

Dear Deputy Bryans

I am a parent of two young children and very unfortunately was unable to attend the Scrutiny Panel meeting on Wednesday night, so I am emailing to make my plea for you to please reconsider the scrapping of free Nursery hours to households earning over ?75,000.

My husband and I will only just reach the ?75,000 mark, my husband being self-employed and me being a part-time primary school teacher. If the free hours are removed and we have to pay for the full fees for our second daughter's year at Nursery from September 2017, we will have to reconsider whether it is even worth me working any longer as the cost of extra childcare / nursery fees will impact hugely on the amount I bring home every month. This would be not only a shame for me, as I enjoy the privileged position of being able to balance working in a career I love at the same time as being able to be at home and look after my daughter in the afternoon, but also it would impact further on the economy in that I would no longer be paying taxes if I were to stop working altogether again.

I can understand the potential need to impose a threshold, however ?75,000 seems rather low to me and it seems unjust to be targeting young families at a stage of their lives when financial pressure is often at its highest, when trying to raise children. It also seems very unjust that only Private nurseries should potentially have the funding taken away and then, therefore, have their very existence threatened. Our daughters are at the wonderful Acorn Nursery in Trinity and it would a travesty if such a nurturing and excellent place were to have to shut down in the name of saving a few pennies here and there. If it did shut down, more places would be needed in already over-run States nurseries, meaning more money would ultimately have to be spent on opening new States nurseries / employing more teaching staff.

What has happened to the island being an 'example of excellence' of public/private partnership through the establishment of the NEF? It seems ridiculous that excellent private nurseries, whose skilled staff generate plenty of tax for the States, are being penalised in a decision in which few people have been involved.

This decision has been made without a prior and complete economic impact assessment being carried out on the wider affects. I refer not only to the nurseries that will close and the lost tax revenue from them, but also the wider impact of the many working mothers who will have to give up their jobs to look after their children because it will become uneconomical to continue working, and the resulting loss of their tax income once again.

I urge you to please strongly reconsider your decisions. We are sick with worry about the future of our children and the amazing Nursery which nurtures them (and which nurtured my husband over 30 years ago).

Yours sincerely