

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND EDUCATION
BY DEPUTY I. GARDINER OF ST. HELIER
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 24th MAY 2021
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 1st JUNE 2021**

Question

Will the Minister advise whether his department –

- (a) undertakes an annual survey of school capacity to provide data on school places, reporting any surpluses or overcrowding; and, if not, why not;
- (b) has a policy or procedure pursuant to which overcrowded schools can allocate students surplus places elsewhere; and if not, why not; and
- (c) intends to review school catchment areas in the foreseeable future; and, if not, why not?"

Answer

- (a) School capacity is reviewed, by a central admissions team, on a daily and annual basis.

Daily: Each day school capacity across the whole system is reviewed, taking into account, in-year transfers and new admissions to schools. Live data is used to see each non fee-paying school's current pupil numbers per class and is measured against the maximum capacity for each class. This is done in accordance with the class size policy, ensuring that availability is understood, and any surpluses/overcrowding are managed accordingly.

Annually: Reception and Year 7 places are allocated which may lead to extra forms of entry (where possible) being opened/closed, due to demand. In addition, migration and birth rate data is updated, enabling refreshed forecasting of school places to be undertaken.

(b) Primary Schools

The published maximum class size for a Primary school form is 26 children. When allocating above 26 places the department will also consider the number of places available within neighbouring primary schools that are in the same secondary school catchment area. It would be unusual for the department to allocate over maximum numbers in a school if there is space in a neighbouring primary school linked with the same secondary school. The department will however make every effort to accommodate children within their catchment school. There may be occasions when due to capacity or for educational reasons it is necessary to allocate above the published maximum upon which the department will apply the criteria below:

- 27th & 28th place – will only be allocated if instructed by the Planning & Projects team.
- 29th place – will only be allocated if instructed by the Chief Education Officer or an appeals panel.
- 30th place – will only be allocated if instructed by the Education Minister or an appeals panel.

The decision to increase numbers above the published class size maximum in both primary and secondary schools will consider the views of the head teacher in relation to class specific issues (e.g. SEN / AEN / EAL considerations, space constraints).

Secondary Schools

Class sizes in Secondary school year groups are allocated based on multiples of 25 but can be exceeded by 1 child per 25 specifically for children living in catchment (this is referred to as 'stretch capacity'). The number of forms in Year 7 is agreed with the Head teacher of the secondary school once the number of children living in catchment and requiring school places is known.

Decisions about out of catchment requests are agreed annually, per year group, by the CYPES leadership team. Decisions are based on the number of places available vs the demand and allocated according to the priority detailed in the admissions criteria. These decisions are then considered when 'in year' places are allocated.

More information can be found on the [Children, Young People, Education and Skills Policies \(gov.je\)](#) pages on gov.je

- (c) The Minister will advise of any review of catchment areas following the completion of the review of primary schools in the town area.