



Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Government Plan

Witness: The Minister for Education

Friday, 13th September 2019

Panel:

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier (Chairman)

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John

Deputy R.E. Huelin of St. Peter

Witnesses:

Senator T.A. Vallois, The Minister for Education

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour, Assistant Minister for Education

Mr. S. O'Regan, Group Director, Education

Mr. K. Posner, Director, Policy and Planning

Ms. L. Haws, Head of Careers and Student Finance

[10:02]

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier (Chairman):

Good morning and welcome to the public hearing of the Minister for Education. I will just start by pointing out the document in front of you, which is the details of public hearings and regulations around them. Can I ask everybody to switch off their phones? We should not have any recording. It is livestreamed and you can download the recording for our public access. We will start by introducing ourselves. I will start with that. I am Deputy Rob Ward and I chair this panel, the Education and Home Affairs Panel.

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John:

I am Trevor Pointon, Deputy of St. John, and I am a member of the panel.

Deputy R.E. Huelin of St. Peter:

I am Rowland Huelin, Deputy of St. Peter.

Director, Policy and Planning:

I am Keith Posner. I am the Director of Policy and Planning at C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills).

Group Director, Education:

Seán O'Regan, Group Director of Education.

The Minister for Education:

Senator Tracey Vallois, Minister for Education.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Good morning, everyone. Deputy Jeremy Maçon. I am Assistant Minister for Education for this one with the delegated remit for skills.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Thank you very much. This hearing really is to focus as much as possible on the Government Plan. I will say that we have received a number of business plans, but we have literally had a day or so to take them all on, so we will refer to them. If you have sent us information in those business plans, it would be great if you could give us the information anyway as concisely as possible as we go through, because obviously that has been a short turnaround for us and we have got a lot more work to do on that. We start off talking about higher education, which is page 23 of R.91. The actions within the Government Plan speak about planning a new student finance scheme. However, within the additional funding in R.91, the supporting business case maintains the current scheme. Are you intending to bring forward a new scheme or maintain the current one?

The Minister for Education:

We are mandated by the States Assembly to relook at the scheme, purely I think because of the sustainability and the concerns around the long-term ability for that to continue to function as it currently stands. We are carrying out a lot of work around that also looking in terms of post-16, so not just the academics, but looking at vocational as well, because you will recognise that Deputy Maçon and myself have both stated quite explicitly that we want both vocational and academic to be seen on par, as equally important. My concern is having the current scheme, you have got to recognise that the people who go on to that current scheme have 3 years or maybe longer, depending on the course which they are a party to. You do not want to upset that course; you do

not want them ending up having to come off that course because of a change in the funding scheme. I would like to commit and the Assistant Minister would like to commit to give certainty to those people on the current scheme it will continue until the end of their particular course. Now, we are working on looking at a new scheme and that would be intended for new entrants that would come in, because although it may cause a lot of extra administrative work and 2 systems running alongside each other, we do not think it would be appropriate to upheave people in the middle of their courses and change the parameters around the requirements. Also there is a lot of uncertainty about what is or is not going to happen with regards to the U.K.'s (United Kingdom) report on university fees and those types of things as well.

Assistant Minister for Education:

If I could just add to your question there, Chairperson, the issue is while we are mandated by the States to bring it forward soon, there of course is no guarantee that the States would accept that scheme, which means that we need to, for financial purposes, highlight what the costs would be for the current scheme.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

What is the timescale if there was to be a new scheme? Because there will obviously be a point where it transfers over, and I absolutely agree with the fact that if somebody starts a 3-year course, they have to know they are funded through the 3 years. That makes complete sense, but there will be a point where people will be applying - if there is a new scheme - for the new scheme. What is your timescale to have that ready, for example, to go the Assembly for hopefully the best thing since sliced bread?

The Minister for Education:

We have committed to ensure the current scheme carries on to September 2020, so there is certainty around that. With the ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is that beginning in 2020, so anyone starting in 2020 will be on the ...

Assistant Minister for Education:

For the academic year in September, yes.

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Will be on the new scheme or old scheme?

The Minister for Education:

The old scheme, the current scheme that is running at the moment. The intention would be that any new scheme would then come in September 2021, so it gives us the appropriate amount of time to look at it properly, but also it is recognised that there was a lot of work done last term around higher education. There was a number of models done by Treasury and there was a lot of work done by the Education Department in looking at different models and the way that it could be done. There is also the question around still the loans system and the position, the way Treasury would deal with that. We now have a new Public Finances (Jersey) Law, which is more an enabler now than what the previous Public Finances (Jersey) Law was. There is discussion between our department and Treasury about how we could manage that. Then of course there would be the scrutiny of higher education, which is vitally important to ensure that we have a sustainable model. In terms of demographics at the moment, we will have a large proportion of children going into secondary 2023 and 2024, and of course a large amount of them may go on to university, so we need to recognise sustainability in that respect.

Assistant Minister for Education:

There is one small caveat. If the new scheme, for example, is financially beneficial for different people say at the lower income end, there would be the ability to change on to the new scheme, so we have also got to have some flexibility at that end just to make sure that that is there.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The review that you are undertaking, it will be a new review but drawing on some of the information that you already have?

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That will come to Scrutiny and so on?

The Minister for Education:

Absolutely.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Because it could be quite a significant change, if you are talking about loans and so on.

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Absolutely, yes.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Can I ask just a point of clarification for a student that might be listening today? I think I have understood that if they are starting this year, 2019, then their funding will be assured for 2020. Assuming it is a 3-year course, that will not be assured for 2021.

The Minister for Education:

If it is a 3-year course and they are on the current scheme, they will stay on that current scheme.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

So they are assured?

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I had misunderstood it then. That is fine, so 2019 people know that their funding is for the 3-year course.

Assistant Minister for Education:

The idea is - to use different terminology - to grandfather the current existing scheme unless it works out financially better for them to be on the new scheme.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I understand.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

There are a couple of things, hopeful things, I think. Looking at the U.K. and the funding of higher education in terms of loans, I think it has been genuinely accepted that the debt levels that the students are going through are just totally unacceptable. If one was to say there is probably going to be an election in the U.K. it does look like most of the parties would talk about a cut in tuition fees. We move closer to the U.K. with Brexit because we tend to be taking on ... the E.U. (European Union) is crossed out and U.K. is put in on Brexit, so it is unlikely we will be seen as foreign students,

so we could financially have a significant advantage with the money that has been put aside, so if we are looking to fund £9,000 per student per term and that suddenly becomes £3,500, we could have a surplus. Would you look to put that surplus into providing more support, i.e. perhaps more support beyond just fees or do you think that might be a loss to Treasury if that was to happen? I know we are talking about hypotheticals here, but looking to the future ...

The Minister for Education:

For me, looking at it into the future, depending on the way in which the U.K. decides to go, I mean, the recommendation in the report that came out was a reduction to £7,500. It will be entirely up to their Government and what they do with that. As I understand, because of all the Brexit stuff, we are kind of really low down the pecking order when it comes to this stuff around universities. There has been a long tradition of our department doing a lot of work working with individual universities to recognise our students as home students, because they have in the past, in some areas, been recognised as international students. But yes, recognising the whole Brexit side of things, there is a lot of other bigger fish to fry I think is the best way to push on that, but I am very much - and I have been - asking to ensure that we are recognised whenever the talks are taken forward in terms of the universities. Of course Jersey, being a Crown dependency and predominantly English U.K. areas that our children tend to go university, it is important that we are recognised in that area. In terms of if they were to drop a significant tuition fee from £9,000 down to £3,000, of course there would be a surplus within the budget. As I understand it, with the rules and stuff that are in place, there would be a big conversation with Treasury, but the ideal side of things behind that would be utilising that funding to recognise the vocational courses, to bring them on par as well, so utilising that across education in other ways, rather than just pushing it back to the centre. That would be the ideal position I would like to see long term if that was to happen.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The £6 million additional funding, P.33 said there was a £2.5 million shortfall. The additional funding is £6 million now, so you are above that. It is a significant increase. Why that extra £4.5 million? Is that a recognition of the number of students coming through? Is it a recognition of the real costs that we are going to need?

