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**STATES OF JERSEY**



**A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF EARLY  
EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE IN  
JERSEY**

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**Presented to the States on 3rd August 2004  
by the Education, Sport and Culture Committee**

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## **A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE IN JERSEY**

High quality early education and childcare is crucial to the future well-being of our Island. It should be affordable, sustainable, equitable, and provide continuity. This review draws these key themes together and will help us focus on meeting the needs of children, families and the economy in a socially responsible way.

The Education, Sport and Culture Committee acknowledges that young children need high quality care and education from birth and recognises that parents need to be supported in their role as their child's first and most important educators.

It has been the Committee's policy to develop nursery provision in non-fee paying primary schools. It also acts as the political sponsor and principal source of funding of the Jersey Childcare Trust. This independent review was commissioned to help the Committee reassess its investment in this important area and to evaluate the work of the Childcare Trust, which is mid-way through its five year strategy.

Jenny Spratt, who conducted the review, is Head of Early Years and Childcare Services for Peterborough City Council. She was instrumental in helping Peterborough gain 'beacon status' for its early years strategy and has contributed to regional and national strategic working groups in England.



**Senator Mike Vibert,  
President of the Education, Sport and Culture Committee**

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## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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- 1 In February 2004, the Education, Sport and Culture Department commissioned a mid-term review of the Jersey Childcare Trust (JCCT) in relation to the development of an overall strategy for early education and childcare services across Jersey.
  - 2 This review is informed by a research methodology which involved the interviewing of key personnel from the JCCT; Department for Education, Sport and Culture; other agencies and departments; providers and parents.
  - 3 Documentation and evidence from other research projects have been used to form this report.
  - 4 The key findings of this review are as follows –
    - While there is a clear strategy for Early Years Education in Jersey, there is no overall States strategy for integrated early education and childcare.
    - The JCCT at the mid-term of its Five Year Strategy has become too broad and is no longer focused on its original objectives.
    - The JCCT is perceived as being effective in some areas of its work, but lack of transparency and consultation has resulted in the duplication of roles and responsibilities.
    - A perceived lack of investment in early education and childcare services has resulted in criticism of current policy.
  - 5 To address these issues, this report recommends that –
    - 5.1 A vision and overarching strategy for early education and childcare be developed to provide integrated, high quality services for children and their families.
    - 5.2 An analysis of the necessary investment to support the strategy should be undertaken.
    - 5.3 Principles of early education, as already identified in the Education, Sport and Culture early education strategy, should be reviewed in order to underpin the overall strategy for early education and childcare, providing consistency of approach, common ground and shared values across all settings.
    - 5.4 Agencies are open and transparent in the planning and delivery of services, with targets set against measurable, relevant performance indicators.
    - 5.5 The Trustees of the JCCT and senior members of the Education, Sport and Culture Department consider the structure and function of the Trust, with the intention of ensuring targets are relevant, transparent, cost effective and measurable.
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- 5.6 The JCCT re-focus its performance indicators against core objectives and re-publish its Implementation Plan 2004-2005, to ensure an open and transparent approach to planning and delivery of services.
- 5.7 A partnership approach is taken to the co-ordination of information that is available to parents, in order to provide a one-stop shop to reduce confusion and promote accessibility.
- 5.8 The JCCT and other agencies identify current and predicted market trends alongside demographics in considering future sustainability of early education and child care. The Education, Sport and Culture Committee should consider the re-introduction of part-time as well as full-time nursery places and a system of graduated fees and means testing should be established.
- 5.9 The Foundation Stage teacher supporting the private nurseries, be contracted from the Trust, to work under the Education, Sport and Culture Early Education Advisor, providing a cohesive approach to the implementation of the curriculum and continuity in transition.
- 5.10 Areas of duplication in the roles and responsibilities of the different agencies/departments be identified, with a 'flatter', more equitable structure developed between the JCCT and the Education, Sport and Culture Department. This will involve a review of the job title/job description of the currently named 'Executive Director' of the JCCT.
- 5.11 A partnership be developed, built on mutual respect, trust and identified common vision. The vision, supported by agreed principles, will develop a co-ordinated overall strategy for early years and childcare services in Jersey. This should be established through open, transparent, inclusive processes, ensuring clarity of purpose in which to benefit the children of Jersey.

## 2 TERMS OF REFERENCE

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The Terms of Reference set out the scope of the Review, as being –

‘To undertake a mid-term review of the Jersey Child Care Trust’s (JCCT) Five Year Strategy, and the funding, responsibilities and purpose of the Trust in relation to the overall strategy for early years and childcare in Jersey and to make recommendations to the Education, Sport and Culture Committee, with regard to –

- The need for an overall strategy based on integrated working to support children and families.
- Creating clarity and focus regarding the roles and responsibilities of different departments and organisations in developing the strategy and achieving its aims’.

### 3 INTRODUCTION

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The integration of early education and childcare has always been a difficult issue to address and is currently high on the agenda of many Governments. In January 2004, the Education, Sport and Culture Committee of the States Government commissioned a mid-term review of the Jersey Childcare Trust's Five Year Strategy, in relation to the development of a more integrated overall strategy and vision for the future.

This report begins by explaining the methodology of the research undertaken to inform the review, it then considers the findings in relation to the emerging key themes. A summary of these findings and the recommendations are to be found at the end of each section.



## 4 METHODOLOGY

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- 4.1 The review was undertaken by an independent researcher experienced in the development of high quality integrated early childhood services at both national and local level in the U.K.
- 4.2 The research informing the review was designed as being 'fit for purpose' for the States of Jersey, using a flexible design, based on a qualitative research methodology. This approach was relevant to the evaluation of the Jersey Childcare Trust, as 'the focus on qualitative research on exploring meanings and behaviour in depth, identifying diverse perspectives, capturing processes and contexts, and using flexible methods, means that qualitative research is seen as being capable of making a distinct contribution to policy evaluation.'<sup>1</sup>.
- 4.3 An evolving design was crucial for the evolving nature of the research – the main factor for consideration being that the research was located within the context of the Island. The political structure, organisation and policies supporting early education and childcare are specific to Jersey and its culture. For this reason, the methodology was based on an ethnographic approach where 'shared cultural meanings of behaviour, actions, events and contexts of a group of people are central to understanding the group'<sup>2</sup>.
- 4.4 Data was collected from two main sources –
- Documentation
  - Interviews
- to provide reliability and validity to the research.
- 4.5 Documents studied included policies, surveys, audits, implementation plans and other documentation from the JCCT and other early education services.
- 4.6 Interviews provided a flexible and adaptable way of finding out the perceptions of the different parties involved in early years, childcare and other related services across the Island. This approach involved 'getting a purchase on the field of study, by looking at it from a number of vantage points'<sup>3</sup>.
- 4.7 The interviews took place over a period of three days in March 2004, with the researcher and co-researcher conducting face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with a cross section of representatives from organisations involved in this area of work. These included –

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<sup>1</sup> Spencer, L.; Ritchie, J.; Lewis, J.; and Dillon, L.; (2003) *Quality in Qualitative Evaluation: A framework for assessing research evidence*. U.K. National Centre for Social Research p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Robson, C. (1993 reprinted 2002) *Real World Research 2nd Edition* Blackwell: Padstow p. 186.

<sup>3</sup> MacNaughton, G.' Rolfe, S. and Siraj Blatchford, I. (Eds.) (2001) *Doing Early Childhood Research. International Perspectives on Theory and Practice*. Open University Press: Buckingham p. 124.

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- JCCT
- Education, Sport and Culture
- Employment and Social Security
- Parents
- Private Providers
- Highlands College
- Youth Action Team

4.8 The interviews were held at the offices of the Department of Education, Sport and Culture and at the Pathways Project, Le Squez School. Twenty-five interviews were conducted, 23 on a one-to-one basis and 2 were group interviews. One hour was set aside for each interview, with assurances given of confidentiality. In total, 35 people were interviewed – 51% were service users and 48% service providers.

4.9 The review considered the following key themes –

- The vision for early years and childcare in Jersey.
- The coherence of planning for early years and childcare provision.
- Current service delivery in relation to the original intention of the JCCT.
- The effectiveness of the JCCT.
- The range of information to enable early years and childcare services to respond to parental need.
- The effectiveness of current financial arrangements supporting early education and childcare services.
- Value for money provided by current organisational structures supporting early education and childcare services.
- Benefits for children and families of agencies working in partnership.

4.10 A literature search has been undertaken to support the writing of this report. It acts as a point of reference for readers who might want to look at research articles/texts in more detail.

The literature review focuses on the key themes emerging from the research, with significant quotes written into the text. The references are found in footnotes at the bottom of the relevant pages.

## 5 FINDINGS – KEY THEMES

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### 1.0 A vision for early education and childcare

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1.1 Lack of an overarching strategy for integrated early education and childcare emerges as a key theme throughout the research underpinning this report. It inhibits cohesion and has resulted in a lack of common ground, resulting in the duplication of roles and responsibilities.

1.2 This report supports the Jersey Education Audit Committee Review of the Foundation Stage/Nursery Education's 2002 recommendation that –

*'there is no co-ordinated Island-wide strategy for early education and care. An Island-wide five year strategy which incorporated the relevant stakeholder's strategies and plans would be beneficial in ensuring that a comprehensive and cohesive provision catering for all forms of education and childcare is delivered. It should explicitly highlight the:*

- *Role of each sector.*
- *The development plan and expansion of current provision.*
- *Training and support.*
- *Way in which to monitor and measure performance'.*

1.3 As part of the research underpinning this review, interviewees were asked to identify their vision for early education and childcare in Jersey. The following common themes emerged –

- Investment in the early years.
- Integrated provision.
- High quality provision.
- An equitable system of early education and childcare.

### 1.4 Investment in the early years

- Evidence from research undertaken by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development<sup>4</sup> into early childhood education and care policy reviews suggests that significant public funding is necessary to support a sustainable and equitable childhood system. Without that investment, there is a probability that a shortage of good quality programmes, unequal access and segregation of children according to income will occur<sup>5</sup>.
- Analysis of the interviews in the research underpinning this review indicates that investment is regarded as essential to the success of any future strategy in

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<sup>4</sup> From: Bennett, J., 2003, *Starting Strong in Journal of Early Childhood Research Vol. 1 May 2003 p. 36.*

<sup>5</sup> Bennet, J. (2003) *Starting Strong in Journal of Early Childhood Research Vol. 1, No. 1 May 2003 p. 36.*

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Jersey, with comparison being made to the U.K. system of providing funded nursery education places for all three and four year olds, whose parents want them.

- The need for investment, however, was not just targeted at the early years sector. It was felt to be needed for all sectors of childcare, particularly out of school childcare for older children, reflecting the findings of international research that has identified that 'education systems in most countries have tended to disregard the out-of-school care needs of children, as traditionally care was seen to be outside the strict education remit. A more coherent approach to out of school care is needed, more closely linked in concept and organisation to existing early childhood education and care and school provision'<sup>6</sup>.

### 1.5 Integrated provision

- The need for integrated early years and childcare provision was highlighted in the interviews as being an important element of any overarching strategy that might be developed in Jersey.
- The benefits of integration have also been highlighted in the longitudinal research 'Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) (1997–2004) which has found that children from integrated settings and nursery schools tend to do better on cognitive outcomes, even after taking account of children's backgrounds. These findings have influenced the development of integrated children's centres in the U.K. which have as their core service a co-located/integrated early education and childcare provision to provide a seamless provision for the child.

### 1.6 High quality provision

- High quality provision was identified as essential within a future strategy for early education and childcare in Jersey. The EPPE research<sup>7</sup> has found that the quality of the pre-school settings is directly related to better intellectual/cognitive and social/behavioural development in children. It also found that –
  - *Good quality can be found across all types of early years settings, nursery schools and nursery classes.*
  - *Settings which have staff with higher qualifications, especially with a good proportion of trained teachers on the staff, show higher quality and their children make more progress.*
  - *Where settings view educational and social development as complementary and equal in importance, children make better all round progress.*

<sup>6</sup> Bennet, J., *Starting Strong in Journal of Early Childhood Research Vol. 1, No. 1 May 2003* p. 32.

<sup>7</sup> *The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project Institute of Education, University of London, funded by DfES.*

- *Effective pedagogy includes interaction traditionally associated with the term 'teaching', the provision of instructive learning environments and 'sustained shared thinking' to extend children's learning is a vital component of pedagogy.*
- High quality provision has also been found, by the EPPE research to have significant impact on children from disadvantaged backgrounds –
  - *'Disadvantaged children are more likely to show adverse social profiles at age three and school entry. The increased risk of anti-social/worried behaviour is linked to an early start in group provision, but it can be reduced by high quality'.*
  - *'Disadvantaged children in particular can benefit significantly from good quality pre-school experiences, especially if they attend centres that cater for a mixture of children from different social backgrounds'.*
- These findings support the recommendations of the Co-ordinating Committee of the Decade for the Eradication of Poverty in their report 'Hardship Experienced by Children and Young People in Jersey' July 2003.

#### 1.7 Equality of provision

- Equality of access to early childhood services is currently being debated by parents, providers and agencies throughout Jersey. This debate has also been undertaken by most countries in Europe and they 'recommend to other countries increased public investment in early childhood services, on a universal level, as despite interventions by States to palliate the effects of market failure, a great imbalance exists between the services for the over-threes and the under-threes. In addition the present situation seriously hampers any real equality of opportunity for women with young children in jobs, salaries or career progression'<sup>8</sup>.

#### 1.8 Developing the vision

- The development of high quality, equitable, integrated services will be undertaken in a context that is appropriate for the children of Jersey.
- Children themselves do not distinguish between an education or care setting. In establishing a vision for the future, a set of principles should be established to provide consistency of approach, common ground and shared values to underpin the strategy.
- The Jersey 'Handbook for Nursery Providers' sets out the Principles underpinning the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage (QCA/DfEE 2000). These are taken from the recognised principles of high quality early childhood practice, and are applicable to any form of education and childcare.

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<sup>8</sup> Bennet, J., *Starting Strong in Journal of Early Childhood Research Vol. 1, No. 1 May 2003* p. 28.

### 1.9 Principles

- Effective learning is enabled by a relevant curriculum and staff who understand and are able to implement curriculum requirements.
- Effective learning is enabled by staff who understand that children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.
- Staff should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.
- Early years experience should build on what children already know and can do.
- Parents and staff should work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- To be effective, an early years curriculum must be carefully structured (recognising different starting points, and levels of need).
- There must be opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they plan or initiate themselves. Staff must observe and respond appropriately to children, informed by a knowledge of how children develop and learn.
- Well planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by staff will engage children in the learning process.
- For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment must be well planned and well organised.
- Above all, effective learning and development for young children requires high quality, care, support and guidance by staff.

### 1.10 Summary of findings

- A vision and overall strategy for integrated early education and childcare should be developed.
- The strategy should address the following themes –
  - Investment in the early years.
  - Integrated provision.
  - High quality provision.
  - An equitable system of early education and childcare.
- The principles that underpin the Foundation Stage should be adopted to underpin the strategy. These will provide consistency of approach, common ground and shared values.

**1.11 Recommendations**

This report recommends that –

- 1 A vision and overarching strategy for integrated early education and care be developed to provide, high quality services for children and their families.
- 2 An analysis of the investment necessary to support the strategy should be undertaken.
- 3 Principles of early education, as already identified in the Education, Sport and Culture's early education strategy, should be reviewed in order to underpin the overall strategy for early education and childcare, providing consistency of approach, common ground and shared values across all settings.

