
STATES OF JERSEY



BILINGUAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS – HEAD TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

Presented to the States on 16th September 2024
by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

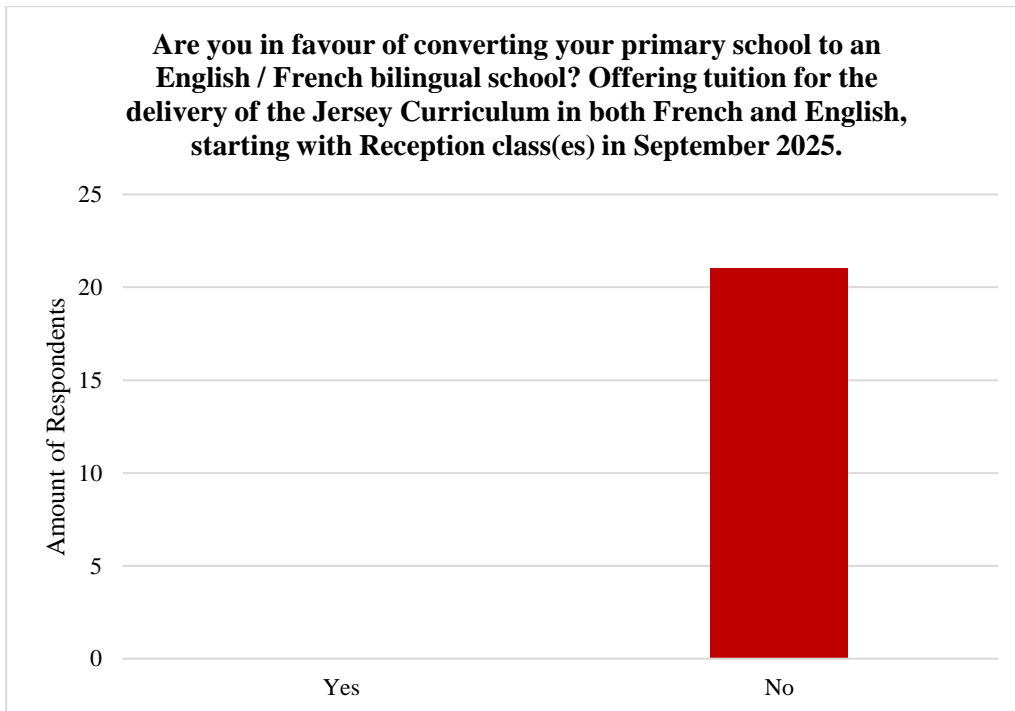
STATES GREFFE

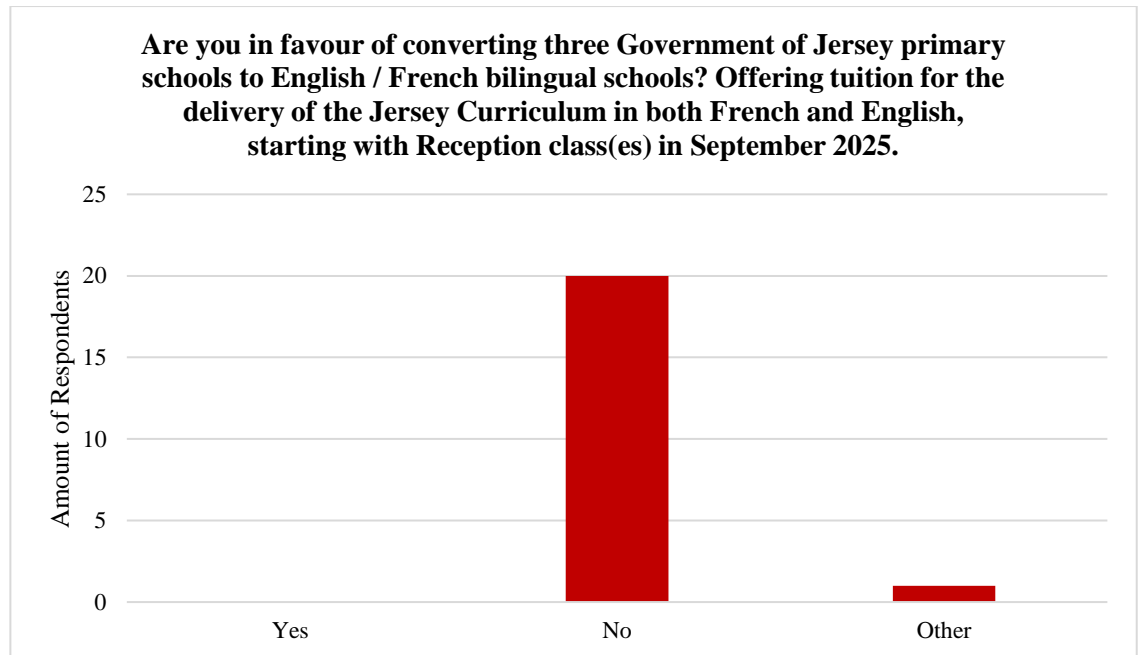
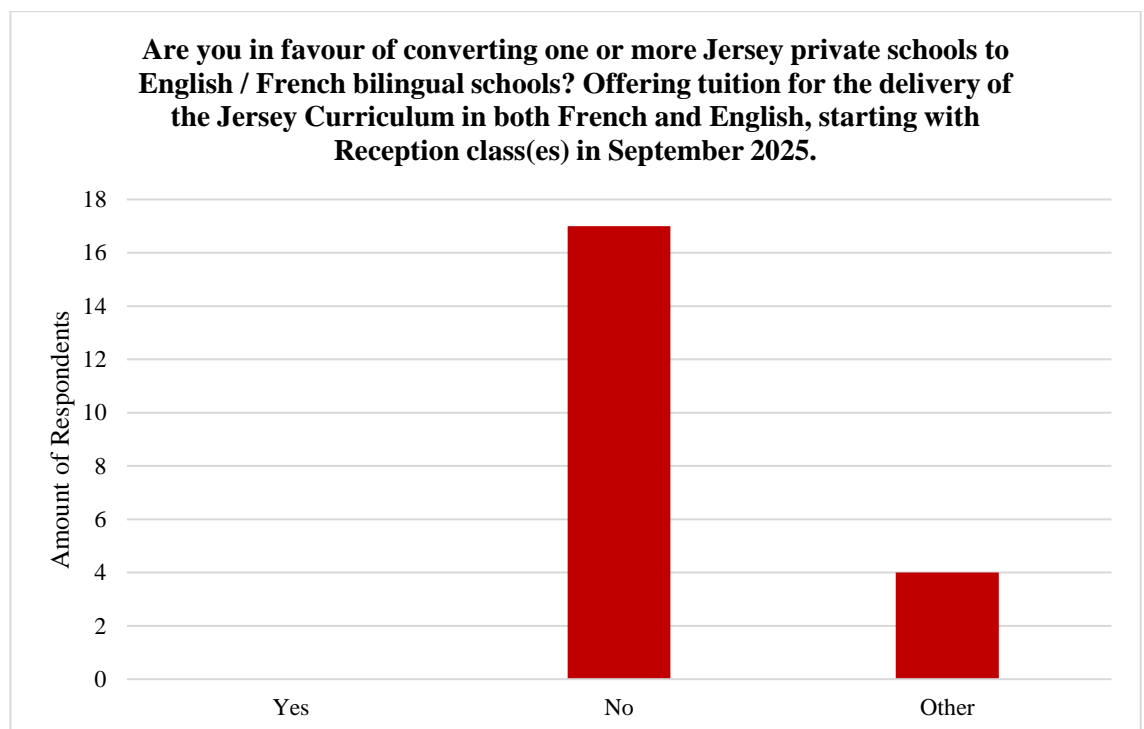
REPORT

