



Children, Education and Home Affairs

Scrutiny Panel

Quarterly Hearing

Witness: The Minister for Children and Education

Thursday, 8th December 2022

Panel:

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

Deputy B. 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

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour, Assistant Minister for Children and Education

Ms. N. Mulliner, Head of Early Years, Education

Ms. S. Devlin, Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills

[10:02]

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 8th December. I would like to draw everyone's attention to the following. This hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording transcripts will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent. For the purpose of the recording and the transcript, I would be grateful if everyone who speaks could ensure that you state your name and role. If we start with the introductions, the panel members can introduce themselves first, followed by the ministerial team. I am Deputy Catherine Curtis. I am the Chair of the panel.

Deputy B. Porée of St. Helier South (Vice-Chair):

I am Deputy Porée and I am the Vice-Chair of this panel.

Connétable M. Labey of Grouville:

My name is Mark Labey, Connétable of Grouville, and I am 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:

Deputy Louise Doublet, Assistant Minister for Children and Education.

Head of Early Years, Education:

Nicola Mulliner, Head of Early Years at the Education Department.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

I am Susan Devlin, Group Director in Children, Young People, Education and Skills, and I have responsibility for integrated services, which includes C.A.M.H.S. (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) and Early Help, and I am also managing Children's Social Care Services.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Apologies from Connétable Richard Vibert. He is unwell. He is my Assistant Minister with responsibility for children's services, but I would be obviously answering, as Minister, all your questions.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

All right, thank you.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

And apologies from Rob Sainsbury, the Director General of C.Y.P.E.S (Children, Young People, Education and Skills).

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, he is also off sick.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, it is going around the department, I think, is it not?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thanks. First of all we have got some questions to do with children's rights. The first one - so this is referenced in the ministerial priorities - how will you ensure front-facing services in C.Y.P.E.S. are rights-respecting?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Before I am handing to my Assistant Minister, because Deputy Doublet has responsibilities for children's rights, the children's rights is always on top of any decisions that we are making within C.Y.P.E.S. because the voice of the child, their right to play, the right for education, the right for ... every time that we make a decision ... and Louise Doublet, as my Assistant Minister, and before we went through the States Assembly, is always asking: "How does it impact children?" I think you introduced the C.R.I.A. (Children's Rights Impact Assessments) and we looked through the C.R.I.A. through all propositions, so I will hand for more detailed questioning to Louise, but I am happy to continue.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

No, can I just say quickly as well - because people have raised us using acronyms and so on - C.Y.P.E.S. is Children, Young People, Education and Skills.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, thank you. Sorry, I will try to also just stop doing it.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

We are still getting used to the acronyms as well, most definitely. Yes, I totally agree with what the Minister has said, and obviously children's rights is very much part of my ethos as a States Member and I have that brought that into the department. It was being embedded in the department, but I think the fact that it is there in the leadership as well as the senior officers, that culture change is really going forward. So in terms of front-facing services, do you mean apart from schools? Is that what you would like to hear about?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It is written in the ministerial priorities that front-facing services in C.Y.P.E.S. are rights-respecting, so it is just to sort of get an idea of what this means - you have said already why it is a priority - and if there is any sort of definition or standard for what "rights-respecting" means in this way.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. Again, this links back to my Back-Bencher proposition, where I asked for all States employees to receive a copy and to have training, and it is happening. There are kind of 2 levels of training.

There is a mandatory training, which is e-learning, so that is completed online. I think all staff have completed that, I think, have they?

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Pretty much, Assistant Minister, yes.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, so that is going really well, and there is also 150 children social care staff, so that includes residential, care staff, children's social workers. The kind of key staff that are working with vulnerable children day-to-day, they have participated in additional children's rights training and that was facilitated by the previous Children's Commissioner. There is more training scheduled for January next year and that will be for C.A.M.H.S. staff.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, great. That is really about that question, I think.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Just maybe to add about ... you know that we have created these participation standards that were published and just yesterday we received a toolkit that will be distributed across the department. Today, this morning, I sent an email. I would like this toolkit to be distributed to the States Members and also to the other officers across other departments. What is this toolkit? It is giving how we can engage and get the voice of the children, including detailed games, including detailed steps. It is like if you have younger children: "Do you like this? Thumbs up, thumbs down" so you will see really engaging how we can get the voice ...