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## 5 FINDINGS – KEY THEMES

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### 2.0 Cohesion of planning for early education and childcare services

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- 2.1 In addressing the terms of reference of this review, to ‘create clarity and focus regarding the roles and responsibilities of different departments and organisations’ – a question was asked in each interview about the cohesion of planning of early education and childcare services.
- 2.2 The findings show overwhelmingly that there needs to be more cohesion in planning as the perception of many people (39%) interviewed was that there was no cohesion at all, and 59% felt that more cohesion was needed.
- 2.3 Research shows that the perception of those involved in early education and childcare in Jersey supports the view of Bennet’s research that ‘Early childhood institutions can make important contributions to many other projects of social, cultural and political significance. Furthermore... early childhood institutions can play an important part in constituting civil society, and become the primary means for fostering the visibility, inclusion and active participation of the young children in civil society’<sup>9</sup>.
- 2.4 Bennet also found that, in developing integrated services, the Council of Ministers Recommendations<sup>10</sup> proposed specific objectives for developing cohesive services for young children –
- Affordability.
  - Access to services in all areas, urban and rural.
  - Access to services for children with special needs.
  - Combining safe and secure care with a pedagogical approach.
  - Close and responsive relations between services, parents and local communities.
  - Diversity, flexibility of services and increased choice for parents.
  - Coherence between different services.
- 2.5 The British Government, in planning cohesive services in England considered the EPPE research and has established the Sure Start<sup>11</sup> approach, which has the vision to provide –
- Better outcomes for all children, reducing the effects of poverty.
  - Better outcomes for parents, increasing labour opportunities, ensuring pathways out of poverty and strengthened families and communities.
  - Better outcomes for communities – less crime, higher productivity.
  - Stronger labour market and building of a civil society.

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<sup>9</sup> Bennet, J., *Starting Strong in Journal of Early Childhood Research, Vol. 1, No. 1 May 2003.*

<sup>10</sup> Council of European Communities, 1992 in Bennet, J., *Starting Strong (2003).*

<sup>11</sup> *Sure Start Delivery Guidance 2003 DfES.*

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The Local Authority role will be to provide leadership and join up agendas by bringing local partners together – to deliver strategy.

## 2.6 Summary of findings

- Of those interviewed 36% felt that there was no cohesion to the planning of services for early education and childcare, and 59% felt that more cohesion was needed.
- The evidence of the research underpinning the review shows overwhelmingly that there is a need for the development of a vision and overarching strategy that will foster cohesion.
- Research indicates that the historical view of education and care services as separate services, still exists.
- Research has informed coordinating strategies such as Sure Start in UK, supported by investment.

## 2.7 Recommendations

This review recommends that –

- Agencies are open and transparent in the planning and delivery of services with targets set against measurable, relevant performance indicators.

## 5 FINDINGS – KEY THEMES

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### 3.0 Current service delivery in relation to the original intention of the Jersey Childcare Trust

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3.1 To fully inform the mid-term review of the Jersey Childcare Trust, this report refers to the documentation from which the Trust evolved.

3.2 The Jersey Childcare Trust Constitution states its aim as being –

*‘to coordinate, promote and facilitate the expansion of high quality and affordable childcare provision in the Island’.*

3.3 The Objectives of the Trust evolved from the recommendations of the Working Party Report 1996 and are set out in the Constitution as follows –

- (a) *Promote high standards of childcare.*
- (b) *Monitor and seek to improve the accessibility and affordability of childcare facilities and services in the Island.*
- (c) *Promote and encourage improvements in the status and conditions of service of childcare staff.*
- (d) *Promote the training and development of staff in the childcare sector.*
- (e) *Provide information and advice to all interested parties and coordinate childcare provision across all public and private sectors.*
- (f) *Sponsor and support research into childcare needs.*
- (g) *Identify market needs, stimulate and facilitate new developments and encourage and facilitate partnerships which enhance childcare provision.*
- (h) *Attract funding to pump prime initiatives for all of the above.*

3.4 The Trust’s Business Plan (1999-2000) acted as a focus for its initial work and was set against these aims and objectives.

3.5 The Five Year Strategy document Firm Foundations – a Five Year Strategy for Childcare (2002-2006) retains the original aim of the Trust, but incorporates other organisations in its delivery:

*‘The role of the Jersey Childcare Trust is to coordinate, promote and facilitate the provision of high quality and affordable childcare involving a number of agencies. This is a cross-Island strategy that calls for a response from the many private and public sector organisations who have an important contribution to make. It is not an action plan for the Trust alone’.*

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3.6 However, the objectives of the Five Year Strategy are different to those set out in the Trust's Constitution. They are as follows –

**Objective 1:** increase the number of high quality childcare places.

**Objective 2:** create a trained, motivated and well supported childcare workforce.

**Objective 3:** ensure very working/studying parent can afford a high-quality childcare place.

**Objective 4:** create a child-friendly Island environment.

**Objective 5:** support parents and carers in their role.

3.7 While objectives 1, 2 and 3 can be identified with the objectives in the Constitution this report questions how objectives 4 and 5 equate with the Constitution with no apparent change having been made to the Constitution itself.

3.8 The core business of the Trust, as stated in the 'One Year On' October 2001 – October 2002 states these objectives are the activities that the Trust adopted in the previous year's business plans and 'continues to provide as a vital part of the development of childcare services'. These do not reflect the original objectives, and are unrelated to the aim of the Trust.

3.9 Where targets have been changed, as in the 'One Year On' document the focus action and funding varies considerably from the original intention, as in Target 1.4. Target 1.4 in all documentation states –

*'40 Nursery class places in a private childcare establishment'*. However, the funding for this target has provided the Foundation Stage teacher that supports the private sector. The wording of this target should therefore be changed to reflect this.

This report finds this to be misleading. Targets should be open and transparent to all who read them, and a full explanation and change of target identified.

3.10 The research underpinning this review, as well as considering evidence from documentation, also used interviews of representatives from different sectors to obtain data.

Each person interviewed was asked to give their views on how the JCCT was meeting its original purpose.

3.11 Analysis of the data suggests division between those who do not feel the Trust meets the original intention, against those who feel that it does. Closer examination of the statistics indicates the high level of those thinking the Trust meets the original intention is influenced by those who represent the Trust itself.

- 3.12 More people from agencies and providers felt that the Trust did not meet the original purpose and had moved beyond its remit, than those who felt it was meeting its intention.
- 3.13 Few people felt that there should be no Trust at all.
- 3.14 It is therefore important that this report considers the remit of the Trust, alongside the funding of each target. If the targets that are funded by the core budget are identified, they can then be matched alongside the original objectives, to re-focus the Trust on its original purpose and be more cost effective.
- 3.15 **Summary**
- This report has considered the Constitution of the Jersey Childcare Trust and the aims and objectives of the Five Year Strategy and their monitoring of the 'One Year On' and 'Two Year On' documents.
  - The creation of new objectives in subsequent documentation shows the way in which the work of the Trust has developed into areas beyond its original purpose.
  - The research for this report shows how the majority of people interviewed felt that the Trust had moved beyond its original intention.
  - Targets should be linked back to the original objectives of the Trust and they should remain more pertinent to the Trust's Constitution, than those that developed in the Five Year Strategy.

**3.16 Recommendation**

- It is recommended that the Trustees of the Jersey Childcare Trust and senior members of the Education, Sport and Culture Department consider the structure and function of the Trust, with the intention of ensuring targets are relevant, transparent, cost effective and measurable.

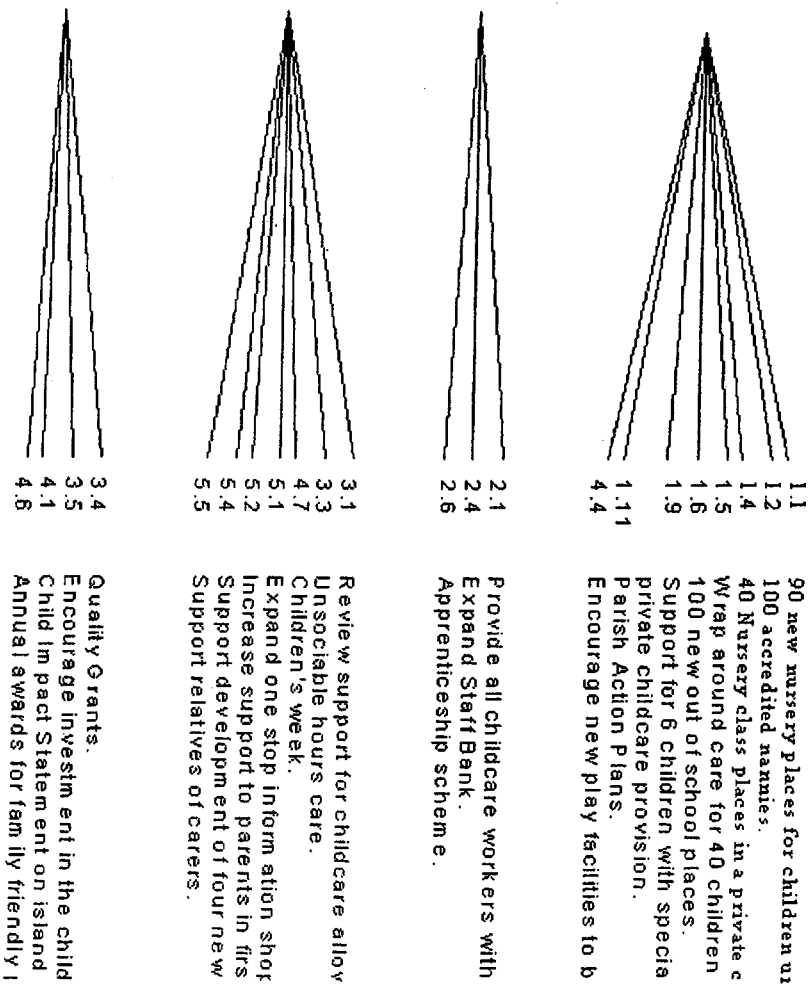
**OBJECTIVES**

*Features Common to all*

- Promote high standards of care
- Attract funding to pump prime initiatives
- Sponsor and support research into childcare needs

1. Monitor and seek to improve the accessibility and affordability of childcare facilities and services in the island.
2. Create a trained, motivated and well supported childcare workforce.
3. Provides information and advice to all interested parties and co-ordinate childcare provision across all public and private sectors.
4. Identify market needs, stimulate and facilitate new developments and encourage and facilitate partnerships which enhance childcare provision

**TARGETS**



**Fig. 10**

## 5 FINDINGS – KEY THEMES

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### 4.0 The effectiveness of the Jersey Childcare Trust

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4.1 The effectiveness of the Trust is monitored by submission of its plans and annual reports as set out in its Constitution –

- *Within its first year, the Trust shall provide, for approval by the Education Committee, a detailed business plan and budget for creating improvements to childcare provisions in the Island over the subsequent 2 years.*
- *During the second year of the Trust's existence, the Trust shall produce a five year strategic report together with funding and action plans for the same period. Such plan must be submitted to the Education Committee for approval and will be presented to the States by the President of the Education Committee on behalf of the Trust, for information and reporting processes.*
- *Thereafter, the Trust will produce an annual report which will be presented by the President of the Education Committee to the States for information and reporting purposes.*

*JCCT Constitution*

4.2 The Five Year Strategy 2002-2006 sets out this process in more detail –

- *Both the strategy and annual action plans will specify measurable targets, a time frame, resource implications and a lead agency.*

*Five Year Strategy*

4.3 The action plans of the above documents provide varying amounts of information, by which to evaluate the effectiveness of the Trust. Some targets have performance indicators and resource implications, but others are very generalistic. This does not provide the public with a measure of the Trust's effectiveness.

4.4 The Trust produces an Implementation Plan, but this is not published. The Implementation Plan reports under the following headings –

- Target
- Target Information
- Actions Required
- Departments/Groups involved in Delivery of Target
- Timescale
- Funding Source

This plan is specific and measurable, providing an open and transparent approach to the effectiveness of the strategy.

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4.5 The research underpinning this report, asked all those being interviewed for their views on the effectiveness of the Trust. Analysis of the responses shows that effectiveness of the Trust is perceived by the different sectors, as follows –

- The JCCT itself, through self-evaluation, feels that it is effective in all areas (75%), except in after school care (25%).
- The agencies feel the Foundation Stage Teacher (33%) and funding of training (33%) to be the most effective aspects of the Trust.
- Providers also feel the Foundation Stage Teacher (57%) and training (71%) to be the most effective. They also benefited from the Trust allocating grants/benefits (42%) and supporting after school care (28%).
- Parents gave no responses to some areas of the Trust's work, as they have not experienced them (50%). They find the Trust is effective in allocating grants/benefits and SEN support (75%).

#### 4.6 Summary of findings

- The process of measuring the effectiveness of the JCCT is set out in the Constitution 1997.
- The Five Year Strategy 2002-2006 states that the Trust will specify measurable targets by which to assess its efficiency.
- Published plans have not been sufficiently open and transparent to enable informed judgements to be made.
- Efficiency is being judged through interpretation and perception.

#### 4.7 Recommendation

- It is a recommendation of this report that the JCCT re-focus its performance indicators against the core objectives and publish widely its Implementation Plan 2004-2005, to ensure an open and transparent approach to planning and delivery of services.



## 5 FINDINGS – KEY THEMES

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### 5.0 Information available to parents

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- 5.1 The JCCT Constitution sets out how the Trust will ‘provide information and advice to all interested parties and to coordinate childcare provision across all public and private sectors’.
- 5.2 In developing an overall strategy for early education and childcare in Jersey, it is important that parents can access information to help them find ‘high quality and affordable childcare’ (JCCT Constitution). It is an important aspect of sustainability of childcare services.
- 5.3 The Five Year Strategy document of the Trust states that it intends to ‘continue to expand the one-stop information shop for parents’ (Target 5.1) and the ‘Two Years On’ document explains the Trust’s intention to ‘expand the one-stop information shop for parents’ and that it will –

‘look for premises and develop a working group to look at what kind of information we should provide. To develop information for providers. To develop standards which are akin to those in U.K.<sup>12</sup>, but will be specific to Jersey.

### 5.4 Summary of findings

- An important aspect of an overarching strategy is the accessibility of information on early education and childcare for parents.
- This is a key factor for the sustainability of the strategy, and of childcare generally.
- Currently, information is located in different departments or organisations and parents are unclear about who to contact.
- The JCCT Objective 5 (1997) and Target 5.1 (2002) set out the intention to create a one-stop shop for information for parents. This has not been achieved.

### 5.5 Recommendation

- This report proposes that a partnership approach is taken to the coordination of information that is available to parents, in order to provide the one-stop shop, to reduce confusion and promote accessibility.

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<sup>12</sup> U.K. Local Authorities are required to have a Children’s Information Service, providing information to parents in a one-stop shop.

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## 5 FINDINGS – KEY THEMES

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### 6.0 Effectiveness of funding to support early education and childcare services

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- 6.1 Terms of reference for this review state that consideration should be given to the funding of the JCCT in relation to the overall strategy for early education and childcare.
- 6.2 Lack of an overarching strategy has resulted in complex funding arrangements with the different sectors currently working in isolation.
- 6.3 It is the opinion of this review that issues of funding of early education and childcare should now be considered within a cohesive, inter-agency approach to provision for children across the Island. Much research has already been undertaken (Kathy Bull Report 2004; Hardship Experienced by Children and Young People in Jersey 2003, Education Audit Committee Review of the Foundation Stage/Nursery Education 2002 report) which have all made similar suggestions.
- 6.4 This review finds that lack of such a strategy has enabled each department/organisation to develop its own strategy and infrastructure within its own budget limit. This has resulted in well-intentioned services that in many cases are duplicated by another department/organisation.
- 6.5 The Jersey Childcare Trust, at the mid-term of its Five Year Strategy can be used as a case-study to illustrate this situation. By surveying parents, the Trust identified the need to support them in their role as parents/carers. In so doing, the Trust has moved beyond its original intention, into areas of work that are covered by other organisations.
- In spreading itself so thinly, the Trust has diminished its impact and influence in the area it is intended to support – ‘quality’, affordable childcare. If, however, the Trust were an equal partner of a co-ordinated, interagency approach, its role would be defined. Such clarity for organisations, enables a fully supportive structure to be built around the child.
- 6.6 England can be used as another example as it has initiatives that coordinate services for children and families at local community level, such as Sure Start Local Programmes and Neighbourhood Nurseries. These initiatives provide useful models of coordination, but they are supported by huge investment by the British Government. Children’s Centres are also being developed in England, but with much reduced budgets. They are based on an ethos of the co-ordination of services, through integrated working between the agencies.
- 6.7 In England, Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships have been supporting early education and childcare services since 1998. Originally they followed a prescribed format from Central Government, but since 2004, they have been able to develop according to local need.