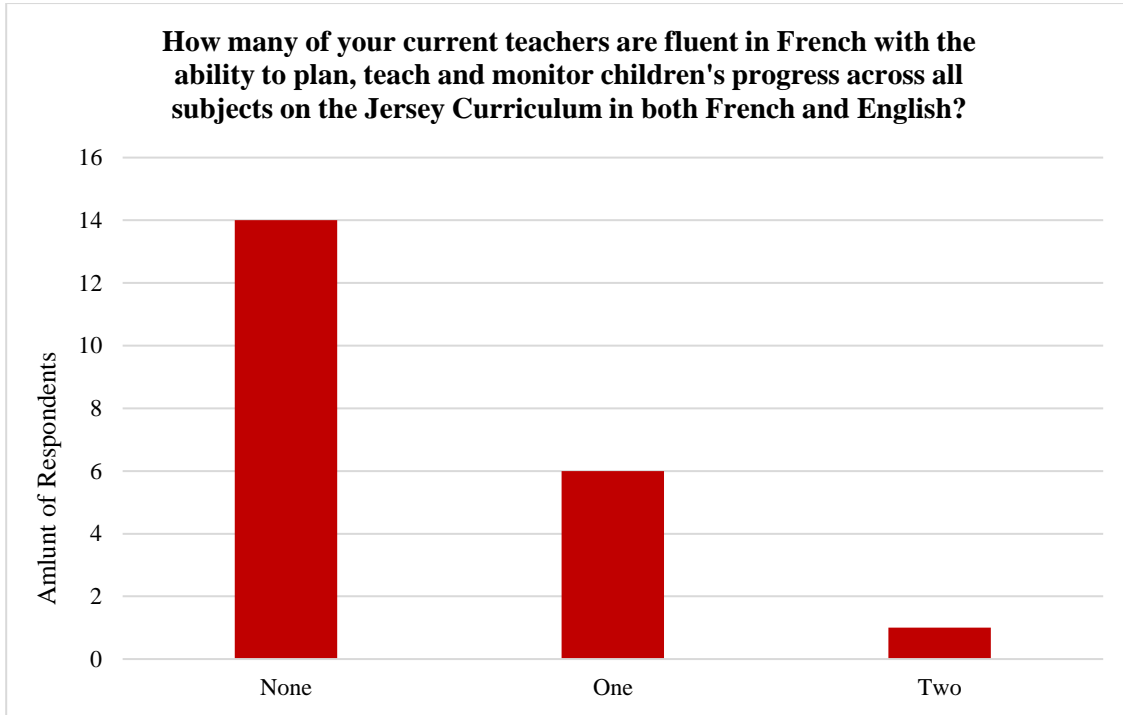
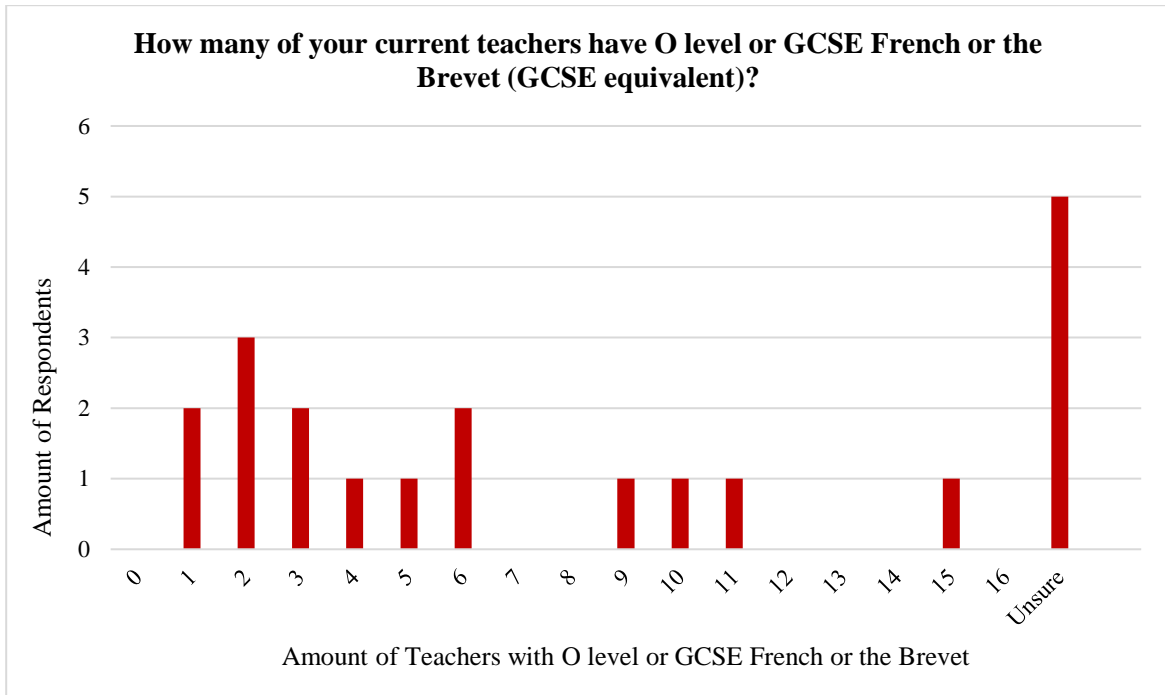
Primary School Headteacher's Survey Results

