



Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Post-16

Witness: Beaulieu School

Friday, 22nd March 2019

Panel:

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

Deputy R.E. Huelin of St. Peter

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John

Witnesses:

Ms. A. Firby, Head of School

Mr. P. Toal, Deputy Head

Mr. R. Steel, Assistant Head of Beaulieu

[14:28]

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

Thank you very much for your time and for your submission ... all of the information we have got. It is really important that we get it and it helps us in what we are trying to do. There is a little sheet of paper that tells you about the hearings in front of you for formality and there is no one here today to take your phones away as well. I think we will introduce ourselves as well because there maybe people who will watch later on. Deputy Robert Ward, and I chair the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel and this review panel.

Deputy R.E. Huelin of St. Peter:

Deputy Rowland Huelin from St. Peter.

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John:

I am Deputy Trevor Pointon, St. John.

Head of School:

Afternoon. I am Andrea Firby, Head of School from Beaulieu Convent School and I must just give our apologies for Chris Beirne, C.E.O. (Chief Executive Officer). I know he has had a chance to write to some of you. He is unable to be here today because of an injury. We have got the Deputy Head.

Deputy Head:

I am Deputy Head, Phil Toal of Beaulieu.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Roy Steel, Assistant Head of Beaulieu.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Excellent, thank you very much. It was really an opportunity to go further with your review. It is really not a grilling in any shape or form sort of just to reassure you. So we will start off with a brief overview of the Post-16 provision that you provide at Beaulieu. If you can do that that would be great.

Head of School:

Okay, all right. I can hand that over to you, Phil. Do you want to talk about our curriculum and diversity?

Deputy Head:

So in terms of our curriculum at Beaulieu we are trying to be as diverse as possible. We try to offer as many pathways as possible to our students and maintain flexibility. So we do offer a sort of standard range of A Levels and within that we are going back to 4 A Levels. Some of the students may want to do 3 A Levels, some students may want to do 2 A Levels or even a single A Level and it is very dependent on the individual that we have in front of us going through that process. Alongside the traditional A Levels we will offer a range of alternative qualifications which are equivalent qualifications, so we might have B-Techs, Cambridge Technicals, Cash qualifications, range of Level 2 and 3 qualifications alongside.

[14:30]

We also provide a range of support assistance for students who have not necessarily met the entry criteria into a full A Level range. So students who may not have got a Grade 4 in maths or English for example we would offer them a resit programme alongside possibly one or 2 A Levels and in

some cases there might be a 3-year A Level programme instead of 2-year A Level or Level 3 programme. So we do try, wherever possible, to keep the child at the centre of those conversations and offer them as many different options to get them to wherever they want to be and it is very much focussed on their individual pathway and their career as an outcome and we will tailor what we possibly can in our curriculum to provide support for them.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Just for clarity do you take the A.S.s(?) 2:30:51 still or have you dropped A.S.? A number of places have dropped A.S.

Deputy Head:

We currently off A.S.s and it is a case that those are to be sat at the end of Year 12.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Those who take 4 A Levels do they drop one and just do 3 at the end?

Deputy Head:

Some do and some do not.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Some do and some may go through with the whole 4.

Head of School:

Yes, some might go all the way through with 4. We are a Catholic school so we take responsibility very seriously about tailor-making whatever we do to the individual. So to say the majority would take 3 A Levels is probably a fair picture but it is very blended, whether it is with technical courses or it is A Level. It is a very blended system and it is very unique to the individual I have to say so ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, and what do you say your main successes are then Post-16 beyond just results which it could be?

Deputy Head:

It would be the range that we offer our students that is so very bespoke. We have a slightly unique situation at Beaulieu where we are able to offer online learning modules as well which has, to some extent, exploded our curriculum where students are able to opt in for things that they have never thought possible. They could not access anywhere else in the Island so they might be able to do something like animal management or perhaps look at ...

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Can I just ask, what sort of things?

Deputy Head:

So we have one child at the moment who is doing adult social-working online, one who is doing travel and tourism, one who is looking at criminology, one student who wants to go back and do G.C.S.E. (General Certificate of Secondary Education) biology to go on to do a course at university so she is doing G.C.S.E. biology in a year. So that has allowed for quite a breadth of study for our students. So we see that as a highlight, the range, in terms of what we can offer.

Head of School:

Also the support, the S.E. (special education). The students because of our criteria to enter into our Year 12 I would say we are a fully inclusive school so we have a real range of students who join us and we offer a rich, diverse support network through our learning support. I do not know if all the other schools offer teaching assistance support in their 6th form but we do have a 6th form support in that way.

Deputy Head:

So we do offer bespoke support for students. So we have students who, as I said, have not quite met the grade for Level 4 or Grade 4 at G.C.S.E. and would have the staff on hand to provide one-to-one tuition for those individuals who might be some distance away to try and get them to the point they need to be to progress. We also have 7 T.A.s (teaching assistants) and many of them work across Year 12 and 13 to support students.

Head of School:

And students that take resit on one-to-one tuition for a couple of students who are resitting maths while doing A Levels or a B-Tech course.

The Deputy of St. John:

Correct me if I am wrong, you did mention adult social work. Is that an A Level course or is a ...

Deputy Head:

It is a Level 3 and C.A.B.(?) 2:33:57.

The Deputy of St. John:

A Level 3, right. Would that give the individual some of the skills needed to go out and become a social worker or would it ...

Deputy Head:

So it would allow them to basically explore a course which are they passionate about and would have an interest in with a view to go into that as a profession. So it would lead nicely into the social-working degree in Jersey for example or possibly go off-Island but my ...

The Deputy of St. John:

So Social Services need to look to Beaulieu to train all newly qualified social workers.

Head of School:

We would love to help. Yes, we would love to help.

The Deputy of St. John:

There is a massive shortfall.

