

STATES OF JERSEY

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Education

MONDAY, 4th December 2017

Panel:

Deputy L.M.C Doublet of St. Saviour (Chairman)

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour (Vice-Chairman)

Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier

Deputy T.A. Vallois of St. John

Witnesses:

The Minister for Education

Chief Education Officer

Deputy Chief Education Officer

Communications Manager

[10.00]

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour (Chairman):

Welcome everybody, we are the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel and this is a quarterly public hearing with the Education Minister today. Could I just ask before we start, has everybody got their phone on silent please? Thank you. I am Deputy Louise Doublet, I am Chair of the panel and I will let the rest of the panel introduce themselves.

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour (Vice-Chairman):

Good morning everyone, Vice-Chairman of the panel, Deputy Jeremy Macon of St. Saviour, District Petite Longueville.

Deputy T.A. Vallois of St. John:

Tracey Vallois of St. John, member of the panel.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier:

Deputy Sam Mézec of St. Helier, member of the panel.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

And our officer cannot be with us today because he is having an operation. We are very lucky that we have got Timothy Nicole assisting us today, so welcome Timothy. Minister, could you please introduce yourself and your officers?

The Minister for Education:

Deputy Rod Bryans, Deputy of St. Helier No. 2, Education Minister.

Chief Education Officer:

Justin Donovan, Chief Education Officer.

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

Sean O'Regan, Deputy Chief Officer.

Communications Manager:

Tracey Mourant, Manager of Communications.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Lovely. Minister, there is a statement there -

The Minister for Education:

No, but I have read it before.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

You have?

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Memorised and understood (Overspeaking). Thank you. Okay, let us begin, first question. Minister, at the last meeting we discussion bullying in the Education Department. You made a commitment to send an email out to all teachers with your newsletter, I believe. Just putting information on policy and how staff can go about reporting if they feel that they need to. Could you update us on that, please?

The Minister for Education:

My email generally goes out towards the end of term so we have not sent that yet. However, we have got all the information that relates to the bullying to go out with that. That is how I do it. So it is in hand, it just has not happened yet but like I said, that is going to be delivered in time.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay. Okay, so is that the last day of term or the last week?

The Minister for Education:

No, it is a couple of days before so that teachers get -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay, so teachers will have a chance to ask questions on that email before school finishes? Okay and could you copy in the panel please?

The Minister for Education:

Certainly, I think I did last time.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Thank you very much, okay. That is all on that one.

The Deputy of St. John:

Are you aware if the email has gone out centrally?

The Minister for Education:

Yes. That would be in the attachment.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay. Deputy Vallois?

The Deputy of St. John:

Will the Minister update the panel on the progress of the Education Business Plan of 2017, please?

The Minister for Education:

Sure. We remain on track, I have got a copy here. This is the latest version and that one now notates not just the 4 principles which were raising standards, working with families, autonomy and the curriculum. I will go through each of those but that is what we have really kept our focus on. I think most people appreciate that that is the area that (Overspeaking) - bless you. Okay, standards have risen, I think people are aware of that. Therefore, we remain on track for what we set out to do. We have got a new curriculum which I will mentioned in the curriculum area. However, coming up with that was part of raising the standards. There will be a new assessment framework and new moderation that goes behind that. Working with families, we now have the family forum and we now have new support workers associated with that. That is, new support people have been appointed, you may have seen that in the press. There is more work to be done on each of these as I go through it. Autonomy, if anything is the area that we need to pay a bit more attention to. However, all teachers now teach the same curriculum that was important to us. All teachers are under the same terms and conditions that has been worked on with ourselves and the unions. Therefore, we have adopted the same safeguarding arrangements and we will have a school evaluation framework. That is, 17 reviews have been done including college which is the autonomy but there are still areas there that we need to keep working which I'm sure the Chief Officer can explain later. Then we come to the curriculum. The curriculum has been 'Jersey-fied' for want of a better word. Therefore, we have got more focus and I am sure Deputy Maçon will be happy to hear that there is more focus now on the politics of Jersey, the history of Jersey and to do with languages in particular. We have increased a languages project that has just reached fruition. You may have got an invite to the end of a 6-week project which is Immersive Languages for Primary School Children. We had a full French assembly, I think there have been a couple of others. We are still evaluating the results from that but that has been very successful from what we perceive from both the childrens' point of view and the parents'. Lastly, but not least in the curriculum, the other element that we felt needed a bit more attention was the Cultural Passport I think Deputy Mézec was aware of my work with the Design Council and using design thinking. Therefore, the 6 projects that we have been working on using design thinking are 3 in Jersey and 3 in Guernsey. The one that we had, in particular, to Jersey was Cultural Passport. Through that concept, we changed the notion of the passport as a physical object, which I think was the Chief Officer's idea originally, to a cultural experience. I'm sure Sean who has been part of the project can articulate it further. However, it is a cultural experience, therefore all the children from the point of reaching primary to the point they leave school will have some sort of context of experience of what we think is the culture of Jersey.

The Deputy of St. John:

Can I ask, when you talk about raising the standards of reading outcomes for Jersey's children and

young people, what do you actually mean that? Is it standards just in the case of getting a good result at the end?

The Minister for Education:

No.

The Deputy of St. John:

Okay, so can you explain?

The Minister for Education:

Yes. So raising standards involves itself in different areas. In particular, in increasing literacy on the Island is an example. If you get young people more or at an earlier age, which I think creeps into some of the other stuff that we've been doing in the early years, we have got more opportunity in later life to actually access that. Further, raising standards in terms of G.C.S.E. (General Certificate of Secondary Education) results. There is a golden Thread all the way through. We have been working on things like the Real project. We have been enhancing what E.C.O.F (Every Child Our Future) had to offer - Every Child Our Future and so elements of that.

The Deputy of St. John:

On the actual standards of the business plan, you talk about strengthening significantly the arrangements to challenge schools and the system to raise standards on improved outcomes, what do you mean by that?

The Minister for Education:

Challenging schools?

The Deputy of St. John:

Well, it says strengthen significantly arrangements to challenge schools.

Chief Education Officer:

Sure, it means a whole range of things. There are 3 key elements to that. One is having data, we now have 3 years of reliable data. So we can track progress of each individual child, groups of children, schools, communities. That allows you to go back to those communities and schools and say, "We have the data on these children, they're not making the progress they should" or, "They are making great progress, well done", that is the first thing. The second thing is a review framework which allows us to take very experienced HMI from off the Island, very well-trained local heads, deputy heads and other leaders and members of our own department to combine to a team. They review - very robustly indeed what schools are doing. At the moment, I think 17 schools have gone

through that process. In a year's time all schools would have gone through that process. We do not make it compulsory, but hopefully most of our heads and deputies will also have participated and that is terms of 'challenge'. The third is cultural and we are trying to encourage the whole our system to question itself and each other. Can we do better by these children? In the past, what we 10ded to have were targets which were predictive grades for children. If they came in at 11 to a secondary school, this is how they should go out at 16. There's been 5 years with them, so during that 5 years what else can you achieve other than the predicted grades? Back to your original question though, in order to raise those grades, through the curriculum, as the Minister has said, another process is trying to raise children's self-confidence, their perseverance, their resilience. A whole range of skills and compe10cies which will help them in terms of getting better outcomes.

The Deputy of St. John:

What is the expectation that this will end up exactly like O.F.S.T.E.D. (Office for Standards in Education (British)) system in the U.K. where there is just pressure? For example, children that are going home saying we are constantly being assessed, I'm bored, I'm fed up of this, I'm not learning anything. What is the end result there?

Chief Education Officer:

It simply won't happen. Because many people in Jersey have not experienced the full onslaught of an O.F.S.T.E.D. inspection, they 10d to compare the review with O.F.S.T.E.D.. Having lead many O.F.S.T.E.D. inspections myself and trained something like 200 odd O.F.S.T.E.D. inspectors or participated in their training, this isn't anything like O.F.S.T.E.D.. There are a number of differences. Firstly, the team doesn't go away - O.F.S.T.E.D. is hit and run. A team will turn up, do a school over, produce a report and go, which I think is criminal. During the review, we have built up a huge knowledge base of the school and get right under its skin. So the team remain in place and work with the school, they do not leave they work with the school to make the school even better than it is. Secondly, the culture here is different. The view we take with our schools is this is about school improvement. Therefore, when we review a school, if a school is not doing very well that is as much our fault as a department as the school itself. If it happens on our watch, we are small enough and there is no excuse for a department of this size to say that school over there is not doing very well. It is our school, we know it well so we are in it together. So we certainly wouldn't go down the O.F.S.T.E.D. route. This is very different, it is robust and it is challenging but it is fair and it's transparent.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

I would like to ask the Minister a bit more about this assessment process. The phrase that you used Justin that the schools are being assessed is very robust, indeed. Minister can you just elaborate

on that? What is your understanding of that process? Can you define exactly what is meant by very robust indeed?

