

Ministerial Response: S.R. 14/2010  
Review title: **Political Education Review**

Ministerial response required by 17<sup>th</sup> January 2011

**Scrutiny Panel: Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Sub-Panel**

**Introduction (*Overall reaction to the Report*):**

I welcome the report by the Education and Home Affairs Sub-Panel on Political Education. I will work with the Sub-Panel wherever possible to take forward any agreed recommendations.

Before taking a view on the findings or recommendations it is important to make a curriculum observation; the teaching of PSHE in our secondary schools is limited to a maximum of one hour each week (4% of a pupil's structured education). This is because of the pressure on the timetable from all other subjects which are externally examined. In addition, the citizenship area of PSHE, which includes political education, is just one part of the PSHE curriculum. Political education, therefore, constitutes less than 1% of a pupil's structured education.

**Findings**

	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1	<b>Key Finding 1:</b>  The Sub-Panel was unclear about the degree of quality control within the accountability structure. It was not apparent from discussions with relevant witnesses during the review that this structure ensured that PSHE was being delivered to the same consistent standard across Jersey Schools.	Head teachers and Heads of PSHE are initially responsible for monitoring and evaluating the delivery of the subject. In addition the head teacher of each school is required to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning across all subjects. This is externally validated by the schools Professional Partner and where appropriate external and independent inspectors and this is validated by the professional partner. Heads of PSHE meet on a termly basis with a member of the Schools and Colleges team to discuss all issues in relation to the curriculum.
2	<b>Key Finding 2:</b>  Independent schools have the current freedom to set their own curricula in accordance with relevant policies and the requirement of examination boards.	This is true.
3	<b>Key Finding 3:</b>  The Sub-Panel believes that the current curriculum for politics within PSHE is targeted correctly. The focus for primary schools is for issue led discussion on current issues, formalised by a debate in the States Chamber in Year 5. The secondary school curriculum then builds on this experience. However, the Sub-Panel concluded that continuity of Political Education from primary to secondary school was not the same across all schools Island wide.	The Minister is pleased that the Sub Panel believes that the current curriculum for politics within PSHE is targeted correctly. It is also recognised that the level of Political Education provided at secondary school level will be dependent on the school's chosen curriculum which is developed to take account of the individual context of each school.

<b>4</b>	<b>Key Finding 4:</b>  Since the 2006 review of PSHE, the Sub-Panel believes that schools have been well resourced with curriculum and support materials to ensure successful and similar programmes across all schools.	Agreed.
<b>5</b>	<b>Key Finding 5:</b>  The Year 5 States visit and Year 10 Scrutiny exercise are of great benefit to the PSHE programme and it must be ensured that all students are able to benefit from them.	Agreed.
<b>6</b>	<b>Key Finding 6:</b>  The Sub-Panel is supportive of the inclusion of local material in other subjects so that it reinforces the information learnt within the PSHE programme.	Agreed.
<b>7</b>	<b>Key Finding 7:</b>  The review has emphasised that teachers are fundamental to the success of the programme. It is not enough to rely on the curriculum structure and resources provided by the Education, Sport and Culture Department. A greater emphasis must be put on training teachers to deliver PSHE, with a particular focus on the local political structure.	The Heads of PSHE across Secondary schools are currently working together to audit the teaching of their subject. The findings of this audit will be used to determine any training needs for PSHE teachers.
<b>8</b>	<b>Key Finding 8:</b>  The Sub-panel was concerned that schools do not have a structured allocation for PSHE post Key Stage 4. The Sub-Panel believes that there needs to be a formal allocation of time in all schools for delivery of information, such as, how to get a social security card and planning for a pension.	The period of compulsory education ends post Key Stage and pupils who continue opt for the courses of study which they wish to pursue. By this stage, the Heads of PSHE believe that pupils should already have been given access to much of this information. Additional support, outside of schools, is provided by Careers Jersey and other specialist services such as Youth Enquiry Service based at La Motte Street.
<b>9</b>	<b>Key Finding 9:</b>  What appears to be absent is a lifelong political/citizenship education strategy, joining primary, secondary, 16-19yr olds and adult education. Although activity is structured in the first two phases, the Sub-Panel questioned whether it is being continued consistently into latter stages of education. The Sub-Panel believes it is vital that a lifelong strategy is developed in co-operation with other States departments, in particular Social Security and Home Affairs.	Political/Citizenship education features as part of the compulsory curriculum for school age pupils. Post compulsory education, pupils choose their courses of study. The focus of any new and extended strategy with other States departments would need to be explored.
<b>10</b>	<b>Key Finding 10:</b>  Politicians do not have equal access to schools. There seems to be an adhoc approach to schools inviting politicians	In general all politicians can access schools in both a formal and informal basis although it is accepted that time constraints, subject matter and availability of States members will to a large

