



Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny

Panel

Quarterly Hearing

Witness: The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Thursday, 30th January 2025

Panel:

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Chair)

Connétable M. Labey of Grouville (Vice Chair)

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade

Witnesses:

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier Central, The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central, Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Mr. K. Posner, Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.

Mr. J. Williams, Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.

Ms. J. Lancaster-Adlam, Associate Director, Education

[14:00]

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Chair):

Welcome to this quarterly hearing of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. Today is 30th January. I would like to draw everyone's attention to the following. This hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent. So we will start with introductions. I am the chair of the panel, Deputy Catherine Curtis.

Connétable M. Labey of Grouville (Vice Chair):

I am Connétable Mark Labey from the Parish of Grouville. I am vice-chair.

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade:

I am Deputy Helen Miles from St Brelade. I am a member of the panel.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Deputy Rob Ward, Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Deputy Carina Alves, Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning.

Associate Director, Education:

Jane Lancaster-Adlam, associate director for Education.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

I am Keith Posner, interim chief officer for C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills).

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Jonathan Williams, programme director for C.Y.P.E.S.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you, everyone. Unfortunately, Deputy Porée cannot be here today. So, I will start. Our first set of questions is about the Minister's response to our secondary education funding review. Minister, in some of the responses you have acknowledged there needs to be a comprehensive review of the Education (Jersey) Law 1999. However have said this is not possible within this term of Government but that you will make best endeavours to review some of the law. Can you tell us more about the work involved in that?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think there has always been an issue of the review of the Education Law. It is such a large piece of work, it never gets started. That is not an accusation or criticism of anyone that has gone before because I share their concerns to a large extent. But what we can do, and we have identified someone to do that work, is to undertake a review of the Education Law in some very specific areas, which we think are important. I can give you some examples of that if you want. In light of the provisions of the U.N.C.R.C. (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) gap analysis provided by the Office of the Children's Commissioner, I think that is one area that we can certainly

... it helps to focus on what is going to happen in that and the law can support my policy ambitions in the C.S.P. (Common Strategic Policy) and intentions for lifelong learning around 16-plus participation, for example, in whatever way that is, be it the age, the provision, the type of provision, and you would have seen that I am very keen to start a dialogue on that. How can the early years work in the C.S.P. as well with regard to Articles 8, 9 and 10 in relation to Day Care of Children Law, because there is a link to other laws, which is one of the reasons there is complexity in looking at the Education Law, because if you change, as everyone knows, it has impact elsewhere. The law pertaining to special educational needs, I think that is important. Response to the N.A.S.E.N. (National Association for Special Educational Needs) Review, for example; we need to look at that. Safeguarding of children and elective home education, and we might have some questions on that. I think we are a lot further than many, many places, but any review would be interesting. Provision of school places and parental preference. There are other things as well, Religious Education Advisory Council; how that works. We have set up a strategic advisory group for education for headteachers, which I think it is a good thing to do, to look at those strategic, those larger overriding possible changes to education and ways forward. Because sometimes we can get real down in the specifics that you need to look at the wider things. There are some more but I will stop there.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I was thinking, because it sounds like quite a lot, maybe you could follow up in writing.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Well there were only a couple of things I was going to mention, which is about school governing bodies, in particular, we are doing some work on now, which I think is really important to enable those school governing bodies to really know what they are there for and to support them and the Jersey Schools Review Framework because that has changed. I think that has changed for the positive. Those would be all 9 areas that I can identify now, which I think are really important for us to look at.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The framework is when the school inspections was done, is it not?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, we call it the Jersey Review Framework because it is more of a collaborative exercise and it is about finding that good practice, identifying it and looking for professionals. It is a profession, let us work with them to get the right things for our schools and to move forward.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, and I know you just mentioned a moment ago about the parental choice. One of our recommendations was that the Minister should assess the legal right to parental choice for their child's education, and your response was that parents have a right to express a preference, however the Minister is not required to comply with any preferences that would prejudice the provision of efficient educational use of resources. But Article 28 of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child references that different forms of secondary education must be available to each child. So can you tell us whether you have received any advice on that position whether Jersey would meet that standard under the U.N.C.R.C.?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Well there are 2 things there. What you mentioned there is exactly why the law needs to be looked at because it is confusing. It says in the heading "parental right" but in the text "parental preference". In terms of that law, I think the range of access to education across our education establishment is there. A preference to access education is there for all of our students. The issue of whether or not it is semi-private education or not, or faith education, those choices are there. I do recognise those choices can be limited because of cost. That is an issue that we need to look at and how we are going to deal with that into the future. Does it cover it? I would suggest in general, yes, but there are specifics I think we do need to look at and that it will be part of the review of the law.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I would just say it was a point that came up a lot at the survey we did, they felt they did not have a choice.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I would be interested to know how many parents it was and I would suggest that what they do is they do contact us because ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I would just say that we valued the survey very much and all the intelligent responses we had in that survey. It was about 300-and-more-plus, so I would not want to ignore the results of that survey. So you are saying that this is going to be looked at as part of the review?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, the wording, what that means and the clarity of what that means. In terms of a postcode lottery was mentioned. There are catchment areas. We have to have catchment areas out of practicality, but of course we also have our whole-Island schools, which are selective. Now the issue of selection, or the question of selection, is a wider question I think we do need to look at. It is interesting that myself and the chief officer here were in Guernsey for 2 days, looking at what we

can share and what we do not. They have made some significant changes to their education system recently. It was really interesting to have those discussions with them about how they went about that and what that meant. I think that collaborative work will help us in those wider discussions that we have to have.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The panel made a recommendation about exploring whether the funding formula could be adjusted to provide better working conditions for teachers. This was rejected, and you have advised that a review of teachers' terms and conditions is underway, so could you tell us more about that review, when it started, what changes might be made?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

In terms of specific dates I might ask people to ... but in terms of the terms and conditions, one of the things that has happened in education, it has been around in education since I started teaching - and I am not going to give my age away - is that the terms and conditions that teachers are working are in terms of hours. Non-contact time for planning, preparation, all of those other things have always been a very difficult issue to deal with because of the nature of the job and the demands. Now over time the demands have only grown and we are very aware of that. As part of the settlement to the dispute, it was not just about money, it was also about looking at those terms and conditions. We have been working for some time with representatives, trade unions and staff to say, okay, what terms and conditions in terms of those types of things are we going to look at? Not simply things like pay scales and how they would work, but things like how can we provide extra, for example, preparation time, P.P.A. (preparation, planning and assessment).

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is really good, the sort of thing that was coming up for us ...

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Can I just say, sorry, because there was a really key point there, which is how we do that and what we can do quickly and longer term are the key things. We want to move on that. There are other things that come with it. For example how C.P.D. (continuing professional development), for example, that you mentioned as well, is an integral part of professionalism. One of the issues there is getting people time to go on it and that is some of the issues that come up in terms and conditions.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is something we brought up.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, exactly.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So can you give us an idea when you might have an outcome from some of the ...

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Do you want to talk about some dates?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Certainly. So the work has been underway for a little over 12 months now. I think it is worth referencing that we have established what we believe to be a very well-represented working group. We have school leaders in the room, we have teaching unions in the room, we have colleagues from People's Services and Government and from central C.Y.P.E.S. to make sure we have a broad input and mechanism for review of suggestions. As it stands at the moment, the priority area for focus of the brief that was given by the original S.E.B. (States Employment Board), and validated by the current S.E.B., was focusing around what was deemed to be very high levels of workload. When the Minister references a set of proposals we are developing around potentially looking at P.P.A., which provides more time for that planning, that potentially would be offset against reductions in pupil contact time. We need to just understand, if we model that, what it means for the number of teachers and for the finances of the department. We are at good stages there now. I would hope to be clearer and making further proposals to the Minister by the end of this quarter, so the end of March this year. We are also looking at a number of things which we do not anticipate will have financial consequences and therefore may be easier for the Minister to propose. So they may include how we deal with inset days, how we guide working hours, flexibility within the role at C.P.D., as the Minister has said already. There is quite a comprehensive collection of things that we are progressing. The immediate focus now is around the potential changes to P.P.A., because that is what the working group has prioritised.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I will add, we honestly did have a really interesting couple of days to look, and I think us going and talking to other jurisdictions, they are interested in the way we have dealt with some of the issues. One of them being, for example, how on earth did you put school meals in schools with no kitchens? It was a really good discussion. There are some very interesting processes in the way they cover staff, and Island-wide cover staff, for example. Those things, I think, will add to this discussion.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is really good. Now just a question about exam results. Minister, you advised the panel that the transparency and analysis of exam results is being reviewed. Please could you tell us more about that?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is a question of what you are going to use. Are you going to use raw scores? Are you going to use simple grades? Are you going to use a system called Alps, which is a more complex system, which gives an output against schools that are similar to ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It would be like the Progress 8 in the U.K. (United Kingdom) or ...?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It could be, it depends what you put in. It depends what you want to report on. It is a system of reporting that compares. I think there are a couple of provisos - and I really would like to get this into the public domain - I think we need to consider. One is we have to remember that our datasets are small and when you have a small dataset and compare against a large dataset, you have to be really careful in what you are comparing to give the right or the wrong image. Second, we have an extremely selective system, and therefore you are not always comparing like with like. If you select a number of students away from a school who are not there and then take the overall school results, they will obviously be skewed in a different direction. We need to look carefully about what we produce so that it gives a good view for parents as to where the school is genuinely going, and a good, genuine picture of success over all of our education system, which is a small dataset.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