The Minister for Education:

Yes. This feeds somewhat into another question we will deal with later which is to do with the teacher's workload and one thing or another. What we are beginning to do for the first time ever with the data that is being produced and we never had this up until fairly recently is to identify where children are on the scale of things. Then we are looking to see where their potential lies and seeing if they're on track to produce that. Although there is the occasional situation that Deputy Vallois has described where children are bored, I do not hear that discussion from children. I think our schools are full of creativity and full of information. They are deeply rich in terms of the learning that we now have, particularly in the primary schools. Now we have got a system that actually allows us to identify things and then to see where the concerns lie. Do they lie with the teachers within the schools, does it lie with the heads? Where does it lie? What we want to do, which is why value added is such a good way of identifying these things is that - as the Chief Officer already said, we can respond to those. We didn't have that data before.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

I'm just trying to get a picture of what this assessment process might look like to a child and to a teacher. Can you describe if you were a teacher in an average primary school, what would that assessment process look like?

The Minister for Education:

Most children will not see the process, they will just be going through their normal day in terms of their education and going about whatever it is that they are expected to do in those particular lessons. The teacher's responsibility is to make sure that those children are moving from one place to another in terms of what's expected of them. However, they must do it in a way that is completely engaging and creative and increasing their knowledge on one scale or another. In terms of the teachers, we have been working very close. As I said before to teachers, to make sure that they have an idea of what the child represents at that point in time and to keep them on track. To look at those various parameters to make sure that we're moving in the right direction.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Can you give more of a picture of the teachers teaching day to day in their classroom, when this assessment commences I want (Overspeaking) what actually happens?

The Minister for Education:

The way we are working towards now is you have an iPad on your desk in front of you teaching. I

could be looking at those particular children and working through a day's lesson and actually identifying that the children have picked up very specific things to do with their reading ability or to do with their literacy.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

How do the teachers know that this assessment has appeared to commence and who tells them and -

The Minister for Education:

All teachers are assessing on a daily basis with all the children -

Chief Education Officer:

Are you talking about the review process or the assessment frame?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Yeah, review process.

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

If it is helpful, 2 weeks before review happens the head teacher is notified and notifies her or his staff. The review typically takes 3 days. The first day, the lead reviewer and a non-Island person, a head teacher, a deputy head and officer with great experience in running schools meets with the head team and the teachers to reassure them that the whole principle is developmental.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So, 3 days before it starts?

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

2 weeks before there is notice and the actual event is over 3 days. Day one is typically a Tuesday, there is a meeting with all the staff to explain what will be happening, the process and the check on safeguarding. Safeguarding is put to the top of the agenda so -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

What do you mean by -

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

Are the premises safe, are the practices safe, is the school up to date with its procedures. Has designated teacher who is responsible for child protection had recent training?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay.

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

That is given priority. Then the full team - and the size of the team is commensurate with the size of the school, a very big school a big team, obviously. Equal numbers of locally trained school leaders and in bigger teams some off-Island expertise. It is led by an external reviewer who will spend 2 days, typically a Wednesday and a Thursday meeting children, sitting in on lessons, meeting school leaders of subjects or departments depending on primary or secondary. Looking at pupil's books, looking at how the data backs up against what they see. Then giving feedback to the leadership team of the school on the Thursday mid to late afternoon and the representative of the department.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay. So the feedback goes to the leadership team. Okay and how is that filtered to the staff? Sorry you are probably getting to that.

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

Yes. So recent ones I've sat at - I get to as many as I can, the staff are then given the headline. So it can be different in different schools. In one of our secondary schools recently the leave reviewer gathered the whole staff, 80 or so people and explained the headlines and what the priority is for change. The focus is that this is just a snapshot in time but we are working together with the department and with the school and what it needs to focus on for continuous improvement.

Chief Education Officer:

We regularly ask staff to give us feedback of how was it for you. It is not always but almost always very positive. They say it of 10 nerve-wracking before it starts which is why we are running this as a training program until every school has experienced it, then we will open it up. The feedback is almost always very positive.

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

We have explicitly told teachers, head teacher and through all the teaching unions that a teacher should do nothing different. Given that 2 weeks' notice there should be no triple marking, triple mounting, triple anything. Your normal planning processes, your normal assessment of pupils' because to be of value to the school you have got to see it as it really is. Then you -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

You're getting feedback from the staff and that is great. How are you recording that and feeding that back into your own systems to improve them?

Chief Education Officer:

We have David Berry who collates that and then feeds it back into the team. The other thing we do, despite no matter how often you say to staff don't try and do things. The kids are not going to suddenly start reading or writing better. We don't take any plans in, so we say to them we do not want to look at any lesson plans. Because if we look at plans, teachers will be up all night writing long plans. We are not going to take any of your planning materials in. The other thing we do is we time these so that it is not possible to spoil people's half-terms. What we thought was if we give them the notice, then half term is part of that fortnight it will spoil their half-term so we don't have any of those. Schools have cottoned on to that, so it is easier for them now to predict roughly when we are coming in. So we are doing everything we can not to do that. To be absolutely frank with you, it depends on how the head teacher manages it. If the head teacher gets a little nervous and overreacts a bit, that will go down onto his or her staff. We work with head teachers to say let's not panic here, this is a school improvement system, it's not O.F.S.T.E.D., there is a big difference.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay. I think we have spoken before, Deputy Bryans about balancing the need for collecting data with the impact the collection of that data through testing etc has on the wellbeing of children and staff? How are you managing that balance and trying to make sure that this whole process isn't impacting negatively on children and staff?

The Minister for Education:

Are we talking about teacher's workload now? Because I have got something -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Specifically, I am talking about this review process but if there are more general things you are doing, please mention those as well.

The Minister for Education:

Okay, all right so I will go onto the workload in a second then. From our perspective, and certainly mine as a Minister, the whole thing that I set out right from the beginning and I am sure my department feel the same, is that we are about educating children. We are not here to make people feel it's difficult or uncomfortable. We have not adopted an O.F.S.T.E.D. process that people have looked at in the past and said this is stressful and dreadful for all concerned. As you have already heard, it has been quite well articulated we are very careful about what we want to do. Our agenda that we set out is raising standards and changing the curriculum. So all of that is focussed on the

wellbeing of the child. That is paramount. If those children aren't feeling well, they're not going to learn anything. So it is very important to us that we get that sort of concept right. Going back to workload strategies for teachers, we have been working very closely with unions and they have come up with -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Just before we talk about that, can we just stay with the children at the moment?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, sure.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

I wanted to ask you what you would say because we are hearing reports of children that are feeling stressed and their mental health is being affected by the tests and that they're losing interest in school and in the curriculum and their learning. We have seen some evidence of that and it is particularly anecdotal at the moment. In the same effective method that you have done with teachers, do you have a way that you can collect, across the board, children's views on school and on testing so you can see the real impact?

The Minister for Education:

Yes. You are very right, just last night I was looking at the NHS's review which is to do with the mental health of children and then trying to identify are we different from what they are doing but of course, we are not. Children are very concerned about all sorts of things and what the NHS report says is that this is growing and it says it is moving down the scale. So primary school children are picking it up which is a great concern of mine. It does not necessarily translate here, I think we are a slightly different society. Through the very qualified colleagues of mine, I think we are in a much better place than the U.K.. However, it is global, it is not just specific to Jersey. To answer your question fully, I think we have now embarked on something else you have asked about, the V.A.P.P. (Voice and Participation Project). All of these things are actually now designed to gain a children's voice -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Can you just elaborate on V.A.P.P. just for those -

The Minister for Education:

I can never remember it myself -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Is it the Voice and Participation Project?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, that is absolutely right. So we have got one of our psychology education people who is now auditing all the schools to see if there are children's forums, if there are opportunities for them to voice their feelings. This is absolutely in line with what you are suggesting because at the moment all we hear is anecdotal as well. The anecdotes seem to be quite varied in terms of what we get. From my perspective, as a Minister I do hear a lot more of the positive stuff rather than the negative stuff. When I go into schools and I know those schools are half the time expecting the Minister. But I also have the opportunity to go in when they are not expecting me. I do not see any of that, I see kids raring to get into school and an examples that I've given in the past is standing at the very point when children are being moved into the school, they're running into these schools, they are hungry for what's being offered through our walls. So I do not see the stresses, it worries me as a Minister that this is a growing thing. We need to be looking at it and addressing it and doing something. However, I think absolutely what we have in place here is the right way to do it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

I think -

Chief Education Officer:

Can I just make one point for the record, because it sounds like you seem think we have introduced a really big regime of assessment and testing, we haven't. All we have introduced are 2 things; every 3 years the children will experience a review for a few days, so the kids will see that for 2 days. All that happens is the lessons are watched and we talk to some children. Then, once a year, they will sit a test. That test is not even published, it is used to test the veracity and the coherence and the consistency of teacher's own assessments across the Island. We have not introduced a testing regime here, we have avoided that. The line we have taken all along is teacher's knowledge of children is most important. The teacher assessments count. Even the one test that we have introduced is trumped by the teacher assessment. Therefore, if the teacher assessment says a child is doing better or not so well as the test, the teacher's assessment trumps. We are only using the test to check the consistency across the Island when we have a conversation about standards. Therefore we haven't introduced a testing regime, it is not here.