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Those are all the things that we tested out of the engagement day, where we got all the children from each school to the Radisson and we tried some of these different methods, different active ways and engaging things that they can do to see which ones they kind of preferred and which ones got better information from that, so that has all been fed into the toolkit.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, because that was to do with the next question.

Deputy B. Porée:

Yes, the next question was really about the participation and engagement standards which you ladies have explained already. I would just be asking, will the success of the standards be reviewed, how often and by whom, for instance?

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, so certainly after a year, but I think we are continually trying to assess the effectiveness of the standards. I am leading on that work and I regularly meet with Elaine Walker. Is she Director for ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Associate Director.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Associate Director for Engagement. So you can see the priority that engaging the children has been given. It is really important to us as a department. Elaine is very effective and she takes my feedback and she takes feedback from other people and from children, of course. There is continual reflection, but yes, I did ask that question myself because I think we tried to achieve the completion of the standards within the 100 days. I think that is a good thing, and that was a request of the Chief Minister, was it not, because she also finds that it is important to engage with children, so I wanted to make sure there was an opportunity to reflect and review because it was done within that time.

The Minister for Children and Education:

To add, you know that we are going into the inclusion programme, it is like a big inclusion programme on the agenda, and we decided to test as a full pilot, like not just one-off, but a full pilot. It has started now and will finish in June, all consultation about the embedding of the inclusion using this participation standard, because inclusion, it is within my remit more than this. What we will do by June/July, we will review how it did work and maybe we need to update the toolkit. It is the first time it has been published. It will be piloted specifically on the inclusion policy and with all the feedback we will review and we will update and we will continue to implement.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. We would like to share that with Scrutiny as well. Some of that work started when I was on Scrutiny and I am not sure if that has continued, but the work that we are doing in government, I think it applies to all children, no matter who is consulting them, so we would be happy to kind of ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, thinking about it, I would like to ask my officers to share with you this toolkit.

Deputy B. Porée:

Yes, because I was just going to ask, so rather than maybe review in a year's time, possibly in 6 months. You mentioned June/July.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, it will be June/July, but full will be ... I mean, because June/July review, the outcome will be when we publish it, more or less. Yes, but we will share with you initial one because it just got ready yesterday.

The Connétable of Grouville:

We would be very grateful. If I may move on, I would like to ask a question about the Youth Parliament. I am a huge fan, so I am looking forward to your answer. Your ministerial priorities also reference continuing to develop the work of the Youth Parliament and school councils. Please could you provide some more detail about your plans to support ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Absolutely. First of all, I am not sure if it is today or tomorrow, within the next couple of days. I missed it. The previous Youth Parliament presented 3 reports to us and I have been approached and asked how we would respond to them. It was a discussion around Council of Ministers and the Chief Minister presented this to the States and I signed off last week our response to their recommendations.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, I saw that.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I was not sure if it is already public.

The Connétable of Grouville:

All of them have been.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Basically we worked with officers, considering each recommendation, what it would require and how we would deliver them. The second step, I am sure that you are aware that I am chairing the International Cultural Centre Steering Group and I made clear that representatives from the previous Youth Parliament and current Youth Parliament own the steering group. So we have 5 States Members, 5 lay members, a representative from the Constables, a representative from the Bailiff and 2 youths from previous and from current Youth Parliament. You know that this current Youth Parliament work with inclusion and diversity, one of their working groups, so it is just direct connection, so they will be connected to the officers, to us, working and developing. We have curriculum council meeting, the first one on 9th November, I think it was, and the Youth Parliament

- previous Youth Parliament - presented to us their P.S.H.E. (personal, social, health and economic education) curriculum.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