The Minister for Education:

I think it is best if we can bring Lynne in just on the student finance side of things, but just quickly overall, we have seen a significant increase in the number of students coming in. I think it is particularly because of the scheme.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Legacy students, yes.

The Minister for Education:

So I believe - and I will have to check with Lynne - it is about 650 that have applied, but the problem at the moment is that it is going through a second round of applications or something like that, so there is not certainty at the moment exactly how much, for example, the 2019 entry is, but it is recognised that on average per student, it is 22 per cent more cost. Because of the way that the scheme works, it will be dependent on people's household incomes. I would imagine that there is a proportion, a larger proportion maybe, on the lower scale of that income and therefore more money having to be spent in terms of the fee. So although it was recognised it was £2.5 million more that was required, we are having to reconfigure and identify, because the scheme was very much last minute last year and there was a ...

Assistant Minister for Education:

I would say that that particular problem was highlighted by the previous Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I was going to allude to that, but I will not. So you could say that we are attracting more students from lower incomes to go to university then through the scheme; it has been a success.

Assistant Minister for Education:

We are attracting more students across the board, but if you want a specific breakdown ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Lynne, are you able to supply us one?

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

Not in terms of ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Could you just briefly introduce yourself as clearly as possible so that people can hear, sorry?

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

Lynne Haws, Head of Student Finance and Careers at Skills Jersey. The £2.5 million was with the knowledge that the H.C.A. (Higher Child Allowance) would come off the amount that the parent got because they had already received that in their tax. The £6 million is the money coming across from income tax, so that is the £3.5 million plus the £2.5 million, so that is where the £6 million comes from.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So instead of it going to H.C.A., to families, it comes directly to you to fund upfront rather than taking it back once the tax has been taken off through the higher education child allowance?

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

Yes, so the £2.5 million was just the extra that was needed on top. In terms of numbers, I do not have a breakdown of which bandings they come from. What I can say is we have had a huge amount of students that we are paying all fees for.

[10:15]

They must be between £50,000 and £90,000 and that is a big increase on what it was last, so middle Jersey or low to middle Jersey seems to have increased in numbers. What I can also say is normally what we would expect, as Tracey alluded to, we have got 500 students that we do not have all the information for yet, so we cannot with any certainty say what income they have yet and what grant they would receive.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is that for 2019?

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So it is quite late in the day.

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is that because of tax issues?

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

Not necessarily. It could be a range of issues. It could be that students have done better in their A-levels than they thought they were going to, or their Level 3s, and have decided to apply later in the day. It could be that they did not fill their tax form in until late, so their tax. So while we get in touch with income tax and say: "Can you put them to the top of the pile, because we are waiting?" there is

a process to go through. There can be a number of reasons. Students can forget. I know that sounds bizarre when we are looking at money, but they can. It is a case of trying to get through. Normally we would expect the ones that have not completed their applications in previous years, they would not have received much of a grant at all and therefore the urgency was not there. However, while we are looking at the moment, the 500 does seem like it is going to be a significant amount. At the moment we have spent ... or we have got on our database £11 million, but that is for just over 1,000 students and we have got 500 that we are waiting, so it looks like it is going to be anything from about £14 million to £16 million for the year.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Thank you, that is really useful. So the baseline budget before the extra £6 million is as stated in P.33 for 2020 and 2021?

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

£10.5 million. Was it £10.5 million?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The current budget plus H.C.A. allowance was £14 million.

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

Yes, so I think the base budget is £10.5 million and then the H.C.A. coming in, so that has not changed.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Right, so it is still only £14 million, it is not £16 million, because that is £6 million added on.

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

Yes, in 2020 it goes to £16 million.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Right, so it is an extra £2 million and a bit on top of the 2020 figure, with the additional £6 million.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Is that because we are just waiting for the H.C.A. claims to work through the system?

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Right, okay. I think we might come back to you on that, but yes, that is fine.

The Minister for Education:

That is fine.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That is great, thank you very much. We have asked a question about fees being ...

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Rob, that was so complicated, and thank you very much.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Tracey, can I go back to you? We talked about potential Brexit - who knows, okay - and you talked about potentially the reduction in fees, if they are reduced because of the U.K., and we also talked a bit about if there is an election, every party will say: "Drop student fees" to get their votes. It looks as if it is going in that direction. That means there will be money left over. You said something about - I think I understood you - additional funding could be used for more vocational matters. What did you mean by that and what do you have in mind for that?

The Minister for Education:

For example, we now have the post-16 vision document, the strategy that is being worked through. I think what is really important is to recognise the world is moving in a very different way and there are lots of different ways to get certain qualifications that are required to do certain particular jobs. We need to make sure that we have the right skills, the right qualifications in place and invest more in our vocational, as we have done in terms of the academics. Sometimes you have a crossover with your academic and vocational courses as well, so we need to make sure that the investment in those areas is on equal par, because not everyone is just an academic and just goes to university, but they are employable with the extra support in terms of certain skill sets. So the idea behind it would be recognising that if there was that surplus, rather than it moving back to the centre or to Treasury, and because of the reasoning behind why we did the scheme in the first place was taking away tax allowance to fund students, it is my belief that that money should therefore be recognised for students across the board if there is a surplus within that area.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

So you are keeping ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Are we talking about things like in the post-16 ... sorry, you have triggered something off in terms of ...

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Can I carry on? Yes, I now forget mine.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

... the H.N.D. (Higher National Diploma) type qualification that we noted when we went to a conference about post-16, that there was a lot of talk that there is a gap. If you look around Europe, they fill it quite well in Germany and so on between Level 3 and 4 and then the Level 6 degree, that Level 5 area of H.N.D., which is where often it is skills-based. Can we look forward to a sort of way of addressing that? It might be ideal for this Island. There is this gap here, is there not?

The Minister for Education:

Absolutely. I think there are small gaps in different areas that we need to start ... when we talk about it in terms of the skill strategy side of things - and Jeremy can speak a little bit on this - it is recognising pathways for people as well. Sometimes people believe that just doing a degree will enable them therefore to get better-paying jobs, a certain job in a particular area. Sometimes it is not necessarily you need a degree for that, so it is understanding those pathways. There is a lot of work going on within schools with skills, with the department as a whole, in other areas in the public sector as well in terms of you can go through a variety of different paths in order to get to the end result that you want. It is important that children and young people understand there are a variety of different ways of how they can ultimately reach their goals. I do not know whether you want ...

Assistant Minister for Education:

I think just generally there is a process clash which we may need to clarify, because certainly under the old Public Finances (Jersey) Law, when you agree the M.T.F.P. (Medium Term Financial Plan), what you are doing is agreeing the spending envelope for each department. What departments present to you is an indication of how they intend to spend the money, but of course it is always in the gift of the Minister to then move the money around. Provided it is still within the envelope, the Minister can always shift pots of money around. It is different to Social Security because that is under a legislative formula. In answering your question, for example, if there was suddenly not a huge demand in higher education, I think the first port of call legally is the Minister for Education to decide how that works. Now, good practice would mean that would be a conversation with the Treasury Department, but I think legally speaking, unless it has changed under the Public Finances (Jersey) Law, the Minister for Education would still have the ability to move that money around.

The Minister for Education:

I think the risk with that though is with the change in the Public Finances (Jersey) Law, we now have a yearly plan, so that heightens the need to communicate and work more closely with other departments, to not just ask for that money and say: “We need it for this particular thing” but justify it as well and say: “These are the reasons why it meets our common strategic policy and the ways that we can move that forward.” I think it is recognised by my fellow Ministers, the investment that is needed.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I do want to move and just clarify ...

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Sorry, I was in the middle of a theme. The vocational budget, if that is freed up, more budget is freed up because of the reduction in the cost of tertiary education in the U.K., are you thinking on-Island or off-Island for that?

The Minister for Education:

In terms of vocational?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Yes.