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

If I may add, it goes even further. There is evidence now that children are being tested less because of what we have introduced Island-wide. We want to know how all the 11-year-olds on the Island are doing so that we can better plan resources. If we need to strengthen mathematics teaching that is where we should invest. We piloted doing an assessment in English, Maths and Science of every 11-year-old when they are in the third week of year 7, just started secondary school. Last year we did it with the children in the May of year 6 year to see which is best. What we have found is by giving secondary schools coherent data, based on teacher assessment and modified by test results, it has cut away the need in year 7. Because a lot of children arrived at big school in that oversized blazer a bit scared in the scale of very happy primary children. Schools felt the need to do a reading test. The trust now is growing and by doing one Island-wide assessment there is early evidence - it is brand new - there are actually fewer tests in that secondary school. It sounds counter-intuitive but by having a consistent Jersey assessment school for each child, based on teacher assessment modified by these external assessments, there should be less testing -

Chief Education Officer:

I just didn't want there to be a perception that we have introduced this big assessment. We have deliberately set about not doing that for obvious sorts of reasons.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

I think perhaps though (Overspeaking) - it might not always be what the Department have instructed heads and teachers to do. However, I think what we are hearing is that there is a culture of raising standards perhaps sometimes at the expense of pupil and teacher wellbeing. With this raising standards agenda, perhaps teachers are testing their children themselves because they want to keep checking where they are. Therefore, it is not always things that may have come directly from your department. The other thing that is striking me now is that we are talking a lot about what I think, what you think what we think. However, what I would like to see is some effective collection of views and opinions and something we could look at -

Chief Education Officer:

We do do that.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

- Something anonymised and independent for every parent who perhaps talk with their child. I know you have done this with the teachers and that data is really useful, it is giving you direction. Is that something you could do, to send a very short, maybe 2 or 3 questions home to families to ask them about their child's wellbeing and ask about the raising standards and the testing? Because this is something we are hearing concerns about and I would like to see the facts on it rather than us just talking about it. Is that something that you could send home?

Chief Education Officer:

We do ask children -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Can I just ask the Minister?

The Minister for Education:

I think before the Chief Officer speaks, it is important to realise that where we have been heading over my term of office is to get to the point where children's voices and parent's voices are heard. There is one area I want to focus on as a Minister in my last part of my term of office. These guys have focussed a great deal on the mechanics of teaching and the schools and to the benefit of where we have reached so far. I want to shift that, we have always had families in here, but I want to consider more information provided for parents so they fully appreciate what it is that they're paying for. Going back to the point you're making about the welfare of children and their wellbeing. What I was reading in the documents I was reading last night is that there is peer pressure, parental pressure, school pressure and social media pressure. All of these things impacting as a catalyst.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

It's not all your fault.

The Minister for Education:

No, but I do think we are in a position to be able to articulate things a little bit better and that is some of the stuff we have been working on. Cliff for instance started a parent forum based upon one of the children and that was the area -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

This is one of your officers?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, sorry. We now actually progress and we wanted to use that to understand how it works more than the mechanics. So those people have been trained and they are able to now talk to parents. What we could ask for is for parent forums at pre-school eventually that would be great. I would like to see governing bodies for each school, we don't generally have that at primary school. Therefore, there is more transition of information, more communication going on. To highlight it to parents at this moment in time, I don't have a particular problem with asking parents questions. However, I think we are moving there in a much more effective way rather than just sending out emails -

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

I agree with the thrust of the question that pupil voice is underdeveloped in Jersey and it has been in the original version of this plan. However, the default from the Department is to answer the question of how can we get the child or young person's voice. For example, the E.Y.C.P. recently had 3 questions for the people of Jersey. We worked to make sure that we could get the children's voice. One of our schools agreed in their States Debate, year 5, "Is Jersey the best place in the world to grow up?" It was debated and interestingly the class in the morning voted yes and the one in the afternoon no. So it shows there is some work to do but we captured the voice (Overspeaking). We work with the Jersey Policy Forum on Civic Engagement and young people's views. We have one of the youngest voting ages in the world but low participation. Each review holds interviews and talks with children and young people about their experience in their school and we are bottling that. In some, the Jersey qualified children said this is the best place in the world to go to and their results are above the mean for the Island which is amazing and in another school they were pretty sad.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

This sounds wonderful and I think on top of that it is just my feeling of some work that I would like to see done. It doesn't have to be yourself, it is something that possibly as a panel we could talk about facilitating. We wouldn't want to take resources away from the things you are working on. Is that something we could talk about Minister?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, absolutely. It goes back to what you and I have been talking about, not collaborating but a more productive role in terms of what we do apart from just scrutinising the policies that we make is moving forward. I think that is absolutely right, I would love to have that discussion. I do think whoever comes in office of Education Minister after May one of the big agenda items is going to be mental health of children and wellbeing. So we can begin that work which is opening up the sort of thing that Mr O'Regan has just talked about which is opening up that children's voice and that is fantastic -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay, so if we were to send something to each family, that could be facilitated through -

The Minister for Education:

Yes. One thing I would ask of the scrutiny panel because I don't know how it operates apart from these meetings and the meetings we currently have is do you visit schools on an ad-hoc basis? Do you go and see -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Us as a panel?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, this is a question to the panel. Because I think that is right, you hear these anecdotal stories but when you actually get in there... Because you could question me very well on this point, but actually when you get into the schools and you talk to the heads and you see the children and you see it. I think all of us just about were at a French assembly, it was amazing to see all of these kids all speaking in French for a whole assembly for about 20 minutes. It wasn't just so much the French it was the confidence of these kids.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

I'd love to go and spend time at schools, but we are an evidence-based system so we have to go by

-

The Minister for Education:

My point is I suppose that parents will contact you if they have got a complaint rather than if they are pleased with the situation -

Chief Education Officer:

Just on a practical point just to be dealt with.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

You're next.

Chief Education Officer:

We agreed just a few ago with secondary heads and last week with the primary heads to launch a full review of all children every 4 years. That is going to happen in 2018.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

What do you mean?

Chief Education Officer:

This is carried out by the statistical unit and so they ask questions of children around a whole range of things -

Officer of Communications:

It is a health related behaviour questionnaire. That is what is used to be called -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay.

Chief Education Officer:

In there there are questions about their wellbeing and how they feel and their attitudes. That is year 6, 8, 10 and for the first time year 12. So there are a number of questions in there and Sean was working with the team. So rather than repeat that work, that will take place during March -

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

If you have questions you can add that to it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Could we be fully informed on that please, could we have any information that is relative?

The Minister for Education:

It happens outside so it is independent, it happens outside of our department.

Officer of Communications:

It is a statute (Overspeaking) - children are given time in school to complete it. (Overspeaking) - previous versions were all on -

The Minister for Education:

It takes about an hour or so we built it into the curriculum.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So you do it in school?

The Minister for Education:

So that we do it in school time and we do it during the P.S.H.E. (Personal, Social, Health and Education) Programme. Nowadays, we get pretty much a 100% response rate and the private schools also get involved. So that is due to happen in 2018.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay. I think we need to move on but I would appreciate if you could just send us a note just outlining what's happened and what is planned to happen and any information you have got, if you could share it.

The Minister for Education:

Yes. Can I just ask before we move on, because you were going to talk about work flow and I have some things -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

We are going to come back to later (Overspeaking) sorry you were going to jump in with a question -

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

At the last hearing when speaking about teachers' workload you spoke about a working group that was looking to deal with this. Could you just let us know where this working group is and what's happening with it?