It is very good.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It was very insightful for people around the table and we are looking how we can incorporate a representative from the Youth Parliament on the curriculum council going forward.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Their work will directly inform the work that we are doing.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, so this is another part, how we are bringing Youth Parliament to our day-to-day work. I think you can talk about the councils, school councils, because you did some.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, I will in a minute, but just to add to the Youth Parliament, so that response that we sent to them, it was initially based on the Scrutiny response template, because I think we wanted to make sure that it was formal enough that they knew it was important to us and that their work was significant. But I did have a look at it with Elaine, who has expertise and engagement, because we wanted to make it a bit more child-friendly because of course engaging with children is not just about listening to them, it is about making sure that when we communicate to them, it is in a way that they can understand and that is appropriate to them. So we did that and I think we want to share that with other Ministers, so that the Minister ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

They accepted it, by the way.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, they accepted it, because it feels accept/reject is really cold, and I think we agree/not agree where we need further work, but we agree with them, because their voice was very clear and valid, but it is how we really communicate. We worked on the language, yes.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, and also with the other Assistant Minister from Home Affairs, we met with one of their campaign groups, the diversity and inclusion group.

[10:15]

Again, that work is being fed in, so obviously a slightly different department, but it is all linked. So with the school councils, they have regular days where they all meet together. I think it is usually at Highlands. I attended that, I think was it last week or the week before ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Two weeks ago probably, yes.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

... and spoke to both groups of children there and it was really good and they said they were really happy that there was a Minister there and that level of engagement. I was there for most of the day. Yes, so we are just trying to get those existing networks that are already there - school council, Youth Parliament - just to boost their voices a bit more and to make sure that, okay, some children are already having a say through those forums, but it is making sure that it is meaningful, that it is received by us and then fed into our work and then they know what we are doing with it, so that is where I am at with that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, they come up with such interesting things and it is really useful, is it not?

Deputy B. Porée:

Yes, absolutely.

The Connétable of Grouville:

It bodes very well for the future elections in this Island, I think, if you engage with the youth in that respect. We are going to see numbers rise.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Let us hope so. This cohort of the Youth Parliament, they have all been great, but just there is so much talent, is there not? It was so inspiring to see them.

The Minister for Children and Education:

What was good, when I request/ask: “So how did you decide who will be elected to the Youth Parliament or not?” and they said: “Basically when we had all these applicants, we felt we will include everyone.” Apparently no one was this year ... they increased the size of the Parliament and it is ...

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, because there is always some that are not there.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Were there any Senators at all?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I assume that when the numbers will go to 100, we will need to, but they said: “Okay, for us, we can work with it and to see how we are building up.”

The Connétable of Grouville:

Excellent.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Great, okay. So I have got a question now, which is to do with accessibility, disability access and so on. Please could you confirm whether any work has been done to assess the accessibility of buildings on the C.Y.P.E.S. estate and have any priority areas been identified?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, I will deal with it. This was my theme when I was Chair of the Public Accounts Committee when we did an estate management review. One of the terms of reference that was important for me, it is about accessibility, so I am definitely keeping this on the top of the agenda through our capital allocations. So during 2022 school summer holidays, we finalised and all primary school estate has been reviewed. The review was done by Liberate Jersey, the Channel Islands’ equality and diversity charity. So at all schools, the audit has been carried out. To date, we need to have our final report by the end of this year. We have a budget. We yesterday discussed our capital project and we do have the budget to address accessibility. What else is important is to explain that also other buildings that the C.Y.P.E.S. Department occupy were audited. With children, we have Bermuda House, we have the Education Department head office, which is in Highlands, Liberate, Liberté professional development centre, Bridge Integrated Centre, Highlands College and Philip Maurant Centre, so all of them were audited. Examples of work that was done in 2022, so Philip Maurant Centre, installation of external access ramp and hand-railing, and we know this is for adult education. The Bridge Integrated Centre, installation of improved L.E.D. (light-emitting diode) lights in La Sente Primary. I am not sure if you visited already La Sente, but if not ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

We saw it when we went to Greenfields, but we did not go there.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, we have La Sente Primary, which is on a different side, and La Sente Secondary, which is next to it, so I think that might be one of the things. It is replacement of all lighting with L.E.D. throughout, the La Sente Primary replacement of existing front entrance door and lobby to disability access, today's standards. Liberté House, replacement of both passenger lifts, incorporate sufficient width door entrances and lift car size and improve to today compliant lift controls. I visited La Sente School a month and a bit ago and they have seen already ...