You said it is already being reviewed, so that is some work in progress at the moment.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes, absolutely. As the Minister said, there are different ways of measuring schools and the achievement of schools. We need to understand which of those indicators is the most appropriate, but also the best way then of presenting that information and making that available so that information be kept transparent. We want to be putting information out there for the public to understand we have got to put it in context. So that is the piece of work that is underway.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That was a good word, "indicators". What indicators are the most appropriate? If you look at value added, for example, there were so many things that will influence that data from ... if you select a group of students, the entire cohort would be predicted 9s - you cannot get any higher than that - it

is very difficult to get any value added statistically. You have to be very careful. If you only publish value added and the value added is zero, it could look like a school is doing really badly when actually it is performing very highly. Vice versa at the other end of the scale, those students who might not be predicted high grades but are achieving something near there will really struggle but not seen to achieve anything with that indicator. So we have to be really careful.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The current way of measuring and showing results is not really giving an accurate picture, would you say?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

No, I do not think it is fair to say that. It is giving a picture, it is giving an overview that we can use to compare. It is used in the Jersey Review Framework, but it is not the be all and end all; it has a context. I actually think it does give a good picture.

[14:15]

It is just a question of what do we want to compare with. Can we improve that to get the context more and to make that more reasonable and sensible in terms of what goes out into the public domain. It is really difficult for parents to understand complex ... and I am not being in any way patronising because I think as members of staff it is difficult enough if you are in it all the time in terms of what does that value added of 0.5 mean for that group of 25 students in that group?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I suppose as long as the context is given in weighing results.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think what we are doing is valid. I think it is good, but it can always be improved and we will always look for the best ways to do that and make it most understandable and transparent, I think is the way that we are looking.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So do you know when there might be an outcome to this review?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

I would hope that we would have more information that we could feed back to you by the middle of the year.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Anything, if we do have something, obviously there are exam cycles, so it would be each September really that you would report. So if you miss a September it will be the next September, unless you can go back to the results you have, but we will have to see.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. The next question was just - I expect you could give a quick answer - but we asked about the Jersey Premium being funding going to annually managed expenditure. That was rejected, so can you just tell us about the rationale for that?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Rationale for that? Let me explain why it was rejected, and you may not usually get answers like this from a Minister. The simple answer is, I am really not sure whether that is the right thing to do, and there are a number of reasons for that. Pupil Premium is a complex thing that creates a range of need, so it is not just a numbers game. There is a complexity to it. If we go down annual managed expenditure, which is directly linked purely to numbers, we could be taking the wrong route. The thing is, I cannot say to the panel I am not certain we are not but I think we need to look at that more carefully because demographics are changing and the work that we are doing on demographics, i.e. they are going down, will it be counterintuitive and take away the flexibility with Pupil Premium and the way that we address it, i.e. if we do not change it just because of numbers and we have that available, we could widen the help that is given and make it more effective overall. With any Pupil Premium hit, you want it to be as effective as possible. There is another key point that has slightly changed my mind, it is only recently that we have gone above the U.K. premium. That is a real success for the department over the years. I am not saying that is my success, that is a success over the years as we have got to this point. I think it is a really good thing to do. That was the reason for the clinical rejection of it. But my honest answer to you would be it is not entirely we will never do it. I just think we need to look really carefully at the implications. Happy to talk to the panel about that in the future and give a wider ... it might be more useful in a private briefing because it will go on for an hour and I do not think people want to watch that, to be honest.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It would be, would it not, yes? Thanks. Minister, you accepted the panel's recommendation to provide more information about the use of zero-hour contracts for staff in schools. Please, could you confirm when you will be able to provide that information by?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

For me, that would be as soon as possible because I think it is a really interesting point and it is something we were looking at anyway. We have seen some very interesting models for staff recently

that we have been looking at, which are really hot off the press. We have not even discussed with the Assistant Minister yet, but we will do. But we will come back to the panel as soon as we possibly can. This is not something we want to try and hide or have any problem with. We want to get this right. The cover staff need flexibility if we are going to get them into the workforce, but it has to be the right type of flexibility. I personally think the permanency of contracts is a good thing because we know what we have got in a profession like teaching.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

You have also agreed to our panel's recommendation for greater investment in technology across schools accompanied by suitable training. Could you please give us a timescale for that?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is a wide remit. I think there has been a problem with that investment over the years and I think there is a long way to go there. It is not just hardware because you can provide all sorts of hardware but if staff do not know how to use it ... it is, what was the phrase? It was pedtech; pedagogical use of technology. Let me explain, Constable. I am really pleased to say this, and that I remembered it. It is not simply about putting technology in the classroom, and this is one of the issues about screen time and so on. It is not as simple as that. It is how are you using that technology to teach? Because it is not just another book. It is a technical device used to try to produce some form of enhancement of teaching. When we look at this investment, we need to look at that. What are we investing and let us use the money well. I think in the past, and I am not blaming schools, that what we have done is we have said technical investment is new computer room, laptop for everybody, lovely screens, marvellous. What are you going to do with them? Do you want something else? I think it is - it was that term, was it not - pedtech; pedagogical technological use. I think that is an area we need to look at more carefully. I think we will talk about that more and I will give you more information on what I am talking about. Do you want to add to that?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Just to add one thing. I recognise the panel's recommendation here. There is investment going in this year though to try and improve the network. In terms of improving the resilience and the speed of the network, that is already happening. I think the Minister is saying we want to build on that in a number of different areas.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Sorry, I jumped ahead. I should have said that, apologies. There was a real problem in the last year or so, I know that, I inherited it, and it was for the previous Minister as well. We both agree on that. There was the ability to improve it there, but it just did not happen. We have got all the kit that

needed to be done, we are moving that forward. I think there was a terrible bandwidth for all schools, I have no idea ...

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

That is right. Improving data, improving resilience, improving cybersecurity, all of those kind of things within schools is happening at the moment.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Something like one gigabyte shared between ... I mean it was crazy. But we are moving that forward. That is the first step towards that move forward. It is that area I think we need to talk to other jurisdictions because there are pockets of real excellence that we can say as a small Island we will take that one, we will use that one, because we can see that working in our schools.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I was looking at some of the plans put forward by schools in the U.K. about the use of technology and it is much bigger than the computer or something.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is also, who are you going to use? I do not think we should be welded to any one provider, be it Apple or Google or whatever. It is what is most appropriate. I mean I used Google Classroom a lot when I was teaching, I thought it is fantastic and it was free effectively. But there were other systems as well which also we used that were really good.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thanks. My last question on this subject: can you confirm when the 2025 version of the funding formula for schools will be published?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Our ambition is end of quarter one. There is a slight increase in the workload as a consequence of the Minister's acceptance of the recommendations around the content of that. For example, the tracked changes, I would call it. So the additional detail which sets out when a variable is last changed, to what extent was it changed. So we are pulling all that now, but our target is end of Q1.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, that is great.