The Minister for Education:

I will ask the Chief Officer to explain a little bit more in detail for you. But we have 3 documents which have just recently been signed off by the unions. We will be creating a platform to go out, I will just read out the titles. Eliminating unnecessary workload around planning, teaching resources associated with data management and around marking. So these have been signed off by the unions, this will create a platform for us to go back and understand what the concerns are. Behind that is, obviously, the teacher's survey which I know you have got another question about. That has only just recently been signed off which is why -

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Are these to be published on the Education website?

The Minister for Education:

These aren't ours, these are U.K.. They will be adopted and used if this agreed by everybody.

Chief Education Officer:

It might be worth just saying that we met earlier in the term with the national executive members of the N.U.T./N.E.U. (National Union of Teachers/National Education Union) who agreed that this would form a basis of our conversation. Sean and I met last week with the General Secretary of the (Overspeaking) last weekend, Courtney and he also signed us off. If we are going to adopt paperwork from the English D.f.E. (Department for Education U.K.) which was a result of some quite significant work between senior union officials and the D.f.E. we thought it was important to get signed off from them. They have both signed off on it and the Department are comfortable. There is lots of stuff in there which is not relevant for Jersey because we don't have the assessment structures that they have there. But nevertheless (Overspeaking) - there is all sorts of stuff in there

which doesn't relate. Nevertheless, in terms of the principles and the balance. The other real breakthrough from both the national executive groups was and particularly with the N.U.T./N.E.U. last week was terribly refreshing. What they are saying is, rather than have the traditional conversation about teachers are working too hard, what we can do about it we are going to start at the other end. We will agree what kind of marking and assessment and data is actually needed to raise standards. Then let's have a look at the workload. The unions are confident that by having that conversation will strip out a lot of unnecessary stuff. So we are comfortable with that as a conversation.

The Minister for Education:

Do you want to mention the working party you have got?

Chief Education Officer:

As a result, the working party will run but we didn't want the working party to start it's work until we had sign off from the national executives -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So it hasn't met yet?

Chief Education Officer:

No because we wanted to get it signed off.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

And who will be on it?

Chief Education Officer:

Both unions, classroom teachers, officers and the head teachers.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

How are you selecting the classroom teachers?

Chief Education Officer:

We're asking the unions to do that. What we are likely to do although we haven't agreed yet, is if you remember from the last survey we ran, workload came up as an issue. We asked for volunteers and got plenty to sit on the focus group for workload. What we will probably do is ask for members of that focus group to come forward because they are already engaged in the conversation and it was quite helpful.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

The focus groups are through the stats then were they?

Chief Education Officer:

Yes.

The Minister for Education:

Heading up that working party is a chap called David Berry who is our new head of Raising Standards and Achievement, he is in control of that. He will be running through that process and then we will be reporting back in the summer term.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

I think we have actually asked for this before and haven't received it, apologies if we have. But we did ask for any documents around this working group, the focus groups etc. Could you make sure that is sent through if it hasn't been and (Overspeaking) - we understand it would be confidential?

Chief Education Officer:

The focus groups from the survey?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Yes -

The Minister for Education:

You're mixing 2 different things up.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

You said that the focus groups are feeding into your workload working group?

Chief Education Officer:

At the end of the survey there were 3 big issues. What we did was ask for classroom teachers to have a very confidential conversation. So there were no officers there, no union reps, it was done independently. We then had a report which gave us feedback.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Yes, that is what we'd like to see. Anything you have.

Chief Education Officer:

We can give you those, that's not a problem. Also then from that that focus group on workload, our thinking is we would ask for volunteers.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Yes, that's fine anything you have received if you could pass it on and again happy to keep it confidential (Overspeaking). And is there a terms of reference for this working group?

Chief Education Officer:

Yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

If we could have that as well.

Chief Education Officer:

That has been agreed with the unions.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Will you be publishing that terms of reference?

Chief Education Officer:

No reason why not to put it on our website.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay thank you very much -

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

This process that you are undertaking now, do you anticipate substantial change as a result of what you might learn from it?

The Minister for Education:

Substantial changes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

What change at all?

The Minister for Education:

It is a process of understanding both from the teacher's point of view and heads and our own. We want to marry up the concerns that we have and correlate what we are trying to achieve. To do that

process, I don't at this point think anything is going to substantive but you never know. That is the whole point of having a survey and working with this group.

Chief Education Officer:

The thing that will make the biggest impact on a day to day basis for teachers and it has always been on schedule for September 2018 is the new A.I. (Artificial Intelligence) assistance is in place, the technology is in place, the training is now going through. Once we have got through all that and the next academic year I think the teachers will find that a lot easier. At the moment they are having to handle data and assessment arrangements 2 or 3 times. It will cut that right out. I am not sure I convinced the unions of that. They want to be convinced but I am fairly confident that it will make a big difference.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

With the workload, is just about marking or is about -

The Minister for Education:

No you have got different strands -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Oh, I see they are all different.

The Minister for Education:

Yes, sorry there are 3 different.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

What was the other one?

The Minister for Education:

One is data, one is marking -

Chief Education Officer:

And planning. When you ask teachers to tell us about the things they spent ages doing, almost without exception is to do with planning lessons and assessing children. We need to plan our learning and we need to assess our children's progress. So we thought, if we are going to reduce workload, we need to focus on those 2 processes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay. Just very briefly, I wanted to ask about the old police station site and some land that was going to be given to Rouge Bouillon School. Is there any further update?

The Minister for Education:

There is actually, the Chief Officer has a meeting...

Chief Education Officer:

We would love to have that designated for some time in the future to build a new school there but it is more an issue for property holdings and we are having sympathetic hearings. But it is not in our gift really.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay, still in negotiations?

The Minister for Education:

It is still in negotiations.

Chief Education Officer:

And I suspect it will rumble on for a while.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay. On a related matter at Rouge Bouillon School, this is by that roundabout, they do not have much of an outdoor area and trees to shelter them. Are you aware of any issues with the air quality around that school?

Chief Education Officer:

Not that we are aware of, no.

The Minister for Education:

No. We have never tested -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Is it something you could look into?

Communications Manager:

Certainly (Overspeaking) they do air quality -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Minister, could you request the -

The Minister for Education:

Both my children went to Rouge Bouillon at some point in time and they are still (Overspeaking) - no I understand. I think always with schools you get 2 points where I would say there is a possible concern would be early in the morning and then when the school is over. That is where you see that accumulation. I think that is quite a wide and open area that particular one but yes, there is no problem.

Chief Education Officer:

Just for the record, on the site whilst there is a lot of discussion, I understand there is a very large site that could be used. The 2 things we were pressing for immediately is one, behind the Early Years Unit to push that wall back to give the kids more space. Also, we want to make sure that the little caretaker's house there is ours to develop. We think that would make a really good - if we are able to develop the idea of children's centres that would be perfect. So I want to hang on to that house at all costs and push the wall back to give the kids more space.

The Minister for Education:

Just to give you an update, because I don't think I have spoken to you since I had a meeting with the community policing team and that caretaker's cottage came up as an agenda item and the Deputy of Health then raised it once again. It has been a concern of ours because it has been standing empty - although it hasn't been empty, it's been used in different ways. However it has not been used as a caretaker's place, it is a consideration for a family centre possibly. It has been spoken about, there are other people talking about it.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Just very briefly again, I appreciate it is a property holdings matter, but of course if education (Overspeaking) - again it is the same type of question for schools. Next to it Samuel Rice(?) site, the planning application has been rejected. Again, traffic and congestion is a big issue at that school. I am just wondering whether the Department has approached property holdings to review that particular aspect of it?

The Minister for Education:

I don't know -

Chief Education Officer:

They haven't actually -

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Would you be minded to do so?

The Minister for Education:

Of course, that is fine.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Thank you. (Overspeaking) - just to look if there is any scope? Just to get the Department to think about it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

We are going to jump ahead now to Student Finance. Deputy Macon any updates?

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

So obviously during the State's budget, a matter within Jersey for some time is the issue on the changes to Student Finance. The Treasury Minister as we know gave the announcement again. We haven't had all the detail on it so I wonder if Minister you could just update the panel on what is happening regarding Student Finance?

