



Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny

Panel

Quarterly Hearing

Witness: The Minister for Children and Education

Monday, 27th March 2023

Panel:

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

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée of St. Helier South (Vice-Chair)

Connétable M. Labey of Grouville

Witnesses:

Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North, The Minister for Children and Education

Connétable R.P. Vibert of St. Peter, Assistant Minister for Children and Education

Mr. R. Sainsbury, Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills

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

Ms. S. Devlin, Group Director, Children's Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning

Ms. N. Mulliner, Head of Early Years

[14:58]

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 27th March 2023. 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's website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent. So if we begin with introductions. I am Deputy Catherine Curtis, the chair of the panel.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M. Porée of St. Helier South (Vice-Chair):

I am Beatriz Porée, the vice-chair of this panel.

Connétable M. Labey of Grouville:

I am Mark Labey, Connétable of Grouville, and a member of the panel.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Deputy Inna Gardiner, Minister for Children and Education.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Richard Vibert, Assistant Minister for Children and Education.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Robert Sainsbury, the chief officer for the Department of Children, Young People, Education and Skills.

Group Director, Children's Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning:

Susan Devlin, group director for Children's Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning.

Group Director for Education:

Seán O'Regan, group director, Education within C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills).

Head of Early Years:

I am Nicola Mulliner, I am head of Early Years within C.Y.P.E.S.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Apologies from Deputy Louise Doublet my Assistant Minister, she is not well.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. So I will start with the first question and this was drawing on some information from the Finance Law Delegation Report which showed that in the period of July to December 2022 an additional £270,000 was paid to C.Y.P.E.S. to cover potential funding pressures for social worker accommodation.

[15:00]

So my first question is: please could you confirm the total amount the Government spent on the C.Y.P.E.S. social worker accommodation in the latter half of 2022?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Thank you for your question. Before I go to figures, I would like to put a caveat on them. Since I have been elected as a Minister and we, as a Ministerial team, and Connétable Vibert is responsible for the children's services, we found that the service has not been resourced properly to provide a level of resilience in the face of operational challenges that the service faced, including a decrease of spaces available in the care. We found ourselves in the place that we do not have enough, basically that we need to create. So, as we concentrated in investment and we have extra growth for this year, going back to your question, that total spend of C.Y.P.E.S on social worker accommodation in the period between July and December 2022 was £276,457. What is really important to emphasise, it is against a total cost of that accommodation which was £412,237. The gap between £412,237 was covered by payments from the social workers that receive wages, so it was a contribution around £1,300 per month from the social workers towards their accommodation. The department paid those costs because the only available accommodation was significantly higher than the key worker accommodation which was available. Another thing that I would like to really bring to your attention, and this is how we are progressing, where we found ourselves in 2022 and where we are now, in the last 2 weeks the service has allocated 22 residents from the private rental at Peterborough and Liberation that have a very high cost to the key worker accommodation at Westaway Court and La Tour Dunlin, previously Le Marais. So basically we have now staff who were living in ... we are paying some money and they are paying some towards the Liberty Apartments which were expensive and they moved to Westaway Court and have key worker accommodation just in time in line with normal. So we are progressing. We are reducing this cost but we needed to act and make sure that people have somewhere to live and we have social workers who work in these jobs.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right, okay. So that is a movement towards that, and I am just trying to get the figures clear in my mind. So, the total was £412,237 but that was partly paid by the social workers, is that right? Yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

By themselves. Like you rent a property, you pay from the rents. So the Government, we subsidised £276,457. Yes, this was the amount that was paid extra to support the accommodation and some of it will not go forward because now they move to key worker accommodation at Westaway Court and Le Marais because we have spaces available and we will include it in the key workers' accommodation.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

One of my questions was what type of accommodation was provided but I can see you are saying that mostly - and it is mostly - places like Le Marais and ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, at the beginning it was why it was so high cost because the private rental at Peterborough and Liberation Apartments which are private rentals, this is the higher cost. Now, they move to key worker accommodation, so it is ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So, they are in key worker accommodation but is that accommodation that would have otherwise been used for other residents in Jersey through Andium?

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, the key worker accommodation, we have a special policy for key worker accommodation, like Westaway Court was empty for several years, and we are bringing in phases, and Westaway Court was allocated specifically for key workers' accommodation.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you. So I have still got another question about the accommodation.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Sure, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So could you confirm whether a provision for the social worker accommodation is included in the £1.8 million of funding for the social worker recruitment and retention programme in 2023?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It really all depends if we need to subsidise. We do have money but we are not going to use it lightly. If we have more key workers' accommodation which will cost less, we will not. So we have resilience, we have contingency if we need and we will pay some, but it will be ... the direction of travel is to reduce the spend on accommodation, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Reduce spend on accommodation, okay, thanks. In your response to our panel's Government Plan review, you advised that you continue to work with the States Employment Board to explore all options to improve the recruitment and retention of social workers. Can you provide an update on this work, including whether a Jersey supplement is being considered?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Okay. I am sure that you have heard about the delivery unit or I can expand. When education was the first one that picked up to see how we are doing recruitment in different ways, and we were pretty successful, now we are using this similar model and there are 3 people, dedicated people, moved into the children's services and social workers recruitment. So we are unpicking, to go to the fair, and I think, Susan, you went ...

Group Director, Children's Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning:

I was there last week.

The Minister for Children and Education:

... to the fair last week, so we are looking at how we can recruit differently. There is a micro-site developed about Jersey and what to expect when you move to Jersey because lots of people are surprised, including cost of living and others. We currently have 77 full-time posts that all require professional social worker qualifications, and all of them filled or registered for permanent by the agency. What is changed with the agency, and this is what we are doing, we do not have an agency that is going backwards and forwards. If the agency person arrives and the person is not good, within a week this person would go basically, will not stay for longer. I mean, a week or 2 weeks, but it will not be something ... so we can assess if this agency person is good and professional and works for our team. All others, they will work between 18 months to 2 years; it is not the agency workers that will go immediately. We are now exploring, and it is a lot of legal engagement with agencies, because maybe some of the people who worked here for a year and a half and 2 years, they would like to stay and become a permanent, but we need to go through the process. On top of this, we are reaching out very, very targeted and having targeted conversations with social workers.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Just to add, will a Jersey supplement be considered or discussed?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I am not sure where you are at now because I am looking at Susan. Susan is involved, she can maybe give a bit more detail.

Group Director, Children's Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning:

Thank you, Minister. There is to be a professional review carried out at a corporate level across government. Obviously social workers do not just work in children's social work, although there is a bit of a difference than there is to adults or probation. So it is intended that there will be a

professional review carried out and that will look at those broad aspects, and I am sure as part of that it will be a ... whether there should be a supplement on it or not, Chair.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Do you know when that might be, when that might happen?

Group Director, Children's Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning:

There had been a slight delay on it just over the winter there with a change of personnel. People in Corporate Services, I think they are now getting back on track with that and picking up. The terms of reference were done, completed and agreed, so hopefully that will pick up in the not-too-distant future.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, great. So still on this subject but not accommodation, Minister, you accepted the panel's recommendation following the Government Plan review to encourage all departing members of staff from C.Y.P.E.S. to undertake an exit interview. Please could you state whether you have had any discussions with representatives from the States Employment Board or people's services about that process?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, we did, and it is coming into a Ministerial meeting as well. All meetings we have updates about recruitment/retention, people who are going from the service and how we know why they decide to leave the service. We are not great with exit interviews. It is not just around the social worker, we are not great in exit interviews I think across the board, and do what we call our H.R. (Human Resources) partner. We have a H.R. partner, they are developing and it is sitting ... Rob, did you have any progress with Maxine and with central S.E.B. (States Employment Board) about ...

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

So our plan would be in the new system for Connect People, we should be able to better capture this activity. At the moment it is quite manual and quite difficult to feed that information and if it is in relation to, say, a temporary worker, we have had particular difficulty being able to capture it but the new system I am told is able to help us with that. We should be in a better position to report on trend and information that could be thematic for us to learn from, not just individual.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is good.

The Minister for Children and Education:

So there is a Connect Finance now in place and the Connect People group come a bit later this year, and this is where the information can get captured so we can ... to Connect.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So we will be able to check up at our next hearing and see how that is going, yes?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

We have always regarded exit interviews as very important, especially in a very fluid market that we have at the moment, which is very heavily biased towards the employee.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, absolutely.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Could you just give us the number of agency social worker staff currently working across Children's Social Care?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Forty full time equivalent posts currently filled by the agency.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks. Are there vacancies at the moment?

The Minister for Children and Education:

So the head of service we have 2, team managers 3 ...

Group Director, Children's Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning:

Sorry, Minister, I beg your pardon, they are not vacant, they are covered by agency staff.

The Minister for Children and Education:

They are covered by agency, so we do not have ...

Group Director, Children's Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning:

Just in case you thought they were vacant.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Oh, okay, so ...