Head of School:

Yes, absolutely. Part of the passion for what we do is about serving the community. As I said before, we are a Catholic school. Part of what we do is about going out to serve those in the community of Jersey and beyond and that is what we try and instil in our students but also in what we do and how to do it on a daily basis.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

It is that range. We do not have that academic selection so we have students coming in at all ranges. It is that value-added thing you were talking about successes. It is not just adding value to those that already have value. It is adding value to everybody that comes through our doors.

Head of School:

Do you want to talk about B.I.T. (Beaulieu Institute of Technology)?

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Yes. I mean because one of the things or one of the successes you have had this year that started with those tranches is the Beaulieu Institute of Technology, which we have called B.I.T., and that is a course that allows any student from the States or any Island student at all to come to us free of charge. It is subsidised by the States, full funding, whereas, you talked to De La Salle about that funding split. The funding follows that student but there is no academic qualification entries into the 2:35:43 (inaudible) because we see too much gold in kind of that entrepreneurial ship and the students that are not necessarily traditionally academic but still succeed in life because they have just got that hunger. I do not think they were being catered for so we decided to cater for them. It

has been amazingly successful. They just got their results this month. They all passed their first exam which is superb considering we do not have that academic qualification but it just goes to show that when they were at interview they are showing their passion. That is what drove them through to succeed and so we have used the B.I.T. as an example that that is possible and we would love to develop that because it is a small group at the moment as a trial. At the moment it has been very successful and we hope to continue. It is a model that we want to see some ...

The Deputy of St. Peter:

How many?

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Seven at the moment. We have got the space for up to 20. We have already got more ready for the next year. It is a 2-year trial. We have got more than we had last year so word of mouth is getting around. It is always hard to crack the traditional routes and the traditional pathways in Jersey that are established. The word is now getting around that there are courses and opportunities that are not traditional.

Head of School:

I think the links you make with business all the way through the course with placements ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Yes. We have worked hard. We have worked hard with entities like Digital Jersey and businesses. We are just presenting it at PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers) and things like that. That is where the real link has come. I have got this perception of Jersey that Jersey needs to look after Jersey a little bit more and the business links that we have made it shows that students can go straight from Level 3, A Level qualifications, to work and we can guide them into the positions that suit them rather than just throwing them out there and saying: "Go find a job." We like to make those introductions well before they have left us.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

How much time is involved in doing B.I.T. and the ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

So it is equivalent to 2½ A Levels. They do ...

The Deputy of St. Peter:

So it is full time.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Yes, 100 per cent. It is business B-Tech and the Cambridge Technicals. They want me to call them C-Techs. They are making sure there is a difference because the reform with the B-Techs has made them more academic and universities are taking them much more seriously now. The C-Techs are also there. I know you will probably mentioned T-Levels later; it is of a similar ilk. The whole point is that I am just seeing this whole swathe towards vocation and we just want to embrace it. We hear businesses; they want skills, they want those soft skills, they do not just want academics. When we looked at the stats earlier 50 per cent of our students have a mixed vocational and A Level route. So you can have vocational working alongside traditional A Levels. Half of our students at A Level are already showing that and we feel that is giving them a greater width of skills going forward into business.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Did you get any resistance setting up your B.I.T.?

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

No. It was new certainly. I think there was nervousness about what it was because there are routes to computing and we did not want to take those. Those routes were established. There was no point in such a small Island having that level of competition for computer science. What this is is digital business. This is not about people that are coding and making A.P.P.s (Advanced Placement Programme). There are places they can go for that. This is about giving people that are going to hit management going into the finance industry, Jersey's main pillar, and having a digital knowledge which will give us an advantage in the coming future.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

What we have found is some schools are doing university things very well and we end up spending £25 million or something, which is quite a lot. I think this is something that we should be spending quite a lot of time on. Can I ask you just to give an overview, this is for us as well as the one person who is listening down there? Can you give us an overview of what the curriculum entails and how 2:39:44 (inaudible)?

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

For B.I.T. specifically?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Yes.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

One of their B-Techs is business studies. The other one, the Cambridge Technical, is I.T. (Information Technology) so it is a 50/50 split as far as that value is concerned. The extra half of the A Levels is made up of something called an E.P.Q., (Extended Project Qualification), and this is quite new and universities are really enjoying candidates with it because it is an open-ended question. This is the difficulty of explaining it. You can write an essay. One of the students is writing about how social media could mentally affect students going forward; the pros and cons of doing an in-depth research article. Where another student is making a real life Iron Man suit with electronics and 3-D printing and lathe work and all that engineering style of stuff. We have heard of people in England that have gone and made kick bikes with it. So it is to show off your individual skills, which is very unique when we talk about the proscribed nature of A Levels and G.C.S.E.s. The E.P.Q. has offered something that is really wide and it is not just offered to B.I.T. students. The E.P.Q. is offered to all Beaulieu students if they want to take it forward because business and university are starting to get a little bit ... bored is the wrong word but difficult to assess the A and the B students. There is not much coming out in C.V.s (curriculum vitae). Everything is quite grey.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Yes, they have all got gold stars ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

It has been quite traditional whereas this E.P.Q. ... one, the lad that is doing the Iron Man suit; that is going to stick in your memory in an interview or if you are able to talk about mental health with passion and good research skills and investigative skills ...

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Is this business studies and the I.T.; is that just picked off the shelf at the standard A Level or is it only tailored for ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

I think it is picking a need for Jersey. It was picking a need for Jersey. I work quite a lot with Digital Jersey and there is obviously the drive to fill that digital gap as one of the main strands from the Government themselves but I did not feel, because we were not fast enough, and I.T., if you do not move fast enough, it is just pointless. Even if you are trying to plan 3, 5 years ahead, you have just got to get up and do it and do not let it go.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

But is it third party business studies or is it specifically for ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

They are accredited. No, there are accredited courses.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

But if you do business studies here you could do business studies as an A Level elsewhere. Would that be the same or is it a business study ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Yes.