The Minister for Education:

Okay, there are several different issues here. I think everybody has been aware and as a panel you have been focussed on this yourselves. We certainly have since I took office. We have now got to a point when all the areas that we were most concerned about have been addressed to some extent and there is still more detail to come. I believe we have a meeting with the Treasury Minister and my Chief Officer Thursday. So I am going to the finance side of it. From our perspective, what we were always wanting to achieve was the best result we possibly could for the children. It is in that context, both myself and the Chief Office and my Finance Director have been fighting for an increase in the Maintenance Grants. This is opposed to a lot of pressure on us to produce a student loan which will then burden students with debt. I think I was quoted as saying I would find that very difficult having looking across the waters and seeing what is proposed there. What we want is children going to university that are not focused on that but are focused on their education. Along with the Treasury we have worked hard to produce what we think is a workable solution. Moving past this point my Communications Officer, I'm sure she will just outline it in a second. She will say what we are going to do in terms of the consultation arriving at a point in March when we would come back to the States Assembly with it. I think you have read all of the detail that has been produced with the press releases. However, we are now looking to communicate those views more widely to try and capture some of the views of the students that are away on holiday over Christmas. Would you like to just explain what we're doing?

Communications Manager:

Yes, sure. Here is one I prepared earlier. This is the Communications Plan for the consultation. The aim is to run it from Monday the 11th of December so it would launch ideally a week today which is the last week of the school term. That is quite important because it enables us to get to parents through the schools and to students currently in school. We can send them a link to fill in an online survey. We will run that over Christmas so that we get the graduates who are coming home for Christmas and people who are contacting families and things like that. We will run it into the New Year and aim to close it on the 12th of January. This gives enough time for people to respond and then enough time for us to collect the information and feedback. We are bearing in mind that there are have already been 3 substantial consultations on this issue. We don't need to go over old ground, we want this to be quite tight, quite focused, quite (Overspeaking) - so that we can move forward. It needs to be a consultation that is really quite useful and tight. It has 3 objectives, one is to inform the public about the details of the plan. The second one is to get a mandate if there is one, or otherwise for us to go forward with this plan. The third one is to collect comments about it. So we have a very clear indication yes or no and then we have a range of comments to explain people's concerns about it. It will be potentially different for every family. The issue with higher education is that the system is different for every family because their own circumstances are different. So it is going to be focussed around social media and online survey. It is going to be quite simple and straight forward so that we can collect and feedback the information quickly. We are also going to have drop-in events at the library before Christmas and after Christmas in the evening and possibly handing out leaflets in town so we get maximum take up of it. We will be doing all the usual things like contacting businesses, chain of commerce and things. Skills Jersey also has a database of some graduates that we can use to contact them. We are just going to do as much as we can in a really short space of time.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Will you work with the Youth Service?

Communications Manager:

Absolutely, yes, all of that, yes.

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay. What was the finish date for the consultations?

Communications Manager:

Well, this hasn't been signed off but ideally we would want it nice and compact and it would be done and dusted by the 12th of January.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay, so there is some time after Christmas?

Communications Manager:

Yes. So we will do a drop-in at the library because of course there will be students in the library over Christmas (Overspeaking) - but also lots of people in town. So we need somewhere where they can go and use a computer to fill in the survey there and then.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So it is all in line.

The Deputy of St. John:

How about in terms of once it's finished?

Communications Manager:

Yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

In terms of collating the data and the information together, will you be publishing that response?

Communications Manager:

Yes.

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Roughly how long do you think that will take?

Communications Manager:

It depends on how many responses we get.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay.

Communications Manager:

It will make it really simple, so there will be just a couple of really simple questions and some open text boxes under certain themes. And the idea we publish the survey we will make it clear that all the comments will be published. They will be published pretty much straight as they are. We need to make checks for bad language and things like that, those will be taken out as they would normally. Otherwise all those views (Overspeaking) - all those view will be entered like we did with the mechanical consultation is a document that is clear and easy for everyone to use and understand. I don't think it needs to be at this stage a really complicated thing. We know that from your consultation and from the student learning group consultation. We have also factored in a briefing with them. What else can I tell you?

The Minister for Education:

Earlier I had an email from a parent who is concerned about wanting to take a child or advising their child to a foreign university and would it be the same. Effectively, what would be saying to people at this point in time before we go to this consultation, what we have taken is what we previously had in little bits. So all the elements of it will remain the same but just more opportunity for more students.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

We can all say we have been flooded with questions as soon as it was announced. People wanting to know the detail and I would urge the Minister and the Department with Treasury to get as much information out to people as quickly as possible. I'm sure that will be taken on board.

The Minister for Education:

Sorry to interrupt, I think we mentioned to you before in the background we have been trying to change within the States website more information being placed on it. We reached a couple of hiatus points which are the difficulty transferring the information. We want more of it, I would like much more information. Even considering to the point of having our own website where we can put more data up there and more information that will help parents wherever we can. Deputy Vallois asked me before about are we going to have a platform for people to be able to understand our education funding and can they have a calculator. We have been working on that and we have got something that we have been working with and creating. As soon we have got the parameters of all this fixed down then there will be a calculator.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Has there been a Ministerial decision associated with this yet?

The Minister for Education:

No.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So that will come after the consultation?

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay. How likely is this proposal to veer from what was stated in the States Assembly or is it pretty much set in stone?

The Minister for Education:

It's not set in stone. There is an opportunity for people to make comments and to look at it. The principle of what we are trying to achieve here remains. All of us, no matter who it is in this room have been working on this for a very long time. It wasn't one particular thing or another up to this point, it was working through it. The difficulty, to some extent, was actually identifying the numbers and making sure - and I'm sure you will ask the question on Thursday - giving up the funds to make this actually happen and the sustainability of it all. It was those parameters which are the reason it has taken us this long.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Do you know if the funds will still be coming from within your department? Because I know there has been an issue with separating the higher education funds out. Is that going to be separated going forward?

The Minister for Education:

It will take the £10.5 million which is already in our budget and add the £3.5 million from tax reliefs that create the budget and that will move to the treasury.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Right.

The Minister for Education:

That is the assumption we're making that hasn't been agreed yet.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So that is what you'd like to happen?

The Minister for Education:

What we cannot do is have it come out of the Education budget.

Chief Education Officer:

As a Minister you know yourself all too well, is that the 2 things that we dealt with have been non-statutory in terms of where we were. And as an Education Minister, the sort of questions you were asking me earlier about teacher's workload and the wellbeing of children and the education and raising standards, it's the country we inhabit on a daily basis. But we soak this up, it is very necessary, we want to make sure it is all about the economic impact of this island. We are more than happy to get involved.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

How confident are you that that budget will be separated from you own department then?

The Minister for Education:

They are the discussions we are having at the moment.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

So just to understand, after the consultation then will there be requirement for there to be a proposition to the States? Or does the Minister - if the Treasury Minister were to unlock funds can do it by order? How is that going to work?

The Minister for Education:

It has to come back as a proposition.

Communications Manager:

Also, we need to change the order.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Change the order -

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Okay.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Thank you -

The Minister for Education:

We are hoping if it is a very positive outcome in the consultation it will be dealt with quite quickly through the States -

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Can the Minister confirm this has been agreed by the Council of Ministers?

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Yes?

The Minister for Education:

Yes -

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

So there should be some minutes somewhere?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, I would hope so. Unfortunately I wasn't present at the actual Council of Ministers when this was discussed.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Okay. We have already requested them, yes, okay but it is just nice to get it on the record. A lot of these I think are perhaps more Treasury questions which we want to ask on this section -

Chief Education Officer:

From an education department point of view of course we are delighted, absolutely delighted.

The Deputy of St. John:

Will it affect Education?

The Minister for Education:

We don't think so, no. No.

Communications Manager:

Because we are not changing anything. This is essentially going to be the same system.

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

With more funding towards it, I'm sure.

Chief Education Officer:

The end result will hope will be more young people going to university than is currently the case -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

- Any legislative changes at all?

The Minister for Education:

And it doesn't take - (Overspeaking) - just to fill in the back ground that doesn't stop us from the work we have been doing, particularly to do with foreign universities to increasing the degree offerings here on the Island. All of that carries on and I still think it's important to get as many students through.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

So what is happening then can I just ask around the Nat West loan? Is that going to be scrapped? Is that carrying on?

Chief Education Officer:

That's scrapped.

The Minister for Education:

That's going to be scrapped (Overspeaking) - or in fact they have already written to us to say that they won't finish that.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Oh, okay -

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

And the Maintenance Grant is only to be increased by £500?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, but the parameters for claiming that have grown.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Right. We also had a question from a parent asking whether the new system will cover university fees that are charged over the £9,000 threshold. Has there been any examination of that?