Group Director, Children's Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning:

I beg your pardon, Minister.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, sorry.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Vacancies for permanent staff?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, so we have everything covered, so it is not that you do not have ... we have 21 agency social workers but we need to recruit 21 social workers, so it is covered by the agency.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks. Then just moving on to the workstreams, what updates can you provide the panel on the workstreams underway to reform Children's Social Care which had the budget provision of £6.5 million for 2020?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Just to make sure that it is okay because Connétable Vibert is responsible and leading on this matter.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. So we have got the improvement work in Greenfields secure unit and particularly we have dealt with those issues raised by the Health and Safety Inspectorate and Jersey Care Commission, and our improvement notice there was recently lifted, so there has been substantial work there. We have also, with a view to Greenfields of the future, visited the secure unit in the Isle of Man and the third party that we have had discussions with, the third party who runs that for the Isle of Man Government, and I think those are ongoing with myself and Rob included, we will continue to work with them to look at our ... and ask for their advice, in fact. We are very impressed with the 10 years in which they have run that facility in the Isle of Man and the different approach. We have already sort of covered the delivery unit on recruitment, so we have got various priorities for the future. The service has not been resourced to the level that it should have been, and I think Inna has covered that in the previous question. We have commissioned a third party to work on residential care practice model and a children's home improvement plan, and we are currently in negotiations with the Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland. I think we will also work with St.

Christopher's in the Isle of Man. The other priorities are Staying Together, the priority focusing on earlier intervention to try to keep families safely together wherever possible, and that takes into account the provisions of the new Children's Law and puts in place a duty to assess children who may have health or development needs. I think that is absolutely vital, that early intervention is the key and something that we must focus on. I know the efforts have been there over the years to do that and improvements have been made but I think that is the key area. Combined with that of course you want to provide a loving home.

[15:15]

A care home should be somewhere where children want to live, not where they just go to live. Again, I was impressed with the secure unit in the Isle of Man because as a secure unit - and I think, Rob, you would agree - it was somewhere where they wanted to live. It was built at roughly the same time as Greenfields but a very different model of building. We have recently looked at a home that has been acquired by States of Jersey and looking into turning that into a registered children's home. At the moment we have paperwork and legalities to complete for that if there will be an additional children's home which we urgently need, as we have had to use unregistered premises in the past, which is not ideal and so this is going to give us some more urgently-needed capacity. What else can I ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Is that being therapeutic?

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

No, therapeutic would be an additional ... yes, would be in addition to that. I was going to come on to that. We hope that again there are possibly properties acquired by States of Jersey that might be suitable but we have to look at ... we must not just look at something that might have come our way, we have to look at, really, the ideal site or property to convert. So still sort of early days in finding and planning that environment but very much one we are focusing on doing that and we do have the funding agreed for that, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

We have specifications agreed, we have funding agreed, we have a couple of options for the site that we need to see, which one would be suitable for our specifications. In general, this home will provide short-term care for 3 children up to 2 years. So during the 2 years, because it is therapeutic, you want to give intensive support to prepare them to go into the general provision unless more will need to be required. Why it is so important to have a therapeutic place is because the children who come, some of them pass through really adverse and very difficult experiences as children, and it

takes time to recover from the trauma. So we need this very tailor-made approach to address the child's need and to support when coming out from the trauma that they experience, so it is involvement from all professionals in one place.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Where that child can have a peaceful environment as well, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, and it is also very important that there will be some outside space, there will be some space that will ... it still will be 3 children with the staff and the child in this space. We have a specification we are working on and it is really to create the child sometime maybe can compare, continue to be in this relationship, to develop it, to have this one place and a safe and stable environment, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I have a few questions which I think you have already covered but there may be something to add.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So, I was going to ask about an update on the promised Scotland and Leeds Council work that was going on but you have already mentioned and covered Scotland.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, we have covered ... yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

For the workstream Providing Loving Homes, it is also about foster carers.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I just wondered about the outcome for the recruitment drive for foster carers.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

So the recruitment drive for foster carers has been very successful. I just need to have some numbers here somewhere on foster carers. Right, so where we are from the outcome of the ...

there are currently 22 foster carers' households and 14 connected carers. So, from the recruitment in 2022 we have improved one connected carer, 2 new foster carers, and we have 5 new foster carers scheduled to commence in May, June and July, so those are gradually coming through. From the point at which you recruit people to them being able to look after children, there is obviously ... it does not start immediately but those are now ... people are going through their training and, as I say, they will start to come onstream in the coming months. We have got additional recruitment taking place in May and September, so we will be able to train the people that we have taken on initially and then we will start new recruitment programmes to add to those.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Those 5 that you mentioned, for example, is that 5 households?

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

That is 5 households, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, okay. Then I just did have a question about how much money is being spent on the recruitment drive.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Roughly £26,500.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks. I had a question about the therapeutic care facility but I think you have given us all the information on that unless you had anything else to add.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

No.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

No? Okay.

The Minister for Children and Education:

We will keep you updated on how it is progressing because it is work in progress.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Just a quick question I wanted to ask, to come back to on this workstream of Staying Together with the funding going into that and the work going on in that, will you be able to demonstrate how that is being done and what it includes at some point?

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. Susan, you would know how we will show that it is being done but that is the intention that, where possible, we keep people together.

Group Director, Children's Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning:

Shall I come in?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

Group Director, Children's Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning:

So, Chair, thank you. We want to put some money in the Children and Families Hub. You will know that that has been in place for a couple of years now, 3 years, and we are seeing huge demand and really increased levels of need, and with the new legislation of course that will bring more people in, so we are going to put some more resource in there, so that will be early help assessment. Once you then progress to requiring a children's social care service, we are enhancing our assessment with a support team, so that is our, if you like, front-door team. There is M.A.S.H. (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub), then if you need an assessment it goes through to the assessment team. We want to build our capacity to do much more thorough assessments. If it can offer short-term support to families who might need 3 months or so, we will do that in that team, and we will have additional family support workers in there. One of the other elements that we are investing in is family group conferencing. We have had that in place for a couple of years and we are going to just employ another member of staff and they also use zero-hours contracts. So, we will do that and that is about families finding their own solutions in a facility in a helped way, if you like, so we will be doing some of that. So all of that will be measured in terms of numbers but also qualitative feedback from people that we might use things like the outcome stars kind of methodology where people can score themselves and we can see how the progress is going with people, so we should be able to capture that. So this is very much about us getting in upstream and trying to get some more support in so that people are not escalating. I have to say it is a very busy picture. We are becoming, as the hub has got on its feet and really established itself, the referrals have gone up post-COVID as well, so we are dealing with quite high numbers of referrals, Chair.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

But that is great to help people in the early stages, yes. Okay, I think that is my questions for now.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you, Chair. We are going to move on now to discussing C.A.M.H.S. (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service). At the last quarterly hearing in December we heard that there will be a draft report relating to C.A.M.H.S. data and performance standards ready in February. Are you able to provide an update on the status of that report and advise if or when it will be published?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Thank you for your question. The C.A.M.H.S. Annual Summary Report is complete in draft format and plan for it to be published in April 2023. It was slightly delayed but it is there. I am not sure if during the previous public hearing I said that the minimum dataset was established in 2022, just last year. This is the first year that they are analysing and going through the data and putting it together in the report. I hope as we progress we can have the report finalised quicker but in April 2023 it will be published. We are also developing new summary dashboards going forward, so we will have more granular data. So we know what is there now but going forward we will have more granular data and it will be more automatic so it is easier to see the trends.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Funnily enough, the next question was about the dashboard, strangely enough.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Sorry.

The Connétable of Grouville:

How will the collation of data in the dashboard, the report and data dashboard, be practically used to improve C.A.M.H.S.?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It will be a live year-to-date data featuring caseload summaries, waiting time, in-patient data, re-referral rates and current K.P.I.s (key performance indicators). Later this year as well we will include featuring outcomes and feedback measures because the feedback is something that will close the circle. So we said “this, this, this” but how does it work together, so it will go through the whole circle. So currently we have goal-based outcomes tools which use pre and post-measure, current views clinical tool; this will be used as a pre and post-measure. The feedback that we are developing, it would be feedback heard from children, young people and their families as a post-measure.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Excellent. What is the current re-referral rate for C.A.M.H.S. patients?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Current in 2022?

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I do not have the number for 2023.

The Connétable of Grouville:

No, I understand.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Re-referral rate was 9 per cent.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Nine?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. It is lower, much lower than in the U.K. (United Kingdom).

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes. Have the issues that the Auditor General highlighted with data quality on this rate been addressed?

The Minister for Children and Education:

From my understanding, since the dashboards started to be introduced and be used in practice so we have clarity, it has all followed through, because I think when the C. and A.G. (Comptroller and Auditor General) report was written, when I was still at the Public Accounts Committee, all these measures still were not in place. So the tool was not in place and now we have a tool in place that gives us their data.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Has any change been made to C.A.M.H.S. on the "did not attend" guidance following the findings from the Auditor General?

The Minister for Children and Education:

C.A.M.H.S. now follows the “how to manage a missed appointment for under-18s”. So they are trying not to show it “not attended” because it feels very civil servant language and blaming children and families for not attending. So the language was changed to how to manage a missed appointment for under-18s. Policy was ratified in September 2021. C.A.M.H.S. managers were involved in policy creation so currently the missed appointments is the weekly standing item on ... sorry, standing item on the weekly agenda of C.A.M.H.S. management meeting. So you have C.A.M.H.S. management weekly meeting and this is a standing item on the agenda. It is chaired by the associate director, the head of C.A.M.H.S., and reports any young people where there are concerns over the missed appointments being managed under this policy: how many appointments, how many times, what is the reason and how it is followed up, so it is on a weekly basis this data.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Is there any data to share with us about the rate of non-attendance or missed calls?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I do not have it with me but I will ask to provide it to you.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you. Another question on C.A.M.H.S., please could you provide an update on the work to develop a shared prescribing scheme between G.P.s (general practitioners) and C.A.M.H.S. clinicians for A.D.H.D. (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) medication?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. A.D.H.D. diagnostic assessment referrals, I am not sure if you remember, the number increased in 2022, became 350 compared to 51 in 2020. It is 7 times increased within 2 years. There also were a number of young people open to C.A.M.H.S. where medication treatment for A.D.H.D. is indicated. This increased pressure on prescribing clinicians from these prescription requests.