- 6.8 Jersey should now develop its own strategic plan, supported by the infrastructure needed to support children, putting them at the heart of future developments.
- 6.9 This review has made the recommendation that the Jersey Childcare Trust give greater priority to its original purpose of providing high quality, affordable childcare. It needs to identify market needs, and to undertake important work to ensure sustainability of existing provision.
- 6.10 EPPE research shows that high quality integrated centres provide the best environment for the child. The term 'integrated' meaning that the child has continuity of provision between early education and childcare. The child does not see any difference between the two. EPPE has also found that integrated centres provide the best environment for children's cognitive development.
- 6.11 Such integration can be achieved by partnerships between public, private and voluntary providers/agencies. Positive examples of this way of working already exist in Jersey – the Pathways Project at the Le Squez School and for older children, Centrepoint, that links to schools such as Janvrin for wrap around and after school care.
- 6.12 Sustainability of education and childcare provision needs to be built into the vision and overarching strategy, which will provide a framework for the planning of services for the next 10 years. Detailed plans should be made for the first five years of this period and be viewed as 'the pioneering' phase. A range of provision is important to give parents a choice in the services that they need. However, the more that the vision is linked to schools, the more secure, in financial terms, it tends to be.
- 6.13 Consideration of demographics of the Island may show that some schools will have falling rolls during this period. Assessment of school buildings asset management programme will identify spare capacity, where a partnership with a private/voluntary provider to provide integrated early education and childcare, would be cost effective for both sectors. It would also provide services for families at the heart of the community, which means that the services are likely to be used, as in the Pathways project.
- 6.14 The cost of childcare and the issue of free nursery class places in Jersey needs to be addressed. EPPE research shows that high quality nursery provision where a qualified teacher has direct daily contact with the child and is responsible for the planning of the learning programme provides the best experience for the child's cognitive development. Multi-professional teams are also important for the child's holistic development. In general terms, nursery schools/units have a long history of such provision. The research underpinning this review shows an overwhelming view (100%) that the current system is not equitable. One of the main issues being raised in the research is one of full day/part-time provision in the nursery units. It was generally felt that these should be more flexible according to parental need and child's age. For summer born children it may be more appropriate for such a placement to be on a part-time basis.

6.15 This report raises the following questions –

- Is the market price for childcare right?
- Is it preventing people from accessing the market?
- Should there be better targeted supply and more generous demand?

Alternatively, a model for sustainability may be provided through a model of graduated fees. This would be a form of means testing where a range of incomes exists, so that a much lower price is charged for those in a lower income bracket.

6.16 Evidence from longitudinal research throughout Europe provides examples of funding strategies –

*'Subsidised provision for under-threes is most developed in Denmark, Finland and Sweden – countries with a long history of supporting public-funded Early Childhood Education and Care, as part of broader gender, equity and family policies. Most services are full day, with parents paying fees on a sliding scale'.<sup>13</sup>*

It concludes that *'evidence from the organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development thematic review suggests significant public funding is necessary to support a sustainable and equitable childhood system. Without that investment, there is a probability that a shortage of good quality programmes, unequal access and segregation of children according to income will occur'.*

6.17 **Summary of findings**

- Lack of an integrated overarching strategy for early education and childcare has resulted in complex funding arrangements, with the different sectors working in isolation.
- Duplication of roles and responsibilities has resulted.
- Initiatives in England provide models for coordination of services through integrated working, but are supported by investment.
- The JCCT should give greater priority to its original purpose of providing high quality, affordable childcare, identify market needs and ensure sustainability is a key feature of its work.
- Partnerships between the public and private sectors should be considered, alongside detailed identification of demographic trends.

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<sup>13</sup> Bennet, J., *Starting Strong in Journal of Early Childhood Research Vol. 1, No. 1 May 2003 p. 30 and p. 36.*

A model of sustainability through a model of graduated fees and means testing to be investigated. Examples exist throughout Europe.

**6.18 Recommendations**

It is recommended that –

- The JCCT and the Education, Sport and Culture Committee identify current and predicted market trends alongside demographics. In considering the future sustainability of early education and childcare services a system of means testing and graduated fees should be considered.

## 5 FINDINGS – KEY THEMES

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### 7.0 Value for money provided by current organisational structures supporting early education and childcare services

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- 7.1 The terms of reference of this review ask for the mid-term position of the Five Year Strategy with regard to ‘the funding and responsibilities of the Trust, in relation to the overall strategy for early education and childcare in Jersey, creating clarity and focus regarding the roles and responsibilities of different departments and organisations in developing the strategy’.
- 7.2 The research informing this report considered the effectiveness of the current staffing structure of the JCCT. Of those interviewed most people felt that there was a duplication of the roles and responsibilities of other agencies. Of these responses 66% said that they thought the organisational structure should be reviewed.
- 7.3 Of the responses that felt the staffing structure was effective, 28% felt that this was because of the teacher who supported the Foundation Stage in the private sector.
- 7.4 Lack of transparency and confusion about the Trust has impact on the value for money provided by current organisations that support early education and childcare services. This is reflected in the opinion of those interviewed for the research.

Of the 27% that felt that current structures provide value for money, 20% attributed this to the nursery education policy of the Education, Sport and Culture Committee.

- 7.5 It is not the purpose of this review to define staffing or organisational structures, that is the responsibility of the States Committee. However some of the following suggestions may assist decisions that will need to be made.
- If the JCCT focuses on key objectives as in Recommendation 4.7, the core functions will determine the staff requirements and their roles and responsibilities.
  - The Daycare Service already has a defined role – Registration, Quality and Birth to Three Matters.
  - Foundation Stage support in both the maintained and private sector should work together to ensure continuity and cohesion in young children’s early learning.
  - Greater emphasis should be given to out of school childcare for older children and the link with children’s play.
-

7.6 This research has highlighted much concern that the job title for the 'coordinator of the JCCT' evolved into that of an 'Executive Director'. As part of an examination of roles and responsibilities generally, it may be appropriate for the Department for Education, Sport and Culture and the Trust to develop a 'flatter' structure between the Trust, Daycare, Education and Play Services with equality of status and responsibility.

#### 7.7 Summary of findings

- 37% of those interviewed feel the JCCT's staffing structure is effective, but 58% feel it duplicates roles that already exist.
- Many of those interviewed expressed concern about the number of administration staff employed by the Trust.
- The role of the Foundation Stage teacher in the private sector is well regarded. This role is well defined.
- Lack of transparency has impact on the perception on duplication of roles and responsibilities.
- Of those interviewed, 73% felt a review of staffing structures in organisations supporting early education and childcare is needed.
- Structures, roles and responsibilities will evolve from the development of an overall strategy and associated budgets.
- The research highlighted much concern regarding the title 'Executive Director' of the JCCT, when the original documentation of the Trust states that a 'Coordinator' should be appointed.

#### 7.8 Recommendations

It is recommended that –

- The Foundation Stage teacher supporting the private nurseries, be contracted from the Trust, to work under the Education, Sport and Culture Early Education Advisor, providing a cohesive approach to the implementation of the curriculum and continuity in transition.
- Areas of duplication in the roles and responsibilities of the different agencies/departments be identified, with a 'flatter', more equitable structure developed between the JCCT and the Education, Sport and Culture Department. This will involve a review of the job title/job description of the currently named 'Executive Director' of the JCCT.



## 5 FINDINGS – KEY THEMES

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### 8.0 The benefits for children and families of organisations working in partnership

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- 8.1 The terms of reference for this review refer to ‘the need for an overall strategy based on the integrated working to support children and families’.
- 8.2 The terms ‘integration’ and ‘partnership’ were frequently used during the research for this review, but were not defined. The purpose of ‘integration’ was identified in the terms of reference, but the meaning of ‘partnership’ remained open to debate. To clarify further, it was decided to include a question on the benefits of partnership working in each interview.
- 8.3 Responses show overwhelming support (95%) to the concept of working in partnership. Of these positive responses, 85% of those questioned felt that the ‘partnership’ should develop and implement the vision and overall strategy for Jersey. Each organisation/department would retain its own identity and have its own targets and objectives, but they would be part of the whole picture, providing a cohesive and co-ordinated approach to service delivery. People felt that this approach would clarify roles and responsibilities as well as accountability, and by being open and transparent, there would be no duplication of services. This approach would provide value for money and support for children and families would be more cost effective.
- 8.4 In considering what the ‘partnership’ would look like, some people (35%) felt that it should have a wide representative membership, to ensure that all parties involved in early education and childcare are involved in delivery of the strategy. Conversely 15% felt that the partnership should be limited to a small group, representing key players in the field.
- 8.5 Partnership working is not easy, particularly when starting from the state of fragmentation that currently exists.

Strategies and models of partnership working exist and can be used as a guide to enable Jersey to develop a structure that is appropriate to its context.

- 8.6 The nomination of the chair is important and different models exist that can be helpful in deciding what type of chair a partnership should have. An independent chair provides obvious benefits, but an in-house chair from a statutory body can also be an advantage for establishing and driving forward strategy.

It may be helpful while establishing the partnership to have the chair and vice-chair representing both situations. Job descriptions help to clarify responsibilities and provide transparency to all partners.

- 8.7 A partnership needs to be co-ordinated and ‘driven’ in a practical way, i.e., in developing lines of communication to the States Committees and disseminating strategy to partner organisations. This ensures the partnership
-

remains active and vibrant. A budget will need to be identified to enable coordination and administration costs.

- 8.8 The success of this approach depends on the willingness for it to succeed. The research shows overwhelmingly that agencies; JCCT; providers and parents want a more cohesive approach in which to provide the best for the children of Jersey.
- 8.9 A partnership approach coordinates services – it does not replace them. It supports the findings of the mid-term review of the JCCT, by providing a framework for the JCCT to remain focused on its objectives and to present identified gaps in services to the partnership so that a co-ordinated approach can be given. It may fall to the Trust, in line with its objectives, to identify external funding to support a multi-agency approach to a time-limited project, that the partnership identifies. In this way, what the sectors/agencies can achieve together, in partnership, will be better for children and families in Jersey, than what they are currently providing alone.

#### 8.10 Summary of findings

- There is overwhelming support for a partnership approach to support the delivery of early education and childcare services in Jersey.
- The 'partnership' should coordinate, develop and implement an overarching strategy for early education and childcare services.
- The membership of the partnership and nomination of the chair and vice chair to be determined through consultation with partner agencies/departments/organisations and to be fully inclusive.
- The Constitution and terms of reference to be determined as part of the process of developing and implementing the strategy.
- Resources to be identified to support the process.

#### 8.11 Recommendation

- It is recommended that a partnership be developed, built on mutual respect, trust and identified common vision. The vision, supported by agreed principles will develop a co-ordinated overall strategy for early years and childcare services in Jersey. This should be established through open, transparent inclusive processes, ensuring clarity of purpose in which to benefit the children of Jersey.

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# STATES OF JERSEY



## INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE: A VISION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE FOR CHILDREN IN JERSEY

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Presented to the States on 5th July 2005  
by the Education, Sport and Culture Committee

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
UNTIL 09.30 a.m. ON  
05 JUL 2005  
**EMBARGO**

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## CONSULTATION

*Investing in Our Future* sets out for consultation, the Education, Sport and Culture Committee's vision for early childhood education and care in Jersey. It contains plans to develop and extend high quality early learning opportunities for young children by investing in private sector provision to complement nursery classes in provided primary schools.

The Committee is interested to hear the views of States Members, community groups, private sector providers and members of the public about these proposals. Responses should be sent to:

Investing In Our Future Consultation  
The Department for Education, Sport and Culture  
P.O. Box 142  
Highlands  
St. Saviour  
JE4 8QJ

Email responses may be sent to [ecec@gov.je](mailto:ecec@gov.je)

The closure date for consultation will be 30th September 2005. All the responses received will help in the formation of more detailed options for the future which will be published later this year.

## FOREWORD

Every child in Jersey should have the opportunity to grow up in an Island that values children and families. The realisation of this is dependent upon government which recognises that the education and care of children is a shared responsibility between family and the community. A quality early childhood education and care experience can supplement good parenting and have positive long-term benefits on children's lives. This in turn leads to significant benefits for society.

Objective 3.7.1 of the States Strategic Plan 2005 – 2010, documents a commitment to increase the number of three to five year olds accessing 'early years' programmes and assigns lead responsibility for this to the Education, Sport and Culture Committee. The proposals outlined in *Investing in Our Future* are designed to give effect to this and to remove some of the barriers which currently prevent children accessing high quality provision. The implementation of these proposals will make early education and care more affordable, accessible and equitable for all.

The focus of *Investing In Our Future* is primarily three and four year olds. However, for maximum effect, these proposals should be implemented in the context of broader and more coherent family policy which supports working parents in the choices they make, particularly in respect of children under the age of three. To this end, the Education, Sport and Culture Committee is committed to consult with its strategic partners, the Employment and Social Security and Economic Development Committees as well as the Health and Social Services and Policy and Resources Committees. Working together we can ensure that every child in Jersey has the opportunity to grow up in an Island that truly values its children and families.



Senator Mike Vibert  
President of Education, Sport and Culture

## INTRODUCTION

We know, from research, about the value of high quality early childhood education and care for the healthy growth and development of children. There is compelling evidence from studies conducted throughout the world to suggest that it contributes fundamentally to the physical, emotional, social, intellectual and linguistic development of children<sup>1</sup>.

This is particularly true for disadvantaged children from high risk, low income families, where quality provision has been shown to have strongly positive effects that can partially compensate for home circumstances<sup>2</sup> and improve educational attainment even into adulthood.

The Education, Sport and Culture Committee recognises that, all too often, parents struggle to reconcile work and family life. High quality early childhood education and care facilitates female employment, boosts tax revenue and minimises expenditure on social benefits. It supports education and training whilst promoting the equality of women by enabling them to retain career and work continuity.

Good parenting is fundamental to child development and the Committee realises that its strategy will inevitably play a crucial role in helping families find an appropriate balance between work and family life. Nevertheless, child development and early education are at the heart of the Committee's vision for the future. A child's early years are the most influential. Children who are well-cared for in early life are more likely to be emotionally and socially well-adjusted and more successful at school. They enjoy better health, employment continuity and higher earnings.

This, in turn, has long term benefits for society. Better health means a reduction in health costs borne by the public. Higher skilled workers positively influence productivity, earn higher wages, pay more taxes and need less support. Socially well-balanced children grow up to be better citizens and parents. Good citizenship and parenting is the foundation of a socially balanced and cohesive society.

The Committee believes that investing in our youngest children is one of the best ways to positively influence the long term social and economic future of our Island. This paper outlines the Committee's vision for early childhood education and care.

## THE VISION

Within three years:

- there would be more coherent family policy, based on clear values which recognise that the States needs to actively support parents in the choices they make in the best interests of child development;
- all three and four year olds would have access to affordable high quality early education and care for up to 30 hours per week for 38 weeks per year;

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<sup>1</sup> Andersson, B.E. (1992); Doherty (1996); National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (1997); Effective Provision of Pre-School Education Project (1997-2003).