The Connétable of Grouville:

End of March.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is an incredibly diplomatic answer there from Johnathan.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Basically saying that it is your fault, Minister.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Fair enough, but well, I can blame the panel. We can take collective responsibility. But quite seriously, it is good. This is where it works well. If there is a recommendation, we think, yes, that is a good idea, and those working on it say: "Actually, yes, that is a good idea, let us make sure we increase that transparency." Because the funding formula is difficult to understand. It is easier when you have been embedded in it since day one. We will do that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you.

The Connétable of Grouville:

We are going to move on now to something you have already mentioned, Minister, which is homeschooling. Obviously, because of the recent very tragic case the U.K. has proposed changes to legislation that will remove parents' rights to homeschool vulnerable children. Please, can you describe the position in Jersey with regards to homeschooling?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I will start, and if you want to jump in at any time because I have missed something. Jersey has very strict policies on procedures around permission from families to apply for elective home education. I will say, and I will say right from the beginning, that the group that represent elective home educators are a very constructive group. We have very positive and extremely well-organised meetings with them. I will give a shout out there to that because it really helps us do this and the communication with the department is very good. That really helps in this jurisdiction for the 88 young people that we have got home-elected; 55 primary and 33 secondary, just so you know. Anyone wishing to home-educate has to apply through the Education Department, detailing the reasons why they wish to do so and the plans they plan to put in place. They must then meet with the associate director of Education to explain their proposed education plan. The department will also write to a child's former school if they are aged 5-plus, and any other agencies come in supporting, such as C.A.M.H.S. (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) for any additional information, and if approval is given the child will be added to the Elective Homes Education Register. It is really important we have a register, we know who home-elected children are. Which

is seen as a school in its own right, and there is support of a special education needs co-ordinator, a S.E.N.C.o., from the centre inclusion team. So there is support built around the schools. We assign an officer for elective home education who would then undertake a home visit - like yourself - following approval to ensure that the child be effectively safeguarded, and that is a really important point. Then the officer continues to visit families on an annual basis to view progress, more regularly if it is felt it is required. The department also has regular meetings with the E.H.E. (Elective Home Education) community on a termly basis, so we meet with that group that I mentioned. If we are aware of any safeguarding concerns either the lead officer or a member of the education welfare team will visit the home and all safeguarding procedures will be followed in line with the schools, same as schools in Education. We have quite robust safety guards in place. We have a register, we know who children are. I think we are in a different place to where the U.K. was. Do you want to add to that?

Associate Director, Education:

We have a full-time officer who actually ... that is her role. So she does all of the home visits. I give the permission but she then does all of the home visits right at the start. Then if she feels there is any issue whatsoever she will do more regular visits into that home. Equally, the elective home education community, lots of the children get together. If there was anything that anybody was concerned about, that would be highlighted back into the department.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Are we confident that we have got all the children who are being homeschooled on the register?

Associate Director, Education:

That is a very good question. We believe that we have, but clearly all young people that come on-Island are expected to register at a school. We only have the data that we have from the perspective of a family arriving, registering their child with the department or with E.H.E.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So is there any crossover with people, for example, registering at Social Security with their children that would double check whether that child has been then put on to the education role?

Associate Director, Education:

Not that I am officially aware of.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

No, but that is exactly the type of thing that we need to look at. I think from your experience in Home Affairs, you know that our entry is quite strict and we should know who people are for the vast

majority. But yes, I think one of the things we need to do, and this is again why it is useful to have these conversations, is that anything that is uncovered there we absolutely want to look at. I think we have got a good situation in where we are, which is good. But that means, to some extent, it makes it easier to find those smaller parts because the other bit is working really well.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Just to follow up as well, if I may. When you have got parents who decide to take their children out of primary school, for example, what sort of ... if they have been in a primary school and they are dissatisfied with the service that they are getting at the primary school, what sort of feedback do you have for the original school? How do you address the issues that the parents are so concerned about that they have had to take their children and put them into a homeschool environment?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is a good question. My impression of that would be it is so dependent on the individual case. There will be very specific issues. When you have those very specific issues, we really do need to know about them and the school needs to know about them to act on them. There could be a myriad of issues and it could be ... I do not know, you have probably got more experience - direct experience - than me. I am talking generally.

Associate Director, Education:

Yes, we track all the cases. Obviously we monitor when they come in as to why they are. Very often, certainly latterly post-COVID, they have been around more of an S.E.M.H. (social, emotional, and mental health), where young people enjoyed being educated online during COVID because they had underlying neurodiversity. So actually when it came to going back to school and they did not want to do it some parents have supported that by getting them online learning. So we do track and monitor all the reasons why.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think because it is a relatively small number of our cohort, there is not ... we can deal specifically with those individual cases and try and support them. It is supported. We do have a good relationship there. One of the first things I did when I took over as Minister was to enable the access to taking exams, the G.C.S.E.s (General Certificate of Secondary Education), and funding those G.C.S.E.s as any other school child would because I think it is the right thing to do. Because I think it gets much more difficult if you are trying to home educate at A-level.

[14:30]

I certainly would not want to do it. So you may have children going back into our system.

Associate Director, Education:

We support them with that.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, so I think that is an important thing. There are some really constructive relationships there. Hopefully, we can continue those; and we will do. I missed the last meeting because I was trapped in the U.K. because of the wind, so that was my ... I make that public excuse to the home educators, I do apologise.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I think you have answered all the questions on that section, have you not?

The Connétable of Grouville:

You have pretty much answered all the questions I had for you, so I will move on, if I may, to the Educational Psychology Service. Minister, are you able to provide any update about the status of the review of the Educational Psychology Service, please?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, I am expecting the report to be available by the end of February.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It has been delayed a couple of times, has it not? It was going to be in December, then it was going to be in January, so it should be end of February.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We are confident it will be end of February.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

End of February.

The Connétable of Grouville:

What is the current average waiting time for assessments by the Educational Psychology Service? Can you provide that for us?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, I can. The mean time, so there are a couple of things here. It was an interesting area and you send us the areas that you want, which is a good idea, so I looked into this in quite some detail. I

want to mention a couple of things. From September 2023 to 2024 there were 164 cases in the mean time for waiting; it is 55 working days. In September 2024 to 2025, there are 85 cases and the mean time for waiting was 19 days. We are going in the right direction. Even with the difficulties that we have, accommodation has been put in place to try and keep the service going. That is no comment on where we are with the report or what we are doing, but we hope at the end we can come out with some positives and carry that going.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Just to clarify that, so the 2023 to the 2024 is based on 164 cases for the year, and there is September to 28th January and that is based on 85 cases, just to give you context.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is academic years. I should have said that.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We have not got to the end of the academic year.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, we have not got to the end of the academic year, that is what I mean. Yes, absolutely. In terms of the waiting time for a R.O.N (record of need), which is exceptional action ... do you want to go through those numbers because ...

Associate Director, Education:

I could explain it.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, could you explain it because I think I am going to give the wrong number.

Associate Director, Education:

Last year there were from 2023 to 2024 academic year 76 cases put forward for exceptional action and a record of need. They were all completed on time and delivered.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Are they new ones?

Associate Director, Education:

And new ones. Then this year we have agreed 57. The due date is 19th March. We have already completed 33, and the remainder will be done for 19th March, which is the panel, which is when they grant.

The Connétable of Grouville:

We are also interested, if I may, in the age groups most impacted by the weight for an assessment.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Do you want to deal with that one as well? I have got a whole myriad of data here.

Associate Director, Education:

We actually analysed all the age groups and R.A.G. (red, amber, green) rated them. There is actually very little difference, certainly now - this current year - in wait times. Last year, 2023-2024, it was the earlier years because we suddenly, post-COVID, had a much higher view of numbers being put through. We did use an off-Island provider to support with that. But they were all completed before the children started school in September 2024.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We know that there is growing need, because there is also growing recognition of possible need, so we have to adapt to that and it will take more resources.

The Connétable of Grouville::

That is true.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I am pleased to see the waiting times go down a little. I would want to obviously make them go down as far as we can and to get this in because the sooner we can intervene the better it is for young people.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Early intervention.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Also though I have to say when those assessments are made sometimes the interventions are not huge. There are simple interventions that can be taken as well because there is a range of need within that, a huge range of need within that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just ask, are there interim appointments with educational psychologists from the U.K. brought in to cover this period?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, we used ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That would be a lot more expensive.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, of course. But the outcome is that we have kept the service going while whatever is that the report will report on, it is looked at and we hope for a positive outcome in the end.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is educational psychology support available to the 88 children who are being homeschooled?