The Minister for Education:

I think it depends on which route we go down in terms of which qualifications we decide to take on. I think it would be really beneficial to have as many vocational courses on-Island, but recognising that some courses, some particular qualifications require very science-based or very particular facilities that we may not particularly have. But it gives us the opportunity within this Government Plan to have that conversation around the further education campus and asking those vital questions, not just talking about a university, we are talking about something very different, something very unique that offers a variety of different opportunities for not just children and young people, but adults and lifelong learning objectives and all those types of things that I believe we are particularly committed to. It will not happen in 5 minutes. This is a long-term thing, like most things in education, but it will give us the opportunity to have that conversation about what we need in terms of a campus.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Totally agree with you. My last one. I think we are at the back end of this culture, but there is still the view that in the U.K. we are still back to Tony Blair’s: “Education, education” which is tertiary education, and that is the solution to all particular problems, which we now know it is not, but there

is still a bit of a legacy there and there is still a legacy of kids doing degrees and ending up ... and I am not quoting me, I am quoting the press as saying they become the best baristas in London, which is not necessarily the best use. There are other sides to education than just the academic. Is it wise - this is a cultural question - to be persuading this volume of people to go to do tertiary education when I think statistics, which I do not have, will bear out that a lot of them are not necessarily doing what is the best for them within themselves, the best for the futures and their careers going forward? Can we review that? Because I totally agree with you when you talk about people should be doing more vocational things but are being pushed in the wrong direction.

The Minister for Education:

I think the most important part of that is that it is not necessarily just doing a review, it is looking at that whole culture, the whole working of the post-16 offering. If you do not have an offering, if you do not have the opportunity there and people do not understand the offering and the opportunity that is there ... and it is critical that we work, and Skills Jersey do a fantastic job in this, and some of the senior advisers in our department, in working closely with industry to identify how certain subjects in schools can be recognised on a Jersey basis in terms of the cultural passport side of work that we do with farming and all those particular areas, hospitality as well, but Skills work really closely with industry in secondary schools and with people that are N.E.E.T. (Not in Education, Employment or Training), young persons, and also identifying the particular critical skills that are required and advocating for those individuals as well. There is a lot of work that is done on Trackers. Trackers is an extremely successful piece of work, where it is not just working with the individual, it is working with the business as well to enable those apprenticeships to be really successful.

The Deputy of St. John:

You have just anticipated a question I was about to ask so ...

The Minister for Education:

Okay.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I just ask one thing before we move on from higher education, because I can feel it being asked elsewhere? Is the funding solely for first-time undergraduates and not covering postgraduate qualifications at all in terms of the higher education funding and the additional funding mentioned in the Government Plan?

Assistant Minister for Education:

Are we talking about the current scheme as exists today?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Both, and with any review. For example, the additional funding that is in the Government Plan is funding the old scheme, which is clearly until the new scheme comes in. I am assuming that does not include postgraduate funding, but a new scheme might, depending on the review.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Generally yes, it only covers first-time Bachelor level degree courses; we are talking Level 6 courses. There is an exemption. You might correct me on this one, but I think there is an exemption on the critical skills list. For example, if you go and do say an arts degree, come back and then want to be a nurse, we will fund you to be a nurse or a teacher or the ones on the critical skills list and I think they are still entitled to student finance from that.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is that correct, Lynne?

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

If it is on the critical skills, yes.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Yes, good. In regards to Master's and PhD level, that is from the pot, but it is only about £100,000 at the moment, but that varies, because sometimes a person might be doing the 2-year course so, for example, they might get allotted 2 lots over the years, which means that next year, for example, there might be £90,000 to play with, but that comes under the higher education pot.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So there is some funding for postgraduate depending on the discretion of yourself or ...

Assistant Minister for Education:

Yes, under the current scheme, yes, of the current mechanism.

The Minister for Education:

We do need to ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Some integrated Master's, for example, are included?

The Minister for Education:

We had a big conversation about this yesterday. The risk of having such discretion around those particular areas is then you get the view that certain people are being chosen over others or there is no kind of standardisation and fairness in the process. We need to try to move away from that. It is important that we look at PhD and Master's under a new scheme and recognise the importance and how that may or may not play out, whether it is requirement under a critical skills list, for example, or whether what we do is just pay for it. That is a lot further on than just the undergraduates, where we are at the moment, but we recognise the importance of Master's and PhDs and they have become quite a thing to have to do in particular areas, but it is also recognising we only have so much money and how we slice that. We need to make it as fair as we can, but ensure that it meets certain criteria so that the discretion does not create this animosity or feeling that somebody else is picked over someone else because of certain ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That critical skills list could be part of the review then, because that probably will change in terms of how the needs of the Island change, I would imagine.

Assistant Minister for Education:

The critical skills list held by Social Security is under constant review.

[10:30]

If education or industry come to the Social Security Department and say: "We need this skill. We can demonstrate that there is need for it on-Island" then the scheme will change, absolutely. That is with my Social Security hat on. The only thing which I wanted to add about ... what was the initial question again, just to jog my memory?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

If I am honest, I have forgotten.

The Minister for Education:

The PhDs.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, that is it.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Yes, PhDs. Just to say we have also been in contact with the Comptroller and Auditor General to look at the process around it, to see from her advice how it could be improved.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That is leading us nicely. I am going to just jump forward a bit, because this seems to fit in well here.

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

Sorry, can I ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, of course.

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

Sorry, just additionally on the postgrad, because I think it is quite important, if a student wants to do a postgraduate such as a P.G.C.E. (Post Graduate Certificate in Education) or an L.P.C. (Legal Practice Court) which leads to a specific job, you have to have that qualification in order to do that job, it is treated as an undergraduate degree. So there is a portion of post-grad that student finance do fund over and above the bursary and that is in the current scheme. We have a number of those going through.

Assistant Minister for Education:

So if you train to be a doctor, for example, we will cover the extra years.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Law conversion as well with the U.K.?

Head of Careers and Student Finance:

We do not normally do conversions. We would not generally do a conversion course, but we would do the L.P.C. after that.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Thank you, that is really helpful. You have developed the post-16 strategy and we were very pleased you accepted or partially accepted all the recommendations from our post-16 report. That was nice to see. How will they be reflected in the new strategy? What priorities do you think would be in that strategy?

Assistant Minister for Education:

So that particular report, strictly speaking, is policy under development. However, you would have seen the document that went out to consultation, which has a lot of the vision in the strategy already, which mirrored some of the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel and that is in the public

domain. Within that document, as you will know, there are some things which we can do in the short term and there are some things which will require further strategies into the long term to look into. One which we can talk about is the offering of courses which we might need to attract off-Island students to do in order to make those particular courses viable, for example, so that will still require work. To answer your question, there will be a mixture of things that will be accepted in the vision for 16-plus education, but there are also strands within that document which will require further policy development.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The strategy appears in 2 actions within the Government Plan, a vibrant economy and reducing inequality. There does not appear to be a great deal of difference between the 2 actions in terms of content. What is the rationale for having practically identical actions within 2 different parts of the Government Plan strategy?

Assistant Minister for Education:

It is to do with how you access the funding behind those different things. The way that the C.S.P (Common Strategic Policy) document was put together, and therefore the Government Plan, it is just how it is divided. Because it appears here and it appears there, it means that it indicates departments having to work together but also it means that within the document, for example, while skills is mainly in the children's budget, it is also in the workforce C.S.P. 3 and that is why it might appear twice in the documentation. It is around the budgeting side of it, but also about the objective those C.S.P.s are going to achieve.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

In one area it says it would give an open resource and in the other area it says it will implement. There is a difference between those 2 actions. That is what we are trying to get our heads around, whether it will be implemented when it is developed in the resource. I cannot get my head ... when I say it now, again the same issue comes up in my head.

Assistant Minister for Education:

It goes back to what I was saying before of the vision of the 16-plus education. Some of the recommendations within that document can be actioned immediately, some of it will require further policy development and that is why there is that difference.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

What is the timescale then for the review? When do you think your review will ... because it is mentioned in the Government Plan and funded from 2020, I believe.

Assistant Minister for Education:

If you are talking about the 16-plus document, that is imminent to be published, it just has to go through the proper signoff. That should be available for Members before the debate in November but we are just ... we need to go through the civil service approvals and then C.O.M. (Council of Ministers) approvals.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Just to push you on that, I am going to ask this: should or will? "Should" is one word, "will" is different. Because it will be quite integral to the Government Plan to have a post-16 review that we are going to fund. We have to really know what it is before we talk about the Government Plan.