<sup>2</sup> Carolina Abecedarian Project (1972, 1987, 1998).

- an integrated children's centre would provide free early education and extended childcare for vulnerable children under 5 years old, family support, adult education and outreach services. It would also provide a base for the existing Parenting Team, the Jersey Child Care Trust and the Youth Action Team and operate as a one-stop-shop providing information on all aspects of early years provision.

To support this vision:

- a new partnership would be established between the public and private sector to include private providers who commit to quality and a fair value contract;
- a clear set of principles would be developed to underpin all funded provision and address key child development issues relevant to Jersey;
- the current evaluation framework would be expanded to complement existing good practice in registration and ensure the highest standards of provision;
- funding would be channelled to accredited private sector partners to support high quality provision for rising four year olds;
- the Jersey Child Care Trust would become a more powerful champion for quality and focus on raising income to support childcare, encouraging the development of family friendly policies in the workplace and providing information to the States, parents and partners.

## DEVELOPING THE VISION

Recognising the complexity, significance and cost of early childhood education and care, the Education, Sport and Culture Committee commissioned a comprehensive review of its investment in this area in February 2004. The review was conducted by Jenny Spratt, Head of Early Years and Childcare in Peterborough, a Local Authority recognised for excellence in early childhood provision. The terms of reference were as follows:

*'To undertake a mid-term review of the Jersey Child Care Trust Five Year Strategy and the funding, responsibilities and purposes of the Trust in relation to the overall strategy for early years and childcare in Jersey and to make recommendations to the Education, Sport and Culture Committee with regards to:*

*The need for an overall strategy based on integrated working to support children and families;*

*Creating clarity and focus regarding the roles and responsibilities of different departments and organisations in developing the strategy and achieving its aims'.*



The ensuing report, *A Vision for the Future of Early Education and Childcare in Jersey*, was received by the Committee in July, published to the States as R.C. 35/2004 in August and presented to members of the public at a Town Hall meeting in September. In summary, the report concluded that:

*Whilst there is a clear strategy for Early Years Education in Jersey, there is no overall States strategy for integrated early education and childcare.*

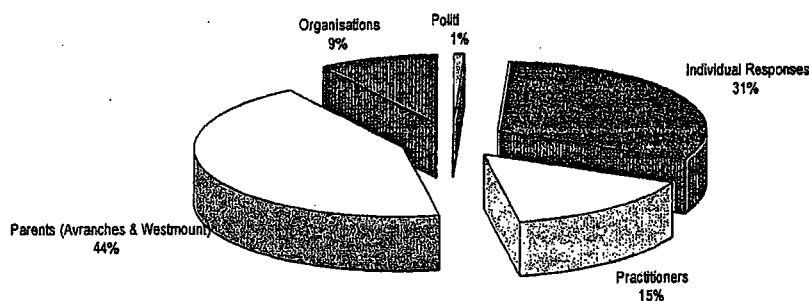
*The JCCT at the mid-term of its Five Year Strategy has become too broad and is no longer focused on its original objectives.*

*The JCCT is perceived as being effective in some areas of its work but lack of transparency and consultation has resulted in the duplication of roles and responsibilities.*

*A perceived lack of investment in early education and childcare services has resulted in criticism of current policy.*

During the consultation period that followed, 121 responses were received from individuals, groups and organisations.

**Figure 1: Responses to 'A Vision for the Future of Early Education and Childcare in Jersey'**



Groups and organisations who contributed included:

- Centre Point Trust
- Jersey Child Care Trust
- Jersey Early Years Association
- The Partnership Group for Early Years Education and Childcare
- The AMOS Christian Trust
- The Group for the Eradication of Poverty
- The Primary Head Teachers Association
- Parents Action Group from the Parish Nurseries
- Parents from St. Martin, First Tower and Plat Douet primary schools

The Committee is grateful to the many individuals and groups whose contributions to this debate have been of great value and much appreciated.

This vision has been influenced by their contributions as well as research from other countries into the nature and benefits of early childhood programmes for children at different phases of their development and key demographic, social and economic trends in Jersey.

## THE STRUCTURE OF EARLY YEARS PROVISION IN JERSEY

### *Background*

Prior to 1996, childcare in Jersey was mostly a private concern. The *Report of the Working Party on Childcare (1996)* recognised the benefits of high quality childcare for children in the early years of development and presented the original childcare strategy to the States 'to extend the current range of child care provision for children up to 12 years through partnerships between all interested parties whilst ensuring high standards in all provision'.

The working party also made recommendations which led to the formation of the Jersey Child Care Trust, the enhancement of tax allowances for childcare costs and the introduction of child care allowances for low income groups. The Trust was established to co-ordinate, promote and facilitate the expansion of child care provision.

Policy in relation to early childhood provision has been overseen by a number of Committees. These include Education, Sport and Culture, Employment and Social Security and Health and Social Services.

### *Childcare*

The Education, Sport and Culture Committee is the political sponsor and primary source of funding for the Jersey Child Care Trust. It is also responsible for the registration of childcare providers.

The classification of providers, for the purposes of registration under the Children's (Jersey) Law 1969, Part VII, is as follows:

*Day Nurseries* provide full day care for children of a wide age range which may include babies. They tend to offer an all year service on weekdays, closing on Bank Holidays and for short periods at Christmas and Easter. Hours of opening usually accommodate the needs of working parents.

*Playgroups* provide specifically for children between the ages of two and five years and offer care sessions for periods up to five hours. Such groups may refer to themselves as *nurseries*, *nursery schools*, *kindergartens* or *pre-schools*. Some playgroups are open all year round whilst others follow school terms.

*Playcare* is provided primarily for children from the age of school entry up to twelve years and is designed to meet the needs of working parents before and after the school day and during school holiday periods. *Playcare* may be offered in a variety of

settings such as school premises, children's centres, community centres or church halls.

*Play Schemes* provided by the Committee deliver a form of *playcare* during the Easter and summer school holidays for children aged between 5 and 11 years. They are usually based on school premises:

*Family Day Care* offers care to children in the family day carer's own home. Family Day Carers may, at any one time, cater for a maximum of 6 children under the age of 14 of which no more than three may be under the age of five years.

### *Early Education*

It has been the Committee's policy to provide, in the long term, a nursery class place for every three and four year old whose parents want one. This has been driven primarily by child development concerns rather than the provision of child care places to facilitate mothers taking up or returning to employment. Provision is up to 30 hours per week, term time only. No fees are currently charged for children attending nursery classes although a facility exists in the Education (Jersey) Law 1999 for the States to introduce fees if deemed appropriate.

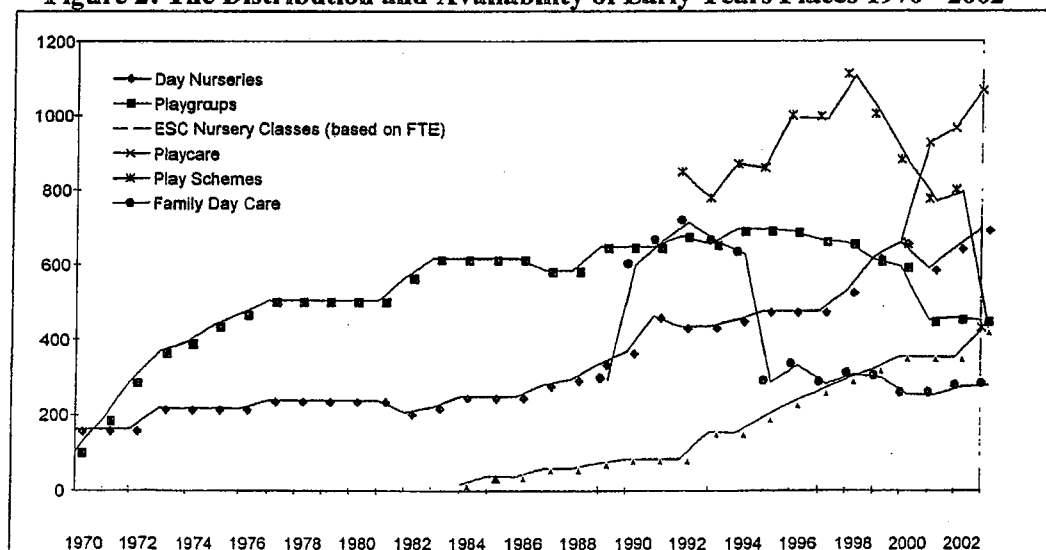
### *Special Needs*

The Committee also provides additional support for children with special needs. There are resourced nursery provisions at provided primary schools which cater for children with hearing impairment, physical disability, language disorders and attention and communication difficulties.

## THE DISTRIBUTION AND AVAILABILITY OF PLACES<sup>3</sup>

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of nursery class and registered childcare places in Jersey between 1970 and 2002.

**Figure 2: The Distribution and Availability of Early Years Places 1970 - 2002**



<sup>3</sup> Mountford S, 2002.

Certain significant trends may be drawn from this data. There has been a continued growth in the number of nursery class places in provided primary schools, giving effect to the former Education Committee's policy<sup>4</sup> agreed in October 1989.

Following a period of growth up to the mid 1990's there has been a decline in the number of playgroups. The demand for family day care places has remained fairly stable, possibly because family day care is a parental preference which is largely unaffected by the development of other kinds of childcare provision.

Whilst the number of playcare places has increased following the introduction of registration for playcare providers, the demand for places available in play schemes has declined significantly.

Although it is difficult to isolate one factor, apart from demographic growth, that has affected trends in relation to childcare provision, it is reasonable to assume that the Committee's policy in respect of nursery classes in provided schools has had an impact on the nature and distribution of other provision. However, it is important to emphasise that the increase in the number of places available in the Committee's nursery classes since 1984, has been matched by a similar increase in the number of places available in Day Nurseries, the majority of which are privately provided. This growth in the private sector is unsurprising since strong economies are often associated with labour shortages which attract mothers into the work place and provide a natural stimulus for the expansion of private childcare provision<sup>5</sup>.

The growth in nursery class places has meant that 49% of three and four year olds now access free high quality provision for up to 30 hours per week, 38 weeks per year.

## THE CASE FOR CHANGE

The main issues in relation to early childhood education and care in Jersey are about affordability, equity and access.

### *Affordability*

The cost of childcare in Jersey presents a challenge for many parents. This is especially the case for single parent families; where there is a child with special needs or for families where there is more than one child under school age. Parents responding to the consultation on 'A Vision for the Future of Early Education and Childcare in Jersey' made the following comments:

*"At the moment my nursery fees are £1,490 per month, from September this will increase to £1,566. I earn £1,900 per month .... We want to give them the best we can but I don't know how long we can go on paying these amounts each month. There will be only one option open to us, to go back to England after seventeen years. I feel this is so unfair."*

*"My nursery tries to keep fees affordable they are non-profit making. Not easy to meet fees of £536 per month. I need all year nursery."*

<sup>4</sup> Pre-school Education: Future Strategy 1989.

<sup>5</sup> OECD (2004).

*"Far too expensive, nearly half my salary is devoted to providing a full-time nursery place when I have two other children to support as well as general living expenses."*

The average cost of a private sector nursery place for a child under two years in Jersey is 63% higher than the average cost across England and 30% higher than the cost of a similar nursery place in London. For children over two years of age these figures are 52% and 26% respectively. Although, in making these comparisons, no adjustments have been made to Jersey figures to take account of variations in average earnings, costs of goods, services and property rents, the minimum staff to child ratios are the same as in England. However, salaries paid to childcare workers in England are generally poor compared to Jersey.

**Figure 3: Average Weekly Cost Per Child of Nursery Places<sup>6</sup>**

Area	Under 2 Years	2 Years +
Jersey Average	218	187
Inner London	168	149
Outer London	169	147
England Average	134	123

Whilst parents have access to financial support, specifically through the Child Tax Credit and the Childcare Allowance, the Committee recognises that childcare needs to be more affordable. Conversely, the Committee does not believe that the injection of public funding into the private sector, either in the form of subsidies to parents or providers, would guarantee affordability, unless other mechanisms were place to ensure fair value.

#### *Equity*

A two-tier system currently exists. Nursery classes provide half of the total capacity for 3 and 4 year olds and the parents of these children enjoy free access while the rest must pay for places in the private sector. Whilst some parents will always choose private provision and expect to pay the market rate, others find that their choices are constrained by their capacity to pay.

*"Finance plays a huge role in my decision making process on whether to move my child from [nursery] to a free States run nursery. I feel very strongly that I do not have freedom of choice on this issue ..."*

The equity issue is further exacerbated by the fact that nursery classes are staffed by qualified teachers who receive better pay and conditions of service than their counterparts in the childcare sector where higher and more costly staff to child ratios are required.

<sup>6</sup> source England figures: Daycare Trust 2004; Jersey figures: Jersey Child Care Trust 2004.

### *Access*

Day nurseries provide childcare for up to 50 hours per week for 48 weeks per year. This private provision better suits the needs of many working parents. Nursery classes, on the other hand, provide for a maximum of 30 hours per week during term time, leaving some parents, who work longer hours, to find complementary forms of provision. A further complication arises when parents who predominantly want an educational experience for their children are unable to access a free place whilst others, whose prime concern is childcare, may secure one. Also, as most nursery class provision is currently offered on a full time basis, some parents who only want a part-time educational experience for their child may be unable to access one.

*"The current plan by ESC to provide a nursery class in every primary school is admirable but does not meet the requirements of many parents. For those who are working full-time, the school day is at least 2 hours shorter ..."*

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE**

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's definition of early childhood education and care includes:

*'... all arrangements providing care and education of children under compulsory school age, regardless of setting, funding, opening hours, or programme content ... to include policies – including parental leave arrangements – and provision concerning children under age 3, a group often neglected in discussions in the educational sphere'.<sup>7</sup>*

The Committee sees its responsibilities for under threes predominantly in terms of protection through the administration of the childcare registration process for which it is legally responsible. However, it recognises that there is a need for more coherent family policy, based on clear values which recognise that the States needs to actively support parents in the choices they make in the best interests of child development.

Research suggests that maternal and parental leave during the first year of a child's life, is associated with better maternal and child health<sup>8</sup> which in turn impacts positively on child development. On the other hand there is also strong evidence that high quality childcare alongside parental care at home is similarly beneficial, although the case in favour of childcare for children under 18 months is less compelling<sup>9</sup>. Whilst the Committee has chosen to focus its attention on provision for three and four year olds, it recognises the need to consult with other States Committees on wider family policy issues.

### **THE CASE FOR INVESTMENT IN EARLY YEARS EDUCATION AND CARE**

Although child development is at the heart of the Committee's vision for early years, other factors such as work life balance, income and family context also influence

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<sup>7</sup> OECD (2003).

<sup>8</sup> Parental Leave and Child Health Across OECD Countries (Tanaka, S. 2004)

<sup>9</sup> The Effects of Early Maternal Employment on Child Development in the U.K. (Gregg, Washbrook, 2003).

normal child development. Therefore the case for investment is based on an analysis of needs in Jersey and the potential long term benefits to society of investing in early child development.

