

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR
EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE
BY DEPUTY J.M. MAÇON OF ST. SAVIOUR
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 30th NOVEMBER 2010**

Question

What measures, if any, has the Department taken in order to ensure that every student leaves the education system as a literate citizen and, in doing so, has consideration been given to the French system whereby students are held back until a certain level of literacy has been achieved and, if not, why not?

Answer

The Department has a clear literacy policy, which applies to all States schools and colleges. The system has been tailored specifically to meet the needs of Jersey's students. The Jersey Curriculum is a differentiated curriculum which enables pupils' needs to be met while remaining in their year group with peers and friends. This, we believe, is an important principle. Pupils are only moved from their year groups or held back in exceptional circumstances and only in consultation with the department's senior educational psychologist. We are aware of the practice in France and other European countries but feel it is not in the best interests of children to be held back because of the serious impact this can have on their self confidence and self esteem.

Pupils are continually assessed in English by their teachers in school. These assessments are moderated by a trained team across the year groups and key stages. Schools are supported in their teaching of English by a specialist Teaching and Learning Advisor who is part of the Schools and Colleges Team who visits all schools and provides central training.

A Professional Partner allocated to each school, monitors the application of this policy, reviews progress every term and considers a report prepared by the schools team. In addition the Professional Partners meet the head teachers annually to analyse specific achievements including each pupil's performance in English.

Every school has a pupil tracking system in place. This gives every teacher the tool to be able to monitor every pupil's progress against age-related expectations which identifies those pupils who require additional support in reading. Primary schools have a successful programme for pupils who experience problems and a reading recovery programme provides one-to-one targeted support outside the classroom with a specialist teacher. Secondary schools also prioritise support for those pupils who need help with literacy.

The Department administers an island-wide Reading Screening programme, which has been in place for four years. This screening provides schools and Professional Partners with detailed information which supports and challenges their in-school assessments

Literacy is also a major focus with the post 16 students at Highlands College. These young people are given the opportunity to study courses that are designed to develop literacy skills that are directly relevant to the work place and adult life.