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

I went this week as well.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. I have seen already drawings because the entrance, they do not have a disability access entrance, so the whole entrance will be redone ...

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

They are prioritising that over other work.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Oh, they are prioritising other work that will have accessibility in 2023 and then other things will be done then. It is definite that we have special location budgets - I think it is around £500,000 - and we will start to progress with the recommendations that we receive.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That sounds really good. It is just I was also thinking about buildings that will be used for ... not normally in the estate, but used for children to access the services, for example, at Eagle House for the drop-in. I know there has been problems with that.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Which one is Eagle House?

The Connétable of Grouville:

Top of Don Road.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, mental health services.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

It is a mental health drop-in that takes place in the building at the bottom, on the bottom corner there.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I have been in there and had a look myself, so the door to the private rooms are too narrow for wheelchair access and so on, so if somebody did go in in a wheelchair, they cannot be seen privately at all.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I will pick up on it. Thank you. I wrote it down.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I am just wondering if when the services do use other buildings, if it is taken into account so that children are not ... sort of do not have access.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. All services, all buildings that I said that were audited, we had these clear suggestions, the widths and the entrances and accessibility and lighting. There is lots of things that we need to comply with. I do not know about Eagle House. I now will pick up on it.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

But we should check. If there is a step, like if we are utilising buildings for one-off or events, if there is a step in the planning stage to check for disability. I think that is a really helpful suggestion. We could ...

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

I wonder if I might just assist here. I think if it is someone that we know and that we were having a planned visit with, we would make sure that we had somewhere suitable. I think the point you raise, Chair, about the building downstairs at Eagle House, when it is being used for a drop-in, that is a bit different because you do not know who is going to drop in, so thank you for raising that. If it is a planned thing, we will obviously plan to make sure that somebody accesses private space, so planned, they could come into Liberté House, for example, if they were in C.A.M.H.S. or in Children's Social Care and we can use the lift there, now that the lift is fixed and overhauled, thankfully.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, that is really good, but of course one thing about drop-ins, it is to help ...

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Absolutely.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

... those people who are sort of on the edge of thinking: "Can I get help? Do I need help?" and so it is really important then as well, is it not?

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Absolutely, yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

So this question is with recent news in the U.K. (United Kingdom) with reference to the death of a young child that was linked to the exposure of moulds. Is there a mechanism in Jersey for identifying children who might be living in poor housing conditions presently?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Okay. You are absolutely right, and I think that we had this discussion at the States ...

Deputy B. Porée:

Sitting, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

... sitting, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The Youth Parliament raised it, did they not, as well?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think the Youth Parliament raised it. We do not have full structure yet in place and we need to separate what is in the power of Children and Education and what is in the power of the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Housing, and I think is cross-department work. So existing system is largely referrals-driven or people self-referral or somebody refer. You know that it was a very clear intention from the Minister for the Environment that will propose to introduce a licensing scheme to regulate all rented dwellings, so the moment that we will have the licensing scheme introduced, it is opening that we will have a system in place to visit and to find this. Saying this, we do have referrals from C.Y.P.E.S. staff. What does it mean? If the teacher does home visits and

finds a place with mould, it will be referred, so I know that we cannot cover, but it is very clear for the staff that this cannot happen and it will be looked after. Basically what I am trying to say, anyone who has concern about poor housing conditions for children can contact the team and Environmental Health. People listening, it is a public hearing, I would call to 445808. Please bring it to our attention. Until the licence will be introduced, which is not in my gift, I will really urge people to ring. The living circumstances are really important for us.

Deputy B. Porée:

When you mentioned Children and Education staff will do home visits, is that Early Years or who are these ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is a variety.

Head of Early Years, Education:

Yes, I can offer some extra information there. Yes, as part of good transition processes for children just starting nursery in our schools and in our private nurseries, a home visit is offered as well, so at that very early years point we can have a good idea and understanding of what those living conditions might be.