	<p>to speak to students, often based on existing relationships between a number of teachers and politicians. Schools also insist that a lack of time is a barrier.</p>	<p>extent determine the availability of politicians able to speak with students. It is of note that there have been a number occasions when Politicians have been invited to attend schools but have been unable to.</p>
11	<p><b>Key Finding 11:</b></p> <p>The Sub-Panel agreed that the Youth Service should have a different approach to that of schools when educating young people. As such, any political content to their curriculum could successfully be delivered by way of an issue led approach. Evidence, however, suggested that Youth Workers had not been provided with regular training and up to date resources about the Jersey political system, and as a result, had not been best placed to facilitate political discussions with young people.</p>	<p>The Youth Work Curriculum is different from the Schools curriculum. Young people lead on the Youth Work curriculum, so that the issues are relevant to their needs. This issues that dominate tend to be relationships, drugs and sexual health.</p> <p>In terms of seeking to increase the numbers of young people who register to vote, the Youth Service has developed a poster campaign aimed at encouraging young people to appreciate the benefits and understand the responsibilities of exercising their right to vote.</p> <p>The Youth Work emphasis is on encouraging and enabling young people to be actively involved in decision making as individuals and with others in the youth projects they attend. This generally does mean that young people accessing the youth project already have the opportunity to explore decision making both personally and politically.</p> <p>It would complement existing work if youth work staff were able to update their knowledge of the Islands political structures, system and processes and this could be achieved through additional training.</p>
12	<p><b>Key Finding 12:</b></p> <p>The Sub-Panel found that attendance at official hustings by young people had been seen, at previous elections, to be minimal. It therefore believed that students must have the opportunity to attend a well planned and publicised hustings, organized on a school site, in school time, at which all politicians could attend. Schools must be able to display election literature on site, and inform students why it is important to vote and attend a hustings.</p>	<p>It is true that electoral apathy extends to our young people however much effort is made to make pupils aware of their right to vote and why they should use it. It is well known by the Sub Panel that ESC current policy does not allow for official hustings to be held on school premises during school time. This would not be appropriate because it would impact on the curriculum and could be construed as pupils being compelled, by virtue of their attendance at school, to attend. Although alternative arrangements might be made for pupils who did not wish to attend, this could be disruptive to the school.</p> <p>The department will however consider in conjunction with all schools how all the candidates election literature could be displayed on site.</p>
13	<p><b>Key Finding 13:</b></p> <p>Evidence showed that young people need to be 16 ½ before they can vote, due to the registration process.</p>	<p>This is the impact of current arrangements for registration.</p>
14	<p><b>Key Finding 14:</b></p> <p>Discussions with different schools suggested that school councils had not consistently been set up and run across all</p>	<p>The department actively encourages schools as they seek to involve students in the day to day operations of a school. Some schools are more advanced than others in this respect.</p>

	schools.	
15	<b>Key Finding 15:</b>  It appeared that, in contrast to England, there were no structured channels open to young people for them to feed through their views to politicians.	At present young people have the same access to politicians as any other adult. The department is keen to improve channels of communication encouraging young people to have a voice and to this end are seeking to create a Youth forum
16	<b>Key Finding 16:</b>  The Sub-Panel found that parental influence played a significant role in the formation of interest in politics	Agreed
17	<b>Key Finding 17:</b>  The Structure of government in Jersey is too complex and opaque for people to want to engage with it, especially those who are new to the island.	
18	<b>Key Finding 18:</b>  Jersey is lagging behind other jurisdictions when it comes to using social media to engage local people in politics.	
19	<b>Key Finding 19:</b>  The Sub-Panel believes that had the student survey been issued as a directive from the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture, all schools would have had to take part, permitting meaningful analysis.	Participation in any survey is down to individual choice therefore it would be wrong to force all schools to take part. The department and schools did take steps to encourage students to participate in the survey.
20	<b>Key Finding 20:</b>  The Sub-Panel found that enthusiasm and knowledge for the political element of PSHE varied greatly from school to school, both within the state sector and between the private and state schools. Those in the 'selective' schools were found to be more engaged in local politics.	The individual context of schools is likely to influence this.

