

Minister for Education - Opening Remarks

Early Years Engagement Event, The Royal Hotel, David Place, 12th July 2019

Good morning everyone and thank you all for coming along this morning to help us take up the challenge of improving children's outcomes in the Early Years.

As many of you will know, I am passionate about providing the best start for children in Jersey. We have committed to putting children first and as Minister for Education, I am determined to make a bigger and better difference.

The evidence from experts is clear. Children's Early Years' experiences shape their development, educational attainment and life chances. Children who receive high quality Early Years services from conception onwards are more likely to have a positive attitude to learning when they start school, be more resilient and have better learning, development and health outcomes overall.

I want that for all Children in Jersey and I am sure you do to.

To help us realise this ambition I set up the Policy Development Board that will advise the Council of Ministers on which policy priorities to take forward during the course of this Government.

Many of you here today are already delivering or receiving a wide range of well regarded, professional, child and family centred services. We are starting from a very good place, and I want to thank all of you who provide the care, support and education for our children with such dedication and passion.

I know that good policy comes from good discussion and conversations with the right people. Today, I think we have the key people in the room, with experience from public and private sector practitioners, parents and officers from different Government departments. This gives me confidence that we will be asking the right questions and being curious about the right issues, your expertise and experience are vital to our policy development.

The purpose of this morning is to seek to identify some of the key themes that you think need to be considered by the Early Years Policy Development Board. What gets discussed and recorded today will be used to assist the Board and help decide the starting points for our policy development.

I am mindful of the passion in the room this morning and I know that some of you will want to stay engaged.

That's great.

To help us stay in touch please give us your permission to contact you in the future via the evaluation form.

For those of you who would prefer to follow the work from a distance please note that the work of the Policy Development Board is on the Government website so that developments are shared in a transparent way.

Later this afternoon and evening we will be running drop in sessions for practitioners and parents to review and comment on our discussions and decisions this morning.

Please do feel free to promote this opportunity to your network of colleagues and friends throughout the day.

To help stimulate your thinking officers have drawn together a colourful infographic which is on your seat and this contains some headlines that describe aspects of our early years sector in Jersey. I am confident that you can add to it and help illuminate the numbers with success stories and ideas for improvement and future challenges.

So now, you know my ambition I hope you are ready to assist me and the Board.

To help us in that task I would like to handover to our facilitator Pete Bryant for the day who has planned a morning that is truly participative and led by you.

Pete over to you....