[15:30]

It is also not an accessible process for families collecting prescriptions every 4 weeks from C.A.M.H.S. and presenting at the hospital pharmacy. There is a desire to move for a shared-prescribing scheme with G.P.s which is in place in the U.K. I think it is easier to go to G.P.s than to go to C.A.M.H.S. and go to the hospital to make it easy as a process. Previous discussions led by Adult Mental Health with G.P.s were not successful and currently ... I am sure you know that we have a new ... Toni Cooper, service manager for Neurodevelopmental Service, that started her work

recently. She is currently leading a renewed discussion on behalf of C.Y.P.E.S. to establish G.P. prescriptions for children and young people.

The Connétable of Grouville:

A bit more co-ordination.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just say, I hope that works because it will save a lot of time for everyone, will it not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Absolutely. Absolutely, I agree and we are really keen to progress and help Toni to manage it, what was not managed before.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes. Please could you update the panel about the new ... here we go, it is one of those words, neurodevelopment pathway in C.A.M.H.S. please?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, this is the service manager, the neurodevelopment pathway, was appointed in February 2023. We have currently a service manager in post from February 2023, 2 speech and language therapists recruited and due to start in the next 3 months because they need to serve notice and come through, one senior occupational therapist was interviewed a week ago, just under a week ago, a community paediatrician accepted a job offer and currently working out his period, start date soon, and a psychiatrist, a locum psychiatrist in post ahead of advertising to the permanent. So we do have a path, so we have a direction, and it is a completely new service, but we understand that we really need it.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Absolutely. One more topic, please could you advise how screening for Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder will be incorporated as part of that pathway?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I am not sure that we discussed this. No, we did not discuss this.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

A point, sorry, Connétable.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It was part of the inclusion but I do not think it was part of this neurodevelopmental service.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

“The neurodevelopmental service, which will be launched in 2023, screening for F.A.S.D. (Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) would be included.” That is what I have got as a quote here from our hearing on 8th December, so we are just following up on that.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I need to follow it up because I know that this was discussed with our inclusion team.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

But this mentions the neurodevelopmental service in this quote.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Because currently neurodevelopmental service specialises in A.D.H.D. and autism, so these are the 2 major things: A.D.H.D. and autism, yes.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

I was just going to add that our colleagues in public health are also reviewing F.A.S.D. and they are looking at, I guess, the Island overall approach and what we need to do from a strategic needs assessment. I think that work is beginning now, Daniela Raffio is leading on this area, so we can get feedback through public health routes as well which will pull in inclusion, it will pull in our neurodevelopment.

Group Director, Children’s Social Care, Integrated Services and Commissioning:

Yes, I think it is also likely that some of those children before they are diagnosed will come through the neurodevelopmental service as we do that assessment and testing, so it is likely they will come through there. I think when we spoke last time we were talking about the very low numbers in Jersey and we thought that there were probably more children who were likely to be diagnosed on that spectrum.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Those were our feelings as well; we shared that.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I need to follow it up.

The Connétable of Grouville:

May I just say, Chair, that we have heard about the incredible work that has gone on in C.A.M.H.S. in reducing waiting lists and we are very grateful for that, and keep up the good work, but we do still get the odd message about when they are re-referred they are still dealing with different people, that they are not getting that familiarity that they have had with their original diagnostician. So, I just thought I would share that with you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Thank you for raising this. What I find that this is work that we are doing around the table within C.Y.P.E.S. So sometimes children can be diagnosed with autism, for example, but are high-performance and they are managing well at school. They officially discharge from C.A.M.H.S. because C.A.M.H.S. diagnosed them and they give some recommendations and they are coming into schools. As you know, in schools we have a S.E.N.C.O. (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) that will take care and will support the child and the family going forwards, unless there is something coming through the mental health difficulties and will go back to C.A.M.H.S. What we really need to get better is to create this package in family and child view, that the discharge official word from C.A.M.H.S. it does not matter that everything is stopped. It is not discharging, it is handing to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator in school and they are having this meeting, and there is a pathway within our department that we are raising.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I just thought I would share that with you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So people's needs are taken account of afterwards, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

So, Minister, this next set of questions are targeted to the early years and nursery funding but due to the fact that Deputy Doublet is not present, I wonder if I can still ask those questions and hopefully you will give me some answers.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Absolutely. First of all, I do have knowledge, and secondly, this is Nicola. Nicola is developing all policies and all agendas submitted with the Jersey Early Years Association, so working hand-in-hand with Deputy Doublet. So all questions that you have on early years will be answered by me or ...

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Okay, thank you. So, with reference to the recent announcement to provide an additional £288,000 of funding to the Nursery Education Fund this year, please can you provide the panel with some further information about why that amount has been agreed and how it has been calculated?

Head of Early Years:

Shall I just ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Nicola, I think because you develop all numbers with Louise, it will be better than that I read out.

Head of Early Years:

Okay. So there is an annual review process to look at the Nursery Education Fund and the hourly rate. That was conducted mid-January with a series of 6 meetings with J.E.Y.A. (Jersey Early Years Association) who represent all nursery providers, so we looked and considered what they had to say in terms of their own needs analysis. They had done some work for us in terms of their cost pressures, so we were able to consider that and look in terms of affordability for the Government. Two indexes I use to help us to do that, that is the Jersey Retail Price Index and the Index of Average Earnings, and that is how we were able to agree on an 8 per cent uplift for this year. So that sort of takes us up over where we would have been considering what they were telling us, their pressures, and we want to maintain that quality with them, for them, for the children. So that 8 per cent was agreed but also the one-off additional payments that was also allocated, and that was not just to support the 3 and 4 year-olds, but that was to consider all the children that attend the settings. So, we heard about real-life situations where the cost of food has really increased, so being able to offer additional nutritious snacks is something that the nursery providers felt really they were wanting to do, keen to do. We were keen to support them to have that opportunity to look at where their own costs were and so that they could make that decision for themselves but we would keep account of that so that we were confident that that money was being spent in the right way so that the children were going to benefit from that. So, there was the 8 per cent uplift that was agreed but also the one-off payments as well. That was around £82,000 as well in addition to the 8 per cent uplift.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you for your answer. We understand that the hourly rate paid to registered Nursery Education Fund providers for pre-school children aged 3 to 4 will increase to £7.44.

Head of Early Years:

That is right.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

How does the hourly rate compare to the cost of provision?

Head of Early Years:

So we came to that agreed figure with all providers. Not all providers are the same: some are for-profit organisations; some are not-for-profit organisations. Some have higher overheads than others, so it was seen to be a fair representation of what we could afford but also what their needs were, so it was matched from that point of view.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

So would you say that now there is a fund calculation in place in terms of hourly rate?

Head of Early Years:

Yes, I would consider those 2 indexes.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Are you happy with that?

Head of Early Years:

Yes, and obviously we take into account every year what has happened, so cost of living and the increase was something unexpected, but we were able to respond to that because of the annual review process that we have with them.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you. So we understand that a rate increase usually happens in advance of the autumn term for the full academic year but this has been brought forward. Please could you confirm if the rate will be reviewed again in advance of the autumn term in 2023?

Head of Early Years:

So the rate that was agreed will happen a term early, so providers will be paid this new rate for the summer term as well. So they will be in effect having the 4 terms of the higher rate, so we do not

anticipate having to review that for September 2023 but they will have the benefit of 4 terms rather than 3 to offset the increased costs.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

For a longer period.

Head of Early Years:

Yes, to try and help out. We would not do that normally, it would just be for the academic year, but in fairness and working with the Assistant Minister, she felt very determined and keen to do that to support the settings.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you for that. The next question is with regards to, which you already mentioned the £82,000 as a one-off payment, can you confirm how many early year settings will receive a portion of that funding?

Head of Early Years:

Yes, I can. All settings, there are 27 of them, and it has been worked out on the number of children that they have. We applied the same methodology during COVID where some settings that stayed open had a one-off payment as well, so the settings were familiar with that model. So we have 10 settings that will be in receipt of £1,500, we have got 14 settings that will have £3,500 and 3 settings that will have the maximum of £6,000 dependent on the size, the largest size.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you. So another question in relation to that, will it be up to the individual nursery to decide how the funding is spent or are there any limitations or directions for how the one-off grant payment should be spent?

Head of Early Years:

So during our working group, we talked with the settings, with the providers, to draw up a little bit of a menu as to the sorts of things that they could be looking to spend their additional sum on. Some said cost of food and the healthy snacks, some in terms of children's needs, they need some specialist resource or want to look at developing their environment to meet children's needs. So we did not set a limit on but through our team, our childcare and early years' service team, we have offered that opportunity for them to talk to us, to ask us: is this a good spend, is this an appropriate spend, and we can help them and advise them to make sure that those children benefit.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

So as much as you are concerned that funding is specifically targeted to the children's needs, do you think there is any way that some nurseries may want to spend some of that funding in staff wages, for instance? Is that something that could happen?

Head of Early Years:

I think in terms of supporting staff through professional development, to attend training, we very much support settings to look at their needs. So as long as we are confident that the children will benefit either from physical resource or from well-trained staff or from more competent staff, we are quite happy that, yes, they can do that.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

So you are giving the nurseries quite a free range to utilise that funding in a way they feel most appropriate to do so?

Head of Early Years:

Yes.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Okay, thank you for that. My next question, has an impact analysis been done on the funding provided from the Nursery Education Fund for children aged 3 and 4 since there was an increase to 30 funded hours in September 2021?