Head of School:

Yes.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Yes. So when we talk about that blended, 50 per cent vocational academic my class with its students also has some of our Beaulieu students in with their other A Levels as well so it is a great mix and having 2 different styles in the same classroom ...

Head of School:

Yes, it has been really beneficial.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

... you are really adding value to what has been going forward.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Have there been any technical barriers?

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Not since we went kind of on our own because Beaulieu was the first gigabit connected school in Europe and we have worked very hard over the last decade to keep at the forefront of technology.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

You had Tony Moretta there.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Yes. Well, it was before Tony came. Tony has helped us a lot over the years and it is more our links with J.E.T. (Jersey Employment Trust). They have really helped us through. What that has done is every student at Beaulieu has their own laptop device. They carry that around with them. There is no computer room because everybody has a computer. So when we want to do research

or we want to work collaboratively the girls and the boys can do that instantly because our Wi-Fi is everywhere all over and it is not to be sniffed at and I always want to make this point. I talk in England about what we do and we represented Cisco in a U.K. (United Kingdom) conference recently to show that we are at the forefront of this technology. Jersey has the ability to lead in this area because of the internet connection and the facilities we have locally.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So that could be possible in all schools.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Without a doubt. Without speaking out of turn 2:43:35 (inaudible) to get that sorted for everybody.

Head of School:

But it has to be funded so we have made a decision and it was a risk when Chris and Roy made that decision but they made that decision, took the risk and diverted funds from school in order to make it happen. The teaching and learning benefits that we are seeing now are huge in every single subject and in fact every single class from our pre-school 3 all the way through to our 19 year-olds.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I mean by general reputation the use of I.T. certainly within the States is ... I have got to think of a word that is parliamentary language really. It is not very good. I gather that you have been doing a lot of things on your own within your own software without your own resources.

Head of School:

I think Chris and Rory were frustrated enough to want to ...

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Can you explain that?

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

It is hard to manage a huge ... we talk about big in terms of U.K. It is not huge. It is a district. It was frustrating and I think it is hard to make that leap. Sometimes the safe option is the easy option and I like to make options that scare me in a way because you are only going to make significant change if you do that. When we switched off wired infrastructure to wireless that was a huge change for us. When the girls walked in on that first day I was nervous when that happened but we were confident it was going to work.

[14:45]

I think a risk averse strategy that can sometimes occur on the Island is holding us back with innovation and certainly with technology. It goes to say as well that while there has been levels of investment we think, as a school, we have done it because there are cost savings at the end of it. People hear “digital” and they hear Wi-Fi everywhere and they hear gigabit they think that is expensive and there are savings at the other end with printing savings, with the fact they we have not got computer rooms. The girls have got their computers. Cost are moving around. We are extremely efficient about what we do with the money that we have. We have to be. I have always got one eye on that. It is not a frivolous expenditure that we have got. It is tight.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

But if extended your I.T. infrastructure within the school with your own individual applications and the way you are teaching that is ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

So everything is online. We are very unique in that way. It is effectively called a Cloud school mentality in the U.K. and the world domain. I take a lot of what we do from the southern hemisphere. I think they are very forward thinking when it comes to this area, Australia particularly. To move everything to the Cloud means the girls have the same experience at home as they do in the school and that for me is invaluable.

Head of School:

Vice-versa, yes.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Yes, because they can continue working, continue that investigation without having to download expensive software that is only available when they walk through the school gates.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Were there obstacles from the Education Department in doing that in terms of accessibility which meant you had to do your own ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Well, 10 years ago. We had just got to a point where the filtering was quite cumbersome. I know things have changed at the moment where it has been going on but we had got to a precipice. We wanted to use Google as a service. It is quite predominant now worldwide. I think they are out-performing Apple and Microsoft are on their heels but they are certainly the leader in Intech at the moment and that was a carte blanche no. We were not allowed to use that technology 10 years ago

and so we said: "Yes, we want to" so we had to break ... that was the pivotal moment and it is coming back round. You know, I will not say I predicted the future ... it was a risk at the time ... but it has proven to be the case and now Google Intech is dominating. I think most of the schools are using that as well as their 365 provision which could cut the cost.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We went to a conference that mentioned about how those obstacles ... those simple ... I say "simple" but they are really obstacles and hold back that sort of development and it is interesting to see that happening. I was going to ask you about the challenges for ...

Head of School:

We have still got more successes to talk about. We have only done 2. We have got more success.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Can I just do one more?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, go on.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Unfortunately it always begs the question of security really, how you overcome that.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

This always makes me smile because Jersey, for some reason, thinks it has got more resources on tech security than Google. If Google gets hacked the world is in a state. To say that Jersey could manage that security better than Google itself I think would be a touch arrogant and for us the security is unbelievable. This document that I am looking at right now is saved to the internet in fragments, all encrypted, in certain locations all over the world on Google servers and when I want to look at it it all comes back again in those jigsaw pieces. Are we doing that in Jersey? I do not think we are.

Head of School:

But the beauty is we can open each one of our laptops and work on that document collaboratively and I suppose collaboration is another success that we would want to talk about.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

We produce 10,000 documents a week, new educational documents a week, with 350,000 emails bouncing around, 2 terabits of those. We are the biggest user of the internet in the entire Island

according to J.T. (Jersey Telecom) because of the fact that we opened these doors to that technology. Like I said, we have always got security. We have got filters that come through, the obvious. What worries me more is not the filtering in the school and the security in the school, it is the security at home and what kids are getting up to on 4G devices and their mobiles when they leave us. I would say that is the environment that is more of a concern to me than when they come into the school.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Security is one per cent technology and 99 per cent of people oppose those 2.49.21 (inaudible).