A survey sent to all 24 primary school headteachers on Tuesday 3rd September 2024 received 21 responses. None of the respondents were in favour of converting their primary school, or three Government of Jersey primary schools, to an English / French bilingual school offering tuition for the delivery of Jersey Curriculum in both French and English, starting with reception class(es) in September 2025.

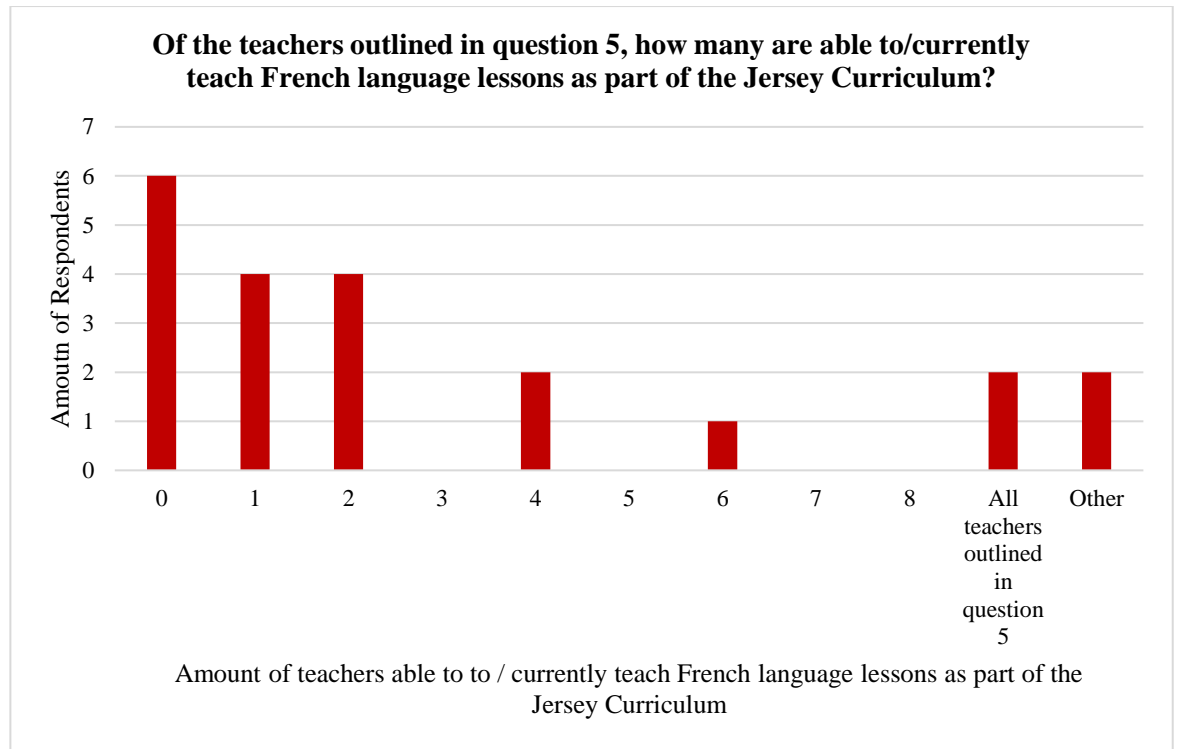
Question 1



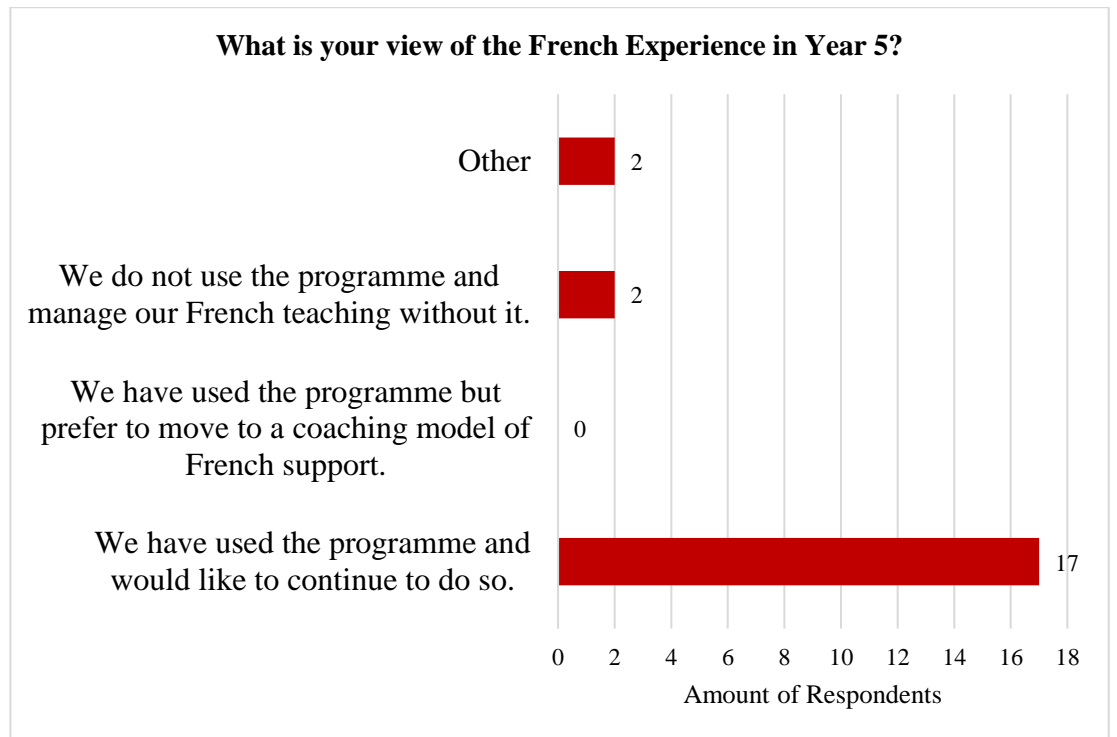
Question 2**Question 3**

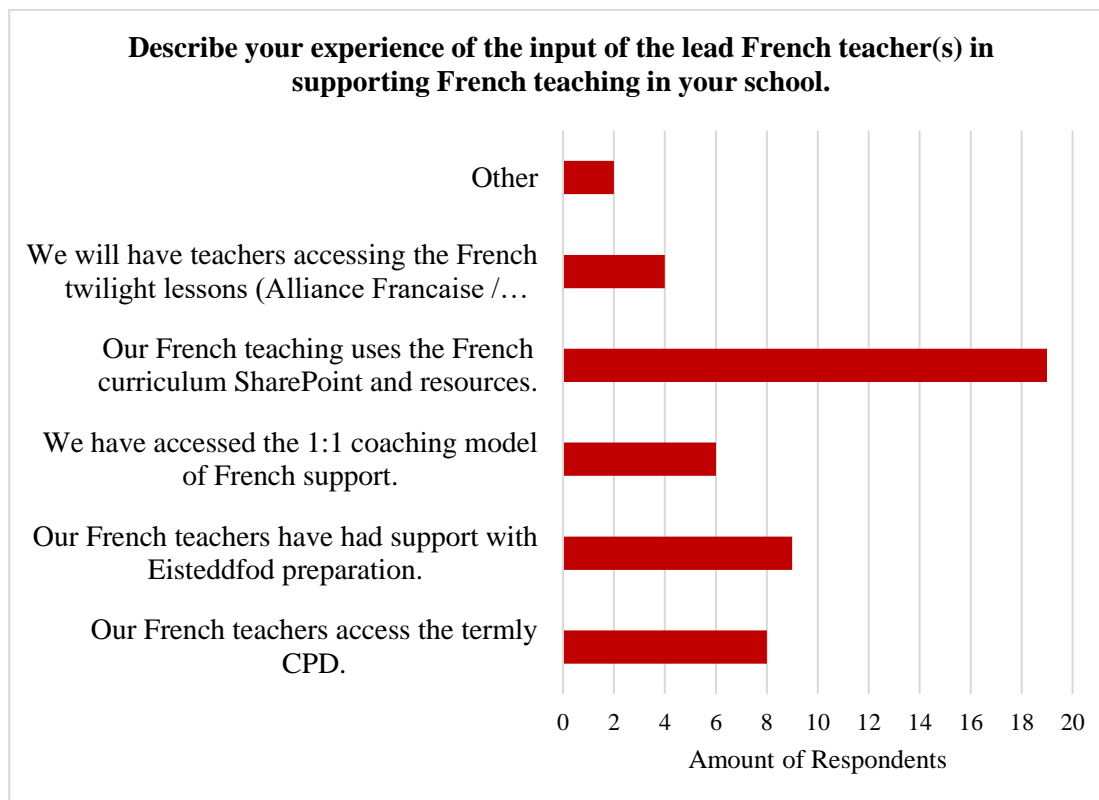
Question 4**Question 5**

Question 6



Question 7



Question 8**Question 9**

Do you have any further comments about the teaching of French and/or the bi-lingual schools' proposition that you would like the Minister to consider?

Response 1

We cannot recruit and retain high quality teachers. It is not enough to be French speakers; they would need to be quality practitioners too - the chances of staffing such an initiative are very slim based on recent and current recruitment data.

Response 2

A ridiculous idea. Get the current portfolio of school buildings up to scratch as they are woefully inadequate. Ensure the current schools are staffed sufficiently with a talent pool to draw up, get this done first (or at least try) before coming up with a whimsical idea of a bi-lingual school. Nonsense, please visit the town schools first and speak to headteachers about the situations they are currently dealing with: increasing numbers of SEN and lack of new talented staff, then make a decision.

