

2015.04.14

3.6 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding the Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum:

Can the Minister please outline what is covered in the Jersey P.S.H.E. (Personal Social and Health Education) curriculum at primary and secondary level and give details of any areas that are planned to be added to or altered?

Deputy R.G. Bryans of St. Helier (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):

I am very pleased to say that the whole curriculum, including P.S.H.E., is in the final stages of being updated and will be taught in primary and secondary schools from September 2015. The aim of P.S.H.E. is to give our young people valuable life skills and help them understand the range of moral and social issues they are likely to face as they grow up. The P.S.H.E. curriculum is now structured around 3 core themes; health and wellbeing, relationships, living in the wider world which includes citizenship and politics. We have specific requirements for our young people to learn about Jersey's political system. Also to make Members aware P.S.H.E. is a compulsory subject in Jersey, it is not in England, only citizenship is at key stages 3 and 4.

3.6.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Has the Minister seen the recent report from the Education Select Committee which found that P.S.H.E. should be compulsory in the U.K. but also sex and relationships education, and are there any plans to do the same with S.R.E. (sex and relationships education) in Jersey?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

No, I have not seen the report and I would be very willing to accept it from the Deputy. But it is a very comprehensive document, the new curriculum, and in fact 2 things will be happening for the first time that may help Members, which is that Education is creating a blog to inform people of Jersey - the parents and the students in particular - about the content of what is being taught in our schools and we will upload that as a live document on to the web. With regard to the other teachings that she mentions that is very much part of what is in the document.

3.6.2 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

When I was at school, which was not that too long ago, P.S.H.E. stopped at the end of G.C.S.E.s (General Certificate of Secondary Education). It did not continue up until the end of A levels and given the proportion of students who stay at school until they are 18, would he agree with me that it should be compulsory until the end of 18 if it has not already been changed since I left school?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

I am not sure I agree it should be compulsory. Certainly as an aspect of Island life it should reflect what we are teaching our children. I think when students get to that age their focus is then on passing exams and the exam syllabus that they have. The curriculum is already quite constricted at that point in time. I think Members will be delighted with the content of the new curriculum and will see that it covers things like the development of the political system of our government, including the roles of citizens and what happens in the States Chamber and the Island's relationship with the Monarch. It also includes the operation of the States Chamber including voting and elections and the sort of thing that has been dear to Deputy Mézec's heart.

3.6.3 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Supplementary? Does the Minister not see the contradiction that I see there where he emphasises all this education about the political system in Jersey which, when I was at school, there was not that at all? Does he not see the contradiction in putting an emphasis on that only to then stop it all of a sudden when these young people become eligible to vote? That is a contradiction surely.

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

No, I do not see it as a contradiction. We have coming up through the ranks now the new Youth Parliament and I think it is far better, if we are talking about the political side of the P.S.H.E., that they learn - people learn, students learn - from what the Youth Parliament will be addressing, so it is peer to peer education as opposed to politicians telling what they should and should not like.

3.6.4 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Could the Minister explain how the quality of the P.S.H.E. curriculum is monitored, ensuring that consistency across all schools is measured?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

Could you repeat the question? I was ...

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Certainly. Can the Minister explain how the quality of the P.S.H.E. curriculum is monitored, ensuring that consistency across all schools occurs?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

The curriculum itself is a framework in which all schools adapt and adopt suitable to their particular positions. We have professional partners, one we have just recently recruited who was a top level Ofsted inspector. It is part of their remit to ensure that all the various aspects of the curriculum are taught.

3.6.5 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

At the hearing with the Minister for Home Affairs, on 17th March, the Minister agreed to contact the Minister for Education and talk about whether issues around consent were being taught to children in our schools. Can I ask whether that conversation has taken place and if not, will the Minister agree to follow that up please?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

No, that meeting has not taken place although we do have a meeting up at the Prison and I think some of the content of that meeting will be about the matter of consent.