Head of Early Years:

So, through our annual review process we are able to look at increased costs so that we are able to make that adjustment to that hourly rate and hopefully bring that in line to offset any additional costs.

[15:45]

The 30 hours has had a knock-on effect in terms of meeting children's needs and we are very aware that post-COVID, children are coming with additional needs. We are in further engagement and consultation with J.E.Y.A., with the sector, to ensure that we are funding children's needs fairly, so additional funding if it is needed through special educational needs funding, so we can ensure that any indirect consequence from going from 20 hours to 30 hours can be covered through all the work that we are doing going forward to improve the funding rates and the affordability of those places for parents.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you. Would you say that there have been any learnings coming out of this particular analysis?

Head of Early Years:

I think so. I think we are very aware, as I said, of children's needs since the pandemic. We are seeing a lot of children in terms of speech and language developmental delay, social and emotional difficulties, so through our COVID Recovery Fund that we were fortunate to secure, we have been able to meet those emerging needs now and we are in a position to be able to plan for that in further Government Plan bids so that we can maintain that level of support going forward.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think based on the outcome of the review, you have seen that there, like you say, are more children with special education needs. There are the options that were introduced for 2, 3 year-olds to bring the children early to the system and to provide them support in early years, so currently part time up to 12 hours a week nursery placement care available for children between ages 2 and 3 with a developmental or financial need too. So we recognise if there is a need, we need ... and we are testing a pilot to see how it works, what will be the outcome, what it will require because it is really important to develop sustainable, affordable and high-quality early years child provision.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

If anything, I suppose it goes to show how important it is, socialisation with a very early age of the infants and children, without that that problems may arise.

Head of Early Years:

Absolutely, yes.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you for that. My other question is, the Ministerial Delivery Plan which was produced or published in January, last January, deferred that the Government will consider appropriate ways to commission and deliver targeted childcare support for 2 to 3 years-old. What is your timescale for that work?

The Minister for Children and Education:

This is what has started; we have started already. Currently it is part time, up to 12 hours a week, nursery placements which are available for 2, 3, and the placements are funded by the Jersey Child Care Trust. With additional support from Early Years COVID Recovery Programme we have been able to increase the number of places available. We have secured funding from the Government Plan and we are providing sufficiency, there should be enough spaces to increase the offer. You know that we have a petition, there is a petition been lodged?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

That was my next question.

The Minister for Children and Education:

You can ask.

The Connétable of Grouville:

That is your job, being too far forward.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, because it is 2, 3 that is kind of connected, I think. It was very interesting to see that a U.K. announcement came last week - it was last week - and some time ago I had a conversation with the Chief Minister and also with my Assistant Minister, Deputy Louise Doublet, and before this announcement we discussed how we are increasing childcare provision for early years. What was clear for all of us, the first task is to stabilise and make sure that we are having enough provision for 3, 4. We started to look at what is happening in the school nurseries, what type of provision can be done in the school nurseries, how we are training enough people and we have enough staff to provide 2, 3 and slowly to extend. So it is not just about the funding, it is also about the provision, so it is really important for us to have a sustainable ... for me, the policy development is sustainable, affordable and the quality. This is one of the reasons, through our conversation a bit earlier, that Deputy Doublet is working on the report, the report will be published shortly, because what we have done, we overlooked our system for early years provision to include evidence: what are the good practices, what works in our system and what does not really or what needs to work better. The moment that this report will be finalised and published this will be for us a clear direction of travel for the policy development. So I think that we have been ahead of the U.K. in our thinking. If you see their introduction, it is also 2024, 2025, 2026, it is not immediate.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

That is good. So with regards to this particular petition you were just talking about, can the Minister confirm if the team is ready to provide a response, a reply to the petition, a Ministerial ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

We will respond straight after Easter; we will publish the response after Easter holiday.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just add in a quick question? These places that are available now for some 2 year-olds, do you know how many places there are for those?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Do you know?

Head of Early Years:

Yes. So at the moment we are funded 20 extra places as well but there is ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

In total?

Head of Early Years:

Yes, it is just over 100 through the ... so there is a panel that the Jersey Child Care Trust facilitates and that has got representatives of the Early Years Association as well as health visitors so that they can triage that panel and place children in the private nurseries with the availability to meet the children's needs.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

But these are generally children that might require a bit of extra support?

Head of Early Years:

Yes. So it could come from their 2-year check with the health visitor, so an early opportunity to identify where that intervention would be most successful. It could be a language delay or a social emotional developmental delay, so a group setting where that social exposure with other children would be of benefit to those children, so, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks. Sorry, Beatriz.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

No, that is okay. So, my next question is, in the Ministerial Delivery Plan it states that: "Programmes will be explored and developed to ensure sustainability across the early years sector." What does sustainability in that context mean to yourselves?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I will start because first of all we have Best Start Partnership and the Assistant Minister is the member of the Best Start Partnership. The Best Start Partnership is critical in co-ordinating action and development for early years services in Jersey. Sustainability for me is that announced 30 hours for early years but we were not prepared for the workforce that will ... it is not me announcing, I was not announcing, but the moment that it was announced we were not ready with staff and places.

The moment that it was announced the resources were taken from early years even, from younger children, to supply so, for me, before announcing any further, it needs to be prepared and balanced. This is the why the report that will be published shortly - I am talking about shortly, a couple of weeks, 3 or 4 weeks max - will show us where our gaps are so we can develop a sustainable policy. The policy, if it is under 2, after 3, after 9 months, what needs to be in place to make sure that we can sustain it going forward and not have crises that perhaps the ...

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

In the long run, yes. Thank you, Minister. Can you please describe how you engage with early years providers about any proposed changes to nursery funding support?

The Minister for Children and Education:

So first of all, when I was elected as a Minister, Deputy Doublet and myself, Nicola, Seán, we had a meeting with the early years' representative, J.E.Y.A., and since then they are part of the Best Start Partnership. They are sitting on the board, they are a party for all discussions, developments and options. When they raised with us the difficulties with cost of living, the team was pulled together and the announcement last week was developed together with them. It was not us saying: "This is what it will be" they worked very hard, the team worked hard, led by Deputy Doublet, to get to the agreement that will be acceptable for everyone. I think they were very successful, which I am very grateful to the team for doing this.

Head of Early Years:

Just happy to add that Rob, our chief officer, and Deputy Doublet commit to meeting quarterly with the Jersey Early Years Association as well. So they have that high-level discussion, yes, that they want from that sort of strategic level, but operationally I meet with the nursery owners and managers as well. We have monthly meetings so that we can talk about operational things as well, but they have an audience at all levels I think so that they are able to feel supported from the department.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

That is good, ongoing communication and transparency.

Head of Early Years:

Yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

How was the training meeting with them?

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes, very good. We have good dialogue with the association. They are very obviously acute to all the challenges that they are facing, many of which we face across our sectors, so workforce is a critical piece of work we are working really closely with them around. Overall we have committed to being very open and transparent with each other around future policy development. If there are changes to what will be required around sustainable funding, we would like to work with the association around that. We have good dialogue, robust dialogue, but good dialogue with them.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think that one of the conversations that we had with them about whether we continue to work, how we are working with open books as well. Because, like I said, they are all ... some of them are businesses, some of them third sector, some of them part of the Parish arrangement and all of them operate differently, so we need to be fair in our support, and we need to understand what is provided for the future.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you. On that note then of the early year providers, are all the early year providers in Jersey represented by the Early Years Association?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I do not think so. All of them? Yes, okay.

Head of Early Years:

Yes, they have worked hard to ensure that they are the representative voice because we were concerned that maybe some people did not have a voice in that but we have asked them to make sure that they are represented.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Okay, sorry. I have heard some things but if they are already all on board, it is good.

Head of Early Years:

It did not used to be.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It used to be?

Head of Early Years:

It did not used to be. Did not used to be.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, because when I was elected it was raised with me but if you have progressed, it is really welcome; I have learnt something.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just add, does that include the child minders as well?

Head of Early Years:

So the child minders have their own association.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right, okay.

Head of Early Years:

The Jersey Association of Child Carers.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, are they included in discussions?

Head of Early Years:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, okay.

Head of Early Years:

Obviously they are not in receipt of the Nursery Education Fund, the child minders, but we are part of their network as well, so we meet regularly with the child-minding association's committee.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. How could the Government further assist with workforce pressures in the early years sector? I know the communication is very important, transparency, ongoing conversations with the providers. What other ways do you feel the Government could still support that group further?

Head of Early Years:

Minister, shall I continue?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. I tell you what; I think it is important that the training, this is something that we need to provide and create and to work together. I think it is about the workforce prep.

Head of Early Years:

We have created a specialist workforce working group within the Best Start partnership, so their task and their focus is to look specifically at workforce recruitment, but retention as well. They are focused on that. That is multidisciplinary; we have got representatives on there from Highlands College, they are a key part of any sort of continued discussion about qualifications and training, so Highlands are on there. We have got workforce representatives - Skills Jersey and Trackers support that - so we have been able to secure 2 additional level 3 courses this year. We listened to the sector; they found it hard to allow staff to attend full-time so we were looking at part-time models. We are also looking at the apprenticeship model but also the trainee model as well. So we do not exclude anybody who might have an interest in childcare and early years education but they can see a clear route and pathway through from the start, working through from level 3 to level 4, maybe into management and then post-graduate. So I am trying to sort of develop that career pathway for them.