Deputy B. Porée:

So it would not be through a rapport with the child, because at that age the child will not be able to identify mould issues in the property, but we will be reliant on the professional who is going to be coming into the property.

Head of Early Years, Education:

I think so, yes. I mean, the idea is to build a relationship with the child and the family and not to sort of go and inspect, but if we have got any concerns whatsoever, particularly linked around the wider issues of poverty as well, those are our ideal opportunities to be able to engage with other services that can support the child and the family.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Of course health visitors would be going into each home. Does everybody get a health visitor?

Head of Early Years, Education:

They could be, yes. The offer is whether they come into a clinic or at home, so there are multiple opportunities, I think, for professionals to sort of see what is going on and to be able to intervene at that earliest opportunity.

Deputy B. Porée:

Yes, I am sure the professionals will help. I suppose this is what strength the professionals will have to make sure the landlords are to make their properties fit for these children to live in, so they will be across on that one, will not they?

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

I think perhaps what we could do is make sure this number that you read out ... and there is an email, and anyone who has concerns, we could send that to the health visiting team perhaps and the Early Years team, could we not, to make sure they know who to contact? Is that something we could commit to doing?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

Presently we do not have any way to kind of manage landlords and what they do to their buildings. On that note, in the 2021 Children and Young People survey, 6 per cent of the children surveyed said that they had black mould in their ceilings or walls at home. As Minister for Children, are you able to do anything to address those issues? When you are aware that there has been obviously reporting of such, how could you, as the Minister, help make sure the properties are fit for purpose for the children of Jersey?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think it is extremely important that the properties are fit for purpose and this is the reason that we are working across the Council of Ministers' table. We will send an environmental officer and we will urge the landlord. We do need to know where it is happening. It is something that the structure ... the current law does allow to send an environmental officer to visit the property. We just need to know which property to visit and we need to identify. This is why it is so important that if somebody visits somebody's home and maybe some person himself or herself is not ready to bring it to attention, we need people currently helping us to find this property and then we can address.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Can I ask a supplemental there?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, sure.

The Connétable of Grouville:

We have had recent experience of this on the committee with 2 properties, both owned by Andium, and we have had to report them, but I have to say their reaction was swift and very, very ...

Deputy B. Porée:

That is good to know.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, very good to know, and I thank them for that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is good to hear.

The Minister for Children and Education:

That is good to know. This is why I say I am really encouraging public, professionals, if you know that it exists, please report it.

The Connétable of Grouville:

The next section is about C.A.M.H.S., the mental health service. In your ministerial response to the Jersey Youth Parliament's closing report on mental health, you referenced a children's mental health facilities working group, looking at the design and build of a new community mental health facility. Please can you provide us with some more information about that group?

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Let me just assist.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, it reminds me that the group is ...

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

So I think that is in relation to coming out with Liberté House and the work with the C.D.T.C. (Child Development and Therapy Centre).

[10:30]

It was part of the hospital programme, which was then put on at the end when ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Now I understand what it is, coming together.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

I think it is what you are referring to, Connétable.

The Minister for Children and Education:

What is really happening, we are looking within the C.Y.P.E.S. to connect between all pockets of service that we have because currently we have children's services working one way, we have youth support, in terms of youth support going the other way, we have C.A.M.H.S. as a separate service. They are all sitting within the C.Y.P.E.S. We have drop-in sessions, yes, on Saturdays. The children or parents can come and visit.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I am not sure enough people know about that. I found out about it and there is a psychologist, is there not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, so we have family hub and young people hub, but it is all not connected, so what we are doing in C.Y.P.E.S. currently, in our department it is like C.Y.P.E.S., one department sitting together. We are bringing those operational matters around to one table and working with the community that we will have, the services, so if the child comes, for example, because the child has been assessed on autism spectrum, the child or parents do not receive a letter saying the parent discharged from C.A.M.H.S. The parent need to have a meeting with C.A.M.H.S. representative, school co-ordinator, inclusion person and basically saying: "This is the diagnosis. The child is performing well at school. For school, this will be the arrangement. For parent support, this is our commissioning where you can get the parent support." If situation is changing and you can see more extreme behaviours at home, because maybe sometimes children behave really well at school and coming back home and it feels ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is very common, is it not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is very common, so parents do not know. So if something changes, this is the address, so what we are not having, we do not have this handling even within our department and connecting between services within the department. Some of the services that can be commissioned, for example, Autism Jersey provide very good parenting support and we work with Autism Jersey for the parenting support. We work with Brighter Futures for the family support, for the carer support, but what is

missing, it is the package around the family and the child, that people know how to connect and how it will work.