Associate Director, Education:

It is. We introduced that. We gave them an educational ... well, a S.E.N.C.o., and then the way in which it works is if there is no value from the point of view of the funding element, because they are not funded as such, but what we do is if any parent identifies that they want their child to go back into mainstream education then we follow through straight away with the exceptional action process. An E.P. (educational psychologist) will visit the family in the home so that we can get a R.O.N. in place before them starting back in mainstream, recognising that the schools would need the funding to support them.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is if it is needed.

Associate Director, Education:

If needed, yes.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is not every child. You do not assume.

Associate Director, Education:

No.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I just make that point. The transition back to school can be, you know.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you, Minister.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Moving away from the educational psychology to the major project at Mont à L'Abbé School. The Government Budget approved 2025 to 2028 extended the major project approval for Mont à L'Abbé. Part of that was the acknowledgement that the school will be at stretched capacity for 2025 to 2026. Certainly the panel visited Mont à L'Abbé and had a lovely visit there, and they were saying that they are full basically. They cannot take any more. Can you tell us about any contingency measures that have been put in place for those children that normally would have gone to Mont à L'Abbé?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

If you are okay, do you want to ... because this is a very specific ... I know you have explained it to me a number of times but do you want to start and I will make some points afterwards?

Associate Director, Education:

What we have done is we have obviously monitored the young people that are coming through because this is predominantly from the early years' portfolio, they are coming in at the bottom. We have got 3 spaces at Mont à L'Abbé and those year one children, some of the children that have stayed in mainstream school, which can be very valuable for them, will be transferred to M.A.L. (Mont à L'Abbé) in September. But that is at year one, the age group. Obviously that opens up some spaces in our additional resource centres. We are also looking to put in another additional resource centre at primary level. Just today actually I sat with Giselle and we have tracked and found placements for the cohort that will need a placement for September.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Can I just mention something? The reason I wanted to mention something on the higher level here is a delay to anything is not good. I think though as we go through this we are looking, to be quite frank, at the plans. I think we may well have to say, and I know you will probably shout at me after this, but we may well have to say that we have to re-evaluate those plans because of the increased need. We visited the equivalent in Guernsey yesterday and their numbers were really high. We looked at our population being higher and thought we need to look at this carefully. What could

come as a positive - a strange positive from this - is that we re-evaluate the need and perhaps even build something with more places so that we do not have that problem in the future.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is that not what you are doing anyway?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

What we are saying here is that we are absolutely increasing capacity in Mont à L'Abbé, and that is really important. We need a new secondary provision on the side with the primary provision and all the projections ... the forecast is suggesting more pupils. However, in mainstream education we are seeing a drop in numbers, which everyone is aware of because of the falling birth numbers. That then provides additional opportunity within our mainstream schools to put more provisions within schools, if appropriate. I think that is what the Minister is saying; there are opportunities to do different things. I think just through this process, what Jane has described in terms of standing up new provisions to accommodate the overcapacity at Mont à L'Abbé, it is giving us learning along the way.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I did not explain that very well. I understand the provisions there. But we build something and there is always a delay before it comes in 3 or 4 years. It is a very changing environment. I suppose that is what I was getting at.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You are using 2 sets of language there, an additional resource provision and an additional resource centre. What is the difference?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Apologies, that changed ...

Associate Director, Education:

We just changed the name recently. They used to be called A.R.C.s. (Additional Resource Centres). We are not calling them A.R.C.s anymore, we are calling them A.R.P.s (Additional Resource Provisions). That is all.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

How will the A.R.P.s be funded?

Associate Director, Education:

That has been built into the funding for the next year.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

For each school according to pupil numbers, okay. Can you confirm for us that there will be additional support for every child that is placed in an A.R.P. that would normally have gone up to Mont à L'Abbé?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Remember, the record of need process is always there and the record of needs comes with significant additional funding. I mean, the highest level of funding is £30,000. That is particularly high in need. I do not think I can say what an average combination with a R.O.N. is. I put you on the spot there.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

No, I do not know the answer, but we can find that because we have child-level data around record of need, which not only looks at the individual support plan but also the level of additional funding that relates to. So if the panel are interested, we can provide some more detailed information.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So if, for example, a child would normally have gone to Mont à L'Abbé but there is not room, so you are going to put them into one of the A.R.P.s in the primary school. If that child requires more funding, so for example they need 2-to-one support as opposed to a one-to-one support, will that funding follow the child according to the need?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, and that will be identified. That is where the record of need process is really useful because the funding follows the child.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But the record of need is not a statutory document.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

No but, to be quite frank, we do treat it as a statutory document. But you are right, yes ... but we do treat it as a statutory document because of the recognition of need.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Because obviously what we hear is sometimes what goes into a record of need is not what materialises and children struggle in that environment.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

I think we have to recognise within our schools, and obviously through the links from the headteachers, particularly into Jane's team, where there are pressures in schools we have to react as a department to support schools. And that happens.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Have you got the capacity and the funding to be able to react to that?

Associate Director, Education:

One of the things that we have done, recognising that we have got these young people going into mainstream education, is that over the last 3 weeks we have gone out to recruitment for some specialist T.A.s (teaching assistants), who we are running a 2-week training and development programme starting next week. We have recruited 10. They are going to spend 6 weeks each in different schools but in our specialist provisions, in an A.R.P., so that they will then be able to go into schools and support.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Are you confident that you can find the right level of qualified staff that you need? Ten sounds great if you have managed to recruit them.

Associate Director, Education:

No, I have interviewed them personally.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

And we have people coming forward, that is really good.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think it is one of the areas where there is such a commitment and such a highly committed job that you do find people and you provide the training.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Are those roles term time only?

Associate Director, Education:

They could be either.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

They could be either, yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

What civil service grade do they come up at?

Associate Director, Education:

They are not civil service, they will be on the T.A.F. (teacher assessment framework) framework.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So there will not be a civil service grade?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

No.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

They will be on the teaching framework. It will be a combination of some will be part-time. Will you have any zero hours?

Associate Director, Education:

The ones that we have recruited are not.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

They are full-time permanent contract?

Associate Director, Education:

Yes.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We have to look at the model and the way we recruit and have the flexibility in our system. We have got some really good ideas that would come forward, which I think could work really well in terms of ... but let us develop that first and we will come to the panel.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think there are solutions to it though, absolutely.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Moving away from Mont à L'Abbé to the broader estate. Sorry, the last question was just to tell us more about the extended project for Mont à L'Abbé and what the timeline is, what will change, what are the next steps?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

In terms of the timescale that you mentioned, it is as we have published.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The major project.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

The major project at Mont à L'Abbé.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

What is happening with it now?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

What is happening?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

There is a lot of design work going in at the moment.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So we are at the design stage at the moment.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We are at the design ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

We have not gone to tender planning permission or anything like that?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

No, we are at the design stage. So we are at the point of the design of the school. There is a huge amount of stakeholder engagement that has happened, that now needs to come for sign-off in the central department. Then that goes back to the J.P.H. (Jersey Property Holdings) design team, then to start drawing up formally into plans that can go to planning. We are at that stage at the moment.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Timescales?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

I will have to come back to you but that process is one to 2 years, without a doubt.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, so we will not be getting kind of a spade in the ground until about 2027 probably.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

I would need to go back; let me come back to you on that.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Can I just say as well that we have tried to take an approach, which is - you might ask about it - why some of the projects we have pushed forward because we can get them done, that if there is any opportunity to try and move forward we will. That is not just for political convenience. That is because I think there needs to be some planning, some flexibility in capital projects, because I think for too many years, not just in the recent time, but in the far distant past, capital points have been taken and that is what we are sticking to, but if there is anything that can be done obviously.

