by the Department with private-sector nursery providers that the Partnership Agreement is no longer fit for purpose and that a new Partnership Agreement will need to be negotiated and in place by the end of 2016 and, if so, will the Minister confirm whether or not negotiations between the Department and private-sector nursery providers have started and, if so, on which dates meetings have taken place; and if they have not started, will the Minister explain the reason for the delay?

Is it still the intention of the Department to have a new Partnership Agreement in place by the end of the year?

**Answer**

Meetings with private sector nursery representatives were delayed because of the Medium Term Financial Plan and the impending debate of Amendment 4. The meetings, which are discretionary, have been rescheduled and the first is due to take place on 17th November. One of the items to be discussed is an update of the Nursery Education Fund partnership agreement. The agreement is essentially still fit for purpose although some revisions are required to reflect recent changes in early years.