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Yes, that is it. It is those phishing emails. They are getting more and more sophisticated. I worry for the general public more than anything else. The students are a bit more savvy to it. They have not got bank balances. It is the adults that should be worried.

The Deputy of St. John:

You collaborate with the other private schools ...

Head of School:

Yes, and that would be something that we have been really proud of as a success, Deputy.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

I am wondering why this technological development that you have managed to succeed with has not been translated into the other schools.

Head of School:

It is on offer. It is on offer to students to come and access from whichever school they want to come to us from. As we said, we are here to serve the community of Jersey. We have always been really open about ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

I have been fanatical about opening this work before ...

Head of School:

Yes, always on the ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

I built it a decade ago when Apple were the big education tech name. We brought Apple in to speak to it. I am in the process of talking to Google. I was hoping to get that in next year. It is not through the opportunity. Someone just has to say: "Let us make this change." We are more than happy to help.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

How many of the 7 are Beaulieu students and how many are external?

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Sorry?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Of the 7 you have got doing business ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

At the moment they are all external.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

They are all?

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

External.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

External.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

So we have got 2 from Haute Vallée. We have got Quennevias. We have got Victoria College, J.C.G. (Jersey College for Girls). It is a mix. There is no kind of tick box about who you are to come to B.I.T. and I have got different schools on the books for next year as well. It is more about getting that message out. That has been the hardest job to just say: "Here we are, this is what we are doing." We have tried traditional media. We have tried traditional advertising. We keep banging the drum. There are other routes that are established in Jersey and if we know anything about Jersey it is change is a more difficult beast.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

What is the restriction? What are the barriers you are finding? I spent 30 years in I.T. and it is the most fascinating industry with the changes that are taking place and that will continue to be. This

exponential curve is going to keep on going up. What are the barriers to preventing kids from biting your hands off with this opportunity? Why? What is the culture behind our youth that there are restrictions of doing or ...

Deputy Head:

I do not think that would necessarily be our youth if I am honest. The barrier is more the parental view. They do not necessarily see the range of qualifications as being equivalent as being equal. So if you say to them: "You are doing a B-Tech", they will possibly see it as a lesser qualification to an A Level because that is what they are used to. That is what they have been exposed to for decades.

Head of School:

From their own experience.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Do you think that is changing though?

Deputy Head:

I think it is with our parents. We do find that repeatedly. We do expose them to the language that we need to use. We talk about "levels" as opposed to saying G.C.S.E. and A Levels. We are much more open about it but I cannot speak for the rest of the Island.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

I think sometimes the Island beats itself with a stick. We have got all this kind of focus on data, "data data" and we judge schools believing they are all equal and they certainly are not all equal. There is very much different challenges at the different schools and there is a lot of talk even in the U.K. now about reducing those number of G.C.S.E.s to say let us focus on the 6 and let the students do the project-based learning or do some vocational work ...

Head of School:

Yes, that independent ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

... and let students fails which we do not let them do at the moment.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

So how are we going to change that because by my calculation less than 5 per cent of people work in I.T. in Jersey? If you take the direct or indirect of a bank you will be probably be looking between

25 and 30 per cent of people that service a bank will be in I.T. or out-sourced organisations delivering the services in.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

This week Digital Jersey hosted some data back from Tech Nation and while we talk about the 3 pillars of Jersey, finance, tourism and agriculture, digital now makes up the same G.D.P. (gross domestic product) as agriculture so it should be the 4 pillars we are going on about now and it is attacking the same G.D.P. as tourism. So when we talk about I.T., when you talk about the barriers I see the words "I.T." being the barrier because it is digital now. I.T. is very specific about getting people into back rooms and then ...

Head of School:

Coding and everything else.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

... 2.53:55 (inaudible) and everything like that but digital now is permeating everything and there has to be a digital focus. I mean in Beaulieu all of our students gets an I.T. qualification because we see that as a core subject. It has to be going forward. So for me it is not as little as that. Yes, if you are talking about I.T. I.T., but we are not getting much more detailed data. I think they are going to talk about services data going forward, business data, to get more of a handle on what G.D.P. we have as a contribution to Jersey's money.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

You see extending to that. I mean I just go I.T. because as you said, you go digital. When you go to Silicon Valley they call it tech. So we have got 2:54:38 (inaudible) making sure out there that needs ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Yes. No, and I think you are right because it is important. Digital Jersey is saying it as well.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

When we started with Digital Jersey we asked them to define it and we got the best definition we have had for a while. You remember the 4 areas.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

It was those 4 areas; coding, I.T. infrastructure, applications and project management.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, it is a key feature.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

One of our students recently just won a student hackathon, the Youth Hackathon, and the idea was a very simple one where she has taken virtual reality photos of different areas, Corbière was the example and she is doing disability access. So you go through the V.R. (virtual reality) and you can see: "Well, you can get 2 wheelchairs by there." She has recorded sounds or recorded sounds to say: "This is the ambient noise" to help people with autism and to prepare them. She is not a coder but she understands the digital need for people with disabilities to go somewhere before they go somewhere to check that they can. They know there is not a step that is going to affect them and that is because she understands digital not necessarily, as we would say, like the full coding of that and if all of our students have that knowledge with I.T. and business in general it could affect all areas.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

There are no boundaries.

The Deputy of St. John:

How widespread is the knowledge that you provide this digital environment in the school among the wider community because ...