[14:45]

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I think the issue that the panel have is obviously there was supposed to be a project of a certain size going to Mont à L'Abbé and now there has been some work done around demographics so they have decided it needs to be bigger. Actually if we are not going to see anything until 2027-2028 there is still scope then for 2026-2027 to say demographics are dropping so let us not do this, let us not do that. This is stop, start, stop, start, that is concerning the panel because obviously we have had it with Le Squez, we have had it with Gas Place. Are you confident as Minister that what has been put in place now and what will go to planning will be built?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

What we should have learnt, and I hope we will learn, and what I would want and I would absolutely push for, and we can talk about Gas Place in a moment because it is the same, is that if we plan something it is built. If the demographics go down and we have got some capacity then good, because we have got flexibility in our system. I think sometimes when we build we need to take that more into account. A classic example is we have built a fantastic school at Quennevais and made it incredibly popular and everyone wants to go there. We could have built it bigger. But have we

learned from that? Yes, we have, or we should have. That is exactly the type of model. This is also interesting, I am trying to be positive about Gas Place because I am frustrated with delay to that; we have been talking about that 5 years. But being positive, we can then look and say, okay, as it comes through we can look specifically at what we have now and the need that we have now and build something that is even better in terms of its provision for what we have now and into the future, knowing about demographics, knowing about needs, knowing about the type of children that will be living there. There has been a change in that area because a load more houses have been built. Thousands of them.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I am going to stop you there because we want to talk about education estate and risk management. What are your capital priorities for the Education Department in 2025?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We want to get the La Passerelle Secondary School built, and work is going on at a pace there.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Can you tell us some more about what is planned for La Passerelle?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, the D'Hautree House building will be refurbished to be a specialist school; completely upgraded. The lodge and the residential unit is also included in that to provide additional resources.

Associate Director, Education:

That is the therapeutic unit, so it will be specialist therapies adjacent to the main building.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

So a really good use of the resources that we have.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

What sort of specialist therapies?

Associate Director, Education:

Art therapy, music therapy.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

So that is in place. Both the bylaws and the planning applications have been submitted towards the end of last year. It has been stripped and cleared of all finishes and fittings. A really tight construction programme, but there is hope that we can get on with their ... with the current completion date, and any current completion date, I will give you a ... I mean, if we do hit it, it would be nice to come back and say it was actually hit 27th October.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

This year?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

But that resource, sorry, just say the reason that priority is there is we have a real identified need for a group of young people who do not have the provision we need. Unless we intervene now, my argument obviously was - I am not going to give my argument too much - is do this now because spend the money, you are going to ... even being purely economic on it, and I am not, we are talking about social intervention.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

There is the potential that the lodge that we have just ... I have got late May time, so that could be sooner because it does not need any sort of structural changes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Dare I ask about the future of Rouge Bouillon School and that site?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

There is agreement, I think, and I think you would agree too, that the changes that were suggested for that in terms of the refurbishment, the police and the school would happen. There are blockages in the system. The biggest blockage, in my view, is Gas Place. We are working really hard, and I cannot say anything at this moment, but as soon as I can I will, about obtaining the land and getting that process moving. Because that will create a ... we can then really think about what we are doing into the future there.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Any idea when you might be able to make an announcement about that?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

No. The only reason is, one, I am very superstitious. I do not know if the word “kibosh” is allowed or will be translated properly on Hansard. But it is something I have really been keen to ... the reality is we are not going to start building it. But I do not want it to be another election issue. I want it to be ready to go. If it is ready to go we can move on and start to think about a wider education estate and, whatever comes next, somebody at least has got the opportunity to start making the changes that are desperately needed.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Again, we are responsible for scrutinising as well, so the fire and ambulance system as we know it is just ... okay, thank you.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I do not think you will find much disagreement with the Minister there.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

As part of the reprioritisation of the capital work, we learned during the Budget that there would be some delays to the work at Le Squez. We heard yesterday from the Minister for Children and Families about the youth centre bit. But can you confirm what the impact of that delay is going to have on Samarès School?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

The reconfiguration plans and designs have been drawn up for a series of works to alleviate the problems caused by the Le Squez project. Basically, there is work going on to build classrooms at Le Squez for 2-form entry.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

At Samarès.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Samarès, yes, the 2-form entry. The Le Squez Youth Project, which is not my remit but I can talk about it, there is a facility there. The focus on having a thing in town where there is nothing I think is the right thing to do. Also, if you were to rebuild Le Squez you have to remember one key thing, it would be demolished and you would have a town without any facility there. If you do not have a facility in the centre of town you will not have any facilities, and we have a huge concentration of young people in the centre of town. The possibility of rebuilding Le Squez with another project close by that works and is up and running anew I think makes that easier in the long term. There is a facility there. Yes, it is dated. Yes, it is not ... there are a lot of modern buildings around it, but it is

usable. I have to say that the Youth Service do a really good job there. I think we have to be careful that we do not over-criticise.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But in terms of the work going on in the school, that is going on as planned?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes, the plans have been submitted to the providers.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

So that was not made clear in the debate, I do not think. But then there were 2 separate things.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Can you provide us with an update on the work to manage the fire safety risk across the school estate?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

The fire safety risk, yes. I have got loads of data here. Do you want me to read it out, or do you want me to send it to you, because ...?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Some, maybe.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I mean when you told us back in September that there were 352 outstanding risks, 3 schools had walking watchers, and that things needed to really happen. Can you tell us what has happened since the last time we spoke to you?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

So risks, now we have 286.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It has gone down.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Absolutely. So just to give you some context of this. From May of last year - I do not know where that day has been taken - but there have been 104 risks closed down from last May. We are moving through that. You are absolutely right, we still have to retain those mitigation measures at the

moment until the building work is going to be done. Jersey Property Holdings have put a fire mitigation programme in place and they are detailing timelines up to the end of 2026. That is when we are seeing the end of it. But there is obviously prioritisation for different projects which are happening leading up to the end of 2026.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

So as the landlord, Jersey Property Holdings are the people that are required to mitigate the risks?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Absolutely. Sorry, no, we mitigate the ... sorry, so for the temporary mitigations, they are control measures that we are putting in place. There have been, though, temporary mitigation measures such as some, I do not know, partitions which have been built which they have done, but for the main works, no, it is J.P.H.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is it the landlord that is identifying the risks or is it you?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We are doing it jointly with them.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is that joint relationship working very well? Are there any tensions between C.Y.P.E.S. and J.P.H. over this particular issue?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

No. There are certainly separate pieces of work that then come together for a discussion and agreement.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Again, we were going to ask you about some of the high risks but perhaps we could put those into writing.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

That might be the best way, then we can probably give you a fuller answer anyway.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, absolutely.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

But as Minister, you are confident that this is a high risk area, that funding will be found to make sure that our children are safe?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, absolutely. I mean, safeguarding is the number one priority. It is really unfortunate that we are going to do so much.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

But we are working looking towards the end of 2026 for the whole of this to be done and then we would have been full of the schools, so the programme is there, the work is being submitted.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That is lovely, thank you very much. I am going to hand you over to the Connétable now.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Minister, in the panel's last hearing, you advised that work was underway to review whether social benefits should be excluded from the income assessment that determines a student's maintenance and tuition fees and it was stated that any change to this position would require an update to the law. Please can you provide an update on this work?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I have to say the review is still ongoing and since it started I think some more complexities have come out. The Social Security Law I must admit I would not go on Mastermind as my subject. I learn about it every single time I have supported somebody in a case and it seems to not stick. The review is in progress and it is about ... linked around the adult component of income support during term time which is removed, that is £125 a week, because the student has a grant. These are things which I am not sure I have much say over, it is more Social Security but there you go. That adult component resumes while the student resides in Jersey. A number of things that we can do is the speed of how that can be ... given the law there have been delays in the past, which I think if we remove those it makes life a lot easier. I will not go through the rules because you probably know them, but the review is ongoing and we are looking into ways in which we can and what is the best way to do that. I do not have an answer to it at the moment as to what the best way forward is, but I think we have a greater understanding of where the issues might come up, how many there are, but it is income ... it is classified as income by the nature of the word "income support", and the grant is an income for the student. So we have to work out how it is going to work.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I just wanted to add in a bit of context here, if anyone is listening. That we discovered that there were mature students in Jersey studying essential degrees, like social work, who could not afford to keep studying because of the way this was working out.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, and those individual cases I would really advise them to come to us because we want to support those degrees. That is the type of things ... there are specific cases but then there are the general rules for everybody and how they work. Then those are slightly 2 different things but the review is looking at the more general. But the specifics we need to come to as well. But I would advise them to come and talk to us so that we can deal with individual cases. Yes, that is all I can say on that.