The Minister for Education:

The reason why it is in different areas, for example, it will talk about ... sorry, on page 62 of the Government Plan it is under the local skilled workforce element, and that is where it specifically talks about the developing and resourcing the strategy, so that is the work in terms of putting it together and identifying the streams that need funding in 2020. That will be the 2020. The Government Plan looks over 2020 to 2023, so then there would be responsibility on us to ensure, just like the school funding area, once that work is done and we have identified exactly what it is that we need, rather than pre-empting the amount, then we can come back in the next iteration in terms of the Government Plan and say this is the exact resource and money that we need to do these specific areas of what we have developed to spend at that particular point.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So we are saying we have got a pot of money in the Government Plan which is a generic pot, but there is no specifics yet until this review comes out, but you believe that there is enough money there to implement any review that will come forward?

The Minister for Education:

At the moment we have to continue doing what we are currently doing in post-16. What the strategy will enable us to do is pinpoint certain resources and monies to outcomes and what we want to achieve as an education team, as a Government, so that it is easily identifiable by the public and Scrutiny so you can identify value for money. We do not have one of those post-16 strategy things at the moment to particularly identify whether we are achieving what we said we were going to do and that is why this is important to develop and resource it in the right way. One of the issues I have, and I am not going to be quiet on it at all - and I think I have made myself very clear to my fellow Ministers and officers as well - is that one of the issues with education is of course the academic year is different to the financial year. There has been a bit of a push and pull and a bit of a to-do, not nasty or anything, behind the scenes about my indication as Minister saying: "Well, if I

want to achieve this I need to make sure it is in at the beginning of the academic year” and therefore that means that is going to happen partway through the financial year. There is this particular ongoing discussion between our department and Treasury, and particularly the chief executive officer, to ensure that we do not lose or identify a reduction in our budget in any way that will stop us from producing the outcomes that we want particularly in post-16 ... well, in the whole of education, but on this question in post-16 strategy.

The Deputy of St. John:

Is this a complication of making annual budgets, the move to creating things annually rather than the M.T.F.P., which was 3 or 4 years?

The Minister for Education:

No, we used to have annual business plans previously, so it is not that we cannot do it, it is just making sure that we are ... what we need to be able to do as the Education Department is give certainty to our staff and to the students within our education system that there will not be a loss of monies or resources or all the things that we want to produce in terms of outcomes during the term of the Government Plan. What we need to be able to do as a team, and rightly so - and we need to be held to account for value for money and all those types of things - is justify how and why we are putting in those particular courses or particular qualifications or putting in a certain type of administration to support certain areas. We need to be able to justify that so that we can produce the outcomes that we talk about. It all sounds fluffy, it all sounds nice, but there needs to be a recognition how it goes from point A to point B. What the strategy will allow us to do ... sometimes it is not capable of going: “We have got a nice big strategy so we are going to put it all in September 2020.” Some of that is not going to be viable, not because of money, but because of resource, because of people, because of the amount of time that is placed on other priority areas. We need to make sure that we can put it in over a period of time that allows it to be successful.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I will just pick up something in that because from our post-16 review recommendations there are a number of them that we will talk about which are linked to the Government Plan. But talking about that review and value for money, the courses that are run and the future progression of people, one of the things we talked about and we notice is that a Highlands Progressive qualification, which is quite a key qualification for that sort of sector, a different level of skills as they develop, there has been a change where it says ... the wording around it is now that it has been benchmarked at Level 2, which is very different from what was previously on the website. Can you explain what that means, that it is benchmarked at Level 2, because it is quite a key qualification in that ... well, the progression of young people into the Level 3 and perhaps Level 4 courses that we have talked about. What does that mean? Why did that change?

Assistant Minister for Education:

That is a good question. That might be much more operational. Lynne, are you in a position to comment? No, we might need to get something from the principal of Highlands to be able to respond to that question.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

In a previous hearing we were told that the qualification was equivalent to 4 G.C.S.E.s (General Certificate of Secondary Education). However, there is no reference on the website now. Is that still the case, that it is equivalent to 4 G.C.S.E.s or not?

Assistant Minister for Education:

Again, we do not know. That is an operational thing. We will have to get back to you.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I will give you the concerns that we have. If it is not equivalent to 4 G.C.S.E.s and it is not standardised, and it is entirely a standalone qualification now which is simply benchmarked, then how do students progress from that to any other areas? For example, say they want to go and do A-levels afterwards or want to go to the U.K. and do a qualification, will it be recognised? If not, is that not a problem? Does it mean that students will only progress within Highlands to Level 3 and are they informed of that when they start their course? We do have a concern over that, I have to say.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Okay, thank you for that. We will take that away and respond formally.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Thank you, that would be very good. Do you want to ask some stuff about early years, give me a break?

The Deputy of St. John:

Get away from post-16 and go to the other end of scale. We note that there is no funding mentioned in relation to early years.

The Minister for Education:

For 2020?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, and we wondered why that was.

The Minister for Education:

Okay, there is the ...

Assistant Minister for Education:

No funding or no additional funding?

The Deputy of St. John:

No additional.

The Minister for Education:

No additional funding, okay.

Assistant Minister for Education:

I just do not want anyone thinking we have scrapped the budget.

The Deputy of St. John:

That is a valid point.

The Minister for Education:

We have committed to keep the current scheme until the Policy Development Board have brought together all the evidence and worked with all providers to produce a full early years policy, looking at conception to 5 year-olds. From 2020 the budget will remain as it currently stands. Everybody is given certainty that when it comes next September they will be applying for exactly the same thing that has been in place this year, last year and the year before. The reason why that is the case is because we want to make sure that we do not end up in a position where we are just following what other places do. Sometimes some of the things that they have brought in ... if you look at the U.K., for example, some people would argue that it is a populist move to do something like that and it has not necessarily produced the optimal outcomes for the young children. Wales is a good example of the work that they did behind early years and the optimal systems that were put in place. We have had somebody over from there to have that conversation with us. It is a huge piece of work because it is not just focusing on nursery education funding, it is looking at conception to 5 years, it is looking at those pathways, it is looking at what is the right fit for those children at certain ages, it is not just focusing on 3 to 4 year-olds. That is vital because it would have been easy for me to turn around and say: "I am just going to look at the nursery education funding, I am just going to fix that particular area" and just focus on 3 to 4 year-olds, but with the Government focusing on putting children first and us now having - which we have never had before - a Minister for Children, there may be some

manoeuvring between who is in charge of what when it comes to the early years and how that progresses in the long term. We need to identify the optimal outcomes for those young children and families. That is really important. It is the family unit around those children as well.

The Deputy of St. John:

How is the Policy Board progressing?

The Minister for Education:

Everything is in the public domain. I will give you an update. Everything we do on the Policy Board is put on gov.je, on the Early Years Policy Development Board, so you will have an idea of everything that has been going on so far.

[10:45]

We had a very successful engagement day where we ... basically, instead of turning around to people and saying: This is what we think, this is what want to do”, we invited people in and they drove the conversation, they drove the things that concerned them about what is being provided in the Island, the quality. It is not just necessarily more money in terms of care for the children, it is having that right quality of individual caring for the children. Special educational needs, autism in particular, and a variety of ways of how we can, not just as a Government but as a third sector, work better together so that family units know where to go and who to go to at the right time. It is very much filtering into the work that is being carried out around the Right Help, Right Time. The early intervention piece of work that has been carried by ... I do not know her title, Director of ... is it Commissioning and something else under C.Y.P.E.S?

Director, Policy and Planning:

Yes, Commissioning and Transformation.