The Connétable of Grouville:

More of an overarching, more of a complete ... it is just having had that children's mental health facilities working group, in the ministerial response we were anxious to see if that had been formed, what it was made of, how often they met, that sort of information.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

If I can assist, you will be aware that there is a new government headquarters building being pursued. At one point we thought that C.A.M.H.S. would go into that building to deliver its service, but I suppose what we looked at was best standards around how to deliver services to children who are experiencing mental health difficulties. That kind of government headquarters building is not seen as the most appropriate way to deliver clinical services, so there is a need to ensure that going forward - and once we come out of the current accommodation - that we do have new accommodation for the C.A.M.H.S. service. There has been some work done about what that should look like in terms of scoping, the kind of consultation rooms, the space, involving children in some of that, so it is a work in progress.

The Connétable of Grouville:

You are referring to the therapeutic children's home that has been ...

Deputy B. Porée:

No, it is a different thing.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Different?

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

No, I am referring to the new accommodation for C.A.M.H.S., so for that kind of delivery of services by the psychiatrist, by the nurses, by other practitioners. To deal with, for example, eating disorders you need particular spaces for that for weighing and measuring and so on, so it is about making sure we have an appropriate and child-friendly future accommodation for C.A.M.H.S. that is not in that administrative centre government building, but is in a more appropriate building, so it is a work in progress.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Does that mean this is ...

Deputy B. Porée:

The professionals.

The Connétable of Grouville:

No, there was word for the new therapeutic children's home. Is that a totally different ...

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

That is a different thing, Connétable.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is a different thing.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes. That is what we would like some information on, if that is moving forward, how that is going to work.

The Minister for Children and Education:

We are looking into that because basically a new therapeutic children's home, we need to identify the properties. There are several options on the table, but I do not want to state this house or that house or that house. We will not go into the details, but we have money, we know that we need a therapeutic home and we will come back with this next quarter hearing with more details. Something else that follows on Susan's comments about C.A.M.H.S., because we spoke about the accommodation, another part of government provision for accommodation when the new headquarters will be built, it is also for children's services and meeting with the parents because personally, I completely disagree that it should be in government place because you do not need to meet ... you need child-friendly and this ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, informal.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is too formal. It is not the right place and you do not walk into the government building to meet with parents and social workers and children. We have it now in Liberté House on the ground floor, there are rooms, but obviously we will move from Liberté House and we need to find proper accommodation for this and maybe together.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Just to confirm then, so the planned therapeutic children's home, that is just for looked-after children?

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, and then there is all the separate things we are talking about with the rooms for people to come along to see the psychiatrist for the child?

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes, yes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Excellent. The next question is about again the Youth Parliament. The ministerial response to the Jersey Youth Parliament's closing report on mental health, it is confirmed that C.A.M.H.S. has increased from 21 staff to 56 over the last 12 months. Are you able to provide any further information about the roles that these new staff are undertaking?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is really across ... I will just find the exact numbers. By the way, we have already increased even more. As today, we successfully recruited currently 60 staff already. There are 4 more staff due to be recruited in 2023, including a psychologist, nurse, 2 service managers for early intervention and the neurodevelopment services. We have managed to attract 2 excellent appointees for this role, with significant skills and experience. The posts also have been offered for 2 permanent psychiatrists. We have interviewed further associate specialists on 6th January. We are funding 8 additional posts in 2023. I have funding. Currently we have 60 in place. We need to recruit 4 from the current funding and we have funding for extra additional 18 posts that will be advertised and interviewed. The recruitment is coming across the board from psychiatrist, psychologists, nurses and we also, for example, had the appointment of a quality assurance manager and data officer to focus on improving data, records and performance management. A huge amount of work has been done to improve care path and recording system with additional tools to measure our work. Work was completed with the Child Outcome Research Consortium to develop performance and feedback measures. So it is really across the whole ... I mean, we are talking about a huge increase and I did work ... I am not sure if public are really aware and you are aware about the numbers. C.A.M.H.S., in the first 10 months of this year, received 953 referrals, compared to 695 in 2020, so we are talking an increase. Saying this, because of the recruitment, like even only for the last 8 weeks, we received