The Minister for Education:

I think that exists in what we already have at the moment (Overspeaking) - the medical yes, that's been talked about.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Say if it was engineering or something as it wouldn't fall into that exemption? Okay.

Chief Education Officer:

Not at the moment.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Not at the moment, okay, thank you.

Chief Education Officer:

That's marked at the consultation actually...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

How do you keep that under review as to what qualifications are required by the businesses of the Island?

Communications Manager:

It's through skills strategy.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So that is under review?

Communications Manager:

Through Skills Jersey and that is an ongoing piece of work.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay.

Chief Education Officer:

We haven't talked about a skills strategy yet, but one of the 5 key things is much better intelligence in terms of skill gaps.

The Minister for Education:

And much more joined up thinking. So again, being in the community group just last week, there was considerations in relation to what we offer nurses on the Island, social workers and everything else. All that is in line with what we are attempting to do for the skills strategy.

The Deputy of St. John:

Can I just ask on the skills strategy (Overspeaking) - something I just heard in the media this morning about younger people not being able to get part time jobs or they're not going out to get part time jobs. So the situation around that in terms of understanding the workplace was their education. What is the policy around that and what do you think inhibiting either employers or even the children to actually go out and work say for 14, 15, 16 - just 6 hours on a Saturday?

Communications Manager:

I don't think we have any figures on that.

The Minister for Education:

We don't, no.

Communications Manager:

It certainly wouldn't come under us anyway. I know there is a law about the amount of hours that children are able to work. From our point of view on work experience, we provide everybody year 10 and 11 do 2 weeks like the U.K.. So everybody in Jersey does get some work experience and then also lots of other schemes like the Institute of Directors, work shadowing and lots of others and more niche things for those in the finance industry looking to get work experience. That doesn't come under us any Saturday jobs, it is not an Education -

The Minister for Education:

No, but it is a good point.

The Deputy of St. John:

No, no I just wondered (Overspeaking) the Skills Trust or whether it is -

The Minister for Education:

Yes, it has been discussed several times at different levels. One of the problems is that we have unique situation here on the Island in terms of things like Saturday jobs, there aren't that many

around that there used to be back in the day. Also, the flexibility, because I was just talking to an employer for a supermarket chain over here and what he does and how we works with that. So we had those discussions and he tries to give as many students as he possibly can the opportunity to do that. And you do see that in Saturday jobs but the jobs are finite, we don't have the scope, I don't think.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

It just occurred to me with the Trident, do you do any equality and diversity checks on making sure you're not funnelling boys into science and girls into care (Overspeaking)?

Chief Education Officer:

We do, yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

You do?

Chief Education Officer:

We are very careful about that. Although, it is still skewed but we do our best not to do that. Going back to your point, one of the things in the Skills Strategy is a full-bodied review of Trident. It is very successful - much more successful here than England. In fact, it has been running for 30 years, anything in education that runs for 30 years is pretty successful. But the feedback from Industry Commerce, the Skills Strategy is heavily influenced by Industry and Commerce. They are keen that Trident has greater focus than it currently has. Because Education we see it as kids dipping their toe into the water and feeling what it's like to do into the workplace. But we will be reviewing Trident -

The Minister for Education:

There is a situation which is not quite the same as what you are discussing but we have found that considerably back, before 2008 banks were soaking up students directly from the point they are at their G.C.S.E.'s or A Levels. That tailed off but it is now beginning to grow again so there is much more opportunity for a student to gain jobs in finance than there used to be. I know as a Minister my own son went through a Trident situation and worked from Trident into a job at the local bank so it does work.

Chief Education Officer:

Chair, we are drawing down £1.4 million to deliver this as an Education Department. It is unusual for the Education Department to front a skills strategy it normally sits with economic development.

But I can't think of anywhere else, so it sits with Education. So if ever you want to be briefed on that, we can and we are quite excited about it (Overspeaking). As you know, one of our Level 16 heads is coming out to work on it permanently with us. One of the reasons we are front it is to make sure it has an impact on young people (Overspeaking). As I say, we will be spending £1.4 million between now and 2019 so we are gearing ourselves up. It changes slightly what we do, I'm quite excited about it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Yes, please keep us informed.

The Minister for Education:

Relating to your diversity situation, talking to engineers, so we work closely with things like construction and engineering. Engineering is a really good point. I spoke at a presentation they did which was where they had 2 individuals. One was an old guy who went out and spoke to schools about engineering. The other was a young girl who recently come out and of course her talk was much more (Overspeaking) - many more people turned up. So it is out there.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

I think we should move on.

The Minister for Education:

Sure.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

We will try to finish in 25 minutes. I think we should move on to the nursery education funds now. I am just looking at my questions because we have had some new information since. Minister can you just confirm that you sent us a draft report, has it since been published?

Communications Manager:

This afternoon.

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So it hasn't been published yet?

The Minister for Education:

No.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Oh, okay that perhaps will change the questions we can ask then.

Chief Education Officer:

Bear in mind, it is a report written for us so we have not made any changes to it.

Communications Manager:

The one that we sent you on Friday they told us was their final draft. I think their working members were due to look at it over the weekend and making a final edit. So it might have slight -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay I won't ask any -

The Minister for Education:

Sorry, apologies I think you thought I was being obtuse about it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

No.

The Minister for Education:

But if you remember the original discussion (Overspeaking) - was that I was expecting the report towards the end of October and it was then pushed into November and of course -

Communications Manager:

Partly due to the fact that Dr Hayman doesn't live in Jersey -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Right, so I will not ask any questions about the content of that report as it was given to us on a confidential basis. So going back to our original report then, Minister at the time you partially accepted our recommendation to withdraw the proposals about means testing the nursery education fund.

The Deputy of St. John:

I raised questions many times about the nursery at St. Mary's school. It has been argued that there is a policy back from the 1990's that every school was to have a nursery. I haven't seen that policy,

I can't find it online but that fed into the policy that the former Education Minister I think 10 years ago did early years. At that time, that is when the partnership funding was built upon and the education funding side of things. What was the thinking behind that in terms of having a nursery school on every school and having the nursery education funding in place and the 2 policies working in tandem?

The Minister for Education:

I like you have gone back, I don't know how many times. I think we have had this discussion and the only reference I could find of where the policy is framed from was we think that was referred to by Deputy Biber when he was an Education Minister saying that the policy laid with that. That said, moving forward, without going into too much detail of what this report says. I think it clarifies the issue for us that teaching or having highly qualified teaching professionals within a nursery environment is the best route forward. It has always been my observance that that works extremely well because it gives parents and children a continuity to go through from nursery to school. Going back to your point about running 2 policies, the other thing we have always tried to do, in the same way that we have been trying to do with higher education funding is provide as much opportunity for working parents to get some support for what they're attempting to do. We know in the same way that you have heard these anecdotal stories that parents are under a lot of pressure. Both parents are going out to work, in some cases they have 2 jobs. So actually running a policy that provides some funding for it seems to be -

The Deputy of St. John:

Would there be any consideration in terms of extending hours for the nurseries at the schools to work alongside?

The Minister for Education:

I think there is a consideration for that. But again, what we want do is where we possibly wrong-footed last time and are quite happy to stand up and say we made a mistake is we want to go back out to the parents to consult with them, back out to the nurseries to make sure they are completely in line with the thinking. Working with Dr Hayman's task and finish group and now coming up with this early years childhood partnership gives us that opportunity and gives us a better platform to begin those discussions.

Chief Education Officer:

Can I just add - I know we are short on time, just 4 really quick points. Number one, um, is that those who have been working in Education a long time know that a primary school without a nursery is incomplete. The staff are missing a group of staff with skills and experiences and knowledge about how children develop. A primary school with a nursery is a much stronger school all over.