#### *Economically Active Parents*

**Figure 4: Working Mothers with Children Aged 0-5 Years in Jersey<sup>10</sup>**

<b>Hours Worked Per Week</b>	<b>Number of Working Mothers</b>	<b>Percent of Working Mothers</b>
1-5	22	1
6-10	84	5
11-15	125	7
16-20	313	18
21-25	376	21
26-30	173	10
31-35	209	12
36-40	361	20
41-45	71	4
46-50	35	2
>50	16	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,785</b>	<b>100</b>

Discussions about childcare are predominantly associated with patterns of female employment and the potential discriminatory impact of child-rearing for mothers in employment. Women often have to consider the consequences of having children on career continuity and progression and, where maternal earnings form an integral part of a family's income, some mothers may be faced with a difficult choice. This is an issue for Jersey: the proportion of women working in Jersey is higher than in the U.K. and is amongst the highest in Europe<sup>11</sup>; the proportion of part-time employees who are female is particularly high at 90%; 39% of all working women with children under five years old are working in excess of 30 hours per week; 70% work in excess of 20 hours per week and about one in eight working mothers in Jersey, with children under five years old, are single parents.

#### *Low Income Families*

Even though early education and care is viewed by many as a good thing, some parents struggle to afford the cost. A widely applied measure of relative low income in Europe is the proportion of households whose equivalised<sup>12</sup> income falls below 60 per cent of the median income in a particular country. Although this is not an absolute

<sup>10</sup> States of Jersey Statistics Unit, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Report on the 2001 Jersey Census (Chapter 6), States of Jersey Statistics Unit, October 2002.

<sup>12</sup> Equivalisation is a simple mathematical adjustment which enables households of different sizes and types to be compared on a consistent basis.

measure it does provide a way to compare jurisdictions. After the inclusion of housing costs, about a third of children aged less than 16 years, in both Jersey and the U.K.<sup>13</sup>, live in households below the respective relative income thresholds. In Jersey this corresponds to some 5,100 children. Single families are particularly susceptible to relative low income in Jersey; almost two-thirds of single parents with school age children fall below the threshold measure.

**Figure 5: Comparison of proportion of population living below low relative income threshold in Jersey and the U.K. (% of each age group category).**

Age group	Before Housing Costs		After Housing Costs	
	Jersey 2002	U.K. 2001/02	Jersey 2002	U.K. 2001/02
Children	22	21	33	30
Pensioners	31	22	33	22
Other adults	11	14	19	19
<b>All persons</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>

#### *Inclusion*

Quality early childhood education and care is often critical to help families who originate from outside Jersey to settle, integrate and become self-sufficient. It can provide all children with a cultural orientation. For children from non-English speaking families, it can stimulate language development and promote social inclusion.

At the time of the 2001 Census, almost half of Jersey's resident population had been born outside of the Island; 36% were born elsewhere in the British Isles or the Republic of Ireland whilst 6% were born in Portugal or Madeira. Portuguese was the second principal language spoken by 8.4% of the resident population. Of those residents who did not speak English as a first language, 71% spoke it as a second language whilst 1.6% of residents (corresponding to some 1,400 people) were unable to speak English.

#### *Migration*

The Actuarial Profession<sup>14</sup> is considering the extent to which government policies influence population changes in the U.K., particularly in respect of birth rates in the context of an ageing society. It recognises that parents ultimately decide whether or not to have children, but accepts that many factors, health, social and economic, influence this decision. Government policy is capable of influencing these factors.

Although, the impact of such intervention in Jersey may be far less significant, it is important to recognise that, with the benefits provided through its childcare strategy,

<sup>13</sup>Reports on the Jersey Income Distribution Survey 2002; States of Jersey Statistics Unit, Sept. 2003 & July 2004

<sup>14</sup>More Babies? Who needs them? – The Actuarial Profession 2004.



England might prove to be a more attractive option for young families who would otherwise return or migrate to Jersey, where the cost of housing and the cost of living is already high.

The U.K. Government's 10 year strategy promises to –

- extend paid maternity leave to one year by the end of the next Parliament;
- raise childcare tax credits for middle and low income families;
- extend free nursery places for all 3 and 4 year olds to 20 hours per week, 38 weeks per year;
- provide 2,500 children's centres by 2008 and 3,500 by 2010.

#### *Current Investment*

It is debateable how far government should intervene to support non-statutory early childhood education and care. The Committee takes the view that, measured and focused intervention can provide considerable benefits for children themselves and, in the long term, for the Island as a whole. There is clear evidence that high quality early childhood education and care programmes actually work. However, high quality programmes tend to be expensive.

The European Union recommends that member states annually invest approximately 1% of GDP on early childhood education and care. In practice, there is considerable variation with, for example, the U.K. investing 0.4% and Sweden 1.7%. For jurisdictions such as Jersey, dominated by the financial services sector, GNI is the more appropriate measure of the size of the economy<sup>15</sup>; 1% of Jersey's GNI in 2003 corresponded to approximately £29m. Although no estimate of the State's overall expenditure on early education and childcare according to the OECD definition is available, in 2003, Jersey compared less favourably with other European countries in respect of children aged 3 years having access to free education.

**Figure 6: Investment in Early Childhood Education and Care<sup>16</sup>**

Measure	Jersey Performance	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile
Children aged 3 with access to free education %	33%	51%	60%	66%

In 2005, most four and all five year olds now have access to a free place in reception classes at provided primary schools and 49% of three and four year olds to a free nursery place for up to 30 hours per week, 38 weeks per year. By providing all three and four year olds with access to an affordable, high quality early years experience, the Committee believes that the States would be making a sound investment in the future of the Island.

<sup>15</sup> Jersey Gross Value Added (GVA) and Gross National Income (GNI) 1998-2003; States of Jersey Statistics Unit, Sept. 2004.

<sup>16</sup> KPMG (2003).

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTEGRATED CHILDRENS' CENTRE

The case for interventions which improve the life chances of disadvantaged children from high risk, low income families is compelling, even from the first year. High quality provision has been shown to have strongly positive effects that can partially compensate for home circumstances and significantly improve the educational attainment of disadvantaged children even into adulthood<sup>17</sup>. The delivery of integrated services, health, education, childcare, and welfare can improve life chances dramatically.

The Bull Report (2000) identified levels of emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) amongst young people of school age in Jersey which exceed national norms. Unlike the U.K., where general learning difficulties feature as the most common type of special educational need, in Jersey SEBD (severe emotional and behavioural difficulty) is perceived to be the most prevalent.

*'For the island ... EBD is not only perceived as the most significant SEN, it is also represented at a level which supersedes national norms.'*

*'... when combining visible types of SEN across the age groups, SEBD is the most prevalent in primary and secondary years with SEBD representing closer to half of the total SEN visible population than any other special need.'*

The States currently commits significant funding to support children and young people who present with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties, in an attempt to remediate problems which often have their roots in the early years.

The Committee's vision for the development of an integrated children's centre acknowledges that the most significant factors which affect child development are the home and parental behaviour. Often, disadvantaged parents themselves face challenges which affect their parenting behaviour. The benefits of constructive and supportive intervention to promote positive parenting are already evident through the work of the Parenting Team originally established with funding from the Substance Misuse Strategy. This team works intensively with disadvantaged and teenage parents and has become an integral part of the Youth Action Team established through the Children's Executive to work with young-offenders, young people presenting SEBD and families at risk.

The Committee sees these services being offered together with pre-school language support, special needs provision, adult education and other outreach services in an integrated children's centre. The centre would also become the base for a restructured Jersey Child Care Trust and operate as a one-stop-shop providing information and support to parents on everything that affects child development. It could also become a base for childminder networks.

## PARTNERSHIP

In pursuing its vision for early years, one challenge which the Committee faces is how to work effectively in partnership with the private sector without compromising the

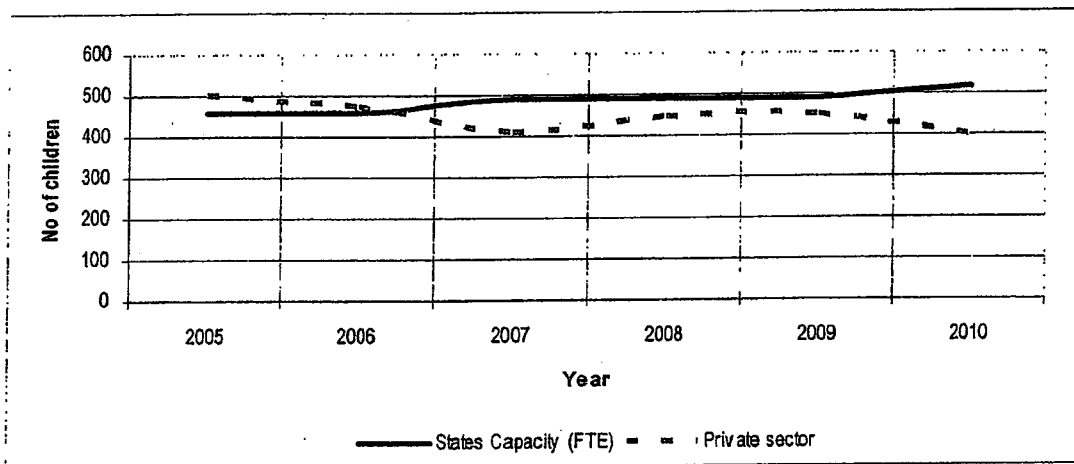
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<sup>17</sup> Carolina Abecedarian Project (1972, 1987, 1998).

educational philosophy and intentions which underpin the development of nursery classes.

Free or more affordable provision could be made available by continuing to invest solely in public sector provision, i.e. nursery classes at provided primary schools. This would guarantee uniformity in terms of cost and quality but would take a long time to achieve and, in all probability, have an adverse effect on private sector provision. On the other hand, more affordable provision could be achieved without the expense of further capital development by cementing a truly cohesive partnership with the private sector and using subsidies, grants or vouchers to channel funds.

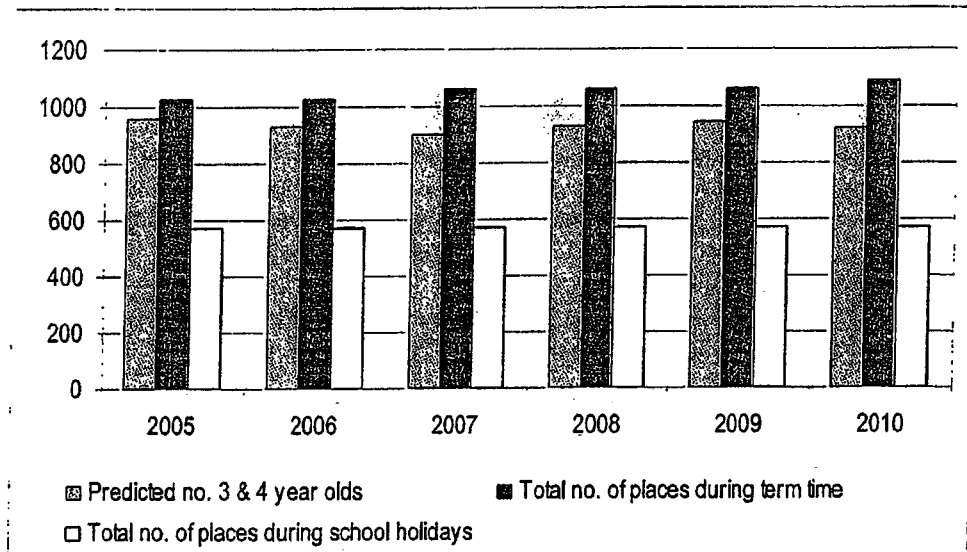
**Figure 7: Hypothetical Impact of Free Nursery Class Provision on the Private Sector 2005 – 2010**



Using mean population predictions it is possible to predict the number of children who arrive in provided primary schools to within 3 percent. Using the same model and assuming that all nursery class places are taken up on a full-time basis, figure 7 illustrates simplistically, the potential impact of nursery class expansion on the private sector. This position would be exacerbated if significant part-time provision was reintroduced in the public sector.

The Committee acknowledges the contribution that the private sector has made to early childhood education and care in Jersey over the past thirty years and does not wish its policy to have an adverse affect on private providers who offer a high quality, fair value, all year service. In effect, this range of provision is necessary to support parents who work full-time. Inevitably, its demise could reduce the availability of needed childcare places for babies. Rather, the Committee recognises that a partnership with the private sector could extend the capacity of the system to provide a high quality place for every three and four year old by 2009 (figure 8).

**Figure 8: Projected Combined Capacity of Public Private Sector Provision 2005 – 2010**



To work effectively this partnership would need, from the outset, to involve key stakeholders who would then define clear goals for the future, develop a framework for quality and accountability and establish clear ground rules. Although some reorganisation might be necessary to ensure that provision across the system better meets the needs of working parents, the Committee is confident that a collaborative partnership would provide better support for children and parents.

The Jersey Childcare Trust would have a significant role to play in this partnership. It would continue *'to coordinate, promote and facilitate the expansion of high quality and affordable childcare provision in the Island'*<sup>18</sup> providing information to parents and professionals, supporting training and passporting small grants to providers. It would become a more powerful champion for quality and take a lead role engaging parents in that process. Furthermore, it would seek to attract private sector funding and encourage employers to develop more family friendly workplaces which recognise the value, to the family and the employer, of flexible working practices.

#### **A FOCUS ON EARLY LEARNING**

*"The accumulated findings of child psychology and brain research suggest that sensitive learning periods occur at specific ages and that adult interventions in their lives are more telling in these periods than in others."*<sup>19</sup>

The Committee believes that an opportunity now exists for us to review our image of the experiences we want young children to enjoy in their early years and to develop provisions that will deliver the highest quality to all.

In recent years, early childhood education and care has been the focus of much attention for researchers and governments throughout the world. Some countries, such

<sup>18</sup> Jersey Childcare Trust Constitution.

<sup>19</sup> PEI, 2000 quoted in Bennett (2004).

as Sweden and Denmark, define clearly what publicly funded provision will deliver for young children. Other countries are less prescriptive, enabling parents to choose what suits them best and allowing market forces to shape the philosophy and structure of resultant provision. The Committee believes that, if public funding is used to support an early childhood education and care strategy, it is reasonable for the States to take a view about the nature of provision and to maintain high expectations in respect of quality.

The debate as to whether early childhood provision should primarily be about childcare or education is often misunderstood. Nursery classes are perceived to offer an educational experience whilst Day Nurseries and Pre-Schools provide childcare. At one extreme these perceptions conjure up images of 'schoolification'<sup>20</sup> whilst at the other, of children who are merely supervised and not stimulated intellectually. In reality, either scenario is rare. Rather there is a growing realisation among professionals working with young children that, child development and childcare objectives are not mutually exclusive – good education involves good care and good care involves good educational experiences.

From the Committee's perspective, the distinction between nursery classes and childcare provisions is important. The policy of developing nursery classes has been driven primarily by child development concerns rather than the provision of childcare places to facilitate mothers taking up or returning to employment. This means that the emphasis is on providing good educational experiences underpinned by good childcare practices. Even so, the Committee does recognise that nursery classes, whilst providing a specific experience for children inevitably provide childcare, although often not in a form that fully covers the needs of working parents.

Nevertheless, by appointing qualified teachers and investing in stimulating, purpose-built environments, the Committee has sought to ensure the highest quality experiences for young children; to provide a flexible structure which guides and supports both the work and professional development of staff; to provide a common language which facilitates dialogue between staff and parents about child development issues and, from the child's perspective, to ease transition from nursery into school. This approach embraces the concept of 'education in its broadest sense'. It is about the holistic development of the child socially, emotionally and intellectually.

The pre-schools of Reggio Emilia in Northern Italy are the embodiment of this approach. These nursery schools are hailed as exemplary and the *Reggio Approach*, developed by Loris Malaguzzi, has influenced developments in early learning throughout the world. It is based very strongly on a particular image of the child as a curious, imaginative and independent learner and emphasises the role of the expressive arts as a vehicle for early learning and creative discovery.

The High/Scope Project in America offers a similar pre-school programme which is structured to provide young children with choice and to foster their independence and autonomy. The Foundation Stage Curriculum which is currently implemented in the U.K. and Jersey is another approach designed to support children's learning through planned and spontaneous play. Again, the emphasis is on learning and the holistic development of the child.