The Connétable of Grouville:

In the panel's last hearing you also committed work would be done to review various allowances such as the travel allowance, skills bursary, and the disabled student allowance. These had not been reviewed since 2018, so that is quite a while back. Can you provide any update on this and confirm if the work has started?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, that is part of the review that we are undertaking, I believe. I would like to work a bit quicker on that. I think the other priorities have overcome us in terms of things that we do want to announce, which we will probably talk about in a moment. Yes, that is part of that review. One of the things about the hearings and these discussions is it does refresh things in my mind, so I will go away and we will catch up on that and we will let the panel know as well, I think, is all I can say on that. But I do not have an outcome for you today.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay, thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Do you know when you might have an outcome of this review?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I would hope it would be during the first half of this year certainly. I am also hopeful that the review will uncover some simple things that we can do. Because you can have a review that ... there are 2 ways a review can go and say: "Right, okay, these are the things we have to do, they are going to take a long time" or: "These are things you can do, actually they are quite quick fixes", which is what I am hopeful for. I think part of it is communication as well, and the way that Social Security is set up for any form of change.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Sure. The approved Government Budget for 2025 has set aside £1.158 million of expenditure growth for investing in lifelong learning and future skills provision. The panel learnt in its review that £500,000 of that funding would be to support existing apprenticeship schemes. Could you tell us about other work that will be funded by the money?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is £500,000 on a £1.15 million?

The Connétable of Grouville:

1.15.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. So £200,000 is put across for distance learning to increase the financial support for distance learning to match campus-based student support. We have done some work on that, and the work we are doing on that is good. It means we can come up with a sustainable approach to that into the future. Previous grants only contributed 80 per cent of tuition fees and low-income households, there will now be 100 per cent of tuition fees, low-income households will be eligible for grants covering the full cost of tuition as they are now, and students will also get help for living costs as well as tuition fees. So the distance learning thing, I hope some further announcements of that and the way we are going to do that in the coming months, but there will be an equity, a provision and the recognition of distance learning. But I also want to say there is a difference between distance learning and online courses.

[15:00]

Distance learning is a specific provision to learn at a distance in a number of different ways, it is not simply putting lectures online, so therefore that type of provision needs to be carefully looked at so we are funding the right thing. That is why when the proposition came I was not happy to just accept everything because you have to be really careful and it had to be money well spent. We have a really good way forward there, which I will come to the panel with. But the first thing I can say is it will be equally funded and £200,000 will be put aside for that. The second thing is about income thresholds, so £450,000 to fund inflation increases to income thresholds for grant allowances, and I think I have mentioned it before to the panel. We will be linking that. The previous no increases over many, many years, yes, they are a problem but we at least will put them up with inflation now.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Do you think those will be in place for the new year, the new season?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, they do. I believe I am right in saying that, yes. But if it is not the case, I will let you know. I believe that is the case. So, for example, 2024, £50,000 income will become less than £52,600. There are tangible increases in those income levels.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Is there any particular reason why these 2 areas have been identified?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think, first of all, they were ones from States propositions that we responded to. To some extent, the scenario was determined for us. I am happy to respond to those and work on the will of the Assembly. Also, I think it was time to look at distance learning more carefully. There are some really good providers out there that could really help our Island. The only thing that might slow down the stuff on distance learning is ... distance learning can also be modular and so we have to think about the modular nature of what those payments would be. I have done a degree with the O.U. (Open University), a second degree with the O.U., for example, and the flexibility of that was really handy. It was very good.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Sure. The panel's amendment to the 2025 Budget was accepted by the Government to review the scheme available for apprenticeships and increase the funding and support available. Please, can you describe how you are going to approach that within the lifelong learning remit?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, this is a really enjoyable topic for me because I think it has opened our discussions up about what we want to do with apprenticeships and what they mean. There are a few things. The apprenticeship process that we have at the moment we want to support and keep it in place. There is some really good work going on there and we want to ensure that we can open those apprenticeships up to support them. The other thing, longer term and on a wider scale, I think we need to look at how apprenticeships fit into all of our post-16 education and this will help us model that, if you like, and see what that can be. There is the question in the long term - and I think it is something we need to discuss and it would be interesting to talk to the panel about it - about a statutory provision for apprenticeships. Is that needed? Is that a good thing to do? Other jurisdictions are doing that. Because what that does, it makes it a lot easier to allocate money and look at what that allocation of money is. That is one of the things I want to look at in the future. The investment money supports the upgrades to apprenticeship qualification to meet new work-based

assessments, for example. There has been an increase in exams for some of them; significant increases actually. I will not mention which ones because I do not think I should pick them out, but people who teach them certainly know. There are new assessment requirements and modernisation to some qualifications like plumbing, for example, that were introduced last year. So some of the money will have to go towards that to meet those requirements. There is some review over the maximum grant per applicant and eligibility criteria. When we talk about funding parity across post-16 education and training, that is something we need to look at. It needs to be understood if you are one day a week at the moment, the funding is effectively one-fifth of what you would get for full-time, but I know there are different demands being made. I think there is some work to be done with employers. Employers really value apprenticeships but I think that conversation needs to happen again to say: "What is it you want? What do you see as successful? What is your contribution to it in terms of how quickly these people will become really valuable to you, is that being recognised?"

The Connétable of Grouville:

One of the challenges that has been reported to us is that relationship with the employer and the cost of taking an apprentice on. Are there any other incentives you are planning on to encourage employers?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

There are some things around the support from living wage which are slightly separate from us, because it is a slightly different department, but I think we can feed into. However, I would say that I think any industry, any profession, any sector in our society needs to recognise that ongoing training is really important. The cost of exams has gone up, they are paid by the college, they are paid by those providing the apprenticeships. Employers are, if you like, protected from those increases. I think it is a wider discussion that we need to have so we understand, and that will also help us say: "Okay, where is money best spent?" Because I think otherwise we could put a lot of money into saying: "Oh, we will just subsidise this" and not get the outcomes that we want. If that makes sense.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, indeed. Thank you, Minister. You have answered our next questions on distance learning so I think we can move on to Deputy Miles.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Just moving to early years. You have obviously got your early years plan and made a statement as well, which was really helpful, so people can ask questions. You have previously highlighted the importance of the early years pilots that are underway. Can you just tell us some more about how those pilots are progressing, when you are likely to have measurable feedback?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I have quite a list, so I will try and expedite it. Phase 1 pilots in July 2024, the first phase of extended nursery activity. Three schools have been working in different ways. Plat Douet have started the Douet Dinkies, an offer to up to 12 2 to 3 year-olds being accommodated. I always said, "Are you going to say Douet Dinkies?" and I have said it twice now, and that is on Hansard as well.

The Connétable of Grouville:

You have won that bet, Minister.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, within the existing nursery for part-time sessions. So it is utilising the existing capacity and space. That is a really good pilot. Trinity will be extending their opening hours to enable families to access nursery provision from 7.45 to 5.00. Breakfast Club is now open to nursery children from 7.45 each day. D'Auvergne have got a project with J.C.C.T. (Jersey Child Care Trust) for tutor-frequent play and learn. That is a really targeted childcare provision where there are additional needs. I am sure Jonathan will talk about the feedback in a minute, but there is some really positive feedback from parents and I think it is a really good thing that is happening there. There are all sorts of things, there is St. Clement, St. Lawrence, Grand Vaux, First Tower, St. Mary, which I will not read out because it will take up all the time. Jonathan, do you want to add anything to that?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

We are interested in the feedback.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes, so part of the question is around when we will know how well these are working. We have established measurements in place, either at schools or where the J.C.C.T. are providing the provision, and we are just working through as a project team how to align that so we can very clearly show to the Minister the impact - the positive impact - on the children in terms of a conventional set of scoring or assessment metrics, of which there are several. Our job at the moment is taking from 3 or 4 different accepted methods of assessment, a crystallisation into one or 2, so we can start to describe impacts. Already measuring so we will be able to, I think, by the end of ... I am not saying end of this quarter but end of this term ...

