

2017.11.27

3.2 Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier of the Minister for Education regarding the number of teachers resigning from the profession before retirement: [1(623)]

In the last 2 years, how many teachers in Jersey have resigned from the profession before retirement?

Deputy R.G. Bryans of St. Helier (The Minister for Education):

Thank you to the Deputy. To put this in context, there are currently 765 teachers employed in States schools. Our figures show in the academic year, 2015 to 2016, a total of 69 teachers left States schools; 48 of these were for reasons other than retirement. In the academic year 2016 to 2017, a total of 57 teachers left States schools; 46 of these were for reasons other than retirement. This relates to about 6 to 7 per cent, which is in line with the figures across the States workforce. However the figures do not necessarily mean that these teachers left the profession completely. This data only relates to States schools and the staff concerned could have moved to one of Jersey's private schools or they might have continued teaching in the U.K. (United Kingdom) or another jurisdiction. We have 11 staff currently training on the Jersey Graduate Teacher Training Scheme and have had 41 N.Q.T.s (newly qualified teachers) returning to the Island this term, most of whom were originally from Jersey.

3.2.1 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Can I ask the Minister for Education what work, if any, has been done to ascertain what proportion of these teachers have left the profession due to reasons of not being satisfied with working with the Education Department, working in schools in Jersey? For that reason, that they have left the profession altogether. What work, if any, has his department done to ascertain those proportions?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

No work specifically in relation to that but we did put out a questionnaire to all staff relating to their situation, how they felt about education, which was done in line with the unions, and we are repeating the same exercise again to see if there are any differentials or if there are any concerns.

3.2.2 Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier:

Can the Minister tell us whether there are any variations between schools? Did some schools experience higher leaving rates than others; if so, will he advise us which ones they are?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

Yes, there are differentials for all sorts of different reasons. I think there was a slight difference in Les Quennevais, perhaps last year. All staff who left last summer did so because of either promotions, retirement, illness or actually left Jersey.

3.2.3 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour:

Could the Minister inform the Assembly whether every teacher who leaves their post, whether it is for retirement or another reason, is offered an exit interview as a standard procedure?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

To be honest, I do not really know. I think it is part of the States Employment Board to offer that circumstance, but whether teachers take it up or not, I do not know.

3.2.4 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier:

Will the Minister check his figures again because my approximate maths suggests that the numbers he was supplying were greater than the 6 per cent he claimed? It is quite significantly greater in some cases.

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

Happy to go back and revisit the figures, but these were the figures I was supplied. But if there is a differential I will make sure that the Deputy is made aware.

3.2.5 Deputy M. Tadier:

Given the fact that there are no exit interviews that are necessarily offered, or even taken up by existing teachers, how can the Minister stand up and speculate that some teachers may leave the profession to go and work in private or fee-paying schools without knowing whether that is the case or what the stats are? What further research would the Minister do in that regard?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

There are different ways in which we ascertain this information. Myself, I have viewed ... I was up at a private school recently, where I saw 2 teachers who previously had been in a States school, so I had observed that they have moved from one school to another. I think it is true that the States Employment Board offer these exit interviews, but I do not want to mislead the Assembly so I will make sure I find out and come back to the Deputy. As I say, we have got this questionnaire going out, so we will have a better idea if there is any kind of concern that teachers do have.

3.2.6 Deputy M. Tadier:

Could the Minister also take the opportunity to look into whether there is an asymmetrical pattern between teachers leaving state schools for private schools and those leaving private schools to come and work in the state sector?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

If that information is available, if there is a pattern there, I could find it quite easily.

3.2.7 Deputy A.D. Lewis of St. Helier:

Just following up on the exit interview issue. I just wondered if the Minister could elaborate further because I am astounded that exit interviews are not mandatory. It is such an important part of the H.R. (human resources) process. Not just in education but I would have thought across the board in the public sector. In any business it is essential. I would like to understand why he does not know about that and whether he felt it would be a very useful thing to have as a mandatory part of the H.R. process. I certainly believe it should be a very, very important element of that process.

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

The Deputy is quite right. I am unsure of my facts in that particular case because it is to do with the States Employment Board. But, as I say, I was informed prior to this question that if teachers are offered that opportunity to give exit interviews then they can do so. I do not see that there is anything of concern there. As I say, the figures at the moment verify that we are hardly out of kilter with anything to do with the States Employment Board, but I will look into the matter.

3.2.8 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Would the Minister be able to confirm whether or not there are unqualified teachers teaching in Jersey schools? When I say "unqualified", I mean people who are not currently undertaking a postgraduate certificate in education or the Jersey equivalent of that. If it is the case that there are

unqualified teachers working in Jersey schools would he be able to tell us whether that has anything to do with the vacancies that are taken up as a result of teachers leaving the profession?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

I am unaware of any unqualified teachers working within Education. We do have supply teachers, of which we have ... on the list currently is about 173. But I am unaware of any concerns being given. I am sure the unions would be in touch with us if there were any problems in that area at all.