[16:00]

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Because Highlands College has very well-attended courses for those particular professions so that is good there are the pathways. I think that is all for me for now anyway so I will pass it on.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I have got questions now about the Jersey school curriculum. My first one is to ask if you could confirm whether there is now a representative from the Youth Parliament on the Jersey Curriculum Council?

The Minister for Children and Education:

First of all I do recognise absolutely the important part the young people need to play with developing the Jersey curriculum. There is a law and within the law it is a constitution and not required. But what I am doing, and this is the direction of travel, so for example I just got a new curriculum for P.S.H.E. (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) that we started to develop. Everything in yellow, this is what Youth Parliament added to the curriculum when we are developing. The way that we are working with Youth Parliament, youth representatives, first of all I have to report that we will publish our response, and I have just been updated at the progress on both of the Youth Parliament response and one of them around the basic curriculum. I requested meeting with the Youth Parliament representative who wrote this report to update them and to see their views. Second,

anything that comes into the curriculum comes ... so, for example, we have recently religious education and worldwide views; it was a new curriculum that was developed over the years. The person who is responsible for several schools ... and we are using now our participation standard; you remember we were developing a participation standard? So everything which will come to the Curriculum Council needs to be approved by the Curriculum Council and needs to present a report of the engagement with the young people. It is not only one or 2 people; we have Youth Parliament, Youth Assembly, school councils and across schools engagement using our participation standard that we will input into the curriculum. Also my director of Education and myself on 20th March met with Youth Parliament and we discussed their views. Tomorrow I know we have the Youth Assembly and one of the things is around the curriculum, what we are doing. So there is extensive engagement. We are considering what is the best way, because there are a lot of people around the table and currently to put a burden on one or 2 young people to be around this table, it might create some difficulty, but what is clear is nothing will be approved from the Curriculum Council without having the full package and report for presentation for wider engagement, to hear children's voices from different ages, from different schools. This is the engagement that we have going forward. The Youth Parliament was invited to the Curriculum Council meeting so they can be a guest and we would invite, but they were very shy and I felt that the real engagement gone through ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

We met a year 11 council from Hautlieu last week; they were not shy. But the head was frightened of them.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

It was a definite setting through . A different setting.

The Minister for Children and Education:

But I feel like engagement within schools, when you are going to school and have much more information, to see the children and young people's views than invite one or 2 people for 15, 20 people around a big table.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

That can be intimidating.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So the answer to that question is no then? So you are not going to have a representative ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Officially, no, but we have representative coming to the Youth Parliament.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So engagement but not a representative, as part of the Curriculum Council?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Not as a permanent member. They came to the Curriculum Council but they are not a permanent member because within the law there is ... I need to change several things in the law as well so I can put it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so if I move on to my next question. How will you co-ordinate the promotion of U.N.E.S.C.O. (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) sustainable goals throughout the Jersey curriculum?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Climate change runs thematically through the different subjects in the curriculum, and notably in science, geography and P.S.H.E. It is also often used as a subject in debates in English. The recommendations of COP26 are being addressed which will bring the U.N.E.S.D. (United Nations Education for Sustainable Development) into greater focus forward. So the Government's eco-active programme manager, Jane Burns, regularly updates the Jersey Curriculum Council, so it is a standing item on our Curriculum Council that meets 3 times a year and we get an update how the climate change and sustainable goals incorporated within the curriculum.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I think there is about 16 altogether, U.N.E.S.C.O. sustainable goals; it is about equality and all sorts of things like that as well ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, there is a table.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

... so I am just thinking how much that is considered in the Jersey curriculum.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is considered and they are working on it and we have a presentation and we continue to develop, so it is ... if you are looking through the minutes it is in the minutes, so are we delivering the COP26

education pledge and sustainable goals, so we are working also with the Youth Parliament to develop ... it is part of Curriculum Council item that we are ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks. Also, in our public hearing last October you advised us that research was underway to see how suicide prevention could be incorporated in the school curriculum so please could you provide us with an update?

The Minister for Children and Education:

So on the Safeguarding Forum the department is working closely now with headteachers and professionals across health, education, social care and wider government to review current data trends. There was a dedicated meeting last week on 23rd March with the headteachers where the relevant areas were highlighted and they discussed what are the best practices because, you understand, this is a very sensitive subject and how you deliver this at school and how also parents will ... so we need to prepare how we deliver this and how we are preparing wraparound care and how the public will respond. We have different views from the public coming across. So the best practice area around the suicide prevention that was raised by the headteachers, and some professionals and we need to look that we ... if we are concentrating to ensure that students are equipped to deal with the issues relating to bullying, relating to dealing with bereavements, relating to things on the internet which influence their well-being. The pupils have appropriate signposting to relevant services, both child and adult level, if something happen; that if you have access to school, friends, care, support and support for vulnerability and issues isolation, and to connect with the developing guidance. So it is a work in progress because we had feedback and we tried to see how you are working through this. On top of the topics, it is around drug and alcohol, domestic abuse, mental health and loneliness; because this suicide prevention, it is really important to concentrate on what could be the triggers and to work with the triggers to equip children and young people with tools to deal with the triggers.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So that is a work in progress; do you know when this work in progress might be completed?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It needs to be developed over this year and soon after needs to be brought to the Curriculum Council. I do not think that we will discuss in Curriculum Council before the end of the year, beginning next year.

Group Director for Education:

No, I think in an important sense the work never stops.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I wanted to know when something might be in place in the schools that is like a sort of programme to move forward.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think what is in place, because as a curriculum, developing the absolutely new curriculum, it takes time. I can see with P.S.H.E. that we had a recommendation. Now, we have something in place and with the new curriculum I will introduce by the end of this year, beginning next year. The religious education took almost 2½ or 3 years development in new curriculum; they are a work in progress on the other curriculum. So I would not say that the full curriculum will be introduced this year. I will never give this commitment because it is no chance, but saying this, there are parts that I mentioned that can be part of P.S.H.E. and they need to be secure. So the work can start this year but it will not be a separate curriculum for suicide prevention this year because it just takes time to develop. It is not that we are taking curriculum off the shelf and we are adjusting it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you. Now, I just want to ask some questions about the physical education lessons. The panel understands that some schools have outsourced physical education lessons to Jersey Sport. Please could you provide some more information about that arrangement?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, Jersey Sport is currently supporting 8 primary schools with P.E. (physical education) lessons and the headteachers make their decision to their school would benefit from additional input. Different headteachers have different views and they have different arrangements, and this is the autonomy of school because they know what their children in school react better. The bigger schools have economy of scale, it is easier for them to buy in stuff than to smaller schools and it is always there. At the same time it is not all schools current employ a specialist in P.E. and this is something ... so if they not employ specialist they can buy in the Jersey Sport. It is headteacher decision.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

One of my questions was what are the benefits to students, but you have explained about the bigger schools buying in and so that sort of suits a particular school then, is that right?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It suits particular schools with particular needs and they bring in a different approach. Sometimes they buy in for a short period of time to bring a different approach to P.E., and sometimes they buy in because they said: "We have enough children, we have a big school, and the teachers can do

other things at the time instead of teaching P.E.” So it is to the benefit of the children that you have P.E. specialist, I think.

Group Director for Education:

There is also a benefit to teachers. Most primary teachers are generalists, they will teach all the subjects and they will stay in that cricket lesson or basketball lesson and it upskills the generalist teachers as well, having the specialists in.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Is this being evaluated in any way?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I did not evaluate. I know the quality is valued per school about the delivery but if you are being evaluated by P.E. teachers from Jersey Sport or to deliver the generalist ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Having the programme of Jersey Sport doing this, is there an evaluation of how it is going and how it is working and feedback?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I had feedback from the headteachers and I had feedback from when I was in school and I spoke with students. Feedback is very, very positive, but I do not think that we have anywhere feedback in ... and it is something that maybe we need to look at and just see how the strike at.

Group Director for Education:

If I may, under the Minister, Jersey Sport have been very responsive in working through the Curriculum Council on the P.E. curriculum, moving towards physical literacy as a concept, so it is not as if it is a very good arm’s-length organisation. They have got one approach to participation and inclusion. Is it an elite sport? Does everyone get to play? They are working very closely with us, almost philosophically, on the next steps for P.E.

The Minister for Children and Education:

So it is part of the Curriculum Council discussion about physical education.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Are contracts put in place for this at the schools?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is between Jersey Sport and schools.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right, okay, so it would be a contract in place. Do you know how long that would normally be for?

The Minister for Children and Education:

All schools are different. It is really left ... the headteacher got the budget...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, we have heard a lot about that.

The Minister for Children and Education:

The headteacher is responsible for their budget and as long as they deliver what needs to deliver according to the curriculum, we will ... and they are not overspending, I think we just need to...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, we have heard that word "autonomy" a lot.

The Minister for Children and Education:

From?

The Connétable of Grouville:

Heads.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Just wanting more autonomy, sooner.

The Minister for Children and Education:

They want more autonomy and we are ... they now have working groups and we will meet in June and we will discuss what does it mean in practice.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Good. One last question on this. Are there any plans to expand from the 8 schools currently signed up, do you know?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It really depends on the headteachers. So it is not my plans to expand, but I would like to see how the new curriculum around the physical education would influence what we are doing with Jersey Sport.

[16:15]

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks.

The Connétable of Grouville:

It is very difficult for me to talk about child obesity. Minister, Further Education and Skills Actionable Agenda is the next topic. You published the Further Education and Skills Actionable Agenda in December 2022. What will you be prioritising from the 37 actions in this document?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, I do need to prioritise.