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<sup>20</sup> Bennett J. (2004).

Whilst the Committee's vision has been influenced by such acclaimed curriculum developments in early childhood education and care, it is recognised that public and private sector partners will need to develop a shared philosophy and agree a curriculum that best meets the needs of children in Jersey.

### FUNDING THE COMMITTEE'S VISION

The issue of how best to fund early childhood education and care in the future poses a dilemma. At present, the Committee provides 460 free nursery class places. The rationale for this provision is based on the significant benefits that accrue to children. Based on the 2005 cohort, the estimated additional revenue cost of delivering free early education and childcare 30 hours per week, 38 weeks per year for all remaining three and four year olds would be approximately £2m per annum at 2005 values. This is based on subsidising places at the current average private sector childcare cost per hour and takes account of the costs associated with the administration, development and implementation of a quality assurance framework.

However, whilst the Committee supports the concept of free provision, it would be unable to meet this additional commitment from within its existing revenue budget and would require additional funding from the States.

An alternative would be to provide a reduced free entitlement of 20 hours per week for all and to introduce flat rate charges for additional hours provided in nursery classes. Whilst estimating the savings associated with this model is subject to significant uncertainties, it is anticipated that the additional overall costs would be reduced if the revenue gained from raising charges for nursery classes was used to offset expenditure on private sector places. Whilst it is difficult to accurately assess the true impact of this, it would certainly make provision more affordable and deliver an optimum minimum entitlement<sup>21</sup> similar to that which the U.K. Government aspires to.

A third solution would be to introduce graduated fees and means testing for all provision, including nursery classes. This would offer a pragmatic and cost effective way to address the inequality of the current two-tier system but it might also prove complex and costly to administer. Again derived revenue might be used to subsidise provision thereby reducing the overall cost to parents and the States. Inevitably, it would mean the withdrawal of free provision for the nursery class cohort which could be regarded as backward step. In any case, the real argument against means testing is that it could make early years provision less attractive to some parents and lead to the use of unregistered childcare.

In Denmark, Sweden and Finland early childhood education and care is heavily subsidised. In the U.K., policy has been geared toward providing some free entitlement. In Reggio Emilia, early years provision is means tested and all parents are expected to contribute something. The Committee, whilst favouring a free entitlement for all, is conscious that this may be difficult to achieve in the current financial context and would welcome the views of other States Members and the community on this issue.

In most jurisdictions where public funding is used to support early childhood education and care, it is generally through one or a mix of two methods. One way is

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<sup>21</sup> Effective Provision of Pre-school Education 2003.

for subsidies to be directed to families so as to provide choice. This can be done through tax credits and child care allowances but this mechanism does not necessarily guarantee affordability or uniformity in terms of quality. Another method is to channel subsidies directly to private sector providers by way of grants or vouchers but again this would not guarantee quality or affordability unless a clear accountability framework was introduced.

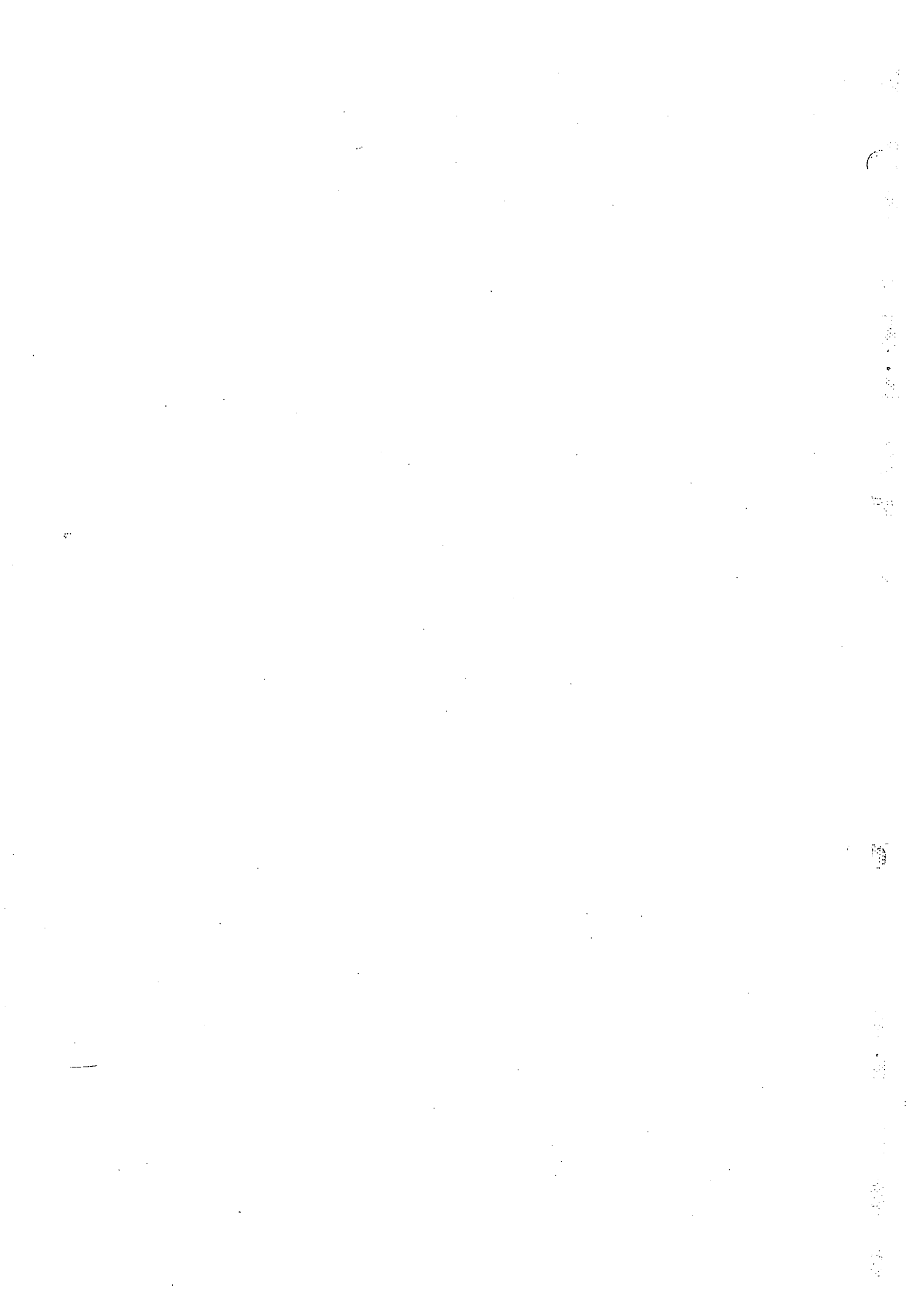
The Committee takes the view that the second method is preferable but only where private providers are prepared to enter into a fair value partnership which guarantees a quality experience and realistic charges.

### **SUMMARY**

The Committee's policy to develop nursery classes in provided primary schools is driven by child development concerns rather than the provision of childcare for working parents. Since 1984, the growth in public sector education provision has been matched by a comparable growth in private sector childcare provision. This has led to a two tier system whereby approximately half of all three year olds have access to a free place.

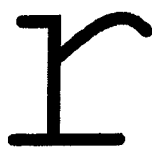
Although the Committee currently has plans to develop further nursery classes at St. Clements's School (2006) and St. Peter's School (2009) it recognises that it would be many years before this approach would provide a place for every 3 and 4 year old.

Therefore in the best interests of child development the Committee is proposing a collaborative partnership with private sector providers who are willing to commit to a high quality and fair value contract. However, recognising the current the financial context of the Island, the Committee is aware that this may not be easily achievable without additional funding from the States.





# **STATES OF JERSEY**



## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE: PROGRESS REPORT DECEMBER 2006**

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**Presented to the States on 22nd December 2006  
by the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture**

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## REPORT

### FOREWORD

The Council of Ministers' overall vision is to enrich the quality of life for Islanders by ensuring that –

- Jersey has a unique and recognised identity;
- people living here enjoy a good standard of living based on a strong, environmentally sustainable and prosperous economy;
- we are an inclusive society where everyone has equality of opportunity and access to the services they need;
- our environment sustains a sense of well-being;
- Government promotes self-sufficiency and enables enterprise.

Whilst the proposals set out in this paper are primarily about giving our youngest children the best start we can, they are inextricably linked with this broader economic and social vision. The benefits of early education and care for the growth and development of children and for society as a whole are well established. Investment in our youngest is an intelligent investment in the future.

This progress report provides a structure for keeping the development of early years under review. Recommendations in respect of 0-3 year-olds are cautious; understandably so, given the impending introduction of Income Support and the proposed consultation on parental leave. With regard to provision for 3-5 year-olds the report highlights some outstanding features of current arrangements. However, in spite of these, there remain issues around equity, access and affordability which need to be resolved.

As Minister for Education, Sport and Culture, I believe that integrated early education and care should be available for all children to support their development. With this in mind, I intend to bring forward to the Council of Ministers, a proposal to provide a free entitlement of 20 hours per week, 38 weeks per year for all 3 and 4 year-olds. This would be achieved by investing in private sector provision to complement our nursery classes in provided schools.

However, given the current economic context, I realise that the timing of this proposal is not ideal. It will need to be considered against the possible introduction of charges for nursery classes and means testing. Each of these models has advantages and disadvantages but, in deciding which to choose, it will be important to ensure that the key principles underpinning early years policy are preserved; that provision is of the highest quality and accessible to all.



Senator Mike Vibert  
Minister for Education, Sport and Culture



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to inform States Members and members of the public about the progress made to review early years' provision. The effectiveness of current arrangements to support parents is considered and recommendations made for future action.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At its meeting of 27th July, the Council of Ministers received a presentation from the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture and a paper prepared by his Department which explored some of the complexities involved in developing a coherent early years strategy. The purpose was to stimulate Ministerial debate about the fundamental principles which might underpin future arrangements.
- 2.2 Both the presentation and paper focused on provision for children aged 3-5, thus reflecting the scope of R.C.54/2005: 'Investing in our Future: a vision for early childhood education and care for children in Jersey'. However, it was recognised that such provision was only a sub-set of arrangements for children aged 0-5 and support for their parents/carers, which itself constitutes one element of Social Policy for the Island.
- 2.3 The outcome of the discussions held by the Council of Ministers was agreement that the:

*'Education, Sport and Culture, Employment and Social Security, Health and Social Services and Treasury and Resources Departments should work together, under the auspices of the Social Strategy Group to develop an Early Years Strategy for the 0-3 year age range by the end of 2006'*

- 2.4 Consequently, an officer group was established and tasked to –
- bring forward recommendations for a comprehensive strategy for supporting early years childcare and education in respect of the 0-5 age group;
  - consider the appropriate arrangements for financial support for the parents and carers of this age group, including benefits and tax allowances;
  - take account of the potential impact of proposals on existing provision;
  - ensure that any recommendations or options for development are fully costed;
  - ensure that the recommendations balance the interests of private and public sector provision to create choice as far as possible within an efficient system of provision;
  - work within the current strategic and business plan.

## **3. KEY PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES**

- 3.1 In undertaking the work, the officers have taken account of research findings which suggest that –
- i). quality childcare has a beneficial impact on the development of children and this is enhanced further where provision includes an element of early education.

The benefits to children are sustained into adulthood and garnered by society as a whole by reducing the costs associated with educational failure and its consequences;

- ii). high quality provision is more likely to develop where there is a strong partnership between the public and private sector that is founded on a clear partnership agreement;
- iii). childcare supports mothers returning to work thus reducing the loss of their skills to the economy;
- iv). childcare costs can be a barrier to labour force participation, particularly in respect of women;
- v). support for childcare is warranted as an intervention measure aimed at children at risk because intervention of this nature has substantial economic benefits by reducing unemployment and crime in later life;
- vi). skill shortages emerging in the economy may be mitigated by greater or more flexible parental participation in the workforce;
- vii). failure to address issues to do with the affordability of childcare can lead to an increase in the use of unregistered childcare.

3.2 Consequently, in reviewing the current context it has been assumed that policies in respect of early years should –

- encourage the development and use of high quality provision thus maximising the educational and social benefits to children and the long term economic benefits to society;
- encourage parents to remain in the workforce and ease their return at an appropriate time which accords with their parental preferences.

3.3 The policy objectives would therefore be to –

- ensure that high quality early education and care is available and affordable for children 0-5 years;
- give parents greater choice in the way their children are cared for in their early years;
- provide targeted support for the most challenged families;
- establish a strong and stable partnership between all providers, public and private, to support the growth and development of early years services.

#### 4. OBJECTIVE 1

4.1 *To ensure that high quality early education and care is available and affordable children 0-5 years*

4.2 *Availability*

4.3 Table 1<sup>[1]</sup> shows the numbers of pre-school children in Jersey in 2006 and Table 2<sup>1</sup> shows the equivalent number of places available including 235 family daycare places

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<sup>[1]</sup> Department for Education Sport and Culture, Projects & Planning.

(child-minders). Although data is not currently available to provide a breakdown of family daycare places by age, it is known that most cater for children 0-3 years old.

Age	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	Total 0-4
<b>Number of Children</b>	949	963	962	928	3,801

Age	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	Total 0-4
Day Nursery Places	124	98	218	283	723
Pre-school Places			152	152	304
Family Day Care					235
Nursery Class Places				480	480
<b>Total No. Places Available</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>1,742</b>

- 4.4 During school term-time, the supply of places is sufficient to meet the needs of 46% of the pre-school population. The most incongruent match is in respect of babies and children aged up to 2 years. Although the indication is that insufficient places are available for this age range, the extent of the potential demand is not accurately known. This will be influenced by parental choice about whether one parent remains home to care for a very young child or whether both parents choose or need to work. However, whilst some parents may choose nannies<sup>2[2]</sup>, the high cost of provision for babies may lead others to seek informal or unregistered care.
- 4.5 The best match is in respect of 3 and 4 year-olds with ample provision for 98% of the cohort but this reduces to 47% during school holiday periods. However, whilst there are many parents who require no more than term-time provision, there are some indications, based on the demand for play scheme places, that there is a need to increase availability during school holidays. Again no accurate statistics are available to indicate more precisely what the demand might be.
- 4.6 Successful planning for early years should be based on accurate indicators of demand including demographics, trends in the use of childcare and parental preferences. Data in respect of 3-4 year-olds is reasonably comprehensive although there are still unknowns around after school care and holiday provision. Data in respect of babies and children under two is less current. For this reason it is recommended that:
- 4.7 **The Department for Education, Sport and Culture works with the States of Jersey Statistics Unit and the Jersey Child Care Trust to determine a mechanism for collecting data to establish trends in the use of childcare, parental preferences and gaps in provision.**
- 4.8 *Affordability*

<sup>2[2]</sup> Nannies are not required to be registered.

- 4.9 As highlighted in *'Investing in Our Future,'* the cost of child care can be a barrier to workforce participation. A typical full-time nursery place for a child aged under 2 years now costs £258 per week, in excess of £12,000 per annum.
- 4.10 For a child aged over 3 years the average full-time cost per week is now £191, over £9,000. The cost of family daycare is also high. Based on a survey of 62 respondents, 78% of family daycarers charge in excess of £5 per hour. Twenty seven percent charge in excess of £6 per hour and 3% in excess of £7 per hour.

