

Good evening,

I wasn't able to attend the meeting at the Pomme D'or last week and had tried to attend the original meeting on Wednesday 6th but got turned away for capacity issues.

I wanted to email to pass on my points that I would have raised at the meeting.

Our daughter Jasmine has just turned two and will be starting pre school in September 2017 so we are directly affected by the changes. My husband is a local business owner and earns over the £75,000 threshold so needless to say we are very disappointed by this NEF funding news.

Firstly we are disappointed that we were given no notice of the planned cuts. With Jasmine starting pre school in 17 months that doesn't give us very long to start budgeting for this unexpected and unavoidable additional cost. We were also disappointed to see that there was no consultation period for such a dramatic decision that will affect children, parents, nurseries and the finances linked to them. A decision as big as this really requires some notice and consultation period.

Our eldest daughter went to a private nursery in 2013 which we were extremely happy with so planned to send Jasmine there and were promised a place by the nursery owner. Needless to say we have not therefore put Jasmine's name down for a states nursery so we have very much been left stuck or forced to consider paying for the private nursery place knowing that we are unlikely to get into a states school nursery at this late stage.

We are very concerned that smaller private nurseries such as the one we have reserved a place at will be forced to close if the parents of the pupils decide they can't afford the additional costs of pre school. Jersey would lose some fantastic pre schools.

I was potentially looking to go back to work in 2017 part time, therefore contributing into the social security and tax pots but this is not likely to be financially viable if we have pre school fees to pay.

Children are the future of our island and as we are all aware pre school is a really crucial introduction into the big wide world; in our opinion there are some very specific milestones:

The first time a little one is left in someone else's care (someone other than family), the first time they wear uniform and bring a packed lunch, the first time they learn to integrate in a learning environment with their peers, the first introduction to a structured day with formal routine like snack time, lunch time, reading stories in the home corner, sitting quietly whilst the teacher gives instruction; all contributing to the start of their educational and social journey.

The Education department need to find £8 million yet these initial planned changes will only recover £250,000; a drop in the ocean to the huge black hole deficit that has been reported.

The NEF funding has been invaluable for preparing hundreds of children in Jersey to become equipped for school. It shouldn't be considered for cuts in order to recover the black hole in the education department. This will do so much more harm than good.

Our eldest has very fond memories of pre school, she established some great friendships and was introduced and exposed to a fantastic learning environment which has been invaluable in preparing her for school. Key principles which will be the foundation for her promising future and we want the same for our youngest child. We've paid our taxes and social security for the 13 years we've lived in Jersey. If the cuts go ahead no only will we be forced to pay for pre school fees but will be paying for others to go to states nurseries in the form of taxes.

We are fully appreciative of the need to save money and recoup funds but this is certainly not the answer. It's going to have negative financial and social repercussions across the board. At a time when the UK are planning on increasing free nursery hours to 30 why is Jersey targeting the needy and taking away from our children's future?

I hope this has helped add some weight to what other families have also expressed. It's something that we as a middle earning family feel strongly about. We would definitely like to see the decision rescinded or thrown out.

Kind regards