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

We started with morals. We had a partnership for our innovation centre and we started delivering courses for the community for teachers and I will be getting back into that as we dropped those. We are getting that backend of the 2:56:14 (inaudible) a bit more time in the summer to do that. I believe it will be things like: "Here is virtual reality, come and experience it" or, "Here is just how to take photos with your phone." We just want to kind of break the barriers. We are not going to bring people in and say: "Learn how to code" because no one is going to come. We are just going to show some people some interesting things with I.T. and invite them into the school to experience it.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Particularly with 2:56:36 (inaudible) classroom I know it has been used elsewhere, just there were some other schools in the way and it is. Can I just ask because one of the key things that we want to know is, what are the challenges Post-16 that we face? One of the things we want to do in this review is make recommendations so that we can move forward and we cannot do that unless we know the challenges.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Andrea said there 2 other success stories.

Head of School:

Maybe just back to something that Deputy Pointon mentioned about, collaborating with other schools. In our 6th form again we have a collaborative model. I do not know, Phil, do you want to share about the subjects that we collaborated on and how we manage that?

Deputy Head:

We do find that our blend that we have between a collaboration has been very successful and it has become closer and closer, the idea of working together within the college model. So we have found that we are able to offer more subjects and the students are able to access J.C.G. and Victoria College and De La Salle for example. This year for the first time we have seen that our subjects have allowed for students to access things in every single block. So, for example, biology appears in every single block. Chemistry appears in 3 blocks. Business studies appears in 3 blocks. This means that students possibly for us may not be able to access the subject range with us but when you work in collaboration with the other colleges suddenly they are able to have everything they wanted to have and for us that is a really important merger and amalgamation that we see as beneficial to our students.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

So that collaboration between different institutions, even though you may have slightly different timetables, by clever timetabling of blocks you can produce that in a sense.

Deputy Head:

Is it working in advance and making sure that firstly we satisfy the needs of our students and then working across the schools to allow us to benefit each other.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Because you run vocational qualifications would that be extended to places like Highlands? I know you have an S.L.A. (Service Level Agreement) between the 4 fee-paying schools. Could you see that collaboration ... I know that the B.I.T accesses elsewhere ...

Head of School:

Yes. In the past our students have accessed courses at Highlands, whether it is a day release to do such and such ...

Deputy Head:

There is also no reason why it cannot work the other way round.

Head of School:

The other way round, yes.

Deputy Head:

There are students who are accessing predominantly vocational subjects at Highlands and perhaps doing 3 days there that they could not come to us for A Levels. We will just have to work with them to develop a timetable which is suitable.

Head of School:

Yes. I think it is about having that blend and meeting the needs of every individual whatever that might look like. I think the beauty that we have got here in Jersey is there is so much choice for our students and when you are a teenager to have that choice I think is vital.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I suppose geographically it is just up the hill.

Deputy Head:

It is walking distance. We will forever be walking to education backwards, it is a 10-minute walk.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Probably pick up the Wi-Fi. No, perhaps not. You say that you are inclusive so how do you make sure that you are fulfilling the needs of all the students who want to study with you, notwithstanding that it is a girls' school although you do have boys on the B.I.T. course? How do you get to all of the demographics on the Island and are there any that you feel you do not access that you would like to in terms of your inclusivity?

[15:00]

Head of School:

I think we are academically incredibly inclusive in everything that we do. We offer financial assistance and financial bursaries to students. In 6th form especially we have got a bursary system that is linked with the Catholic Church. Caritas students come to us and they support them and B.I.T., obviously, is completely inclusive academically and socially really because it is free for the students to come and access. The only criteria is that you show an interest and you show up and have an interview with Rory Steel and you are in.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

You can always gauge it as soon as they walk through the door. One of the lads came over with a folder full and he could not wait to open it and you knew before he had even opened it he was ripe for the course. For me, when you are saying: "It is at the moment business and I.T." We would love to extend it.

Head of School:

You have, yes.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

It is the whole thing. The whole thing about the school ethos and everything is that community drive and it has been shown to succeed. You have just got to open that door only that little bit and we have shown it can work. It is a business and I.T. course. There is no reason why it cannot work. We have got so many options vocationally and academically. There is no reason why those kids ...

Deputy Head:

There is the will to change as well. Every year our students are very aware that if there is something which desirable to them that we currently do not offer them they just tell us. We will investigate it. We will explore it and see whether we can put it in place the following year. As a result we have diversified our curriculum. We continue to do so. So as long as it is desirable for the students we will try our best to support that need.

Head of School:

We no longer sort of follow the square peg to a round hole model. We have thrown away the work bench essentially and look at the student and then design the curriculum around them.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

You could get a Level 3 sign language qualification. Anything is possible.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

One of the things we got from Jersey Finance was ... and I was surprised and I do not know why I was surprised ... there is this notion that the traditional model of just academic qualification is not really what is necessarily ... one suggests they are very useful. It shows you are academic. The broadening of not judgment ... I use the word "judgment" but assessment to other areas. It is a cultural change that is happening. Do you feel that not just because you are doing it because do you feel that is the need that the Island is suddenly starting to be realised due to so many pressures?

Head of School:

Yes. I mean those transferrable skills, whichever subject they might be sort of lead in, are essential and I think we focus heavily on the academic but also the pastoral, also the technical side. It is that blended approach and also those soft skills of being able to present and talk. It is really important so that you are employable at the end of the day.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

I think the beauty is I do not think the girls know today we are teaching the sort of skill of how to be polite, how to 3:03:16 (inaudible). You just embed it in the ethos of the school. So I was doing something with J.T. the other day and they were telling me: "Oh, what do the students think about the I.T.?" and I said: "Do you know what they do not even know. They just take it for granted" and I said: "That is the thing. To them it is just part and parcel of their life and going through that" and it is the same with the work that Beaulieu does in the community, it is there. It is just expected. It is not explicit. It is just one of those things that happens on a daily basis.

The Deputy of St. John:

Do you have any statistics about where your pupils are going to post I.T.?

Head of School:

Yes. I think the fact that I can share that with you probably ...

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Yes, that is last year's list.

