

**STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE
COMMITTEE ON 25th OCTOBER 2005**

On 20th January 2004, this Assembly approved the drawings for a new school at La Pouquelaye. States members will be aware that the new school, d'Auvergne, opened in September 2005 and resulted in the closure of La Pouquelaye and St. Mark's Schools.

At the time I said that I would return to the States about the future of the two closed schools. I also indicated that the Education, Sport and Culture Committee no longer had a defined use for the St. Mark's site and the Victoria College Board of Governors was considering its suitability as a pre-prep.

Since then, the administration of the La Pouquelaye site has been handed over to the Property Services Department and I understand that the Parish of St. Helier is interested in purchasing the building for community use.

As far as the St. Mark's site is concerned, a number of developments have caused the Committee to reconsider its position.

1. In January 2004, a Children's Executive was established to give effect to the recommendations of the Bull Report (2000). Subsequently the Health and Social Services, Home Affairs and Education, Sport and Culture Committees endorsed the recommendations of the Executive. This signalled the beginning of more integrated working between departments providing services for children.
2. In June 2004, the Victoria College Board of Governors abandoned its plans for St. Mark's due to potential traffic problems.
3. In July 2005, the Education, Sport and Culture Committee published its vision for early childhood education and care, *'Investing in Our Future'*, (R.C.54/2005), which included a recommendation for the development of an Integrated Children's Centre in the town area.

Following consultation with our strategic partners, the Health and Social Services and Home Affairs Committees, the Education, Sport and Culture Committee now plans to move forward with the development of an Integrated Children's Centre and has identified the St. Mark's site as being suitable for this purpose. States members will today receive R.C.81/2005 which sets out, in more detail, the rationale for this plan and how it will be achieved.

The Presidents of the Finance and Economics and Environment and Public Services Committees have been consulted about the future use of the St. Mark's site and have indicated their support for the development of the Integrated Children's Centre, recognising that this is the most appropriate use for the site at this time.

It is anticipated that the new Centre will be fully functional by January 2006.