The Minister for Education:

That is the one. Sorry, it keeps changing and I cannot say specific names because she is not here. There is a piece of work that she is carrying out there in terms of the early intervention and it is very much part and parcel of what we are looking at in terms of early years, but it crosses a number of ministries - Education, Children's, Health and Social Security. We have had income tax in to give us a synopsis of how or how not the child allowance does or does not work, whether it is targeted, the same arguments we had around the higher education. If you are going to have a benefit for people, is it targeted in the right way? Is it producing the outcomes that we expect? Is it helping in the most optimal way possible? There has been a great deal of work putting all of that together and now we are on to, from that engagement day, moving down ... there are 3 particular things our

officers are developing at the moment. They are researching into the early years' marketplace, they are gathering the reflections from parents and carers now, in particular. It was very industry carers dominated in regards to ...

Assistant Minister for Education:

One of the assets was it was great to have practitioners, whether that is from the health model, the education model or the industry model, but perhaps there was not enough in the way of the parents' voice.

The Minister for Education:

So there it is gathering the reflections from parents and carers, their experiences, what they feel they need and what they believe is best in terms of their children as well, which is extremely important feedback that is needed. In particular, we highlighted as part of the board's recent prioritisations ... so after the engagement day, we came back together and we took everything that was discussed at that engagement day and we prioritised particularly what we felt we could do now, we could get in place. There are some quick wins that we can do, but there are some things that are going to take a little bit longer to put in place.

The Deputy of St. John:

Can I ask you about a specific facility? Your proposal to fund 30 hours for children during term time, will that provision apply just to the States provision or to private providers as well?

The Minister for Education:

Okay, so I am not at the moment fixed on 30 hours, and the reason behind that is looking at what is happening in terms of the U.K. What we had to do, or what our officers had to do, was go forward with a rough estimation of what it may or may not look like. Thirty hours was a suggestion of an idea within the Early Years Policy Development Board about a way in which we may want to move. Bearing out all the evidence, the research and the information so far, and what we are still going through now, may not determine that we go down the 30-hour route. There may be, for example - and I have said this previously - a need to, instead of having a 30 hour, having a 10 hour or 20 hour for 2 year-olds or investing in particular special educational needs to support those particular children. It may be money better spent, because if we are looking at the outcomes for children, it is not just about paying for childcare. There are a number of initiatives and needs within the early years setting that we need to ensure that they are getting the best bang for their money.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I ask a quick question on that? The Government Plan on page 26 does state 30 hours, so what do we take from the Government Plan that would be voted on? Is the key word "proposed" model?

The Minister for Education:

When we debate the Government Plan in the States Assembly it will be based on the proposition and the proposition will refer to specific tables. The tables that are referred to will be in particularly the money. The indication within the Government Plan around the 30 hours is an indication of where we may go. I was not happy about specifically saying: "This is what we will do" because it is important, setting up something like the Policy Development Board, that we are listening to the very people that not only produce the care ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is that explanation in the wider business plan? As I said, we only got them about an hour or so ago so we have not seen that. I understand what you are saying, it is just in the document we have it is very simplified.

The Minister for Education:

I know.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We are trying to make sense of that document and we need ...

The Minister for Education:

I understand that and I can only apologise. It should not say "we will" or "we will implement 30 hours", it is an indication of how much it may cost if we were to do 30 hours, but there may be better or other ways of utilising that money that makes it more effective and better outcomes for children, early years and families than doing a 30-hour provision. We have seen some of the issues in other jurisdictions around how that has been borne out.

The Deputy of St. John:

I think you have clarified the situation there. You say you have been consulting with service users and getting their opinions. What have you concluded about the provision of childcare and nursery care during the course of holiday times, for example, where parents are in employment? The term time-only facility does not meet their needs.

The Minister for Education:

There is a discussion, and it is not just from industry or particular care providers, it is a view that the department, myself and others have held for a very long time, is this wraparound support that we need to recognise. That is why it is really important not to just focus on the Nursery Education Fund and 3 to 4 year-olds, it is having that wraparound support. It is recognised in research that having

a child staying in a setting ... when we talk about term time, it is not just the term time, it is after school as well. You have a nursery attached to a school, well, come 3 o'clock - or whatever time they finish - they are having to move to another setting. That is not necessarily good in terms of the research that has been identified for children. There is a conversation around ... when we talk about, for example, the nursery setting with schools in the term time, wraparound support that we can do, St. Mary School is an example. There is a good opportunity working with community local service of how we can utilise not just the school setting but the community setting that sits right behind it and having that hub, that support, that wraparound, that framework. It does not necessarily have to be the teacher, the nursery teacher in the classroom, it could be other care providers and there is, I think, a lot of hope and belief that something could work in this area really well. It is just enabling it to ensure that we are meeting all the safeguarding requirements and ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Sorry, just to try and get into the Government Plan here, we should be considering that part on page 26 of early years to include what you are saying there, those sort of wider ideas?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, what I would say is when you look at the Government Plan and you are specifically looking at early years, what I would suggest is look at the work that is being done. It is all up online, everything is open and transparent with regards the Policy Development Board. So recognising the minutes, the conversations, the engagement stuff that we have done is all around ... and particularly if we are just focusing on the Nursery Education Fund, it will be borne out of the work of that Policy Development Board. It is an ongoing feat, but we have stated explicitly that we want something different and better from 2021 and that is why the money increases from September 2021.

The Deputy of St. John:

I am just wondering if you can give us, for the sake of this meeting and the fact that the public are listening, what feedback you have received from the private sector in relation to the way that things are moving forward.

The Minister for Education:

With regards to the engagement day, we invited all providers. Not all of them could make it, but everyone who could make it turned up and contributed. They basically ran the engagement day and they were talking about particularly the quality, whether it is the quality of the courses, whether it is the quality of the staff, whether it is the quality of ... one of the things that came out, which was very clear to me, is we have got the Safeguarding Partnership Board that has a website and people can go on there and click on to courses and go and do that and it is recognised as C.P.D. (Continuing Professional Development) and those types of things which helps the industry to be better leaders

when it comes to safeguarding for children. They are looking for something similar, something equivalent for C.P.D. in terms of childcare. Support in those particular areas where they can click on to a website, they can go on to a particular course that ups their skills, that improves the way that they do things. Like I was saying before, there are some things that are quick wins. We had our skills team at that engagement event, they were listening very closely and clearly to what the providers were saying about the need to ensure they have the right training, the right upskilling, the right qualifications. So work around that can be forthcoming without having to make a particular policy decision because our skills team go off and work with different industries and it is now having that open conversation about how we can do more. Does it need to necessarily be us or does there need to be another platform which can do it better? There were a number of other things and concerns around the hours. They are worried ... there is a concern about whether if we were to go for something like your 30 hour or those particular areas how that would work with the private sector. We have seen a lot of private sector nurseries in the U.K., for example, close down because of the tightness sitting around the requirements in terms of the regulations for the funding and the way that they fund it, and the allowance or non-allowance to be able to charge more to do certain things within their care settings. I do not think we need or we have to go down that route. We are a small Island and I think we work really well with the private sector. I think there is a recognition the level playing field needs to be ramped up a little bit more in terms of the recognition between private providers and public providers and how we therefore take that forward and what that means. There is a big piece of work going on around the Care Commission and what their involvement will be in terms of looking at care settings and whether nurseries do or do not sit within that. In the Day Care of Children (Jersey) Law, there is a bit of a hole, which we have recognised, and that needs to be amended and changed. That is a piece of work that is being carried out anyway.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The timescale for seeing something physical happen? It is just that I think it is very important, while we are on it, that we get the timescale for that review to report back and any change being made is 2020, when the ...

The Minister for Education:

Next year. I want something brought out ... so scrutinised and looked at next year so that we have got our lead-in time ready for September 2021. Whatever is decided, there will be some issues from someone somewhere and that is just the way life is. You are not going to get the perfect system. We just need to minimise any disruption or concerns.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We have the timescale and that is what we need. Go on, Rowland, you are chomping at the bit, as they say.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I have been really good, I have waited. I have been very patient. I have totally forgotten the question. I am trying to understand the ... we have been talking about care for children, we have talked about the 3 o'clock handover from nursery into ... I am trying to understand the mapping of the life of the family with 2 working parents and how that is mapped into the care and the education of the children in early years. Clearly there is a big disconnect, there is going to be a disconnect because of people's personal circumstances, but by having this lack of ... I am not going to call it lack of joined-up, but having this disconnect for the average families, is there or could you attribute or highlight any sort of social or economic effects of that to the Island that could be addressed by ... because we are talking the Government Plan and Budget, that could be addressed by budgets. Is that a very unclear, complicated question?