Head of School:

Yes. This year 75 per cent of our 6th form went on to university to H.E. (higher education).

The Deputy of St. John:

The sort of courses they are doing at university.

Deputy Head:

Economics, international relationships, relations, marketing, veterinary medicine, animal behaviour, criminology, technology; so quite a lot. There is quite a difference.

The Deputy of St. John:

That is very diverse.

Head of School:

Very diverse. Very diverse.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

When you get academically unselected, when people come in with a wide range of skills that is what you end up with, a very wide range, and it does rub off on everybody.

Deputy Head:

We do offer an Oxbridge programme and do make sure that we try to tell you and do pre 3:04:35 (inaudible) in terms of getting our students to aspire to be as best they possibly can as well and go to the best universities for them and pursue the course and the career that they want to go into.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I mean I know there are bursaries but I mean what you are offering those mixed ability opportunity with ... there seems to be a variety which is healthy I think but it is fee paying and there will be financial obstacle, bursaries aside, because there is always a gap in the middle where the bursaries do not hit and do you think that there is, therefore, a gap in provision because of that where if you were to ... I do not know how but if we were to ...

Head of School:

We would love to be a free Catholic organisation. Absolutely. That drives us. We have always wanted to be able to offer that to the Island from when the sisters founded the school. That was part of their mentality and driver that we could offer free education to girls and boys of Jersey community.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

We have heard it a lot, people saying there is choice. Well, there is if you can afford it and you should not have to end up in some sort of bursary lottery to see if you could make that. There should be an opportunity. We have shown there is a model there that works and we are happy to extend that model, you know, not even 3:06:00 (inaudible) have other people do it. It is all great for Jersey in general but happy to make it happen here.

Deputy Head:

Even if you were when you just started, 6th form for example, and it was a free and fully inclusive 6th form.

Head of School:

And a range of organisations offering different environments and different blended courses, yes. That would be our ideal.

The Deputy of St. John:

I am just wondering when you mention a free 6th form there is a free 6th form of course. Why do parents want their girls to come to ...

Deputy Head:

It is a free 6th form but it is a selective 6th form. We are not selective. We do have a minimum criteria but a child can come to us and say: "I did not get to your minimum criteria. What can you offer me? What sort of pathway could I do?" We will sit down with that child and say: "This is what we can put together for you. Does that meet your needs? Is that what you want to go on to do?"

The Deputy of St. John:

So you can take a student who may not be as academic as some that go to Hautlieu and you can offer them a course ... not a course course ... but a pathway to gaining some qualification, not necessarily A Level or not necessarily a higher qualification but a qualification of some description?

Deputy Head:

Yes.

Head of School:

Often some of our students run a 3-year programme so in the first year they might do something that then leads on to a 2-year A Level programme.

Deputy Head:

So it could be a student who does a resit maths and English course within our block E and they might have alongside that perhaps photography A Level and doing the B.I.T. programme perhaps doing business or something. It does not always have to be at level 3. It could be at level 2 and then the following year they would then do a level 3 course. So they are en route. They are meeting the criteria of the course and as a result we are recruiting with integrity for the course so it is not a case of we are setting them up to fail. We know what we have to do to get them there.

The Deputy of St. John:

So in a way we are fulfilling some of the role that Highlands has.

Deputy Head:

You could say that, yes.

Head of School:

So it is a unique environment. It is an all-female school apart from our 6th form. We have boys who join us there. It is very nurturing, incredibly caring. It is small. We are not the size of Highlands and we are all on one site. The girls have often been with us since the age of 3 and so they want that continuous provision. They know us. We know them. We know their families. It is their community base. So although we might offer a similar diet the environment and experience can be very different and that is what they want the choice to opt into. I think it is really important that we can offer them that choice to stay.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Not everyone needs an A. That is that mantra of everyone saying: "You need a 4 or 5 to get in to do this course at G.C.S.E." Well, that is if you are going to the next level, then going to uni and then doing this very prescriptive thing. For some people they just need a bit more time to gather some information to know their subject well and get to love it that little bit more and to move on to the next section. I know lots of very successful people that did not get very good A Level results.

Head of School:

Or at 16 know what they want to go on to and do so that is why it is important that we do not put a ceiling on that they have to leave us at 18.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I ask you; there is a couple of practical things? I was going to avoid asking about T Levels because you sort of started on that. So there is 2 things. I know there are ...

Male Speaker:(?) 3:09:38

Looking forward to it, yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I know they are just very new and are somewhat controversial at times in the U.K. but a lot of money has been pumped into it. There is that element of academic vocational qualification but the variety that you offer particularly when you are working in a group perhaps could work very well.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

I think it is rebranding. I think if I was going to be 3:10:01 (inaudible) about it is the B-Tech because B-Techs offer very much what the T Levels do. I know they are pitching themselves slightly different. I welcome them because it is another thing that will show that vocational is making its way back into education, into skills, so whatever we want to call it, whether it is B, C or T. We will enjoy and see what courses are best for our students. We will just let them choose what is out there and for me I am glad to see vocation return. Academic is still there but we can have that to go with it.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

The other thing is as well, can you access Jersey Premium in your secondary school up to 16?

Head of School:

Theoretically and also lack money, theoretically, and also S.E.N. (Special Education Needs) funding. There are not the mechanisms and systems necessarily in place to be able to support those students to allow the money to follow those students and we are working closely with the Education Department to try and resolve that but it is a bit of a frustration but the mechanisms just are not there currently.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I was then going to ask you whether it should follow them into Post-16?

Head of School:

Yes, absolutely. Undoubtedly, yes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Your opinion on that. We seem to have got a theme on that without giving anything away but if you have watched the hearings I think you can work it out for yourself. That is quite interesting about Jersey Premium money as well.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Because it just another thing. Everyone has talked about funding. It is just a given being underfunded but it is to remind everybody as well that it is not just about that level of funding. It is the fact we have to look after our own buildings as well as look after the actual S.E.N. support. All those things that our colleagues may have not to worry about we do. We have to. So when we talk about efficiencies and budgeting no one knows it better than us. We are extremely efficient ...

