

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE
BY DEPUTY M.R. HIGGINS OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 10th MARCH 2015**

Question

Will the Minister provide the following information relating to unauthorised absences from school for each year during the period between September 2013 and June 2014 in respect of -

- (a) the number of students in each primary and secondary school who were issued with warning letters;
- (b) the number of students that each Education Welfare Officer in primary schools and Attendance Officers in the four 11-16 schools were handling;
- (c) how many students, if any, were referred to the Alternative Curriculum following periods of unauthorised absences; and,
- (d) how many parents, if any, were prosecuted for failing to ensure that their children attended school?

Answer

- (a) Unauthorised absence in Jersey is lower than the UK national average. In the 2013-14 academic year there were 12,202 students in compulsory education in Jersey. During that period, 53 letters were sent from primary schools and 15 from secondary schools. However, letters are not always the most appropriate means of communication for every situation or every family. Head teachers use their discretion and often prefer to meet the parents concerned to discuss the issues.

Note: For data protection reasons, and in line with recommended practice, it is not possible to provide a breakdown of figures by school because the numbers are below 10 and it would be possible to identify individuals.

- (b) During the 2013-14 academic year there were approximately 5,600 pupils in primary schools and the three Education Welfare Officers had 150 open cases over the course that period. These covered issues ranging from punctuality to persistent absence. The Attendance Officers in the 11-16 schools, which had approximately 4,200 pupils, had 192 open cases.
- (c) The Alternative Curriculum is a provision that caters for 20 pupils from Year 11. Places are allocated according to a clear process and set of criteria. School attendance is one of the main criteria.

For the school year 2013-2014 there were 1,063 pupils in Year 11 in Jersey. The Department received 28 recommendations from schools. Of the 20 places offered, only four pupils were prioritised for a place because of their low levels of attendance.

- (d) In the academic year 2013/2014 no parents were prosecuted for failing to ensure their children attended school.