The Connétable of Grouville:

It was a big one, was it not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is a big one. So first of all, a Jersey Skills Fund that was approved by the States Assembly is to be established this year, to have a systematic approach to be taken in skilling, reskilling, upskilling workforce. So we are working now through the possible structure, governance arrangements, income streams; so the Jersey Skills Fund is one of the priorities. As recommended at the recent Jersey Apprenticeship Review, funding for all apprenticeships to be routed currently through Highlands, but we are exploring if it is other providers for ... depends of their apprenticeships. We are looking into the apprenticeship different funding, and this can be connected to an item on the agenda, "Raise participation age to 18". Because the entitlement and requirement for people to be in full education or employment with training and the manual need to follow this. So if currently we are spending X-thousands for child in A-levels, I am told that the same amount needs to be spent per child at Highlands doing training in apprenticeship and this currently is not ... it is the first step, it has raised participation age which will extend. Jersey Employment Group, we are ... it is working. We need to enhance membership and they will work to develop skill strategies to each of the key business sector. I have seen the first thing from this skills barometer last week. The skills barometer-type of diagram, that you input a number of vacancies, via the number of people, via the industry and then press a couple of buttons and you realise how many people in this or that profession you will be missing within the next 10, 15, 20 years. This is clear direction of travel how

we are preparing our skills. Another active work that has started, option to study. So we are looking into high education provision on the Island, via vocational provision on the Island, if it is one compass, 2 compasses which will fit our feasibility study around Highland's provision and education. Another thing from that agenda that we are working actively is consideration to use J.Y. number as a unique learner identifier. Allowing students to progress ... to be followed through all Government-funded education and this J.Y. number, the social security number. So now we have like ... it seems we have different systems and on different systems you have different numbers, and from that actionable agenda to have a unique learner identifier number and we are working with M. and D. (Modernisation and Digital), to see how we are making the J.Y. number this identifier. Not creating a new, unique number.

The Connétable of Grouville:

We wanted to look a little bit into the future, will you be applying for funding for some of these actions as part of the next Government Plan process, and what can start sooner?

The Minister for Children and Education:

There are some standards we have in this budget. I think about apprenticeships, it is something ... I might well need extra money even this year before September 2023, so I am working through the numbers now. I need to be presented with the numbers and this will be presented to Population and Skills Ministerial Group probably in May or June. So it depends what numbers will come back to me, but I am very keen to make sure that apprenticeships on the Island are supported properly.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Please can you tell us more about the proposed Jersey Skills Fund and the work underway to get it launched by January 2024?

The Minister for Children and Education:

This is what I said before. So we are working through the governance structure, we are working through the income stream, so I can ... I have seen some drafts but it will be still irresponsible to give more data. I hope, in May or June, I would say June, I can provide a briefing to the panel of where we are at.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, my next questions were to follow up about that, but I think because you will be giving the panel an update I think we will bypass those. So thank you very much.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skill:

One thing we are doing is we have started to work, have we not, with C.Y.P.E.S. and Skills to communicate with local students about job opportunities, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, this is what we started to really make sure that we are connecting Jersey students to employers here.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay, moving on to a slightly different subject. We note that one of the key actions, as you mentioned just now, is raising the age of educational entitlement from 16 to 18 as a minimum. What percentage of young people leave the Jersey educational skills system at 16 currently?

The Minister for Children and Education:

The question, if we are speaking about them as N.E.E.T. (Not in Employment, Education and Training) because the numbers probably would be different if the children are leaving completely education or they are going into the training. In N.E.E.T. between ... I mean, the last numbers that I have seen between 16 and 25, they were under 200, I think; children was 189. I cannot give you the precise number, but it was under 200 between 16 and 25 that are what we call N.E.E.T.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Will the change to the law take place after the practical restructuring of the Skills provision, or will the work be co-ordinated as far as possible?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It will be co-ordinated as far as possible. Like I mentioned before, to make sure that we are providing enough support for the apprenticeships, this is where it is changing.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Is there a timescale for this change?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I am working at this year, beginning of next year. Depends how everything will go. But the most important for me, to provide enough funding for 16, 19. Whatever happens from the law perspective, if the funding is there we will make sure that it will all work. We will update the law. The most important is the children and young people would receive the necessary funding for their education.

The Connétable of Grouville:

There is a reference in the Actionable Agenda to “review of the legal status of Highlands College”. Please could you explain how, or if, this differs to the feasibility study for the Further Education Campus that received funding as part of the Government Plan?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is connected and not connected. I received a request from Board of Governors and we looked through several details. For example, who can be on the board? Who can be a membership? There are several things in our Education Law ... what is interesting today is that we managed several times on different aspects going back to the Education Law. Education Law is 1999, we are talking about Education Law that has not been updated for 24 years, and almost every part of education that I am engaging, somebody comes in, but the law does not allow for today, or the law is saying X, Y, Z, and it started from age, schools, Highlands, Curriculum Council. So what I am doing currently, I am putting in place all requests or my views when I start on the changes. I feel I would rather develop the changes for the Education Law as one package with all of them to come to the Assembly every time with small, one line to change, so ... and we will work ... I hope I will be able to present in September, October. Again in the private briefing at the beginning, before we continue what are the things in the Education Law that we are looking in to see your feedback, what else needs to be updated in the Education Law. You asked about feasibility study, the second part of the question. I put feasibility study ... so basically we have the actionable agenda, which very clearly we are stating about the development of the post-16 education. It was a short review about higher education provision on the Island and all higher education providers. The review was that by Highlands, I think it will be published sometime in April. What I am currently working on, before we are going to feasibility study, I think we need to ... I am pretty sure that we need to develop specifications for the feasibility study. How higher education would look in 2040, and look building something for today. How vocational education would look in 2040. What does it mean ... what we will need? So the delivery unit, or person from delivery unit or consultant ... we are working who will be lead ... who lead all these things together, and it will be presented to Ministerial ... to me and to Minister for Skills and Population Group in quarter 2. The moment that we will finalise the scope of what does it mean, we are going to feasibility study. So when people get actually if you need this, this, this, this, this place is so available.

The Connétable of Grouville:

So it is feasible.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is feasible, so we know where we need to build, but first we need to clearly express our views for how the education, higher education and the adult education would look like.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Okay, so I have got a question with regards to Jersey Gateway Graduate Teacher Training Programme. There are now 3 routes for the teacher training programme in Jersey. The graduates all complete the same qualification but the financial support is different. The panel has received these question from a member of the public and I quote it: "Why is the financial support different for all the routes? Is this fair to applicants?" That is the question.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think there are different things. I would ask Rob to correct me if I will be wrong. Graduate teacher training, you have somebody who graduated and received funding for their degree. So the funding was provided for their education. I think that we are not charging but we are not paying extra, so it is kind of ... this is the route, so you have been paid, you go to your degree and this is extra training. Some of them working at schools and they are paid at schools when they work at schools during the training. The £25,000 bursary, which I am sure this is where people are looking, why they are receiving £25,000 bursary and we are not receiving. This bursary going towards specialist skills that we are missing. I know that we can say that we are missing all but we are really, really short on science teachers, on business study teachers. We just do not have ... and the pool in the U.K. is not there, so the people who are taking specialist training and they will deliver specialist curriculum, we need to make sure that they are supported, they have incentive because it is ... I think that going generally forward, when we are looking who will get more support, and it will never be fair, because all professions are very important, no professions are valued. At the same time as if we spent public money and we know that we need specialist in science, we can continue to pay for temporary Britain-supplied teachers, which will cost much more in the long run. Also we will train our locals, so it always will be some professions that we might invest more because we...

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

To suit the Island needs.

The Minister for Children and Education:

To suit the Island needs. It does sound unfair but at the same time we try to make sure that the public money is used rightly, and we know that we will never be able to recruit so many science teachers for secondary schools. So we need...

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you for your answer. So how many people are currently using each route? Do you have any idea of numbers?

The Minister for Children and Education:

The numbers that I have in front of me in Jersey will be training between 18 to 25 candidates in September. Between 18 to 25 teachers ...

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Eighteen, sorry?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Eighteen up to 25 will start in September.

[16:30]

Group Director for Education:

So we do not know yet? We have had significant applications. Nineteen candidates called forward for interview. So if there is a paper, so real route, we will know after Easter. For the training route, school by school, they tend to be confirmed in June because the resignation date is 31st May, so headteachers know their vacancy rates and know if I want to pay somebody, for example, to be on the graduate scheme for September. So the colleagues running the scheme anticipate, as the Minister for Children and Education says, between 18 and 25 teachers on the graduate scheme in the autumn. But that will be confirmed later in the summer.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

I suppose we will look forwards to have some confirmation when you are ready for it. Thank you. Could you tell us how are decisions made about suitable routes for each applicant? How are the decisions made on that?

Group Director for Education:

When the whole establishment of the graduate teacher training scheme came from 2 places. One, Jersey Education have some shortages and, secondly, some Jersey people wanted to be teachers but could not leave the Island. They either had dependent relatives, children, a mortgage. So the route is sometimes chosen by the person. Do I go away? If I want to be a primary teacher, historically, the graduate scheme did not do that, but we had such demand saying: "I do not want to leave the Island, but I would like to train", so in a sense they are self-selected. If we need a physics teacher, we have gone to people with degrees and we are offering the bursary that is because we are meeting, as the Minister said, the needs of the system. So people apply to either go through the straight learn-on-the-job route or to be paid by a school, or the bursary. Those 3 schemes. So it is partly self-selection and partly, as a department, us matching people where the need is greatest.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Would you say you work with the applicants in order to make those decisions, rather than having a set...?

