

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE  
BY SENATOR J.L. PERCHARD  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 19th OCTOBER 2010**

**Question**

Given that in his letter (page 3) to States Members dated 8th October 2010, the Minister stated that there were **only 1321 children** in fee paying education in Guernsey with their fees levied at between £5,880 and £7,800 a year, and that Jersey has **4,470 children** in fee paying education with fees levied at between £3,180 and £10,575 a year, does he maintain comparisons in relation to fee paying education between Jersey and Guernsey and, if so,

- (i) what percentage of Guernsey children are educated in fee paying schools compared to the percentage of Jersey children?
- (ii) should the proposed 25% increase in Jersey fees be approved and the Guernsey fee paying student percentage number emulated in Jersey, how many children would remain in fee paying schools and how many would leave them?

**Answer**

It is important to emphasise that I am not proposing any fee increase, but a reduction in subsidies.

The comparison with other fee paying schools in Guernsey, the Isle of Man and the UK was given to States members to indicate the effect the current level of subsidy provided by the States has on the fees of the Island's fee paying schools.

I am not suggesting that we should follow the Guernsey model, however the Islands are similar, not only in relation to the constitution and system of government, but also in relation to the quality of life and standard of living.

In response to question (i), I would advise the Senator that 16.1% of Guernsey children are educated in fee paying schools, compared with 34.6% in Jersey.

In response to question (ii), and as stated above, I am not proposing any fee increase. It is the Governing Bodies of the fee paying schools who set fees on an annual basis and, apart from the two fee paying provided schools, I have no control over the level of fees charged to parents whose children attend the other private schools. Even if the proposed reduction in subsidy were to be removed immediately, and the full increase passed on to parents, the level of fees charged by Island schools would still be less than in Guernsey.

I am presently discussing a proposal with the main private schools on the Island, together with our two States fee paying provided schools, to reduce the subsidy provided to those schools by a total of £4.3 million over time. Mindful of the fact that the fee paying Schools are responsible for the children in their care, all governing bodies have been asked to consider how they would manage the reduction in subsidy whilst ensuring that annual fee increases are kept to a minimum, thereby allowing parents time to adjust to the change. This conversation with governing bodies has yet to be concluded, and we are hopeful that a satisfactory outcome can be reached within a relatively short period.

Not all parents wishing to access fee paying schools are allocated places as schools are full. As a result the children are accommodated in the non fee-paying schools. It is therefore likely that if some children transfer into the non fee paying sector, their places will be taken up by others on the waiting lists, as happens at present. As such there will be an ebb and flow effect.

Although it is possible that parents may choose to transfer their children to the non fee paying schools, it is

recognised that the proposed reduction in subsidy is only one of a number of factors that will influence parents when choosing the type of education they wish to provide for their child.

I would like to reiterate that we are working with schools to explore how they would manage the proposed reduction in subsidy whilst ensuring that annual fee increases are kept to a minimum. Provided this can be achieved, it is unlikely that a modest increase in fees will significantly affect the balance between the number of pupils in the fee paying and non fee paying sectors.