Age	0-2 Years	2-4 Years	3-5 Years
<b>Average</b>	£5.16	£4.62	£3.82
<b>Minimum</b>	£4.00	£4.00	£3.45
<b>Maximum</b>	£6.18	£5.35	£4.73

Age	0-2 Years	2-4 Years	3-5 Years
<b>Average</b>	–	£4.22	£3.62
<b>Minimum</b>	–	£4.00	£3.11
<b>Maximum</b>	–	£5.00	£5.00

- 4.11 There are essentially two policy instruments available for increasing the availability and the affordability of early years' provision with public finance. Demand side funding, which is directed towards parents through some form of tax relief, tax credit or alternative allowance and supply side funding which is directed to approved providers.
- 4.12 Demand side measures are usually the first choice in market systems that are designed to be driven by parental choice. Supply measures normally, although not exclusively, apply to public sector or non-profit-making services where there is likely to be greater government involvement in establishing curriculum guidelines and monitoring quality.
- 4.13 Jersey employs both demand and supply side measures. Financial support is provided to parents through Child Care Tax Relief, the Child Care Allowance and, in respect of 5-12 year-olds, the School Age Discount Scheme. On the supply side, States funded nursery education for 3 and 4 year-olds is provided through the education system at no cost to the parents. These parents are not eligible to claim tax relief or the Child Care Allowance.
- 4.14 The rationale for this dichotomy is understandable. Demand side measures were introduced for economic reasons, to encourage female workforce participation, to 'make work pay' for the less well-off and 'provide a modest incentive' to those in the marginal tax band. Nursery education was introduced for child development and educational reasons and is therefore fully subsidised.

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<sup>3[3]</sup> Jersey Child Care Trust.



- 4.15 Table 5 summarises the eligibility of the income groups to claim financial support for childcare.

**Table 5 – Demand Side Measures Supporting Childcare in Jersey**

Target Group	Measure		
	Child Care Tax Relief (0-12 Year-Olds)	Child Care Allowance (0-5 Year-Olds)	School Age Discount Scheme (5-12 Year-Olds)
Unemployed Households	No	No	No
Low Income Households	No	Yes	Yes
Middle Income Households	Yes	No	No
High Income Households	No	No	No

- 4.16 Childcare Tax Relief was introduced in 1998 for children 0-5 years and extended to children aged up to 12 in 2000. It is only available to those people paying tax at the marginal rate (27%), however it is not possible to say exactly what level of income this equates to as a number of factors are taken into account in making an assessment. Generally, childcare tax relief is available to middle earners. Actual costs may be claimed up to a maximum of £6,150 which, at 27% is about £1660 per annum or approximately £30 per week.
- 4.17 In terms of access, Child Care Tax Relief seems to have been an effective measure. In 2005, 1,601 taxpayers claimed a total of £4,857,069. Of these, 909 were entitled to a deduction in their income tax assessment. The total in lost income to the Treasury was £766,512 (Total claim £2,838, 934 at 27%). However it is important to note that, of those who did not receive a deduction, some would have been exempt from tax due to lower earnings and some would have been higher earners above the marginal rate and paying tax at 20%.
- 4.18 Whilst raising the maximum child care relief claimable might seem a logical way to help parents further with childcare charges, this measure would not benefit the lowest earning households as they would not be paying tax. The 2007 budget decision to raise tax exemption thresholds by 2.5% per annum for 3 years from 2007 may bring more households into the tax exempt category, to the extent that earnings increase by less than 2.5%. However, it is not yet clear how the new Income Support System will operate and what level of benefits will be available. Until this is determined, it would not be practical to consider modifying Childcare Tax relief in isolation, as the combined effect of both measures on 'middle income' families needs to be considered. These families would gain from increasing the maximum Child Care Tax Relief claimable.
- 4.19 The Income Tax System will undergo a number of changes over the next few years and introducing further changes at this time is not recommended. However, even with the introduction of the '20% means 20%' proposals, childcare tax relief will still be available to those paying tax at the marginal rate.
- 4.20 *Child Care Allowance, School Age Discount and Income Support*

- 4.21 At present, people who are beneath the tax threshold can claim either a Child Care Allowance for children in registered child care who are under the age of 5 years or a School Age Discount allowance through the Jersey Child Care Trust for children aged between 5 and 12 years. The funding designated for the Child Care Allowance is approximately £335,000 and for the discount scheme £332,000.
- 4.22 These current systems are based on the requirement that child care is necessary to allow parents to find or maintain employment and therefore to remove the disincentive to work that child care costs sometimes produce. To be eligible for the Child Care Allowance the total family income must exceed £4,406 and not exceed £18,020 for a single parent and £24,680 for a couple. The maximum amount claimable is £110 per week in respect of one child under 5 and £220 in respect of one family.
- 4.23 A major criticism leveled at the Child Care Allowance is that thresholds have been frozen since its introduction so it has failed to keep pace with increasing childcare costs. In any case, during 2007, both the Child Care Allowance and the School Age Discount Scheme will be replaced by Income Support. A number of factors will make this a more effective mechanism for helping low income families with the cost of early education and care for 0-5 year-olds:
- Once an assessment has made as to the whether the child care hours and income for the job are reasonable, the **actual** cost of childcare will considered when the level of support is determined;
  - There will be three different support bands within the childcare component to differentiate between childcare costs for babies, two year-olds and the 3 -5 age range;
  - There will not be an income cut off point as with the Child Care Allowance. This will effectively provide a more tapered system and it is possible that some 'middle income' families, around £30,000, will be eligible for a child care component;
  - More flexible enabling legislation will allow changes to be made by Regulation so that the system may be readily adapted to meet future needs, for example to include childcare costs where the parent is a carer or undergoing training.
- 4.24 Given that changes to the Income Tax System are imminent and the real impact of Income Support on the affordability of childcare is unlikely to be known until the scheme has become embedded, the Working Group recommends that:
- 4.25 **The Departments for Social Security, Education, Sport and Culture and the Treasury monitor the impact of Income Support and tax relief for families with children of 0-5 years and assess the effectiveness of these benefits in facilitating access to early education and care.**
- 4.26 *Nursery Education*
- 4.27 Research suggests that a more unified approach to learning should be adopted in both early childhood education and the primary school system and greater attention should be paid to the transition challenges faced by young children as they enter school<sup>4(4)</sup>.

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<sup>4(4)</sup> In 'Starting Strong II: Early Childhood Education and Care, OECD 2006.

- 4.28 The first nursery class was established in Jersey in 1984 to provide children of 3-4 years old with an educational experience designed to support their social and emotional development and prepare them for a seamless transition to school. Since then, 16 classes have been developed providing 480 free full-time equivalent places to 533 children. At 57% of the 3-4 cohort this is similar to the proportion of children who were attending free maintained nursery classes in England in 2002 (59%).
- 4.30 Since 1984, the growth in nursery class provision has been matched by a similar growth in private sector provision. The development of this 'two-tier' system has created inequity because 50% of children 3-4 years old have access to a free nursery place whilst the remaining half must pay. This led to the conclusion that:
- 4.31 *'whilst there is a clear strategy for Early Years Education in Jersey there is no overall States strategy for integrated early education and child care [and] a perceived lack of investment in early education and child care services has resulted in criticism of the existing policy.'*<sup>5[5]</sup>
- 4.32 However, in spite of this it is important to recognise that there are some outstanding features of early education in Jersey. Whilst most other European countries are struggling to ensure that the availability for 3-4 year-olds meets demand, apart from gaps during school holiday periods, this has been achieved locally.
- 4.33 The quality of provision, which is characterised by appropriate adult: child ratios, small group sizes, properly resourced facilities and well trained staff, has gained recognition by prominent researchers in the field of early education<sup>6[6]</sup>. The introduction a Foundation Stage Curriculum across provided nursery classes and private nurseries has put Jersey at the forefront of moves to integrate education and care for 3-5 year-olds.
- 4.34 Because of the long-term benefits associated with provision of this quality, the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture supports the concept of a free entitlement for all 3-4 year-olds and is committed to bring a proposal to the States during 2006, for investing in the private sector to achieve this. Whilst a full scheme has not yet been developed, the anticipated cost per child is likely to be £3,040 per year, based on an average charge of £4 per hour, 20 hours per week, 38 weeks per annum. Assuming a cohort of 1,000 children and taking account of the fact that 480 free places already exist in nursery classes, this would require an additional £1,580,800 in revenue funding.
- 4.35 The Working Group is aware that the timing of this proposal is not ideal and it will need to be considered against other models of delivery. It would require significant public funding when there is a need to maintain public sector expenditure within affordable limits that do not cause a rise in inflation or lead to increased taxation. In this context of considerable demands on States expenditure, the Working Party would draw attention to R.C.54/2005: 'Investing in our Future: a vision for early childhood education and care for children in Jersey', which clearly stated that this development should be implemented from 2008. Therefore the recommendation is that –
- 4.36 **The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture brings forward for consideration alongside other requests for 2008, costed proposals for both free entitlement and means tested models of delivery for 3-5 year-olds.**

<sup>5[5]</sup> *A Vision for the Future of Early Education and Child Care in Jersey, Spratt, J. 2004.*

<sup>6[6]</sup> *Professor Christine Pascal, University of Worcester; Professor Iram Siraj-Blatchford, University of London.*



## 5. OBJECTIVE 2

5.1 *To give parents greater choice in the way their children are cared for in their early years.*

5.2 Many families would like one parent to stay at home to care for their children when they are babies. Often this can be a difficult choice especially when a dual income is necessary to maintain a standard of living. Apart from those benefits which apply before or soon after the birth of a child, Maternity Grant and Maternity Allowance, the Family Allowance is currently the main benefit for supporting low-income families with children regardless of whether one or 2 parents are working. As with the Child Care Allowance this will be subsumed into the new Income Support System.

5.3 The mechanism usually employed to assist a parent who wishes to remain at home during the first year of a child's life is parental leave. Parental leave differs from maternity leave in that its concern is not primarily the health of the mother but the care and upbringing of young children. Either parent may therefore be eligible for it. The European Commission's 1983 Directive on parental leave defined it as –

*'leave granted to fathers and mothers during a period after the termination of maternity leave to enable parents in employment to look after their newborn child for a certain time, whilst giving them some degree of security in respect of employment, social security and remuneration ... Parental leave is also granted to adoptive parents.'*

5.5 There exists, at this time, no statutory obligation for employers in Jersey to provide parental leave although some pay groups have entitlements built into the Terms and Conditions of their employment. However, for people staying at home to look after a child in the family who is under 5 years, the Home Responsibility Protection Scheme provides help in the form of credits against the claimant's Social Security account. These take the place of Class 2 contributions and protect entitlement to Pension and Survivor's benefits. They do not give entitlement to incapacity or maternity benefits and can only be claimed for a maximum of ten years during a working life.

5.6 Policies on parental leave vary widely across European countries and are driven by different priorities which may be about<sup>7(7)</sup> –

- the promotion of gender equality and equity in the workplace;
- facilitating mothers remaining in the labour force;
- reducing employment by encouraging parents to exit the labour force;
- increasing employment by retaining parents in the labour force after the birth of a child;
- the well being of children;
- women's financial independence;
- the greater involvement of fathers in home and family life.

5.7 Clearly, some of these conflict with each other and this needs to be taken into account when assessing a model of best practice for Jersey. The key challenge will be to

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<sup>7(7)</sup> *Parental Leave in Council of Europe member States 2005.*

ensure that any statutory commitment balances the needs of families with the needs of the economy. Plans are already in place to take this work forward.

5.8 The Employment Forum has been tasked to consult widely on family policies in respect of maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave and report to the Minister for Social Security by the end of 2007. Following this, appropriate recommendations will be drafted into Phase 2 of the Employment Legislation for agreement by the States and implementation in 2009. Consequently, the Working Group recommends that –

5.9 **The Council of Ministers awaits the outcome of the consultation on family policy to be undertaken by the Employment Forum and considers the recommendations of the Minister for Social Security thereafter.**

## 6. OBJECTIVE 3

6.1 *To provide targeted support for the most challenged families.*

6.1 Most recent research into what enables those children who are disadvantaged in childhood to succeed later in life<sup>8[8]</sup> indicates that early interventions yield a high return. One of the most robust findings relates to the importance of parental interest in their child's education which is often related to the parents' own educational achievements and prior experiences. This implies that interventions which encourage parents to become more involved in their children's education have a long-term effect.

6.2 Some of the most ambitious projects in Jersey to date have been the establishment of the 'The Bridge' and the NSPCC 'Pathways' project. These centres offer support for parents from the pre-natal stage and deliver early intervention strategies through individual and cross-agency working. They have already been effective working with 'hard to reach' families who struggle to achieve success in their own lives and to meet the needs of their children. Since 'The Bridge' was first setup at the beginning of 2006, 44 parents have accessed training for employment for the first time in their lives, increasing their self-confidence and encouraging them to strive higher. Many others have benefited from more focused agency support.

6.3 In spite of this there is still much that could be done to coordinate a more holistic and strategic approach to the development of services for children, particularly 0-5 year-olds. Examples of such approaches exist in other countries; in the U.K., 'Every Child Matters' and in the U.S.A. 'No Child Left Behind'. These agendas set a clear framework into which government policies for the health, education, welfare of children and families have been drawn together to provide better coordinated support to the delivery of services. In the U.K. particularly this has precipitated a greater integration of public services working with children and families.

6.4 The strategic model of Corporate Parenting and the establishment of the Children's Executive have, in a relatively brief period, created greater cohesion and coherence in the delivery of services for children with emotional and social difficulties. It is possible that this model could be adapted and developed to provide over-arching strategic leadership for a much broader children's agenda that would embrace support for families with children 0-5 years old. Whilst it is recognised that this is substantial piece of work, it is recommended that:

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<sup>8[8]</sup> 'Bucking the trend' Blanden, Department for Work and Pensions (U.K.).

6.5 **The Department for Health and Social Services and the Department for Education, Sport and Culture begin to develop a framework that would support the greater integration of services for all children in Jersey and make recommendations for a strategic governance model to support its delivery.**

7. **OBJECTIVE 4**

7.1 *To establish a strong and stable partnership between all providers, public and private, to support the growth and development of early years services.*

7.2 Although the inequity of the current system might suggest that there is tension between private and public providers, on a professional level there are many examples of joint working which indicate a shared commitment to develop an integrated approach to early education and care. The development of joint training initiatives for public and private employees has given early years practitioners access to high quality professional development, created opportunities for debate about professional issues and signified a clear ambition to ensure that people who work with our youngest children are well-trained and qualified. The appointment of the Foundation Stage Teacher, funded by the Department for Education, Sport and Culture and seconded to the Jersey Child Care Trust to work exclusively with private providers, is another example of effective partnership.

7.3 Nevertheless, there is a need to ensure that a formal forum exists for public, private and non-profit-making providers and parents to contribute to the strategic direction of the early years agenda in Jersey. Therefore it is recommended that:

7.4 **The Department for Education, Sport and Culture develops clear Terms of Reference for the establishment of a Jersey Early Years Partnership to involve key stakeholders who will work strategically with the States of Jersey to achieve its aspirations for children in the early years.**

7.5 The Jersey Child Care Trust was set up by the States in 1997 to '*coordinate, promote and facilitate the expansion of high quality and affordable childcare provision in the Island*'. In 2004 the work of the Trust was independently reviewed<sup>9[9]</sup> and it was recommended that it '*re-focus its performance indicators against ... core objectives*'. In 2006, the Trust commissioned a further review of its role and function which was undertaken by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

7.6 This review noted that the Trust had re-focused on its original purposes but that concerns were still expressed about it by the childcare sector. However it was recognised that these concerns may in part be due to a number of the conflicts around the Trust's current role. The review proposed three possible models for consideration; that the Trust should act either as –

- an agent for the States in serving as a conduit for providing funds to the [private] sector by way of grants;
- a campaigner and lobbyist for child care interests in the Island;
- an Executive Agency providing services to the sector.

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<sup>9[9]</sup> *A Vision for the Future of Early Education and Childcare in Jersey*, Spratt, J. 2004.