Group Director for Education:

Absolutely. There are examples where somebody might apply just for the training-only route and after the event their circumstances change, or the school says: "We have got a paid slot." So there is some negotiation between the school level, the candidate level and the department.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just add about the people who want to train as primary teachers? Is it only the student route that is open to those who want to be primary teachers?

Group Director for Education:

At the moment it is. That was a newer intervention. Historically, it was just secondary-shortage subjects. Then we opened it and we trained 2 people to be teachers at Mont à L'Abbé Special School. But because we have had demand, we have opened it up for primary.

The Minister for Children and Education:

But now we also run 2 courses for teacher's assistants. So we had 12, I think, graduates from the first one. We have second finishing in another week, and then a new course will be running from 7th September. So they have 2 weeks training within the department and after...

Group Director for Education:

And 2 placements in schools.

The Minister for Children and Education:

And 2 placements. The placements are paid as well.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you. We carry on with the line of recruitments. How many U.K.-supplied teachers are currently employed in Jersey schools?

The Minister for Children and Education:

There are currently 7 U.K.-supplied teachers employed and from the start of April the number will be limited to 6 teachers. Also, we had successes last week and visited schools and I met a lady, one of the teachers, that she came as a supply teacher and she liked Jersey, she liked school and she is going to be staying as a permanent in school also. It was a very good trial. I think that if she would not come as a supply teacher, she might have not considered Jersey and stay.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

A good outcome, is it not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. I have heard about a couple more from the supply teachers that they just appreciate what we can have ...

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

That would be great. Would you be able to give us a number on the current vacancy rate for teachers and teaching assistants?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I can provide later that full data.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

That would be great.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Because it is changing daily but I will be happy to ask to update it, so I do not want to give the final ...

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you. That would be good, thank you. The next question is with regards to COVID-19, the recovery and in the education setting. What has been done by schools in the C.Y.P.E.S. Department to review whether there are still impacts being felt from the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly with regards to children catching up with missed education? I think we touched a little bit earlier on that in primary schools but would you be able to tell us a bit more in regards to C.Y.P.E.S.?

The Minister for Children and Education:

There are a couple of things going on. First of all, the report for 2022 will be completed and will be published in the next few weeks. The report for 2021 was published in 2022. I am not sure if you have this report. Yes, so we have a clear indication from the headteachers that the funding to support reading, to support numeracy, that it is more one-to-one, one-to-2 or one-to-4, it is small groups, really help children to get back on track with what was missed during the COVID. It depends on how it will go. We are looking to request post-COVID support going forward. Because it is not just the children that missed school, there are children who missed nurseries, they missed the beginning of their life, are thinking about now almost 3 years they are coming into the preschool,

they were around COVID a lot. We can see in nurseries, preschool and the receptions, different types of difficulties, like social skills. It is not necessarily affecting maths or reading but the social skills, sharing things, playing together and you need more support towards this.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Staying at home longer with parents who, potentially, might not speak English at home, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Absolutely. Is there anything else, Seán, you would like to add?

Group Director for Education:

As the Minister said, the report will be published but I have got some early data, if that is helpful. In 2022 we built on the successes in learning of 2021, so with the tutoring programme, for example, it was originally from year 1 to year 11, we extended it to year 13. We also went to all 34 schools and colleges, the fee-paying schools were not given that facility in 2021; 8,174 hours of individual small-group tutoring being delivered in 2022 with a higher proportion of children who are multilingual or qualify for Jersey Premium. The profile of need is being more targeted around learning loss. The report has the survey evidence from the schools, including case studies. For example, one headteacher writing: "We found tutoring to be extremely beneficial. We definitely believe it is supported to reduce the impact of COVID-19." We will share the report with you as soon as that is finalised but it has become more tuned. We also ran a much bigger reading recovery intervention where children are put in a 12, 14, 16 or 20-week programme. They always take the 3 or 4 lowest-performing readers in the class and the programme puts them in the middle of performance and we track that for years after. It is the most successful intervention. We also ran 5 summer schools in 2022, which was an increase, so at Haute Vallée and Grainville for secondary, d'Auvergne, Samarès and Trinity. So, 2 of those summer schools are being evaluated by an external reviewer who does school reviews to see the impact and value of that. Because we were given funding for 2023, so the summer schools that will run this summer will be informed by the experience of last summer. That report will be with you shortly but those are a few headlights.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you for that. I think my question on that was going to be about the impacts of the report and now the Government will address it and the Minister had spoken about post-COVID support going forward, moving forward. Do you ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

But this is around really the support that Seán mentioned, yes.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Okay.

The Minister for Children and Education:

We have money for this year, we will get the name back and see what next.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Okay, thank you.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Moving on, yes.

Group Director for Education:

The Comptroller and Auditor General was looking at that as well.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. I have got questions now, which are to do with bullying. A member of the public raised this matter with us but I think it is a good thing for us to look at again anyway and ask some questions about. Firstly, with reference to the C.Y.P.E.S. counter-bullying policy: what continuing professional development and training does C.Y.P.E.S. provide the schools and the wider education workforce on this matter?

Group Director for Education:

Our support or other ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, so what training and so on is provided to teachers and other people working in schools to deal with bullying problems?

Group Director for Education:

The Psychology and Well-being Service, it sits as part of our inclusion service and the lead internal agency. The educational psychologists work with schools, goes beyond the assessment of children

and young people with special educational needs or other disabilities. They are part of a training programme, so they are running I.N.S.E.T. (In-service Education and Training); that happens in schools. They have the weekly training meeting, as well the 3 days dedicated to training for the staff where the children are not present and the teachers are. Our psychology service is there as a resource. Each school's development plan will have its training programme and the counter-bullying work features on that. It is also part of the induction programme for all new entries to our profession, so early career teachers will have that as part of their induction and training. It was a one-year programme but is now a 2-year programme and working to have ongoing professional support for the first 3 years of entry into teaching because we just feel this works to do as you learn the profession; that is the co-ordinating role. Obviously headteachers are in charge of their own schools and very settled staff that know the children very well and the policies. When you get a higher turnover that is when we will step in and give that support for the training and development of the workforce.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Normally then the teachers get a sort of introduction about how to deal with bullying and then there are updates, which will be for the first 3 years.

Group Director for Education:

That is right, we are moving to a 3-year programme. We are at 2 years for the E.C.T.s (early career teachers). We are moving to a 3-year support programme, so we put in more support with mentoring support. In the cultural schools teachers are trained very early on in this area and more broadly across safeguarding issues, if you are not sure ask a senior colleague who will be your reference point, in the same way you might be with disclosures, for example.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, what I found out when I go and visit schools and I have a conversation with the headteachers and we know that bullying, it is happening in schools. Each school approaches, kind of have their own vision, their own way to deal. I remember one of the schools, I will not mention their name, no one left behind, no one is different and it was amazing that it is not just the headteacher kind of told me, and I saw in the headteacher office, I went to year 2 and after year 4 and year 6 and the school council and it was a different conversation but the same sentences about acceptance of different persons and diversity came up, without me even asking. By the way, from that school I never heard anything about bullying. As a Minister you receive members of the public approaching you, members of the public writing to me. This is where I am personally visiting schools, this is one of the points on my mind when I am looking around and see what is happening because it is ongoing. It is something that you have the policy, you have the training, at the same time what I found really

powerful is the leadership team in the school and how they are going, the messages across the school and how they are dealing with this behaviour.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That can be very good then but is there enough of a consistent approach across schools then, do you think?

The Minister for Children and Education:

We can work on it more. I think there are some schools better than others. It is important in each school that some schools have more complications than others. As an approach it is, the policy from the department it is, the support from the department it is but you always have these private things that happen in private schools, it depends. We can see some spikes in specific years as child development and headteachers are completely aware when the spike can be expected and they are prepared for this.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

I was just going to add, I think there is more work that we clearly need to do in the area. When we had our Little Parliament session at Crabbé recently, and that was year 6 students, bullying was one of the themes that came through. There were key points there which were not necessarily relating to just the school time, it was broader and times if you are travelling on the bus or in the park. There is a broader thing I think that we are looking at and Jersey Youth Service is a key part of that as well in terms of our thinking.

[16:45]

I feel we have learned a lot from the peer mediation work, which is really helping how students resolve difficulties and differences within the school setting. But there is probably connectivity to our C.A.M.H.S. work as well because online bullying is becoming such a prominent thing. I think all of our services have got a role to play and how they come together to evolve our response strategy to this and beyond the policy and beyond training. It is an operational thing for us as well, I would say.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Maybe this will be looked at a little bit more in depth, yes.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes, absolutely.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That would be great. Okay, so moving on to my next one: does every school provide data to C.Y.P.E.S. about bullying incidents and counter-bullying actions and how is this reviewed by C.Y.P.E.S.?

Group Director for Education:

On the management information system we have for our schools, S.I.M.S. (School Information Management System), in my concern you would log any reported bullying incidents and the response and that is something we monitor across the piece. I would need to check, I do not believe there is any specific bullying-reporting mechanism, but it would all be recorded on the MyConcern portal, which is wholly designed to keep children safe.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. It is not specifically reported on that ...

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

No, it is not. It is not within our performance dashboard at this time. It is individual to each school via the reporting system. It is something that we could look at in terms of that thematic.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Thank you for raising this with us about reporting it with me because there are so many reported things that I am looking at. We have a C. and A.G. report about information management around the complaint system that we are looking at. It needs to be a digital solution and we are working on it to find a digital solution by the end of the year. We need to check really S.I.M.S. if we can have a specific login or we can include it in another digital solution. It is something that we will need to see how we receive quarterly reports and we can review quarterly reports and see what has happened, try see the trends.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, because once you have got that being logged in a certain way, then you can review how things are working, can you not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Absolutely, yes. Thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Just asking about the appeals process, is the current appeals process within schools' policy sufficient? When parents say: "It is not being addressed", a bullying incident, so they can make an appeal, is this sufficient, this method?