Deputy H.M. Miles:

What sort of tools are you using?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

So there is the Leuven Scale and then there is another piece in Orchard, a bit of software that enables you to track metrics. The main discussion point is whether we want to be doing things on a very short-term basis, so in case of weeks or months, or look at longer term, so either term or annual assessments. So the feedback we have had so far from one of the providers is they believe the rate of progress is such they would like to move towards something that enables you to move towards a monthly recognition of an improvement, such as the rates of development. We are just working out how best to even those up. We recognise it is critical to be able to show the impact of the pilots in terms of childhood development. That is what we are working on.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Can I mention one other thing? Sorry to interrupt. There is a Best Start Together project going on at Rouge Bouillon, I think, where alongside early years education families and children stay, play and learn together, so it is like the family hub thing. It was mentioned before in the juxtaposition between family hub and nursery vision; I do not see it as that, both can be provided in different ways and they are both part of the whole that we want to offer and extend that offer. Also I think that the way we are stepping up our use of school facilities, it is a lot easier for us to step up and step down school facilities that we have. There is a lot more flexibility in that over the years with demographics and need than it is for a private provider to either go bust or be full. So what we want to do, and I want to start this dialogue to say that what we were doing, rather than getting in the way of private providers, it actually will produce a stability there so that we will react to that need and if that need is going down we can react with our school facilities. I think I am right in saying it is a lot easier than asking a private nursery to not do that. Obviously the standards are good across all of them and that we want to make sure the regulatory standards are the same and they are good, but because we are using school facilities does not mean it is just another school classroom. That is a really important point to make.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

What work has been done to assess the risk of unintended consequences for the Government Plans on the broader early years sector?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Well, one of the things we will look at is whether it has had an impact in that way and whether there is that pressure. I believe there is still a need there.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Was that work done to assess the risk before you started the pilot or are you going to look at the impact after the pilot?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Well, one of the things we have to do is pilots first. If there is nothing there then I do not know if we could have an accurate assessment, to be quite frank.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

I think part of the risk mitigation was by having a pilot approach as opposed to moving straight towards a wider scale rollout. The pilots that the Minister has described create some new things. They are enough for us to be able to expose some of the risks of unintended consequences and identify those better. One of the decision points we set is that we do not move, we do not propose to the Minister wider scale out, until we understand the consequences. It is a means by which we can try and understand and expose things that at the start we might not have foreseen.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

How are you engaging with providers?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I will give you a really good example of that. As we look for the 2 to 3 year-old offer and the funding model for that - we have worked with the Jersey Early Years Association - that work is ongoing from the Economy Department actually, an economist to do that over financial modelling, to look at what would it look like a 2 to 3 year-old offer in terms of its actual amount that would best fit with the financial modelling that happens in nurseries and private nurseries now. That work has to be done in advance so that we know that whatever we introduced is most effective.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You have talked about financial modelling, what work have you done around capacity modelling?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, we had a number for capacity, did we not?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Particularly for the under 2s. I would be interested in capacity modelling for the under 2s.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is a difficult one. You go first and I will give my view as well.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

I think I will probably continue with it is a really difficult question to answer, but the way that we are looking to answer it is to have a number of aspects, one of which is the second of the annual

workforce surveys, which was completed in December. We are just starting to get information out now and by the end of February we will be able to certainly report to the Minister. That includes some feedback directly from existing providers on the level of capacity they have in totality but also what they would consider their capacity at individual years. So we can start to get a sense of what the Minister had talked about in the past and the point at which we could potentially move towards a universal 2 to 3 offer, knowing that the capacity gap is sufficiently small that we would be confident the market would respond to it. We are just starting to get very early insight to suggest that there is greater level of capacity now than there was this time last year.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

In the private sector?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

In the private and third sector. So the sector represented by Jersey Early Years Association or Jersey Association of Child Carers. J.E.Y.A. (Jersey Early Years Association), if I can use the acronym, have been very, very constructive and challenging to say by the time we get to this new thing, it might be that is not a massive capacity challenge because of the decline in birth rates, you might end up actually being close enough to the existing capacity. Long story short is we recognise it as a complex piece of work. The second response from the whole sector survey is now in being analysed to give us some further insight.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

When will we have that whole sector survey, do you think?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We are getting the first draft of the complete analysis in February. I would hope, if the Minister is happy, by March time.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

By next time we talk to you, you should be able to answer those questions?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Absolutely, yes.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

From my point of view, ideally, it would be absolutely wonderful if we can say we have got capacity, we can introduce the offer, we do not have to do all the additional work in standing up new nurseries in schools and so on and so forth, and we keep those procedures. That would be absolutely

wonderful. The intention behind this is not to make capacity, to change the nature of it, move away from private. That was never the intention. The intention is to build the capacity where it is needed so that we can provide the childcare that is necessary, good quality childcare and choice for that childcare with the offer made as well. There is also a point that there are all sorts of knock-ons from this and we were talking about getting people back into the workforce, for example, for 2 days a week, in teaching we were discussing.

[15:15]

They may have a 2 year-old and with 15 hours of childcare being provided and that capacity being there, we may be able to bolster our workforce with an experienced teacher who wants to come back part-time 2 days. We have to have the flexibility built in to do that. These things fit together, but we have to get to a point where the capacity is there so we can put the money. I am really hopeful that we can get there and we will do that as soon as we can.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just ask so that I can understand, with the plans for capacity what is the time gap for that? So you start working and looking at figures and then how many months ahead ...

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It can be relatively fast.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

So the main risks the Minister wishes to mitigate is offering parents a universal offer that stokes the demand for places and then providers do not have places and that creates a fracture in the market. We have observed that happening elsewhere, so the Minister is rightly very sensitive to that risk. That is the headline piece. In terms of the work, it is the output from the last survey, the December survey with us this quarter, that will start to give us a really good indication of the extent to which we think the gap has come down to a level that might enable the Minister to, earlier than perhaps anticipated, move towards that universal provision. The irony might be that the Minister says: "Okay, I think I am going to take the jump now" and what we have not then done is had sufficient time to build the nature of the new universal offer. Because while we talked about N.E.F. (Nurse Education Fund) in the past as a comparison, it does not necessarily need to look like that. It could be longer in weeks, it could be shorter in hours, it could be more providers can benefit from this. At the moment, it feels like the longest lead time aspect is ensuring capacity is there. But it might perversely suddenly swing into the work that is going to have the longest lead time is the creation of the scheme and the implementation of the scheme so parents can benefit from it. But that will not become clear to us, I do not think, for another 6 to 8 weeks.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

There will always be some variables, can I just say? The reason it is called a universal offer is because it will be offered to childminders. That is an important point to make. There will also be some variables because ... and I am very wary of this, as I have mentioned, that once a universal offer is made, we may think we have got a real good overview now if anyone wants childcare, they can go for it. Then once the offer is made, there will always be extras, I think. People will come along and say: "Oh, now the offer is there actually we would use that." That is a bad thing, because it would get people back in work but we have to have that flexibility. That flexibility and capacity, which I think is easier if we use school things, if you like. We have this stable sector that we have now, both in terms of schools, third sector and private. Stability, certainty in what the funding is that we have developed with them and then we have got that flexibility to fit around it so that we can get them to provide for the need that we want. That is the aim.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, all right. I am just going to skip ahead a question. Some of them could be answered by written answers better if we run out of time; we might not anyway. If I can just ask questions more about the curriculum. Minister, can you tell us about whether any changes have been made to address suicide prevention as part of the Jersey curriculum? I know we have asked about this quite a lot in the past.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. Not in terms of an immediate change to curriculum, it is a really difficult topic and I cannot imagine how difficult it must be. There are a number of things here. There is conflicting advice as to whether it should be raised or it should not be raised in schools, when it should be raised and so on. My view is that whatever we do there needs to be an incredible sensitivity and delivery of whatever happens in the curriculum. I am somewhat concerned in general that the P.S.H.E. (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) curriculum has become the cure-all for everything, and I am just trying to be fair now to those who are delivering P.S.H.E. because we have had things from elsewhere talking about from everything from opening bank accounts to just about everything, and so how do we do this? I think that what we need to do is to have a better dialogue over how we could do this. I look at how I would have addressed this and I would have really struggled to know how to do it, so it needs really good training, it needs a really clear approach.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It is just that we have been asking about this over the last few years and I know it is difficult and it is hard to sort out how to do it, but it seems that nothing is changing. There have been changes, have there?

Associate Director, Education:

There has been suicide prevention strategy work that has been led by Health, which Education has been part of. So it is looking at ... but it is going down the route, and this is from lots and lots of advice, more around mental health, well-being and relationships, and making sure that young people know what to look for, the signs of young people being depressed, upset, giving where they should go, who to go to for help, support from counsellors. It is being looked at in a much more holistic way, rather than just picking a word.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Is that in all schools? Is that available in all schools?