- 7.7 Although the review also noted that, given the Jersey context, none of these models might be practicable, in line with the recommendations of the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Working Group agrees that:
- 7.8 **The Department for Education, Sport and Culture should establish which model of organisation it would prefer the Trust to follow and to what extent it would be prepared to continue its funding.**
- 7.9 The introduction of the Day Care of Children (Jersey) Law 2002 has provided the statutory framework necessary to ensure that private sector provision meets appropriate standards. The team responsible for monitoring and supporting quality development in the private and non-profit making sectors is located within the Lifelong Learning section of the Department for Education, Sport and Culture. The Foundation Stage Teacher who works with the private sector is seconded to the Jersey Child Care Trust and located at 'The Bridge'. Quality development in school nursery classes is monitored and supported by the Early Years Adviser who is a member of the Schools and Colleges team.
- 7.10 Whilst it may be argued that there benefits from organising services in this way, such division of responsibilities does not properly reflect a vision of cohesive partnership delivering integrated early education and care. Therefore it is recommended that:
- 7.11 **The Department for Education, Sport and Culture reviews its organisational arrangements for supporting early years so that they align with a vision for integrated early education and care across the public and private sectors.**
8. **Summary**
- 8.1 In undertaking this review of provision for 0-5 years, the Working Group has concluded that, whilst many of the policy instruments available to support families with young children are already undergoing significant change, it would be unwise to make specific recommendations in respect of these at this time. To do so without understanding the full impact and effect of the changes already proposed could increase the risk of unintended consequences. Given that any changes, particularly to benefit systems, are likely to have significant financial implications, the recommendations in respect of these are cautious.
- 8.2 The inequity is in the current arrangements for 3-5 year-olds and the Minister's preferred option is to remove this by providing a universal free entitlement of 20 hours per week, 38 weeks per year. As this has significant funding implications for 2008, the Working Group recommends that the Minister's proposals should be considered alongside a means-tested model of delivery which would involve the introduction of charges for nursery classes.
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# Report

Prepared for States of Jersey,  
Department for Education, Sport and Culture  
by the National DayCare Trust

**Examination of the options for  
providing early childhood  
education and care for children  
in Jersey.**

Date: January 2007  
Author: Nicky Road

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## **Nicky Road**

Nicky Road is currently Early Years Consultant to the Lambeth Early Years and Sure Start Service, advising on re-organisation of the Service, the development of the children's workforce and Lambeth's Play Strategy.

## **1. Introduction**

In January 2007 the States of Jersey Department for Education, Sport sought independent early education and childcare advice from the consultancy service at the National Daycare Trust. The purpose of the consultancy was to draw upon the wide range of experience of extending education and childcare that exists in England and elsewhere, to assist in considering the various options relevant to the States of Jersey to extend early education. Key themes that needed to be addressed were around equity, accessibility and affordability.

The Assistant Director for Schools and Colleges met with the Daycare Trust consultant on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> January. The terms of reference for these two days were:

- To explore issues around the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture's strategy for developing the Early Years agenda in Jersey;
- Drawing upon the independent consultant's experience, to comment on the proposals

This report summarises the key areas that were explored and provides a commentary on the proposals based on knowledge and experience of this sector.

## **2. Current Context**

The Education, Sport & Culture Committee set out its early years vision in a report on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2005. A key plank was that, within three years, all three and four year olds would have access to affordable, high quality early education and care for up to 30 hours per week for 38 weeks per year, for those parents wishing to access this.

Due to the growth in nursery class places, 49% of three and four years olds had access to nursery class provision for up to 30 hours per week by 2005. In order to realise this vision within the state sector it was anticipated that it will take a further 20 years. The annual cohort of children able to access this provision is approximately 1000. Currently the majority of places are full time and the provision is free for 30 hours per week.

Alongside nursery education are the private and voluntary sector childcare providers. As elsewhere, some of this provision caters for children from 0 to 5 but in practice some children leave at 3 to access free education if they are able to do so. Childcare services are registered under the Daycare Registration (Jersey) Law 2002, for 0 to 12 year olds.

As childcare costs are high there is currently inequity in that 3 and 4 year olds in the state sector receive free educational provision for up to 30 hours a week but those in the private and voluntary sector do not. However one way of addressing this is the central allocation of nursery education places based on criteria of need.

The quality of the nursery education offered by the state is of high quality. The evidence for this judgement exists in evaluations of States primary schools undertaken since 1994. This review did not therefore focus on the delivery of quality education. However, if issues of equity and access are to be addressed, the private and voluntary sector needs to be considered in any review of the provision of quality nursery education to ensure quality and consistency across both sectors. The workforce profile between the two sectors is different and mirrors the different

professional routes that historically exist between education and care. Nursery classes have a qualified teacher with assistants, whereas childcare services employ nursery nurses and early years staff with vocational qualifications. These settings rarely include teachers due to differences that exist between salaries and terms and conditions between schools and childcare settings. However, many of these providers are committed to providing the Foundation Stage curriculum in their settings and the Department for Education, Sport and Culture employs a Foundation Stage teacher specifically to support to them.

The other aspect of ensuring access and affordability is the profile of the children and families who wish to access childcare and education. The new Income Support System that is to be introduced shortly, replacing the previous Childcare Allowance, is likely to benefit primarily low earners. However, anyone who has been on the Island for less than 5 years will not be eligible for support. This will affect migrant workers, primarily Portuguese and Polish, who come to Jersey to meet the labour shortage and often take up lower paid jobs. Whilst many families traditionally rely on extended families to provide childcare, particularly those working in the low paid sector, this is not usually an option for migrant families whose families remain at home.

Linked to both cost and meeting parental need is the requirement for flexible childcare. Whilst this review focused on services for 3 and 4 year olds, it is important to note that any developments catering for this group of children are likely to impact on services for the under 3s. Nursery education is currently provided full time i.e. 30 hours a week. This decision was influenced by an earlier Education Audit Committee recommendation that part-time places do not represent good value for money if they remain empty. Previous experience in Jersey was that afternoon places were not popular with parents. However a full-time nursery place does not cover the working day and is not intended to provide childcare. Parents seeking longer hours rely on wrap-around care or full time childcare. Non-working parents who wish their children to benefit from nursery education may prefer shorter hours. Currently they have limited choice.

### **3. New proposals**

Given the time it will take to meet the commitment of providing nursery education within the state sector for all 3 and 4 year olds, combined with issues around equity, affordability and the sustainability of the private and voluntary sectors, the current arrangements are under review and options to be considered include:

- providing a free entitlement of 20 hours per week for all 3 and 4 year olds by extending the nursery education entitlement to private and voluntary sector childcare providers;
- introducing charges for nursery education and means testing for all.

### **4. Examination of the Options**

The two options above contain a number of different elements and are interlinked. I will therefore comment on the separate elements in the following way:

- i. Providing free, universal nursery education for all 3 and 4 year olds;
- ii. Introducing charges and means testing;

- iii. Extending the nursery education offer to the private and voluntary sector.

#### **i. Providing free, universal nursery education for all 3 and 4 year olds**

The vision and commitment to provide free nursery education in Jersey has already been made. The dilemma for the States of Jersey, as with all governments, is the time it takes to deliver on this commitment and the costs involved. Clearly the policy is popular, given that nursery education is high quality and free.

The advantages of maintaining free universal nursery education have been well documented in previous reports to Ministers, drawing on research findings from the Effectiveness Provision of Pre-School Education<sup>i</sup> (EPPE), the American Highscope programme and others. High quality early education is directly related to better outcomes for all children, with significantly better outcomes for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Experience in the UK suggests that the gaps in outcomes are widening between children with those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds lagging behind educationally and socially. As a result, the new Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to set early learning and development targets for all children to ensure that the most disadvantaged children benefit threefold from their early learning experience.

The provision of 30 hours per week free nursery education is generous. The research findings on the benefits of quality early education suggest that the maximum educational benefit may accrue in 20 hours per week. This would support the Minister's proposal for a free element providing quality can be assured. Important factors in assuring the quality of provisions for children relate to the quality of the staff in terms of higher qualifications, experience and continuity. In England, the free nursery education entitlement will increase from 12.5 hours per week for 38 weeks a year to 15 hours a week by 2010 and subsequently to 20 hours a week.<sup>ii</sup> Whilst the sharp distinction between education and childcare for young children is now changing, the principle still remains that education is free and childcare is a charge to parents. Childcare services for the under threes, both in the UK and in Europe where there is a long tradition of publicly funded daycare, charge a fee to parents, often on a sliding scale. A reduction in the number of hours of free nursery education from 30 to 20 hours would not have a negative impact on the educational outcomes for children and would be similar to the goal that the UK is aiming to achieve in the longer term.

Currently there is free, quality nursery education in Jersey. To achieve universal provision in the short term suggests that provision needs to be opened up within the private and voluntary sector. This would need to be funded appropriately to achieve both the free entitlement and to sustain the desired level of quality.

#### **ii. Introducing charges and means testing**

Providing a free, universal service has the clear advantage in that it does not discriminate against any sector of the population and is simple to promote and administer. However, it could be argued that it is not fair to offer all parents, regardless of their means, a free service. If better-off parents were charged or if all parents were charged on a sliding scale, the money generated could be invested in extending and improving the nursery education service.

The distinction between childcare and education has already been made. Parents needing childcare for 0 to 3 year olds who are unable to secure a free provided place have to pay. Childcare costs in Jersey are high and equivalent to London costs. In the UK the Government has largely encouraged the expansion of childcare through subsidising parents, via tax relief etc. rather than through subsidising provision. However the high cost of childcare is one of the major barriers to families wishing to access childcare and particularly disadvantages the low paid.<sup>iii</sup> A range of Government sponsored initiatives is therefore being developed in London to address this problem – from providing a subsidy on fees, called the Childcare Affordability Programme<sup>iv</sup>, to providing time-limited free places for young and single parents, those parents wishing to access training etc. This piecemeal response is complex to promote and administer and the system of publicly funded subsidies can escalate childcare costs.

There is much research evidence to suggest that the lowest take-up of early education and childcare is by certain Black and minority ethnic groups (BME)<sup>v</sup>. The reasons range from different BME communities not knowing about the advantages of nursery education in terms of socialising, language development and transition to mainstream education, fear of the unfamiliar and charges. In Jersey, the children of Portuguese and Polish workers are likely to be particularly disadvantaged. Their parents would not be eligible for Income Support until they have been resident in the Island for five years. Consequently they are likely to be denied a nursery education experience and may seek unregistered care. This would have a negative impact on those children in terms of their overall educational achievement and when they start school they could have an impact on other children who have already had the benefits of settling into a learning, socialising environment..

### **iii. Extending the nursery education offer to the private sector**

The arguments for extending the nursery education offer are quite powerful. Regardless of parental circumstances and whether or not childcare is required, all children receive the same nursery education entitlement regardless of setting. There is equity because parents are entitled to the same offer whether in the public or private sector and they may be assured that their child is receiving the same educational benefits. From the private and voluntary sector providers' perspective, they are operating in a fair environment.

The benefits to the state are that the commitment to deliver nursery education for all 3 and 4 years olds could be achieved more quickly by accessing provision that already exists without incurring additional capital costs or affecting the sustainability of the private sector. Also the cost of providing nursery education could be controlled.

However the challenges to the States in extending the offer are significant. Whilst setting out the benefits to providers of the free option described above it would need to be sufficiently attractive for them to wish to join the programme. The public nursery education subsidy would need to be set at a realistic level, with an inflation index, to make providers willing to join and comply with any conditions set around the delivery of quality education. For example in England, to ensure that parents can access their free nursery education entitlement within daycare settings, providers are not allowed to charge top-up fees for these hours.

Currently there is a separate registration and inspection process for daycare providers and education. Whilst this can be retained, any provider agreeing to deliver

nursery education would need to comply with the Foundation Stage curriculum requirements. This could impact on the differences that exist within the early years workforce around qualifications and professional development. Further investment in training and development for the whole sector may need to be made. Building effective partnerships between nursery classes and daycare providers could involve the development of mentoring and peer support schemes and placement opportunities to model best practice etc.

In the UK, to support the delivery of the national childcare strategy, a number of developments is now in place and may have some relevance to the States of Jersey. The Nursery Education Fund<sup>vi</sup> initiative, administered by local authorities, is supporting the extension of the free nursery education entitlement across the private and voluntary sectors. A new integrated registration and inspection process for daycare and education from 0 to 8 years is being implemented in recognition of the fact that young children have both care and education needs and to simplify the current arrangements where one provider can be inspected against two different sets of criteria. The new Early Years Foundation Stage is integrating Birth to Three Matters and the Foundation Stage and will be in place by 2008. The new graduate Early Years Professional Program, will provide career opportunities for early years staff and ultimately replace teachers in all children's centres and full time daycare. This is being developed to address the different qualification routes and experiences across the early years sector. Adapting elements from some of these initiatives may help to support the integration of the sector.

## 5. Summary

Drawing on experience from elsewhere in exploring the implications of implementing any of the options below:

- providing a free entitlement of 20 hours per week for all 3 and 4 year olds by extending the nursery education entitlement to private and voluntary sector childcare providers;
- introducing charges for nursery education and means testing for all;

the following issues emerged.

Providing universal nursery education for all 3 and 4 year olds would be achievable in the near future if this were extended to the private and voluntary daycare providers. Currently there are 520 children accessing 480 nursery class places at 30 hours per week. It is calculated that the current annual cohort of 1000 children will reduce to 830 per annum. The number of places for 3 to 4 year olds in day nurseries and pre-school has been calculated at 435. With minimal growth in provision, and assuming that all providers join the nursery education programme, it would be possible to meet demand.

The cost of extending nursery education through public subsidy to the private and voluntary sector would need to be calculated. This subsidy would need to be sufficiently attractive to providers and they would need to be prevented from charging top-up fees otherwise childcare costs could escalate.

Additional expenditure may need to be put in place to support private and voluntary providers to deliver quality nursery education. This may be used to support the acquisition of early years qualifications and continuing professional development.

Continuing to provide free nursery education across the whole sector would build on the strengths of current educational provision which is well supported, popular and recognised as high quality.

Introducing charges and means testing for nursery education would have a disproportionate impact on low income and migrant families and may encourage other parents to seek sessions rather than a continuous educational experience. It is possible that the children who would most benefit from quality nursery education would be denied it.

## 6. Conclusion

The situation that currently exists whereby the States of Jersey is providing free quality nursery education, places it at the forefront of other countries wishing to achieve such a position. For a relatively limited amount of further investment this could be extended to all children who wish to access it. Introducing charging and means testing is fraught with difficulties and would have a negative impact on the core principles of securing equity, accessibility and affordability.

The early education and care vision, as set out in Committee reports, suggests that commitment by the States of Jersey has already been secured. As in the UK, with the adoption of the national childcare strategy, the case has been proven that investment in the early years helps to secure the future well being of children and provide long term economic and social benefits for society. The issue that remains is how best to achieve the complete solution and this could be achieved by building an effective partnership between the private and voluntary sectors, parents and the States of Jersey.

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<sup>i</sup> The Effective provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project Institute of Education, University of London, 2003

<sup>ii</sup> Choice for parents, the best start for children: a ten year strategy for childcare HM Treasury 2004

<sup>iii</sup> Universal early education and care in 2020: costs, benefits and funding options Daycare Trust 2004

<sup>iv</sup> Childcare Affordability Programme funded by the London Development Agency & Sure Start 2006

<sup>v</sup> Sure Start: For Everyone- Inclusion Pilot Projects Summary Report 2004  
Refugee children in the early years: issues for policy-makers & providers Save the Children: 1998  
Ensuring Equality: black and minority ethnic families' views on childcare Daycare Trust 2006

<sup>vi</sup> The Nursery Education Fund Guidance, DfES 2006