The Minister for Education:

No, I think I get what you are asking.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Can we bridge the gap?

The Minister for Education:

I think what is really important here is early years is about the outcomes for the children. It is not about us putting money into subsidise basically childcare. It is about the outcomes for children. What is really important is to recognise if we get in at the right time for those children who need to get the right care, whether that is through education or whether that is through a care model, but more importantly it is not just focusing on the 3 to 4 year-olds and it is not just focusing on what it means just for working parent. There are some children, their parents may not necessarily be working fulltime, or both parents, or whatever their situation may be within their particular setting. Some children in those particular settings are extremely vulnerable and they are the more likely ones to get the best outcomes if we invest in the right way, those children in particular settings to achieve what is good for them.

[11:00]

That is why it is important to look at conception to 5 years rather than just the 3 to 4 year-old model, at what point we have to or we should be intervening as a Government, or who should be intervening where and when, and making sure that we get the resourcing and people know where to go at what time so that it does not exacerbate and make things worse. There is an argument ... so I look at that from the overall perspective. Technically I could just sit here as the Minister for Education and

say: "Education, education, education", a bit like Tony Blair. I do not like to quote him. You could look at it from purely a: "Well, from an education point of view the optimal thing would only be to do A, B, C and D" and that is it. But there is so much more of this Government Plan in terms of our priorities as around mental health and around social inclusion and around the variety of other different and local skilled workforce and there are competing issues.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

We are still talking outcomes and I totally get that.

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

My question was based on outcomes, I just posed it in a negative way, which is poor, bad me. But you do talk about education and childcare in the same sentence from 0 to 3.

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

The best outcome is when there is a seamless service to support the working families, but they are young, to get the best opportunities. We give them the best opportunity for a positive outcome for the time that they are in whichever service it is, education or childcare; that is where I am coming from.

The Minister for Education:

Absolutely, I get that.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

By getting that wrong, are we getting that wrong? Is there a negative to that that could be addressed?

The Minister for Education:

There is also the balance of the family-friendly legislation as well and recognising whether putting ... at the moment you have children who are going into nursery settings at very young ages. There is a question whether that is right or wrong but it depends on the needs of the individual child and the individual family. When I talk about needs, it does not necessarily mean economical needs. It means their vulnerability. There may be particular special needs that they need extra support in,

which being in a care setting of some sort would be more beneficial for them than just being at home with the parents. There is an argument around the flexible working and the need to recognise flexible working and parents need to be involved in their children as well.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Certainly.

The Minister for Education:

You have children and you do not expect a Government or somebody else to be the ones that take on that role. There is the tri-partnership here in terms of how we fit in the right things at the right time for families and children, but also having the support in place that is right for the needs of the child, not necessarily the needs economically. We all, as families, have to do different things in terms of supporting children.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I am drawing economic links to the Government Plan; that is the only reason I am bringing it up in that direction, but ...

The Minister for Education:

Yes. No, I get that, but there are a number of things that are happening: family-friendly legislation, flexible working, early years care settings, 1,001 days, they all fit together. There is a sequence of events that happens in a child's life which we have never gotten right and nothing is perfect, but we can improve on what we are doing and what we can do.

The Deputy of St. John:

It is interesting you mention the family-friendly legislation, which of course will not be coming into law until perhaps the middle of next year. Then in talking to the people who are drafting the legislation, there is not a great expectation that families are going to take all of the time that they could take because it would be uneconomical for them to do that. That rather contradicts the idea that families are not going to be continuing with 2 working parents because of necessity, because of house prices, because of the cost of living and so on. I know that family-friendly legislation is built into your planning. Are you counting quite heavily on that legislation being taken up or provisions being taken up by people?

The Minister for Education:

I do not count on anything too heavily when I know it is going before the States. I know that sounds awful, but I have been in the States for a long time and sometimes you just do not know what is going to happen, so ...

The Deputy of St. John:

I will bow to your experience.

The Minister for Education:

Yes. I have been before a Scrutiny Panel on family-friendly legislation. I have given my view from an early years' perspective and how it will assist and how it will support and how important it is. I recognise the problem in terms of the amount of weeks that are offered because the cost of living over here is astronomical. It is recognised that 2 parents have to work in order just to keep a roof over their heads, paying for rent or paying for mortgage, whatever the situation may be. But it does not negate the fact that we will have a ... there are a number of initiatives that are being carried out, whether that is through Health and Community Services, whether that is through the third sector, whether that is through education ourselves in terms of nursery settings and the provision of care. There are a number of things that we have in place to try and do the best we can in terms of wraparound support for children. There is a focus and there has been a focus, and rightly so, in terms of very vulnerable children, the special educational needs children, for example. But there is a question about how beneficial that is to a universal provision, rather than a targeted in particular and how that works.

Assistant Minister for Education:

Can I just add, with both my Health and Social Security hats on, what is really important about this relating to the family-friendly legislation is again interesting conceptions, things like the antenatal classes that will make such a significant difference as well.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Not for this meeting but another time, it would be really, really to understand what you are talking about, the complexity of it in a pictorial way, so we can understand the trade-offs, the handovers, just not now, but an action for later.

The Minister for Education:

I would be happy to arrange a briefing with all the stuff that is up online with regards to the Early Years Policy Development Board and we can have a discussion ...

The Deputy of St. Peter:

But it is all linking together.

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Your view of the bigger picture. Thank you, we will move on. What do you want to do next? Thank you, Minister.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We have got a few topics to cover, so first I will try and get some quick answers. Jersey Premium, we will say thanks for taking on board our recommendation.

The Minister for Education:

That is not a problem.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We really like that one.

The Minister for Education:

I hope you support it.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

To extend it to post-16 is a good idea and this is the area of improving educational outcomes. First of all, what percentage of the cohort accessed Jersey Premium? Do you have a figure? It is around 20 ...

Group Director, Education:

Yes, it is 22 per cent at the last census, school census January 2019.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is significant, is it not?

Group Director, Education:

It is significant.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

A very significant part of our population. The additional funding of £401,000, how is it going to be applied? £2.8 million over the next 4 years is and how is that going to be applied? Those individuals will be recognised right up now to the age of 18, so we will fund them through, which is a step forward. They will be recognised and that will go to the institutions and we will say ...

Group Director, Education:

Once eligibility is known for the individual student, a sum of money, depending on whether they are in the primary sector or 11 to 18 now, or with a higher rate that has been published and the rationale shared if the young person is looked after or has a need, is a care leaver, for example. It goes to the educational institution, the school, the college, the setting that they are in with clear account as to whether that money is spent on improving outcomes for that young person.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

With the extension post-16, how many students will that benefit now?

Director, Policy and Planning:

We have about 300, we think.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

About 300?

Director, Policy and Planning:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, so that is significant again.

Director, Policy and Planning:

That funding is planned to kick in straight away at the beginning of 2020. It is not waiting for the academic year.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Of January 2020?

Director, Policy and Planning:

January 2020.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

All right. That is a question then for ...

The Minister for Education:

Why I made that particular requirement, I was not happy that I was losing a term anyway, but recognised the financial constraints for 2019 when it was the previous M.T.F.P. I basically said: "As from the beginning of January 2020 this needs to be in place."

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Will that be a full year's funding from January 2020? I fully understand the financial year and the academic year.

The Minister for Education:

Yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That has always been a problem and I do not know how you square that. So in 2020, will that be a proportion of the academic year that year is Jersey Premium or be the full year's Jersey Premium for the academic year in 2019? Because you have got that issue, i.e. if you miss the term, will it be one term less of the Jersey Premium for that year, academic and ...

Director, Policy and Planning:

Yes, it would be so. It is from that point onwards that that funding will kick in for the 2 terms.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is 2 terms' worth?

Director, Policy and Planning:

I believe this is the case - I will probably need to qualify this afterwards - that the higher rates across the board will kick in for the beginning of the academic year 2020.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, so there is a bit of a complex issue for schools.