## Recommendations

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	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Accept/ Reject</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>of action/ completion</b>
1	<b>Recommendation 1:</b>  The Department for Education, Sport and Culture must work more closely with independent schools to ensure that local political education forms part of a structured PSHE programme, especially given the proportion of pupils attending these schools who could be the decision makers of the future		Reject	The heads of PSHE of the independent schools work alongside other colleagues and attend termly subject meetings. It is the responsibility of the governing body of the independent schools to determine the content of their PSHE programme and curriculum.	
2	<b>Recommendation 2:</b>  The Department for Education, Sport and Culture must organise specific training for all teachers delivering political education, by way of an Inset Day and annual refresher courses. There must also be a structured programme for continuous monitoring to ensure standards are met on an ongoing basis. The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture should liaise with his counterparts in Guernsey to discuss their successful programme.		Accept	Following completion of the current curriculum audit the Dept for ESC will offer specific training for PSHE teachers if required.  The professional partners will ensure that PSHE is being delivered in line with the jersey curriculum document.  The department is keen to benefit from the experiences of other jurisdictions and already works closely with Guernsey on a number of educational matters.	Summer term 2012.
3	<b>Recommendation 3:</b>  The Sub-Panel believes that alongside primary and secondary education there needs to be a focused attempt to provide the opportunity for those new to Jersey to learn about the system. The Sub-Panel recommends, as a starting point, that the Department for Social Security in conjunction with the States Greffe and Department for Education, Sport and Culture, should provide information packs to all those who register, whether it be for work or income support. These packs should include information on the political system, culture and history of the island. In addition to this, familiarisation programmes should be encouraged for those new to the island, and open to any other residents.			Privileges and Procedures committee are best suited to lead on this matter.	Dec 2011
4	<b>Recommendation 4:</b>  The Department for Education, Sport and Culture must work with politicians to establish a formal protocol for politicians		Reject	It is the responsibility of each individual school to determine when to invite politicians to their school Schools believe that current arrangements work	

	visiting schools throughout the year, whereby all visits are organised centrally through an agreed point of contact. The Department should also mirror Guernsey's approach to providing politicians with supporting materials (lesson plans etc) for their visits into schools. This is to provide a uniform approach to all visits and instil confidence in both schools and politicians			well with politicians being invited in to schools as and when it is deemed appropriate.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendation 5:</b>  The Sub-Panel recommends that Youth Service Workers should be included in any political education training organised by the Department for Education, Sport and Culture and provided with the same resources produced for teachers to support the PSHE programme. This, it believed, would build confidence within the Youth Service to lead discussions and answer questions of a political nature.		Accept	The schools and colleges team will share current resources with members of the youth service. Any training programme organised will be offered to the Youth Service officers.	Summer term 2012.
<b>6</b>	<b>Recommendation 6:</b>  The Sub-Panel requests for the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture to pay close attention to the logistics for the hustings for students to be organised for the next elections. Further to this, the Sub-Panel request the Minister to ensure that the time and location(s) chosen are appropriate and will encourage students to attend.		Accept	The Minister is prepared to ask schools to make sure students are informed of all electoral matters including the timings of all official hustings prior to this year's elections. In addition the Youth Service will be asked to facilitate a Senatorial hustings for students, outside of school hours.	November 2011.
<b>7</b>	<b>Recommendation 7:</b>  The Sub-Panel recommends that a formal mechanism should be developed for schools to register students and forward details onto parish halls in advance of their 16 <sup>th</sup> birthdays.		Reject	Pupils are currently provided with the necessary information on how to register to vote. They can only do this on or after their 16 <sup>th</sup> birthday. It is the responsibility of individuals to register.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Recommendation 8:</b>  The Sub-Panel requests the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture to ensure that all schools have active school councils. Furthermore, the Sub-Panel recommends that students on school councils receive training, as is currently carried out in Guernsey.		Reject	The majority of schools do have active school councils. It is the responsibility of the Head teacher of each school how they operate and how the pupils are prepared to take on this role.	

<b>9</b>	<b>Recommendation 9:</b>  The Sub-Panel recommends that the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture works, in conjunction with the Youth Service, to set up a Youth Council, to include representatives from school councils and youth groups. This council should mirror the States Assembly, discussing current topics and giving feedback to politicians		Reject	The Minister is pleased to note that the sub panel support the setting up of a Youth Forum which would include representatives of all ages and backgrounds. Work is being undertaken to determine how best to engage with young people and give them a voice however it has not been proven that the Youth Forum should mirror the States Assembly.	
<b>10</b>	<b>Recommendation 10:</b>  The Sub-Panel also recommends that the Youth Council is supported by an interactive website, for example, HeadsUp ( <a href="http://www.headsup.org.uk">www.headsup.org.uk</a> ). This is an interactive tool to enable all young people to get involved in local issues and debates.		Reject	The Minister's priority is to develop a youth Forum aimed at giving young people a voice as well as reinforcing their responsibility within our community. There are a number of interactive web sites operated by a variety of States departments however present experience is that the success is limited.	
<b>11</b>	<b>Recommendation 11:</b>  The Sub-Panel recommends that the Privileges and Procedures Committee oversees the setting up of States sites on both Facebook and Twitter.			This is a matter for the Privileges and Procedures Committee.  I am aware that the account 'Jerseygov' has recently been created on Twitter.	

## Conclusion

I am pleased that the panel have acknowledged the valuable work undertaken within the PSHE curriculum by our dedicated teaching staff.

I am also confident that our Education system creates independent thinkers and, although only a small percentage of the curriculum is dedicated to Political Education, students will exercise an informed choice when choosing whether to engage with the forthcoming election.