Head of School:

We are our own landlord essentially so if the roof falls in we are pitching up and getting on top and trying to work out the most cost effective way to fix it.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

It should not necessarily be on the minds of educationalists to know how to do building.

Head of School:

But that is the challenge we have.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

That is just us. That is what we do and always have done, always will do although we always remind people.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I am fascinated by the benefits of mixed ability schools who both; the most talented and those with not such gifts and how that works. What are the benefits of that for everyone 3:12:33 (inaudible)?

Head of School:

Do you want to take that one?

Deputy Head:

We have gone through a process of being a school that set the majority of subjects to a school that does not set anything. The English Department was the most recent one where they had bi-sets and got rid of them all and did completely mixed ability and they saw that their results improved significantly over that 4 or 5-year period. They do feel that students who are lower academically able are benefiting from the exposure to the higher attaining students and vice-versa. The conversations are more enriching, the conversations are much more detailed and the sharing of opinion and views from that kind of different socio-economic background as well has been very beneficial. We do see it as a very supportive environment, supportive in terms of academic development as well as the social development.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Sorry, I was coughing my way through that, and I really did not take on everything you said as well as I would have liked to.

The Deputy of St. John:

That is interesting, because the argument for grammar schools on the mainland is that you cherry pick the cream and they get on ...

Deputy Head:

What is very different about it is the amount of support that is around a child, the class sizes, and we tend to have classes that are no bigger than 20 and we have T.A.s in a wide range of classes and those who require support are receiving support, but they are not seen as different from their peer group. To me that is the nature of an inclusive school, that every child is treated exactly the same and has exactly the same access. I think Beaulieu is very good at doing that.

The Deputy of St. John:

So the same would apply, presumably, to those pupils that have some impediment?

Deputy Head:

As a school we have a range of physical difficulties from hearing impaired to vision impaired. We also have a full range of cognitive difficulties as well, specific learning difficulties. We have autistic students. We do not shy away from a child coming to us and try to put a package in place to support that individual.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

I do a lot of work on unconscious bias and if you put all like-minded people together you will get like-minded results and to have that breadth of experience to draw upon, and I know a lot of academics do not have the greatest common sense.

[15:15]

Head of School:

Or resilience, because they never face challenge.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

So I think everyone feeds off each other, so to compartmentalise people into different areas I think restricts innovation rather than encourages it.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I think when you get out into the big wide world you will come across people in the workplace with mixed views(?) 3:15:22 (inaudible) and some will work for you and some you will work for and if you cannot work out how to get the best out of people and have an appreciation of those that have more ability than you and some of who have got less ability than you, if you cannot work with that I think it is really important.

Head of School:

It is that diverse, inclusive approach that we advocate.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

There is a slight irony in such a selective education system in Jersey as well. We select so often, and I wonder whether it is that compartmentalising of young people and then the compartments of what type of education you have that we will go down with what we are facing in terms of what we need for the future.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Shall I deal with our favourite?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Do that. I will finish off with the normal one.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I have forgotten what it is now. It has been a long day. The concept of a job for life has gone and it is only going to enhance the fact that people have a number of careers. As I said I am on my 3rd. How are you preparing your pupils for the world of great change and uncertainty going ahead, certainly within the workplace?

Head of School:

We could talk about our very holistic careers programme.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

It is not the careers. It is the preparation.

Head of School:

That is it. It is the underlying, the building of resilience and having a growth mindset. It is about having the opportunity to aspire and dream and to know that with the skills that you can acquire you can fulfil those dreams. .

Deputy Head

It is all about risk-taking, to take a risk and having another career and doing something different in their lives.

Head of School:

It is about risk-taking, absolutely.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Careers for us is not just about knowing what jobs are out there. Careers is exactly that. It is part of being able to say that the workplace is in that state and that is what they are going to have to deal with going forward. I know that they make everyone join LinkedIn in the 6th form to get into that to see people, who is in the Island, who is not, who is there, because we are a close community and you have to start to get to know it. We talked to our students today about never turning up for an interview and having not researched the company to the nth degree. All those things you are going

to experience, you are going to fail, because it is not just about qualifications and I think that is what we give to the students. One of our ex-students is doing very well at the moment who is presenting at PwC's International Women's Day has done exactly that. She went from digital marketing to a funding tech manager and now works in the U.K. systems in Barclays. She is more than prepared to flick between these roles. We also have a student at the same stage who is heading tech in the dairy farming industry. Wide varieties going forward but they all have that same mantra and I think for us if you can engage their interest and a passion for the subject you can flick to whatever it is and you can just pick up on a job.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I will finish with a question that I ask at the end of every one of these sessions, which is that if you have 3 wishes and that is not 3 each, we figured this out earlier if there were 6 people sitting there. So 3 wishes. What would they be, and it might be one each to be fair. It is up to you, though.

Head of School:

We collaborate as a team and we have discussed what our aims and our vision and our wishes, if you want to call them wishes, would be. Probably essentially one would be a fair, funded system across the whole Island for every single Jersey child to have their education funded in a fair and consistent way I think is really important. We also talk about the importance of diversity, inclusion and compassion in education. I do not know if you wanted to talk about your particular wish?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Can you elaborate on the "fairness of funding"? We have not heard that one so far.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

We have heard it before with people saying there is so much choice on the Island but there is not, if you cannot afford it. It is that lump.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Okay, you are going down that route?

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

Yes, I am. If somebody has a passion for something and we talked about that bursary lottery, you cannot have people relying on that.

