

2018.12.03

18 Senator S.W. Pallett of the Minister for Education regarding the implementation of the 'Daily Mile' in Jersey's primary schools: [OQ.218/2018]

Given the popularity of the Daily Mile in schools across the United Kingdom and in Guernsey, in that it provides physical and social activity during the school day, will the Minister inform the Assembly whether she is considering implementing the Daily Mile within primary schools in Jersey? If so, when will it be implemented; and if not, why not?

Senator T.A. Vallois (The Minister for Education):

Many but not all primary schools in Jersey have chosen to adopt the Daily Mile within their school days to good effect. Some others have trialled alternative additional fitness programmes based on time spent active rather than distance travelled. Some schools in association with Jersey Sports have developed programmes responding to analysis of pupil activity at home and at school using pedometers or other activity devices, such as the free and inclusive football programme offered on Saturday mornings by some town schools. Given this variety of approaches and the range of experiences being offered to children, there is no intention to implement the Daily Mile for all schools as a blanket approach. We are committed to delivering quality P.E. (physical education) lessons within the curriculum and to supporting families and children to be as active as possible. We are happy to continue working together with colleagues from Sport, Infrastructure and Health, to maximise the access that all pupils, regardless of background, have to high-quality well-resourced, accessible sports and open spaces.

3.18.1 Senator S.W. Pallett:

I know the Minister is being positive and I know she wants to help as best she can, but what I am looking for is some certainty. Could the Minister inform the Assembly how she will ensure that there is a consistent approach taken to physical education throughout all schools so that all children have equal opportunity to progress physically - and I repeat equal opportunity?

Senator T.A. Vallois:

At the moment under P.E., part of the curriculum there is a formal advice back from the schools in terms of the department advising what it is that happens with regards to that. One of the issues that we have of course is, if the Assistant Minister was to look at the recent teacher survey, the pressure that is already placed upon schools, in terms of after-school, breakfast clubs, weekend working for teachers, in addition to all the planning and the marking that they are required to do, but also trying to provide a full and extensive curriculum, and so we need to balance this in an appropriate way. But I would be happy to work with the Assistant Minister with a focus on sports if he would be happy to come and sit down with us at Education to look at a more consistent approach, but recognising the professionals who are the teachers in terms of how they can conduct P.E. or even Daily Mile within their schools and whether that is supplemented with support.

3.18.2 Connétable J.E. Le Maistre of Grouville:

Could the Minister tell us how many schools currently take part in the Daily Mile?

Senator T.A. Vallois:

I do not have the exact number in front of me but I am happy to send that around to all States Members.

3.18.3 Senator S.W. Pallett:

Has the Minister or her department taken any advice from Jersey Sport to date or any authority, either in Guernsey or further afield, in regards to implementing the Daily Mile as it has been received well by students, parents and teachers, elsewhere around the country and, if not, why not? I am prepared to help as well.

Senator T.A. Vallois:

I thank the Senator for his offer of help. I understand that discussion has not taken place yet but there are a great deal of changes going on with regards to the public sector but also within Education at the moment in terms of ensuring that we are creating an appropriate range of educational opportunities for our children. I would be happy to sit down with the Senator and discuss with Jersey Sport how we can take this forward proactively and positively for all the children in the Island, but recognising the constraints which we have at the present time.