

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. MARTIN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 23rd MARCH 2010**

Question

“Will the Minister inform Members of his Department's policy with respect to suspending staff who may be subject of police investigations?”

Was the Minister satisfied that the correct procedure was adopted when an Education, Sports and Culture employee was suspended on 18th August 2009 and, if not, what action did he take to remedy the error?

How often does the Minister consult with his HR Department to ensure that suspended employees are receiving the necessary welfare support, their skill base is maintained and the continuation of their suspension is still justified?”

Answer

The decision to suspend any employee is not taken lightly and is carried out in line with the relevant Disciplinary Procedure as stated in the employee's agreed Terms and Conditions of employment. In all cases serious consideration is first given to alternative employment within the Department for the period of any investigation.

The decision to suspend is taken at Director level and is only authorised in cases where the accusation is one of gross misconduct. Suspension is only considered when :

- it is necessary to carry out a full and thorough investigation.
- a potential risk exists to pupils, other staff or the public.
- it is agreed to be in the individual's best interests.

It is not appropriate for me to discuss any individual cases however as the Minister I can confirm that the correct procedures have been followed in all recent cases and that I have been fully briefed regarding the decision made and I am confident that appropriate action has been taken.

As the States Employment Board assumes the role of employer and the Director of Education, Sport and Culture is responsible for the line management of employees, I am not involved in the day to day operational management of Human Resource matters. These matters are dealt with directly by management with the support of the Human Resources. I do, however, have an expectation that all employees in our Service are treated fairly and supported appropriately.