The Minister for Children and Education:

You mean complaints?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

When they have made a complaint they felt it has not been dealt with about bullying and then they go on to the appeal, which I think looking at the policy they can appeal. I cannot find the right part here but they can make an appeal and I am just asking is that sufficient, the process?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, you have 2 options. So first of all it is internal and it ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

To the group director.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, to the group director. First, it is internal within the school and if it is not sufficient they can appeal to the group director, to Mr Seán O'Regan, and if it is not sufficient believe me it is coming to my desk. The woman that has come to my desk came and monitored them, looking through until all that was satisfied, so I just a couple of days ago dealt with something and it was very good communication. The headteacher and new service, everyone got involved to support specifically ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Does this happen very often?

The Minister for Children and Education:

To my level I think I had maybe 2 since I was elected but it was escalated, not just a conversation, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, okay. We noted that the policy available online has not been updated since March 2019, how often will the policy be reviewed or refreshed?

Group Director for Education:

I think that is scheduled for this summer for the new academic year. We are just looking for the changed history on that one.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I will get back to you with this, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

You think that it looks like it is something ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, it is in March 2019, it is in front of me March 2019, yes, if you need to see it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks. Just a slightly different question here: C.Y.P.E.S.'s online safety policy outlines a number of responsibility for schools, for example: "To oversee and monitor the safety of technology when children are in their care and take action immediately if they are concerned about well-being." Does the C.Y.P.E.S. Department monitor the schools' fulfilment of the responsibilities under this policy?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Most of the devices that children use in school, they are very restricted. They were offset for specific school environment and in Modernisation and Digital, whatever the device was brought by us or by schools, because some schools all were donated, none of the devices would go into the school environment before they were being formatted to the age restrictions, school restrictions and the content restrictions. From a school perspective it is safe. Where we have a difficulty is when the child comes to school and sharing what has happened online or not sharing or in fact what has happened online outside of the school. It is part of the P.S.H.E. Each school has different options how they talk about online safety but it is part of the conversation that every school has with children, what are the rules and how to react and what to do when you see something.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right, okay. Are the requirements to provide training and education in online safety part of the centralised training budget available to schools?

The Minister for Children and Education:

The centralised budget available for schools of all this, I am not sure.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

I am not sure.

Group Director for Education:

Schools are in charge of their training schedule for their academic year but when we review each school the first days is looking at safeguarding, it looks at their adherence with the online, making sure, for example, the Impero system which captures any suspicious searches, which I know works because quite rightly on the odd occasion somebody goes to a place that might be dangerous for a child or inappropriate for an adult is captured straightaway.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes. But the budget, it is decided by each school how ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think it is one of the items when they start the school academic year. These are the things that ... one of these kinds of items that they need to go through. Some schools will train and some schools, it depends if new teachers are coming in, so they get updated with the policy.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Just staying on the cyber-type theme, Minister. What action or policies are there to prevent cybersecurity breaches in schools?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Everything that is connected to I.T. (information technology) is connected to M. and D. It is across the Government, so we do have our team. But the cybersecurity policies, they are central policies that need to be applied and the security breaches can happen, so it is training across the departments.

Group Director for Education:

If it is helpful to the Minister, the day before the Christmas break there was a ransomware.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, I was going to say.

Group Director for Education:

A serious attack on a school, it was one of the non-provider schools, so the head ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

They were not in the government system, yes.

Group Director for Education:

They were not in the government system but the head phoned me straightaway, called the police and the Government of Jersey cybersecurity team stepped in to help them in a very significant way because the integrity of the whole system is important, even though they have their own I.T. management. The cybersecurity people captured it because they work at a higher threshold, which suggests why the Government of Jersey schools have thus far, touch wood, not had that level of attack.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so there is that good base there. Do you think anything else needs to be done to help prevent cybersecurity breaches?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think it is really a big piece of work going on within the Government, across the Government about cybersecurity.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Training.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Training, yes, it is just training.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

There is online training, we need to make sure we get a complete uptake and we see it as good training.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, okay. What have we got next? Which C.Y.P.E.S. policy details the procedure for how instances of sexual assault are dealt with in schools and how are the young people supported?

Group Director for Education:

Our keeping children safe in education policy is the one that is directly relevant for instances of sexual assaults. In line with best practice for safeguarding the United Kingdom, keeping children safe in education captures all aspects. Obviously if there is a sexual assault that is a criminal matter and the Public Protection Unit and the police, Family Support, counsellors at the school level and obviously in extreme cases the Sexual Assault Referral Centre would be the reference. But in how one keeps safe, including some of the matters you have just raised here through online safety, the matters of sexting and inappropriate contact or bullying is captured in that. That is kept under rigorous review and we are directly under the safeguarding forum within the department, keep this

under review in our monthly meetings and indeed contact with the Safeguarding Partnership Board. This is the key policy document for us updated in the summer of 2021 most recently.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Because my next question was just how does C.Y.P.E.S. monitor the implementation of the policy within schools? But you are saying that you keep looking at that all the time and ...

Group Director for Education:

We do a safeguarding audit on every school. It is, as I mentioned earlier, in the Jersey schools review framework, the whole of day one is on safeguarding with adherence to this policy key to that. If a review was not due for some time we are doing our own audit, so that we are visiting schools at least annually. Again, that is part of a reassurance piece we have given recently to the Safeguarding Partnership Board.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I am just checking, I am under the time because I have a child to pick up.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

All right, okay.

The Minister for Children and Education:

If you are going to ask some important question and we always can follow up in writing. But if there are some that you would like to kind of prioritise or whatever, I am happy to answer and it is just that I cannot stay much longer today.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

There is a quick one you have got ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, I have got a quick one.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

It is a very different subject. The panel is aware of the policy for third-party use of education premises, which is administered by C.Y.P.E.S. We have learnt on one of our visits that some charities and youth groups are being charged to use facilities, such as St. Aubin's Fort or Crabbé. Could you explain why that policy is in place?

The Minister for Children and Education:

There are several things about this policy and I am looking to review the policy, this particular one, because several things came to my attention as well. As the policy is saying: "The headteachers and service managers are free to determine the fee charged for use of their facilities by the third party." The direction of travel was if the people, as third party, charge a fee, they would be charged by the school. What I found out, that some of them charge like a very basic fee of £1 and it is not correlating with the rent that would be charged. At the same time, as I found when I was elected and it is still there in place, that the school budget managed, including in the charges. If I am changing the policy and the school employed a person because they are renting out for commercial in the evenings and they are getting money from these and using it for the children, it is kind of a very strange policy is that we need to make sure that we are providing free or very low-cost space for the charities. For example, if they do not charge any money ... I think Y.E.T.A. (Youth Empowered to Act), they provide free youth training - absolutely for free for everyone who is coming - and they are charged. We are looking at how we can support them in the meantime before we are updating the policy.

The Connétable of Grouville:

We cannot be specific, can we? But something was highlighted to us that we have a wonderful organisation, whose tutors are all free and who provide a fantastic service to the young people of this Island and they are being charged quite a lot to access C.Y.P.E.S. facilities. We are very glad, Minister, to hear that you reviewing the situation.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is different places, different schools, so we need really to review this, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Do you have time for one very quick question?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

A very quick ... it is not but we will try.

The Minister for Children and Education:

If it is quick, I literally need another couple or 3 or 4 minutes and then I will ...

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Let us try. Okay, right. This is a question with regards to school meals and I can start to say thank you for your letter to the panel on 20th February with your update on the provision of school meals to primary schools. You advised us that you would be able to publish a roll-out plan, including a timeline by the end of March. Can you please provide us with any details of your roll-out plan at the moment?

[17:00]

The Minister for Children and Education:

First of all, I do have a plan. The only thing is I need to tweak a couple of things and this is why I wanted to publish it today but I could not, so it will be another couple of days. First of all, we have the same type of schools that were in before, they will continue with the old provision as they are. We are developing a new provision and I hope 3 schools, I will not mention them, that will be enrolled from September 2023.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

On top of these 5?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. I will not mention names.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

No.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Because it will become different types of delivery, we need to allow time to learn what works and what does not work before we enrol it to an extra 8 schools, between 8 and 9 schools in April 2024.

Group Director for Education:

Yes, I think that is wise.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Other schools come in alone and in 2025 there are 5 schools that have delivery and the old model will come into the new model. We will have ongoing provision and increase and hope it will work. The details again which schools, what I am prioritising as a direction of travel for schools, it is the schools with high Jersey Premium, low-income families, is where we have some reports, just look into the lunchboxes and what is coming in the lunchboxes. I think that the first ones that we will do next, like 3, it will be town, urban, suburban schools. We will look where is the high Jersey Premium more need and they will be enrolled first. I just needed to tweak a couple of things before I am going public with a clear plan.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Did you say the plan was due to be published next week?

The Minister for Children and Education:

By then, literally this week, yes. Yes, it is this week, as I promised. I have tried to push but I really needed to iron out a couple of things because it also depends on several providers, so it will be this week.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay, thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you. We just had a couple of written other questions, can we send that you, these written ones?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Absolutely, yes. Also, there are options and information that we need to provide to you following your questions that we did not have to hand.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you very much everybody.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

All right.

[17:02]