Response 3

Although I value the richness of languages and the benefits that multilingualism brings, the proposal about fully French/English bi-lingual schools brings many challenges. This would include recruitment, parental choice, admissions, monitoring.

Does the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher also have to be bi-lingual, therefore limiting current talent and recruitment into this post. Resources are limited, so why should this suggestion be above other initiatives, for example Oracy development or further language support for Polish/Portuguese students?

Response 4

Believe we have more important priorities.

Response 5

It would be impossible to find teachers who have the skills in teaching French across the curriculum. Some children struggle with English let alone French. Why French and not Polish or Portuguese. How much are these teachers going to be paid for delivering an advanced skill? Other industries would reward advanced skilled employees sufficiently. How will you recruit? What training will be offered? Why is French so important???

Response 6

It's an elitist, niche hobbyhorse and threatens the equity of our offer to all children.

Response 7

If the intention is to improve the teaching and acquisition of French then the funding, staffing and resourcing that is currently allocated to Jèrriais should be reallocated to French - this combined team could then ensure that all schools provide 1 term of Jèrriais and 2 terms of high quality French from Yr3 up.

Response 8

It's a shame that this project appears to have ignored or at least deflected from the excellent MLL inclusion work that has been going on in Primary schools, especially **REDACTED** school which is leading the initiative (alongside other key schools). The impact of this work and the developing use of translanguaging and ensuring that MLL approaches are an integral part of the curriculum planning and delivery, are key to the continued progress and achievement of our MLL children. The positive progress this work has on the accumulated knowledge and developments of children is manifest in our outstanding levels of achievement for our MLL children (at least 70% of our school cohort) and their ability to integrate and thrive as they progress through education. This sits alongside the access we have to both Jèrriais and French teaching as part of our curriculum. I feel a more realistic view needs to be taken on this based upon the reality of needs in schools and our growing community with less emphasis on what might be considered a vanity project.

Response 9

Not at this time.

