

I am a retired Headteacher of a residential school for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions in the UK and have taught at Mont a l'Abbe, Rouge Bouillon and Grainville schools in the Communication disorder provisions. Over the years I have had much contact with the respite services provided by the States especially Aviemore when a holiday scheme was run from that provision. I was away from the island from 2000 to 2008 and was very disappointed on my return to find that little had progressed with respite services even though the demand had risen considerably over that time. Numbers of staff at Eden house are the same as they were in the 90s at Aviemore and there is no provision for full time residential care for children with ASC. Having been inspected on the mainland under the Social Services and Ofsted criteria (my school was rated as Outstanding) I can honestly say that services here would have been shut down if they were in UK. How is it that a wealthy island can care so little for these children and their families?

[Some text redacted]

I must add that the staff from Eden house are brilliant and if it wasn't for them more children would be in meltdown but they can only work with what they are given – a building that is not fit for purpose, a staff team which is far too small for the service required, no full time residential provision (which has been needed for some years), no emergency beds as really not enough beds to meet the current needs at all. No physical interventions (which are required when a child with ASC has gone into meltdown) can be carried out safely in Eden house as stairs and corridors are far too narrow therefore the staff are at risk as are the children if these interventions cannot be carried out as prescribed in training.