Secondly, what States nurseries provide - which is unfair to expect private nurseries to provide - is support for children with special educational needs, that 20%. Because at a States nursery, it is attached to a school with an SEN department with skills and experience. A whole a year of children in early years education with special needs without that support is problematic, so States nurseries provide that. The third thing, is we have got to achieve here - we haven't got anywhere near it, so I can't claim that. But blurring the edges between States and private nurseries, elsewhere parents will turn up to an early years provision and they won't know what belongs to the States and what's private because they work collaboratively together. By doing that, you can make provision for 2 to 4 year olds which is consistent, coherent and really well developed. It provides all sorts of internal pressures about people on different pay rates and all the rest of it. They have much better problems to handle than having parents picking their way through a complicated States or private nursery. St. May is a classic example, where in England it would be a no-brainer, that would be a mixed economy of private and States funding, it works beautifully elsewhere. The 4th thing to say, is that if you look at the 2 to 4 year olds we don't have enough provision at the moment. We are all focusing on the 3 or 4 year olds and we are missing the point, really. So with this report, I am hoping and I admit I am a bit of an optimist at times, I'd rather be that than a pessimist. Having read the draft as you have, I think this provides us with a possibility of a watershed where we can increase the overall provision, wider the age rang and have a much, much better collaboration between private and States. However, we have got to stop the conversation between us and the private sector only being about contracts and payments. We have got to be able to have a conversation about early years. I have been here 3 years and we haven't got anywhere near having the conversation yet. It is a huge step for us and I think this report opens the door to that conversation.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

I think partly some of the confusion may have been a lack of clarity on exactly what the policy direction is going to be. So I am grateful for the clarification there on that you want to see qualified teachers teaching in nurseries. I think perhaps if that had come earlier, we might have avoided some of this. To try and avoid down the line confusion, now that you have this report to inform you, will you be publishing an extension to your business plan? Or something which can outline your policy direction on early years? So that people can have a conversation about it and comment on it and you can develop it.

The Minister for Education:

The quick answer is yes, and I'm sure Sean wants to come in for a second. From my perspective, what was interesting when I first came in as Minister, we talked about Education Jersey and Educating Jersey. One of the things that I have very pleased about seeing through this report and through discussions with Dr Hayman is that what I was always trying okay do was push the parameters either end. So you know that we have been interested in the 1001 days in early years

as a concept. But equally, taking higher education up so that we get our own people involved in education. That is something else that is on my agenda and I want to get involved in. However, Dr Hayman was then pushing it even further down to the point of pre-conception. So getting it - which I think is a really valid point and actually then suddenly transforms what we are trying to do as an education department. I think you are absolutely right, I think there will be clarity on all the work that we are trying to do. The communications office has been working very hard on these areas making sure that parents understand what we're trying to do and why we're trying to do it. So Dr Hayman's will give us a very good platform for that as the Chief Officer says.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So what will it look like then?

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

So once the report is published and goes to the Minister for approval, the draft is being very welcomed. We want to devise an earlier strategy that brings in all of these elements but crucially to stand underneath alongside the emerging children's plan. We have been working with the Community Constitution Affairs, the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry Report made clear recommendations that Jersey should have a Children's Plan. Previously in 2011 it added a Children and Young Person's Strategic Framework. So going back to the family principals of what was a very good piece of work and document, but to get better coordination. So what we do in an early years strategy, if we are not paying cognisance of what help the Commission of Family Nursing and Home Care to do with Health and Midwifery (Overspeaking) - so we have 3 or 4 workshop days under Andrew Heaven looking at all of the charitable part, voluntary as well as the States departments that are relevant. So we want a plan for all Jersey children -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So your policy Minister will be published along -

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

- So that is is coordinated and properly joined up, that's the driver –

The Minister for Education:

Equally, to put some more flesh on the bone, the other thing that we have been working in the background on that we started some time ago. We started with Sam Ray was family centres. So we are looking towards a family centre in St. Peter's and we are looking for 2 town sites to do that. So you will have heard noises about working with Andium to consider the new projects that they have got and putting the family centres into that. So that is the collective and that is all part of the concept behind it all.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Thank you. What is the timescale? When will this come to the States Assembly for debate, this strategy? Will it be this term of office?

The Minister for Education:

I would hope so, it would be nice to actually -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Is that what you're aiming for?

The Minister for Education:

From my perspective as a Minister is that I do want to push this agenda a bit. Because I think this is where both of us started out from saying this is what we want to arrive at. So I will try to get as much information out within my term of office. But it has been indicated to me that it may take - it's a matter of resource for us which is the problem -

The Deputy of St. John:

In the long term, this all sounds great in terms of getting the pictures and vision and all those types of things. But the short term, in terms of people thinking about their children going to nursery next year, is there a plan to bring forward a clear message and understanding? Is that going to happen maybe January or February time just so they understand?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, that is the point I'm trying to (Overspeaking) - we want to be able to articulate what's in this thing and say this what our feeling is being that, absolutely right. Whether it reaches a fruition of anything in 4 months in our office -

Chief Education Officer:

Just to be absolutely clear, this is a huge piece of work. It is long decades overdue in Jersey. Elsewhere, early years provision is seen as a key part of a long term educational strategy. Here, it tends to be viewed as a luxury item. It isn't, it really is important, we need to get it right, we need to take our time to do it. Over the last couple of years, we have put a lot of time into rewriting the curriculum assessment and all the kind of stuff we have been talking about. It is those same people that have to project manage this. So we have got a very, very small team so we are having prioritise. When we get to January, this will be one of our 3 big priorities. So this will be one of them, Skills Strategy will be another and then there is another round of budget. But this will be an important piece of work and joking apart we are looking to get something out. But it will be a summer term

before we get it. Because we want to talk to parents and schools and the private sector. What we intend to do is keep this group together, I think they have done a fantastic piece of work. So the idea is to keep that group on track from the start -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Is there funding from your department, do you know?

Chief Education Officer:

We have paid for this, yes.

The Minister for Education:

Yes. Just to follow on because it was an important point you were making earlier about teacher's workload and stress and all that sort of thing. Actually if we get this right, the pressures on them are less great because literacy will be better, the maths will be better, they will have more confidence and more resilience. So this is the important bit for us.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay, thank you for that.

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Just one process question, the report that is coming out, is that going to be lodged as an R on the States Assembly website -

The Minister for Education:

No, it is a discussion we are yet to have because we only got it the other day. So as soon as we have -

Communications Manager:

We have only just got one, by the time we go back to the office we might have the final version of this report. So we don't actually know what the final looks like yet -

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

If it could be lodged as an R we would appreciate that.

Chief Education Officer:

We want as many people as possible to read it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

I think we will move onto the Care Inquiry now. We might have some other questions that we might need to email you but we will focus on the Care Inquiry.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Can you update us on the work the department is currently doing as a direct response to the Care Inquiry?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, I have got some information who work in this particular area. So the Inquiry response group has now been established, both the inquiries we replaced with a children's plan steering group. We have worked very closely with Andrew Heaven in terms of what he's been doing and equally Dr Cathy is part of his project team as well. So there is a joined up thinking going on there. The steering group has been established developing a children's plan. This will be ready for headline, draft sharing and engagement event in March 2018 with a full view to launch in May 2018. A structural redesign has been agreed to assure multi-agency accountability and multi-agency delivery with the 5 key priority areas in the children's plan. This includes a small cohesive integrated children's leadership team supported by a wider, extended leadership team. So specific to us in terms of education, we have just now appointed these family support workers. There are 6 early intervention that are now fully operational and embedded into the system. Then have been brought up to speed and the structures of the inclusion and early intervention. Pupil voice and participation, you asked about that earlier, but that is a continuous progress and we are doing an audit to see what we have got here. Equally, the wider voice, certainly the youth service plays a big part. The Jersey Practise Model is now overseen by a steering group accountable to 2 individuals who work within the Department. It is good to go it says here so yes, that is where we are.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

You mentioned the 6 family support workers, what is being done with this to make sure what they do is accessible to the people who need it and that people are aware that it exists and -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

And it is not too intimidating for people to access it.

Chief Education Officer:

Yes, we are running that through the schools. So the heads tend to be referring families. We are trying to tie it in with other arrangements. So we have a title of our 30 families (Overspeaking) - parent scope. So we set up a parent scope scheme where parents are invited to come in and talk. We have it rolling around the Department. Often issues arise from there which need some really

positive intervention. So referrals can be that family support workers are coming from that scheme too. That is early days, they have only been in place since the beginning of the term. There has been a lot of training involved in that. Going back to the Cathy Hayman report, we are discovering there are family support workers dotted around doing all sorts of things. What we need to do is bring some greater coherence to that as a whole. You are quite right, we are trying our very best for families to see the family support workers as confidential, on their side. We are at a very successful part at Jamboree School. One of our most experienced heads is working with a number of vulnerable families. It has had a huge impact on attendance, behaviour and outcomes and parents are confident. So we are treading very carefully but it is early days.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Yes and it is great that families can access through the schools. But if there is families with younger children and they are not in the schools yet, because we don't have a universal antenatal provision, before birth there might be parents who need that provision in the early months. How do they access -

The Minister for Education:

That is picked up by health workers, I think -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So right okay so the family support that you've got that is accessible before your child is in school?