Director, Policy and Planning:

It is. It will ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Certain colleges ...

Group Director, Education:

On the ground it is always an 8/12 to 4/12 split because the academic year starts 1st September and our financial year 1st January. Clearly if you are running a primary school or a secondary school, in July a proportion of young people are leaving, including those eligible for Jersey Premium and in September new ones come. For many schools the demographic does not change and the numbers are broadly aligned. It is not penny-pinching, it is not a voucher scheme each head carries. There is a unit sum per eligible pupil, but it does allow schools to have the flexibility to plan forward for the autumn, even if they were at the precise numbers of eligible pupils. But the better our intelligence is from feeder nurseries and from primary and secondary transition, we have a strong idea.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I know it is not a good idea to second-guess the outcomes of the school review that you are going to undertake, but I think we can segue nicely into it. The fact that there is a recognised need for Jersey Premium in schools does suggest there has been underfunding in schools and colleges for a long, long time. Do you think that we have an issue that the Jersey school funding review is ongoing, but we have already committed in the Government Plan to funding of education? If that funding review came back and said: "You are £6 million short in your education funding just to be at a baseline and that you even need to be ..." and I am not having any bias on this at all obviously, but money has already been committed in the Government Plan. Are we going to get to the situation where a school review says we need this funding.

The Minister for Education:

No.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

... but the answer is just going to be ... you know what I am going to say.

The Minister for Education:

No, because I have had wranglings over this all the way through the Government Plan, so ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Sorry, can I just say what the answer is? Because me and you are thinking and I should say it. The answer will be from the States: "Yes, it is a great idea, but I am afraid the money is not there."

The Minister for Education:

But that is not going to happen, as far as I am concerned. I think it is completely inappropriate for a Minister to have an independent review which shows evidence that we would need more money to ensure achievement in standards and outcomes for our children and I am not able to fund it from

the academic year. I got the Government to commit on page 139 of the Government Plan that should it be identified that there was a need for an increase in the school funding that there would be a way to do that from September 2020. The wording, many times it was iterated in different ways, but we got to something that we could all agree. But I think it would be completely irresponsible, I will make that quite clear now, for me to allow our children to go into schools in September 2020 knowing that we are underfunding them. I have a legal duty to ensure children are educated appropriately. We recognise that there are already issues across schools, but having that independently verified through the process in which we are going through is extremely important and also will allow us to identify, and you were saying before, about the Jersey Premium. We can make comments whether we think ... because we need the Jersey Premium. There may be underfunding. What we need to be doing is evidencing and saying the Jersey Premium is uplifting in the appropriate way in which it was intended for those most vulnerable children in our system, just like the arguments for the premium in the U.K. were made. We need to evidence that and prove that that is what it is doing and that all children are receiving an equality in terms of funding across the schools that allows them all on par on a level playing field to achieve what they need to achieve and the standards and expectations we have, as a Government, for our education system.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I am pleased to hear you say that because it covers one of the questions. Just to talk about the school funding review, you will be using an independent body to conduct the review. What criteria are you using? The context of that for me is if you get somebody ... I will give you 2 extremes of the spectrum: the American school system to do your review as opposed to somebody from the Finnish school system for your review. I hate to quote Einstein, but the theory determines what you observe a lot of the time and you are going to get what you paid for. How are you going to assure that we are not just going to get a model which could really not fit us, if we are not careful, in terms of the review bodies?

Director, Policy and Planning:

I certainly do not want to avoid the question, but we are in the middle of the procurement process and there is only a certain amount of information we can release at this point.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That is fine.

Director, Policy and Planning:

I certainly do not want to prejudice this process because we are right in the middle of it. As soon as that has been completed ... and I note that in terms of timescales it is something you are probably quite interested in knowing. I hope that is a matter of weeks, so that the Minister can then be

presented with the options for her. At that point I think we can share with you the detailed criteria that we have assessed the received tenders on, if that is helpful.

[11:15]

Deputy R.J. Ward:

But you are confident that that will give you a ... the concerns I think we have is there have been so many changes in the U.K., for example, which look great but it has been somewhat of a disaster in many areas in terms of the way they have organised their funding at times as well. We do not want to just adopt ...

The Minister for Education:

I think one of the things that I need to make absolutely fundamentally clear is that I wanted to make sure that when we went out to tender for the independent review that it was not focused just on the U.K. or Europe; we looked internationally. That was really, really important for me and whether we end up with somebody from the U.K. will depend on the outcome of the process in which the tendering is going through at the moment. But we need to make sure. We have got terms of reference in those bits and pieces, but we have also got a number of pieces of work that have been done and really gone through and taken a lot of time by our own teachers and by our own department, which identifies a lot of evidence already. But what is important is pulling it all together and looking at it holistically. But what is most important is recognising funding in the way that produces the best for our children in a Jersey context. I think that is really, really important because if you look at the things that are going on in other jurisdictions, and you just have to look across the water in Guernsey, for example, the fundamental overhaul of the way that they are producing their education in terms of super schools or whatever it is that they call them, a very different context in Jersey when you have your parish communities and your community hubs. There would not be, I do not believe, a view of, for example, closing down parish schools in order to have super schools; it would not wash. There is a context in Jersey that you have to take into account when looking at school funding.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Part of that review would be a consultation with the public and teachers and lecturers and trade unions and all of those stakeholders in terms of that review.

Director, Policy and Planning:

I think there are different stages to the review. There is a piece of work that we are tendering for at the moment, which will be looking at the system, looking at the structure, how it is funded and making recommendations to the Minister about potential changes and also looking at better practice models

elsewhere and, as the Minister says, internationally. I think what follows from there will be the recommendation presented to the Minister and the Minister is allowed to choose how she then wants to respond to that. When you are talking about a consultation with the public and further discussions with trade unions, I think that will come at that stage. In terms of the actual delivery of the piece of work that we are tendering for, there would obviously be conversations with professionals at that stage within schools and I could imagine with teaching union representatives as well.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

To move on to another area - and I am conscious of the time - improving educational outcomes area, the Jersey Schools Review Framework. Within the business case summary you explained: "The framework is being reviewed and a full rollout will be given in this month." Can you explain the findings of the review and how the scheme has changed as a result?

The Minister for Education:

I will ask Seán if he can go. I recently had the documentation, the ministerial meeting this week. Unfortunately I have been ill, so I have only had an update on the whole thing yesterday, which was interesting. It was encouraging in some places. I will not lie, I will not hide behind anything and the Group Director knows my views on Ofsted. I am not a particular fan but I think it predominantly comes down to culture and the way that people either take these types of school review frameworks on or do not. I think there is an important piece of work, not just putting a document out, and lots of training, lots of support in place. But I will let Seán give you more detail, if that is okay.

Group Director, Education:

I am in your hands with how much detail, but thank you, Minister. We briefed the ministerial team on Monday and the Minister herself yesterday. We conducted a pilot review of all Government-maintained schools, primary, secondary, special and the 8 A.R.C.s (Additional Resource Centres) in 2 years and a term. That whole review methodology is informed... including the questionnaires from over 350 teachers, from discussion with school leaders, the training events, the external leads we have utilised to develop our peer review methodology. We then commissioned an independent evaluation of the whole process. Visiting professor at the University College London Institute of Education, Professor Peter Matthews, with a colleague, undertook a review, had drop-in sessions with teachers and met all the head teachers from primary and secondary, read every single review and critiqued our whole process and that evaluation was presented to the Minister yesterday. He has spoken very ... he and a colleague spoke very highly of our peer-led approach methodology and is explicit in stating it works much better for Jersey's community, both as a school accountability message, but also as a school development approach. Every head teacher, deputy head and some other senior leaders had been trained in the school review methodology and so the whole framework has been rewritten, informed by the pilot, the practice, the feedback we have got and then this

independent evaluation. What is due to be published imminently has had feedback from all of those sources.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Will we see that evaluation?

Group Director, Education:

The Minister will finalise the position next week, I think, but is indicating we would like to just share it all.

The Minister for Education:

We can share the information with ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That use of the specialist from wherever you said it was, is that the employing additional off-Island expertise that is mentioned in the Government Plan to ...