Associate Director, Education:

Yes, the level of support is available across all schools.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

The suicide prevention strategy has never been published by Health, has it?

Associate Director, Education:

I could be wrong, I think it is due to be. I think it is sitting there.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It has been around for a long time.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think that was my clumsy answer; that is much better, thank you very much for that. In terms of a specific part of the curriculum, it has to be part of that wider thing, because it is about where do you go for help, where do you go if you have got concerns, where do you go if you have got concerns with someone else. Schools, I have to say, very frequently take that on and they do address those issues day in and day out. It is not just about educating, it is about caring and they do take on that enormously caring role. I think that framework in terms of it being part of that wider scope is there because it will also give a way to introduce that conversation, because just going into a conversation saying we are going to talk about suicide is very different from what issues affect you as a person, what can be the outcomes of those? One of those outcomes that is really concerning is suicide and it has to be addressed. I think that is a way into that topic. I am not dismissing it in any way, I think it is really important.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Sorry, can I just address that? There is a resource that all Jersey schools have a subscription to when they are teaching, which is the P.S.H.E. Association guidance. There is an area in there that talks about teaching about suicide. I am just going to quote a bit out of it. So it says: "Do not avoid talking about these topics as this provides an opportunity to increase understanding and signpost pupils to support. However, care must be taken over what is said and the information shared. It is especially important to plan and teach a lesson with the assumption that there is a pupil in the room who is more vulnerable to experiencing trauma or distress in relation to the topic, even if you are not aware of them. It is important to create a culture of open exploration of mental health issues but vital to ensure that lessons do not become instructional to pupils at risk of vulnerabilities." So that is taken directly from the P.S.H.E. Association teacher guidance, talking about mental health and emotional well-being. All schools do have a subscription to this.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is good. Presumably teachers, when talking over the subjects of mental health and where you can get help, will be aware of that.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is exactly the type of place I would have gone to if I knew that was coming up on the curriculum. I would have gone to my colleague and said: "I have got to teach this." They said: "Okay, here we go" and there would have been support. You would expect that teachers would be supportive. You may also get to a stage, remember, that somebody delivering that may not want to because of their own personal experience. You have to be cautious around all of these topics.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That would normally be around like year 9 or something like that, would it, this sort of thing?

Associate Director, Education:

It depends on the situation. If we go back to the very sad cases of the suicides that happened, we did a lot of work going into the schools, centrally education and psychology, to do work with the immediate cohort, in fact the whole schools, but also others that were affected that were at different age groups. Because obviously if you have got siblings, you have to think about the big picture in any case.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is difficult. It is touching on the subject throughout a number of year groups, that tends to be what happens with all sorts of subjects which are very difficult to take on.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you for that. Now on a different subject but still on the curriculum. Minister, could you confirm how Jèrriais lessons are funded by Government? We have heard a few different things about this.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, I can. I will not give you the history of Jèrriais in schools, because I know we are quite short of time. There is currently ... in 2024 and 2025, the budget was £566,156. It is previously money that was centrally allocated but it became part of the core Education budget. So that money comes out of Education and 80 per cent of it goes on staffing and there are all sorts of things that it goes on, 6 per cent spent on promotion of film in 2025, for example, and 1 per cent in lots of other areas. I think there is the challenges that ... the crossover is the phrase I am looking for, between arts and culture and education, those specifics. I may be wrong in thinking that Education is about the teaching and the delivery of language and so on but there is an arts and culture function to it. But that is the funding and that is the amount of money that was allocated.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

We had also heard that Economic Development pays Education for it.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think it did a few years ago but it became a core part of our fund in 2024.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It is definitely Education?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you. Could you tell us about the levels of Jersey history and Jersey geography that are included on the school curriculum?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. If you notice I am flicking through 5 pages, I am not going to read 5 pages.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So there is plenty being taught?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Can I answer this in a written way, because it is a part of the curriculum in a number of different years, as is geography. I will say this, though, that remember that when you get to key stage 4 and the history G.C.S.E., there are very few history G.C.S.E.s that look at specific Jersey history. I believe though that the I.G.C.S.E. (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) in geography may allow you to look at a specific situation wherever you live. I do not know what they do in geography.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so if you reply in writing, that is fine.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I will send you the 5 pages.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Good. Just to tell you some of the things we had around that. Was this dependent on particular school decisions or is there a plan for it? Do the schools work with Jersey Heritage to plan outings and so on. That was the extra bits.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, I can answer that. I believe they do work with Jersey Heritage. Schools are given are options and areas they could deliver. You have to remember that you need someone to deliver it. There may be certain teachers in certain schools who say: "I can deliver a really good piece of work on that" and a headteacher will say: "Okay, let us go with that." On the Occupation, for example, or on another area, the Battle of Jersey, because they may have a real interest in it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. I think this will probably be our last question because we are nearly out of time. In our last hearing we asked about policies related to EpiPens and you advised that there were discussions ongoing with Public Health about legislation that would need to change for schools to have to spare EpiPens in cases of emergency, perhaps for those children who did not already have an allergic response to something. Please could you tell us more about how those discussions have progressed?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, absolutely. First of all, I would say that I am going to refer to them as adrenaline auto-injectors because EpiPen is just one brand.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It is more general. It is the proper way to say it.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. I have liaised with Health colleagues and discussed how we can make changes in Jersey that is similar to the U.K. where there can be - effectively to sum this up - a spare EpiPen in the school for specific reasons for identified children. I am advised that ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Sorry, could there be spares for children who are not already identified because in the U.K. they are allowed to hold spares. This is not to do with an identified child, because children can suddenly have an allergic reaction which is dangerous.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

First of all let me ... okay, the change is a relatively simple change to order and I emailed the Minister for Health and Social Services today. I do not think that is something that is difficult to do. In terms of the administration of EpiPens, I think there are a number of things here. One, a spare EpiPen for those who are identified is a very, very good idea. It is a very simple solution. I am not sure around the question, because I am not a health specialist, of whether the use of an EpiPen for someone who is not identified, how that would work. Because if you saw somebody in this room who you thought might be going into anaphylactic shock, what would you do?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I have done it myself and it does not cause any harm if it is done.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Okay, well, if you are certain of that, that is great. We just need to be certain for everybody that that is the case. I would just say that there are 2 sides. One, a spare pen makes sense, absolutely. I think the vast majority of young people with an allergy know how to manage their allergies as well and use them. It makes sense for them to have them. There should not be a law in the way which simply does not make sense to stop that happening.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

In the U.K., they actually cannot use it for children who are not previously identified at risk.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

But I thought if a child was dying on the floor, it looked like they are in anaphylactic shock, then they can use it, even if they have not been previously identified.

[15:30]

Associate Director, Education:

But they have to have consent from parents for its use.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I guess it would be a bit like on the beaches when you have a lifeguard hut and they have got a spare EpiPen in there. I am guessing that is kind of what you are getting at, but at the moment that does not exist in the U.K.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Are you sure, because I thought I had read otherwise? Anyway, perhaps we should leave that there.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, I mean the reality is that you do something. There are trained first aiders, there are people in schools, but I think the first stage is to make sure that you can have those spare pens. It is in hand, let us put it that way.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Do you know when you will have an update?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I would hope as soon as possible, like really quickly. I was hoping I might get a reply this afternoon, but it is a bit rich sending an email and expect it back straight away; that is a bit unfair. But as quick as possible, because it is a simple ... and we had a quick chat with the officer earlier today. It is one of those things: "Oh, it is not a big change, we can do that." So hopefully that will be the case. Unless there is something we have not thought of that but I do not ... well, obviously I have not thought of that.

The Connétable of Grouville:

You could not do that for insulin because you could kill someone. My son was diagnosed at school and they got him to hospital, you have time for that. Anaphylaxis you do not.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, it can be minutes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, literally.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you for that. We have some more questions but we have come to the end of our time, have we not? So if we could follow those up in writing.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, of course.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We can also send you the UK guidance on the EpiPens as well.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you, yes, that would be good.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

But, again, it is good to have those discussions and we are moving forward in the right direction. Let us try and get it right, we do not want to see anyone harmed.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. All right, well thank you very much everyone.

[15:32]