Deputy Chief Education Officer:

Yes. So to help bring coordination both for early years and across the piece, there is a new post in the Department for parent and family engagement. So as well as the line managing for 6 family support workers, she manages the Education Welfare Service. So those people who check registers for children not being in school or parents struggling. She also works alongside the line manager of the Early Years Inclusion Team. So they work with area S.E.N.C.O. (Special Educational Needs C) so all private nurseries and voluntary nurseries as well as the State schools ones. And they meet regularly to support them. So any referrals from very young children. So what it is doing is running a parallel to what has evolved for special educational needs. It used to be the fact you'd meet children in nurseries -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

What I am trying to get at is though if you have got parents and the child is younger than school age and they have a question about parenting are you saying they go to the Health Visitor?

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay, so they don't need to (Overspeaking) - if there are any more severe problems -

The Minister for Education:

They can be referred (Overspeaking) - and again goes back to this golden thread that we are trying to do right across the States. Is to make sure that any parent for any - it doesn't matter what they are we have got opportunities -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So it is like an escalator - if that is more severe -

Chief Education Officer:

Just to be clear, I see the point you are making. I would have to check but I am pretty sure that if not all, almost all referrals have come through school connections rather than outside the education system. There is no reason why they couldn't be referred through because the connections are there. But I don't think they have been made.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

So there's more information that needs to go to that office -

The Minister for Education:

Yes, it's embryonic.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Yes.

The Minister for Education:

Schools are very primed to do this when they do get into primary school. As an example, lots of schools run a breakfast club. Teachers and the head in particular are so primed to pick up on any of those kind of concerns and it can be dealt with -

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

What is being done to promote this service within the other departments?

Chief Education Officer:

Julie Radcliffe and Debby Key work with people like Andrew Heaven and so everybody is aware of

it (Overspeaking) - but I think the mechanics as such, because they are employed by us and they sit with us, the assumption is I think that you access them through schools. We need to be better at communicating. It is a scarce and therefore rare and important resource. So we want to prioritise their use but there is no reason on earth why our family support workers can't work families before children are of school age.

The Minister for Education:

I think you are aware that we have been trying to produce a document that we will give to parents to understand what the children are reading relating to education. There are 2 other documents that we have got in the background, one is to do with early years so we understand how we can access stuff which has always been a priority for me. The other is for higher education as well to see what's available. I think that will be -

Chief Education Officer:

I think the early years strategy we were talking about earlier will have a huge impact on the way we deploy and use our family support workers.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

You did briefly mention breakfast clubs.

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

How is the Education Department looking at that sort of thing? Other sorts of clubs and courses for when children are particularly young to help give them that start or potentially identify problems if there are any?

The Minister for Education:

I guess this is good illustration of autonomy. Individual schools in different areas have different resources and different needs. So particularly we found this out when we were doing the design thinking for Cultural Passport. If you are in a rural area, the needs are completely different from a town school. We leave it to the heads because they're in the best place to understand what's best for their school. So it is done on that basis.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay are there any planning questions anybody wants to get in before -

The Deputy of St. John:

Can I ask a quick question? I was recently at the Freedom of Information answers online. I noticed that there was a question put in about exclusions to schools. What struck out most for me - and it particularly comes after our session on the standards is that secondary schools reason for exclusion 'disruptive' went from 22 in 2014/2015 to 129 in 2016/2017 academic year. That is quite a worrying jump.

Chief Education Officer:

It's better reporting. It's as simple as that.

The Deputy of St. John:

Is it?

The Minister for Education:

Yes. Much better reporting.

The Deputy of St. John:

Can you explain what 'disruptive' means? Because I am worried particularly about the worst child in secondary schools as well. About their ability to talk to teachers without being seen as a pain in the backside -

Chief Education Officer:

The data in Jersey will always look worse than England because it's so inclusive. Its counter-intuitive I know. If you are in an English school and kids give you a hard time they are very trigger happy. Kids are excluded, excluded, excluded. Here, it takes a lot for a school to lose its patience. So they may exclude you for a few days, do some more work with you, let the situation bring you back. When you look at our data, it is a relatively small number of children causing most of that. We are very keen that our data is accurate because we can't have a conversation about things like disruptive behaviour unless we are really clear about the data. So now schools are reporting it because we can have those kind of conversations with them and provide some support. I have to say though, I really wouldn't want you to get the impression that Jersey is bristling with bad behaviour. The kids here are a credit to the Island, I work with kids all over the place, it's a very small number.

The Deputy of St. John:

I just wanted to understand the jump in 22 in 2015 to 129, it worried me.

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Chief Education Officer:

I accept that but it is better recording. Similarly, you will see other data go up. So we now have an online report if a child falls over and hurts him or herself. Even if it a grazed knee, we have a very quick online form, it takes a few seconds to complete. So now we have good data, is it a playground where a lot of kids are slipping over and hurting themselves. In which case we can send Nick Jung down there and check the kit. So it will look like suddenly our schools are really dangerous because there's going to be far more incidents reported. But we'd rather people get that impression than not have the data. That is the issue there. We do have some very challenging children, but on the whole young people here are an absolute credit to work with and a delight to work with.

Communications Manager:

Good point about small numbers are particularly vulnerable. Young people being in those statistics, it doesn't mean there is individual children. It means often that there are one or 2 individuals who have recurring -

Deputy J.M. Macon (Vice-Chairman):

Multiple incidents, yes.

Chief Education Officer:

One of the things that I've noticed within a few days of being here 3 years ago was how inclusive these schools are, they really are. You remember from the scrutiny committee panel when we had Professor Brian Lamb over. He didn't want to go home because he had never come across a group so naturally inclusive. And that is why that data will look interesting. But it is really important data because it's very disruptive.

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, I know it is, it is just understanding (Overspeaking) - it's okay to put numbers out there but understanding it in context is -

Communications Manager:

That's the problem, it looks alarming but it isn't necessarily what it looks on the surface.

Chief Education Officer:

We are looking at our behaviour support programme. At the moment it is a little bit responsive, kids start to misbehave so we move into support. We need to be better at finding out what those triggers are -

The Deputy of St. John:

If I understand it, the last teacher survey results showed almost 50% of teachers didn't feel like they were supported when they were dealing with children with particular behavioural issues.

Chief Education Officer:

I don't think it was that high but it was an issue (Overspeaking) - yes it was one of the 3 big issues that teachers raised. The other thing is that if you're a teacher and you've spent your career in inner city London or the outskirts of Manchester, you're dealing with some quite difficult behaviour quite a lot of the time and you build skills and resilience. If you work on an island where the children are engaging, intelligent, they're a treat to work with. When you are challenged it comes as sometimes a bit of a shock and I do smile sometimes when teachers refer to this appalling behaviour, this particular child I think was just being naughty, really. But I would not change that for anything. So we do need to look at how we are responding to behaviour. We need to be better at watching these problems bubble up rather than wait for the child - we are not quite where we should be yet with that.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

I just have a final question for the Minister, going back to the report that this panel produced and the announcement that you made echoed really the recommendation in some ways. Minister I just wonder if you can reflect on how the interaction with scrutiny has added value to your work over this term and perhaps how there might be a more constructive use of this really important resource that we have here as a States Assembly? You mentioned that you have paid for this (Overspeaking) - and I wonder if there is scope for the more constructive use of the scrutiny process.

The Minister for Education:

Yes. I think the problem we have got into particularly with the private nursery situation we found ourselves in, we were in a very reactive situation instead of what you're suggesting which is more proactive. This is why today we've mentioned about the skills strategy. You can see the scope and the work and what respectively we would hope to achieve by that. That is an area that would work very effectively. So yes, we found ourselves in a very difficult position but through that process we have got to where we are today and that report reflects it.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Going forward, how do you see that scrutiny could perhaps add more value? It is making use of tax-payers' money really because this is a process embedded in our legislature.

The Minister for Education:

Like I say, to take that proactive thing rather like you, so in advance of knowing what we're doing. We have got a very short space of time before we get to the election but -

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

We can always be better.

The Minister for Education:

No, absolutely and I welcome the question. I think it is that we have that more open dialogue and you understand. I think effectively through the scrutiny what I have achieved as a Minister and what my department has done - fantastic work over the last 3 years, it is a way of reflecting that back and saying we have started on a journey together and we are at a point and scrutiny has played some part in that.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay thank you. Anything more to add?

The Minister for Education:

No, we're done.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (Chairman):

Okay I will bring the hearing to a close, thank you Minister and officers for your attendance.

[11.35]