Response 10

To manage the curriculum expectation is already challenging without increasing the workload and capacity of teachers by introducing a bi-lingual expectation

Response 11

We are very happy with the current arrangement of the French experience

Response 12

How does this fit in with our priorities? What are we trying to achieve? How is this fair, just and equitable for all children across the island? We already have a brain drain - children going to university who don't come back - is it worth the money to give a few children this advantage when the island is unlikely to directly benefit from it when they are grown up? Politicians need to act in the interests of ALL children, and not indulge in their elitist, niche hobby horses. If this proceeds, where is the funding coming from, where is the curriculum coming from? As we teach the Jersey curriculum by law, I am interested to know what about what resources are available to teachers to teach e.g. the Tudors, or The Vikings Invasion of Britain? I can't imagine there are many books available to support children in their discovery of English History. The French curriculum is highly prescriptive - are we supposed to be teaching that. I don't wish to be rude, but this proposal seems have been made by someone entirely out of touch with modern education. Look at the funding pressures schools and CYPES are under; the department has been consistently run down for years in terms of staff - expected to pull out a world class service on tram tickets. What new staff will be needed to oversee this project? A one year timescale is nonsensical - we would need to establish a vision, aim/purpose and then the practical details - including additional staffing and resources for school - in my view this is just throwing away money unless we can determine a very strong benefit to the island.

Response 13

This should be a non-starter. There are many greater, more pressing needs to be addressed in schools.

Response 14

We have a significant proportion of children who start school with little or no English. In our context, we need to maximize the amount of time the children are using English and have a particularly strong focus on oracular to help them to build their English vocabulary. Whereas I can understand that this initiative may well be beneficial to a cohort who all speak a good standard of English as it will provide the benefits of a second language, for a cohort of children who mostly already speak at least one language other than English, it has the potential to hamper the English language acquisition that they may not be getting at home.

Response 15

No.

Response 16

I think there are much more important issues in education to consider.

Response 17

Jersey is a multi-lingual island. The second and third languages of the island are not French, but Portuguese and Polish. If we were to offer bilingual provision, it ought to be in these languages, not French, and there may be uptake from these communities for this (although research would be needed- they may actually not want this either). There is no demand from parents for this that I can establish in my school, nor have I seen adequate research to ascertain if this is what the public want or would actually be of benefit to children. Potentially there will be a lot of resistance. This idea seems to have little rigorous research behind it and does not represent the needs of my school.

There are no teachers that can currently deliver this in my school, and the curriculum, organisational structures, teaching and learning approaches, etc, etc would need to be rewritten and adapted over time, this would be an unhelpful and unwelcome distraction from the very real and important focuses that we currently have for our school's improvement. There are real challenges in our schools in Jersey in 2024 that we are working hard to overcome, around ensuring full inclusion, continuing to raise standards, enhancing our curriculum offer and supporting children and families, especially around some of the challenges they face around mental health, wellbeing and the very real challenges of living in our island community. I cannot see how this proposition is matched to the needs of children in Jersey in 2024, nor to their wishes, the wishes and needs of our parents and families, nor the wishes and needs of the professionals working hard to develop our schools. This proposition feels like a distraction from the important issues that schools are addressing in 2024 and is not touch with needs and aspirations in my school. I would be very unhappy if this proposition was approved, and this impacted on my school. It does feel ironic to even be having this conversation, after a comprehensive Language Strategy was launched over the past few years, and being in a school with a specialist French teacher, a school that often performs very strongly in the Eisteddfod for French and other languages, and a school about to take our Year 6 children on a residential visit to France!

Response 18

No.

Response 19

None.

Response 20

“Quality learning in languages is achieved with strategic planning, excellent resourcing and evidence-based methodology.”

Language Policy for Jersey Education Questions to answer:

1. Capacity? Capacity within the island's teaching profession to undertake this – language capacity and quality of delivery but also workload capacity - we are still navigating terms and conditions for teachers, recruitment freezes?
2. With pressurised resource why French? What is the evidence-based methodology? Of our island languages French is not the most prevalent first language. A French curriculum is already taught across schools. Is this the language to open world-wide opportunities for our island’s children?
3. Impact on first language acquisition – schools are already supporting the Island’s Language Policy, will diverting scarce resource to English-French bilingual schools negatively impact on this work.
4. Is it a priority for our current Inclusion Agenda and the needs as they present within our current cohorts? Reports of ‘delays’ to both development of the Mont à L'Abbé secondary school and consideration for the New St Helier - both are much needed and for some of our most vulnerable children.

Response 21

No.