

20.10.20

17 Deputy J.H. Perchard of the Minister for Education regarding the impact of Covid-19 on learning and education (OQ.265/2020):

Will the Minister undertake to consider a policy paper recently published by the Education Policy Institute with funding recommendations to the U.K. Government to minimise the impact of COVID-19 on learning (including, for example, doubling pupil premium spending) and will she set out her equivalent funding plans in the wake of the pandemic?.

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

I thank the Deputy for her question. I am happy to consider the policy paper the Deputy refers to and set out my plans to minimise the impact of COVID-19 on learning. My officers have designed a school catch-up programme based on lessons learnt both in Jersey and in other jurisdictions. This will establish a tutoring programme to provide small group tuition to the children most in need within intensive learning support and give schools access to subsidised tutoring sessions and free coaches for various groups of children, such as those in Jersey Premium, English with additional language, special educational needs disability and the most vulnerable. Also the programme will invest additional funding in the Olevi teaching programme to accelerate and build capacities to deliver the catch-up programme effectively and improve sustained attainment into the future and to make sure all staff are best equipped for the recovery challenge. In total this programme is costed at £1.345 million and spread across 2020 and 2021. I am aware that the Minister for Treasury and Resources is minded to approve the Ministerial Decision this week that will transfer £445,000 in 2020 from the general reserve to my department. Additionally in the proposed Government Plan there is just over £900,000 to continue the programme into 2021. These sums will put in place a 16-month programme with funding running across the financial years to address the learning loss experienced by many children at primary and secondary schools. Finally, in addition to the catch-up programme, the proposed Government Plan also includes an additional £291,000 for Jersey Premium, and this is in addition to the £400,000 growth already planned for 2021 in last year's Government Plan. In total if the plan is accepted these proposals will deliver around £2 million in additional funding for the catch-up programme and Jersey Premium.

4.17.1 Deputy J.H. Perchard:

I thank the Minister for that thorough and pleasing response. Would she be minded to share the catch-up programme - sorry, I do not know if it is already public - detail with Members in addition to any other reports? I know there was a review done on how education was impacted from COVID but it is not publicly available. Would the Minister be minded to share those assessments and plans with Members?

Senator T.A. Vallois:

Yes, absolutely. We are planning on publishing that report that the Deputy refers to help support evidence-wise for the bid that we have made to Treasury with regards to the catch-up programme. Those papers will be published shortly and I will be happy to share them directly with States Members.

4.17.2 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

The paper mentioned in the question touches on support for the early years sector and the Minister will be aware that there was at least one closure of nurseries during the first lockdown. Could the

Minister outline what financial support she will be giving to nurseries and early years setting, please, to ensure that does not happen to any other settings?

Senator T.A. Vallois:

In terms of the early years, of course the focus has been on the schools' catch-up programme where some of our nurseries are attached to those schools, so that will be included with regards to the nurseries within those schools. There has not been an additional amount identified but we do have a sum in the Government Plan for next year to do with the nursery education funding, but we have been supporting private nurseries throughout the pandemic and they have been really helpful, not just to us as a Government but to the Island as a whole in supporting particularly vulnerable and essential workers' children during the pandemic. We assisted with continuing providing support, whether that be through continuing the funding of the N.E.F. (Nursery Education Fund) and also provision of P.P.E. (Personal Protective Equipment).