Group Director, Education:

No, the additional ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

... help with that or is that ... what are the details of that? They are ...

Group Director, Education:

What we have done in the review methodology is the overwhelming majority of review teams are peopled by people who live and work in Jersey, they are either school leaders, heads and deputies predominately, in similar phase schools or senior advisers and other advisers in the department. Each review has been led by an external reviewer. Our conviction is the best people who improve schools are the teachers and school leaders and the support staff within those schools. The best way they do that is working with other schools, so that collaboration. But periodically, every 3 years say, you need external eyes that can give you feedback on your view on how well you are doing. To make sure we have got that external validation we initially recruited 7. We have gone up to, I think, about 12 external people very, very experienced in this work. Many of them, not all, are ex-Her Majesty's Inspectors, but an international perspective. They have been part of the training of our people, as well as leading our reviews, so that ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, and they are very clear of the distinct situation in Jersey of our very, very selective education system?

Group Director, Education:

They have 2 full days induction before they get near a school, a lesson on the Jersey context.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Right, but they are very well aware of the very selective system and that collaboration in schools. For example, you would have the 11 to 16 schools collaborating, whereas it would not be, for example, one of the private schools and one of the 11 to 16 schools because they come from very different experiences of the cohort in Jersey. Is that ...

Group Director, Education:

In 2 parts: the lead reviewer is absolutely clear on the distinctness of Jersey. In fact, some of them wanted us to prove to them it was not like a system. Many of them had worked in Ofsted and said to establish it is a very different methodology. One of the things that appeals to lead reviewers is that they are part of the school development journey, rather than just going in and making a snapshot image and away.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is not so much the methodology of the system, it is the understanding of the context of the education system here so you can then get involved in that methodology.

Group Director, Education:

If your question is if this is a review of the 11 to 16 school or a fee-paying Government school or a selective academic selective school, they know the distinction and differences. The review teams are a mix across the system. I think there is value in our heads and deputies getting into each other's schools, the number of them who take away really good practice and go straight back to their own workplace and implement it. I am not sure if that is your question. If within the fee-paying maintained schools, Jersey College for Girls, Victoria College, it is not just that they would review each other, their leadership is a part of the whole piece.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is just the understanding of the challenges that are faced in the 11 to 16 schools. The 22 per cent on Pupil Premium, for example, I would imagine the vast majority would be in those non-selective schools and that is a very different cohort.

Group Director, Education:

Absolutely.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Just a final question, because there are a couple of things I want to ask you, what do you perceive the effect of this review system has been on staff? I do not just mean the head teachers. I will put this as politely as possible: those who are in the frontline of teaching every single day and lecturing.

Group Director, Education:

I referenced and we shared the data yesterday. We have had questionnaires after the event in all of the pilot reviews. There are some very significant changes, one of which is asking staff before a review starts: "What is it like for you to work here? Do you like it? Would you recommend it?" Some of the feedback has told us that in some schools, a small number, whether the heads felt agitated that this was high stakes, that it had changed, that some of them ... and we have directly involved. We used to in the pilot give a school 2 weeks' notice that a review was coming. To look after staff wellbeing, we committed in principle that would never be either side of a half-term because the last thing we wanted was teachers being brought in or feeling obliged to go in to make ... high trust is a key part of really good accountability, so we want to see schools as they really are because we cannot be part of the school improvement journey if it is putting on a show.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The trust is there. I absolutely agree with the trust. Do you think it is there?

Group Director, Education:

I do. It is not perfect and that is what we are working on. One way of exemplifying that trust, we have cut the notice period to 4 days by agreement, following the consultation, following the feedback, so that it just feels more normal. We need a bit of a gap between the phone call to a head to say we are going to review the school because we want to ... as well as surveying all staff, survey all parents. We are saying to parents: "We are going to review your child's school and we will tell you what we think, but we want to know what you think because that will inform how we look at it." We are saying the same to teachers and we say the same to children and young people when we go in.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Do you follow up afterwards if there have been issues within a school later on with staff to say the effect there has on them? For example, there could be a great deal of pressure afterwards if it does not go too well and it is not easy to recruit new staff, as we find. Do you think that pressure is built? Have you found any legacy after-effects from the initial pilot perhaps that did not go as well as you wanted to because you have made changes?

Group Director, Education:

I stood in the staff room as a lead reviewer, delivered to the whole staff group. It was a secondary school and there were some hard messages delivered with clear humanity and a desire and the follow-up work. People were rocked hard. One of the reasons in the Government Plan there is the significant expansion money is exactly so we get the follow-up right. In the pilot we have designed a new approach, a new system. I am proud of it. I think we have listened and the feedback we are getting, including from this academic professor, he said it is a heck of a lot better than systems in other places. But hand on heart, one of the gaps we had is did we have enough resource to properly follow up, both caring for people, but also putting in place to work as partners between the department and schools, playing in other schools? I think that is underdeveloped too. What the review pilot has given us is a huge matrix of brilliant practice in Jersey schools. Our lead, our Director of Standards and Achievement reported to the Minister yesterday, three years ago when he came to post, if the Minister had said: "Tell me about best practice or the best teacher of writing or high calibre cross-work, across science or literacy and how good are the ..." he said he could probably tell from his own schools he worked in. Now we have got the intelligence across the piece. There is a huge amount of talent and high-quality practice in Jersey and part of the follow-up is to connect people so that they can share that practice.

The Minister for Education:

I think that is really important because the importance around this is not just about turning around and saying: "You are not doing it good enough." What is really important is we are turning around and saying how brilliant they are doing things, because it goes back to that message that we heard from teachers, for example, not feeling valued. It goes back to that feeling that it is not recognised that there is good practice and being able to have the intelligence in that way. There is evidence that shows how brilliant our education and our systems are, so feeding back the strengths and the good practice is vitally important. It is not just about turning around and saying: "You are doing this wrong, you are doing that wrong."

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I am conscious that we are coming to the end of the time. Again, this segues nicely. Just to finish off, we have had correspondence about vacancies and we are pleased to see that there are not as many as there were. But I have had a lot of queries about it and we have had a lot of enquiries, so I really want to ask. I recognise there are 7 new teacher vacancies and you detailed those in a letter, which is in the public domain. Can we assume then that the vacancies that did exist have been filled by specialist teachers and those vacancies, those positions are still there and been filled, they have not just been absorbed and to some extent lost? For example, if somebody has been asked to go and teach P.E. (physical exercise) and that P.E. post has gone, that is just an example, just as a ...

Group Director, Education:

The 56 vacancies at 31st May were all filled, the actual jobs were filled. It says in the most recent letter to you there are some internal cover arrangements for this term. There is one primary, 6 secondary schools on the list.

[11:30]

That is normal. It was the same level one year in September 2018. Schools have to do that, so if there are examples of the odd non-specialist covering for the term, we all know a really good teacher who is moving on to a new job resigns on 31st May and leaves in July.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, that is why I asked you the question.

Group Director, Education:

The replacement may not be available until January, so there are cover arrangements. It was ever thus.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Just to finish and just as a quick snap question, do you think that recruitment has become more difficult; is it getting easier? Is there still a problem, i.e. are you getting a feel with age, is it more younger teachers that are coming through and are you losing a lot of experience? Do you have a view to ...

The Minister for Education:

I will ask Seán, he is lot more closer to the ground in terms of recruitment.

Group Director, Education:

Recruitment is a real challenge, because it is a challenge because we are part of a national market. Most of our teachers do their initial teacher training, some do it on-Island in the graduate scheme. In England there is a view that if every physics undergraduate in the country becomes a physics teacher there will not be enough with the number who are retiring. There is a challenge and Jersey is part of that. We have got to be more creative, both in making it attractive to come to our schools. Why not? Great kids, great buildings, great schools in Jersey. But things like the key worker initiatives - I know we have not got time to go into that - so we are looking at that, we are diligent.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

A question of time and thank you for your time. We may ask more questions, obviously you know we will, but just thank you again for your time. Thank you, Minister.

The Minister for Education:

No, thank you very much.

[11:31]