Head of School:

Also our students are not funded in the same way that students in other schools are funded.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

We have people watching the R.P.I. (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute) like a hawk because every year they work very hard to put their daughters through that, so yes, I know it is a misnomer to think that it comes easy but on a lighter note we were talking about it before, that for me I do not think we should have this focus on grades and statistics. I think it is heinous. For me the Swedish approach is very good. I am not saying follow their model. They have different taxation and different everything going on, but they focus more on the student, the individual and the skills that student possesses, not whether they got an A or a B. We get students that can, fortunately for them, deal with exams very well, and they can just absorb that information and that knowledge and get it down in an exam. Does that make them a great employee? You do not know, and that is why I think skills needs to be at the forefront. Skills Jersey are working very hard at the moment to get a lot more collaboration with them than we have had in recent years and I see the trends going forward but then all the schools are beaten every August with what results you get, how many 5 As to Cs, as people remember it, what did you get statistically, what is this, what is the value-added? There is no value to it in education.

The Deputy of St. John:

It is interesting that you may be knocking at an open door.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

That is the perception. It has been sensationalised and I think a good thing that the Education Department did do is not have this furore at exam time. Now it is bled out over a period of time, because there is not the importance that it was given at the time. It is all the years that people have been comparing.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Kill the league tables.

Head of School:

Absolutely.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I am guilty as sin. I go there, I look at my old school, I look at my kids' school, I look at some of the competitors' schools and I go: "Yes, I beat them this year." It is totally misleading.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

It is becoming a badge of honour now with the elite schools in the U.K. to deliberately dive bomb the league tables and say: "We are not participating in this anymore. We know we are a good school. We are going to go on our reputation now and will keep that going" and that is where we should be.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

A lot of them are withdrawing from exams because they are going to bring the statistics down. It is so wrong.

Head of School:

Probably our final wish would be not to dismantle the system but to enhance and improve the options and choices that our young people have, whether that is through funding or further collaboration to enable that diversity to be able to take place.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We are obviously at a change for the Island at the moment in terms of the skills that we need. I am now at 3.24 p.m. going to mention Brexit for the first time today, formally in a question. We face Brexit. We face uncertainty. Do you think that if we do not start to address some of the issues that we are at risk in Jersey in the future in terms of our young people and what we can provide for this Island, regardless of what we talk about in terms of immigration and all the other issues that we face? If we do not address this issue of the nature of our education do you think there is a genuine risk?

Head of School:

I think probably to recruitment definitely. The thing that can make the biggest difference to a child's life is the quality of the teacher that is standing in front of them on a daily basis. If we cannot get that right, because we cannot attract and retain or train our own teachers on Island I think we could be in trouble.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

I remember when I came from the U.K. to Jersey to come back to teach it was good to come back. The pay was good, the weather was nice, everything like that. I do not know if that pay differential would be the difference anymore. I really do not, and we need to be mindful of that.

Deputy Head:

We are at a point where we have 3 schools looking for a maths teacher at exactly the same time.

Head of School:

If anyone teaches maths?

Deputy Head:

It is difficult to get teachers.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Carina Alves.

Head of School:

That is a real challenge for us.

The Deputy of St. Peter:

You are the first person not to say: "More funding." You said funding fairness and you talked about improvement and retention of staff, teachers, which is funnily enough pretty much constant. You did not mention an increase in funding. Is that to be different?

Head of School:

No, because I would expect all the schools, if they were sitting here, to want an increase for each other. It is not the increased funding for the school that we want. We want the increased funding for that student. That is what we want, for that young person. It is not for the school; it is not for us. It is for that student.

Assistant Head of Beaulieu:

I think the point was made in another session that the U.K. schools are under-funded and we are more under-funded than they are, so if that is not an alert that Jersey needs to hear then I do not know what else is. If people need to be told: "We need more funding" we should be worried, because they should know that we are already far behind.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I think we know. I will not ask how much. Is there anything else you want to ask, Trevor?

The Deputy of St. John:

No, you have got 3 minutes.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Is there anything that you want to ask me?

Head of School:

I am intrigued to know as a panel and as Scrutiny have you found some things to celebrate? Some hope? There is a lot out there, because I am a totally glass half full type person and I think there is some fantastic work going on in our schools and I hope this has been reflected in this process.

The Deputy of St. John:

I will be the first to say that we have heard this afternoon some fantastic stuff as we have heard from all of the Head Teachers. There are some fantastic things. They are different, but they are ...

Head of School:

We should not be afraid of that, the fact that we are different. I think that does make us unique and it makes our young people have that real choice, especially our teenagers.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

We certainly have and we are very realistic about the funding issues and the other resources that are needed, but still the passion for education is there. Really importantly we have addressed the students themselves. We have got around 2,000 responses to a survey and we talk about talking to students so we have. We have got some really good stuff from that consultation as well. Yes, there are challenges because you get honesty and that is what we need. We went to speak to students and we had a fantastic time at Highlands talking to the students and absolutely got some information that I think surprised a lot of us in terms of the things that they were thinking of. Yes, there have been real positives but also there will be recommendations and there are things that are coming through that need to be addressed. You could say that is a positive, because the themes are common and if they are common they are real and if they are real we should be able to do something about them. That is the key thing, and is why we tried to bring so much evidence together. If we do this in an evidence-based way it is a very difficult argument to oppose and that is what we aim to do in the long-term with the work that we are doing here. Perhaps that is a positive made-up but do you see what I mean in terms of that?

Head of School:

Yes. Excellent.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

All of these conversations and all of the input that we have had has been very useful and we are coming to the last point and this is the penultimate public hearing, so we will have a report ready mid to late-April and that is the good teacher in me getting to exactly 3.30 p.m. to finish the lesson. Thank you very much for your time again and thanks for all of your input and the work that you are doing.

Head of School:

Thank you for your time.

[15:28]