

**2.9 Deputy G.P. Southern of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding the number of students, whose first language was not English, currently being taught in the Island's primary and secondary schools:**

Will the Minister state what overall numbers of students whose first language is not English are currently being taught in the Island's primary and secondary schools, state how these students are distributed between the schools and explain what provisions are in place in which schools to ensure that these students are adequately catered for?

**Senator M.E. Vibert (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):**

A complex, multipart question but I will try and get it all in, in the time you will allow me. There are 178 pupils receiving support currently from the English as an Additional Language team; 121 of these are pupils who have arrived in Jersey since September 2007, the remainder are in their second year of support. The breakdown of such pupils in secondary schools is as follows: Les Quennevais 4; Grainville 13; Le Rocquier 14; Haute Valleé 25. In primary schools: Rouge Bouillon 37; Springfield 15; Samares 9; First Tower 9; Janvrin 8; Plat Douet 7. Can I say those figures were correct as at 22nd January. The remaining pupils are spread across the rest of the primary schools. The specialist support provided for these pupils include the E.A.L. (English as an Additional Language) team which consists of 6 staff, 2 specialist teachers and 4 specialist teaching assistants, 2 of these teaching assistants speaking Portuguese and one Polish. The team supports the pupils in all primary and secondary schools. In addition, there are 5 teachers funded by the Portuguese Government under an accord signed with Jersey who work with pupils in both primary and secondary schools. These accord teachers also run Portuguese language and culture classes after school hours. Currently 246 primary age pupils and 308 secondary pupils access these extracurricular classes.

**2.9.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Could the Minister indicate whether any additional funding is supplied in any of these schools, especially Haute Valleé where it sounds like they have got a class full?

**Senator M.E. Vibert:**

We look at and provide funding as and when necessary. Of course the schools with the greater number of pupils will have greater attention from the E.A.L. team, which in itself is a form of funding.

**2.9.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Can the Minister please answer the question: is additional funding currently being provided?

**Senator M.E. Vibert:**

I answered the question. I said we provide funding as and when necessary and the E.A.L. team, which is funded by E.S.C., is used, according to needs of the number of pupils. The Deputy has put a detailed oral question. If he wants to know how much funding is put into each of the secondary schools please write to me and I will provide it. I look forward to the day when the Deputy says something complimentary about the excellent services we offer instead of nitpicking all the time.

**2.9.3 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains of St. Clement:**

Could the Minister explain how his department deals with the dilemma of a mixed class where there are a few pupils whose first language is not English? If the class travels at the speed of the rest of the class they will clearly be left behind but if the class travels at the speed of those people who do not have English as their first language clearly the other people in the class will be held back.

**Senator M.E. Vibert:**

I invite the Deputy to visit our schools and attend classes. I think he is equating how he was taught to maybe how children are taught today. It is quite different. We teach in different ways. Pupils are in groups, small groups in classes, they work at their own pace and are helped by the teacher, and where we have pupils who are struggling that is where the E.A.L. team come in as well and teaching assistants will help individuals or small groups. We tend to work in that way. It is very different now and I invite any States Member - and I know the Scrutiny Panel have seen it - to look at the work we do, such as critical skills, in our schools and how we develop in our schools. I think we are working very hard to ensure that no one is held back in any way because of any constraint such as language.

**2.9.4 Deputy I.J. Gorst of St. Clement:**

I just wanted to ask a simple question about those pupils where English is not their first language. Are they all congregated into one class or are they spread across the year group and how is the policy implemented on that front?

**Senator M.E. Vibert:**

It varies. It depends on their age, it depends whether the primary school, for example, has a one form or 2-form entry. If it is one form, obviously at a certain age they are all in one class. In secondary school it will depend how the school decides to deal with it in that way and for different subjects they will be in different groups and so on. I am sorry I cannot be clearer than that but it is down to the individual school, whether it is primary one form or 2-form entry, and also with secondary. Although some people may have difficulty with English being not their first language, they may be very good at maths, for example, and be in a different group for maths as to other subjects.

**2.9.5 Deputy S.C. Ferguson of St. Brelade:**

Does that effectively mean that if you are setting up different groups that you are streaming the children? I can see problems if you have bright children in a class being kept back.

**Senator M.E. Vibert:**

I thought I made it clear in a previous answer that we do not keep back children. We try to develop each child to their potential, and again I urge the Deputy to visit schools. In fact I urge her as the Deputy of St. Brelade to visit Les Quennevais School, an excellent example of how this is dealt with in the classroom, and I am sure she will be very impressed by what she sees.

**2.9.6 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

At the risk of appearing nitpicking, can the Minister confirm that while students of primary age are relatively straightforward to deal with because they pick up language quickly, students left in secondary schools without additional resource will struggle? Can he confirm or deny whether Les Quennevais were stopped from having an intensive course down at St. Brelade's College for their English as a Second Language students in the recent past?

**Senator M.E. Vibert:**

I can certainly confirm that it is general knowledge that it is much harder for secondary age children to pick up English as a second language than it is for primary school children. I will look into the comment that the Deputy has made. I have no knowledge of Les Quennevais and the issue he mentioned but I will look into it and revert to him.

**2.9.7 Deputy S.C. Ferguson:**

Surely, following on from Deputy Southern's question, one day a week to learn the language of the school you are in, as opposed to an intensive course, is not preferable. It is preferable to have an intensive 6-week course. I think if the Minister looks into this he will find out that this is the case.

**Senator M.E. Vibert:**

I certainly will look into it, Sir. We adopt and take on best educational practice and if the Deputy can point me in the direction of the research that shows this, I will willingly look into it, Sir.