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## **8 The Deputy of Grouville of the Minister for Education regarding the teaching of the citizenship programme in the Island's secondary schools: [1(77)]**

Will the Minister tell the Assembly to what extent the citizenship programme is regularly taught in all the Island's secondary schools and how much of the programme, if any, is based on Jersey's constitution, political system and local politics?

### **Deputy R.G. Bryans (The Minister for Education):**

Thank you to the Deputy. The entire Jersey curriculum was updated in September 2014 to reflect more of Jersey's culture and heritage. As part of the change citizenship was made a mandatory part of the P.S.H.E. (Personal, Social and Health Education) curriculum, alongside health and wellbeing, relationships and living in the wider world. Members should find a copy of the citizenship curriculum on their desk and will be able to see it is very much based on teaching and understanding of how Jersey's Government works. All the year 5 children take part in a debate in this Chamber and in secondary school the curriculum is delivered in different ways in different schools. All of them highlight the importance of voting and taking part in the democratic process. They work with the States Greffe team who are the experts in this matter and give talks in assemblies about the workings of the State. In relationship to how do I know it has taken place and how often. We trust our schools. The teachers who lead the P.S.H.E. in their schools attend termly meetings of a working group to share practice but it is left to the individual schools - this is part of our autonomy strategy - to organise the detail of their own learning. Some teach P.S.H.E. every week. Some do it as part of their tutorial programme and some will provide full days themed on certain issues.

### **4.8.1 The Deputy of Grouville:**

I would like to thank the Minister for this paper. He may be interested to know that this programme was originally set up by myself and the late Senator Vibert when we were on Education. I am glad to know that it has been updated with regular input. But what I am concerned about is that not all the Island's secondary schools are receiving the same amount of political input to the programme and what standard it is being taught at, and how is it being monitored.

### **Deputy R.G. Bryans:**

That gives me the opportunity to say all Members are invited to a presentation down at the Société tomorrow when we break for lunch. In direct reply to the Deputy's question, like I say, the autonomy is given to the heads and the teachers of the school, those who have a particular relationship to that, and it is for them to provide the teaching and the differences related to what they feel is right for their particular school. What I can tell you is that when we produced the new curriculum behind that was a new moderation and behind that was a new opportunity for assessment. Again, this will be referred to tomorrow. That conclusively for us allows us to monitor the situation in all schools and allows us to see through and see what is being taught and when it is being taught.

### **4.8.2 Deputy M. Tadier:**

With regard to political education in schools, does the Minister think that there is a risk of educating our students, whether at primary or secondary school, about how our system works might put them off in future from wanting to engage in our very strange opaque and archaic system?

### **Deputy R.G. Bryans:**

This is where probably the Deputy and I differ a little bit. I do not think it is that opaque and I think the work the States Greffe is doing, making sure that that is the understanding of how our democracy works, is fantastic, I have to say. I think our students in particular, every time I come across them they want to discuss on any level the relevance to what we debate here in this Assembly. They are highly knowledgeable, they are highly political in their points of view and they are not shy about telling me. So, no, I do not think it puts people off.

#### **4.8.3 Deputy M. Tadier:**

Would the Minister consider drafting in the expertise of our former Greffier who in his Christmas exposition to States Member showed quite clearly how complex and how laughable in many cases the current political setup is with his '*Clarrie Ecobichon*' routine? After 10 minutes of explanation from him I think no one was left in any doubt about how complex our political system is. But on a serious note, does the Minister accept that the best way we can educate our children as citizens and politically is to get them to question rather than only being taught about how systems work. The best form of engagement is to question everything and to demand answers perpetually even in adulthood?

#### **Deputy R.G. Bryans:**

A very convoluted question in itself. The answer is yes, I do think our students question everything, and that is what they are taught to do. What we are giving them is a basic premise and structure of understanding how our Assembly works within this democratic state and I think they are fully aware of how we operate and I think they are fully given to the opportunity of questioning everything when they can.

#### **4.8.4 Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

It definitely arises from what the Deputy of Grouville said, which is about monitoring. Certainly on Scrutiny we have had the P.S.H.E. curriculum on our radar, which we want to look further into, but can I ask the Minister: given the P.S.H.E. curriculum we do not really know how well it is taught across the schools.

[15:45]

We certainly do not know how much information is retained with our students. We know that the system, for example, is not tested. There are no published results of any testing to do that. I appreciate the Minister has goaded us a little bit by saying how it is going to change, but what is going to change so that the public know how well and how retained our P.S.H.E. curriculum is being because it covers a whole host of incredibly important subjects?

#### **Deputy R.G. Bryans:**

Absolutely it does, and it is the very reason that we have made it mandatory compared to the U.K. As I say, we have this presentation tomorrow and I hope the Deputy will attend. We will verify that when you build a new curriculum and this new curriculum, for want of a better word, was Jersey-fied; we have included extra parts to do with geography and history and, in particular, the political situation of the Island. When you do that you then have to build behind that a form of moderation to make sure that that is taught in a particular way. Then you are given the opportunity to make assessment of that. That is what we intend to do. What we will do, as always, and what we have been trying to do from the 4 principles that we set out right at the beginning of this journey, is make sure that every head/teachers responsible for this have full autonomy to teach it in the best way they think possible.

#### **4.8.5 The Deputy of Grouville:**

Has the Minister come across an issue with the training the trainers in political instruction to ensure that they are fully conversant with the political system here? Are they aware that they have resources in the form of 49 Members here that they can call in to the schools to question and to give classes? In my experience I have only been aware of one school that does this on a regular basis.

#### **Deputy R.G. Bryans:**

Many of the schools invite Members in to debate specific subjects they are studying in other parts of the curriculum. For instance, I know that Senator Ozouf has taken part in Brexit debates, Deputy Noel has discussed the incinerator and Constable Crowcroft has been invited to talk about the Millennium Park. So schools really try to play with a straight bat here. They are very apolitical, they make sure that the children and students understand fully how we work as a democracy and I think if there is greater debate from ourselves ... remember the other way that children learn is not necessarily from the teachers themselves but from their parents. We know there has been a certain amount of apathy with regards to voter turnout. So we as politicians need to do more ourselves to engage with students. I would suggest to any Member of this Assembly who wants to do that to go ahead, discuss it with the school and I think they will be very pleased to be received.