270 referrals. Waiting time for autism assessment - and I know that it was really in the press - we have gone less than 3 months, which was ...

Deputy B. Porée:

Compared to?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Compared, it was 6 to 10 months some time before, and you need to understand that in 2019 we had 60 referrals, children that needed to go through the assessment, 60.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Sixty?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Sixty in 2019.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

For autism.

The Minister for Children and Education:

For autism. In 2022, we have 204.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

That is up until the end of last month.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Up until the end of the last month, so from 60, within 2 years we jumped to 104, and because of this engagement and because of the recruitment, it is still maybe not ideal. Obviously we would like to have it less, but taking into consideration increased from 60 to 104 and decreased to less than 3 months in assessment.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

That is a huge improvement within that time.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is a huge improvement within literally a year.

The Connétable of Grouville:

We were going to ask ... I think you have already asked the question, but these are mostly permanent roles, one would assume?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. They are permanent roles. They are full recruitment, embedded. We do have one agency working, but it is the recruitment programme, it is in place.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I was just going to say, I think Deputy Porée had a supplementary she wanted to ask or do you want me to ask it?

Deputy B. Porée:

No, you can ask it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Just the August new staff recruitment, have you been able to get a lot of these posts from within Jersey or have you had to look outside of the Island?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It was mainly outside of the Island. Saying this, like psychologist assistant that we needed, we advertised and we had 40 applicants and we needed just 3, so we have more people on the Island graduating who can go into the training, which is reassuring and we will develop it further.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

The service managers were on-Island, were they not, the 2 service managers?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, and the 2 service managers from on-Island.

Deputy B. Porée:

Has it been a struggle to reconcile the new staff with accommodation in Jersey? Have you been finding that is difficult?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, it is. It is difficult, but we are working on the key workers accommodation and at least within the children's services they were added to the house. We now need to work on the teachers, that teachers would be added to the house. It also obviously depends on which position. The psychiatrist is a consultant position, it is a different type of wages than the admin support.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, absolutely. My next question relates to waiting lists. Because of that increase in the staff numbers, obviously the current waiting lists are 6 to 9 months and we are hoping that will reduce. What is your target waiting time in the future because of the extra staff? What do you think we can get those waiting times down to?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think it really depends on the type of assessment and service that we need, so despite continued high volume of referrals, initial assessment for general non-urgent referrals are being completed faster than before, within 21 days. In 2022, it was 5 weeks; in 2021 it was 4 weeks. So now we are doing it with less than 3 weeks and if it can increase it for 2 weeks. I think we had progress, because from 5 weeks within a year and a half going down to 3 weeks. Something that people are not aware, and this is also I think our fault, that is something that we need to work more, we have family hub and anyone can be assessed within I think 3 days now, so if you have first concerns, there is almost instant access to professional assessment within the family hub.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

It is like a pre-assessment, is it not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is like a pre-assess, like a triage.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes. Minister, just a reminder, C.A.M.H.S. are now part of the Children and Families Hub, so we have a C.A.M.H.S. worker at the very front door involved in triage, so they are picking things up every single day and some things will go straight into specialist C.A.M.H.S., some things will stay in the Early Help element of that and we are building up that early intervention service.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Just a quick question. Can people go straight to the family hub?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Where is this? Just to say where people can go.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

So people can access it online, by phone calls.

[10:45]

The hub itself is based in Liberté House, so we generally have phone calls and email referrals in.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

But there is that drop-in on a Saturday, is there not, with the psychiatrist?

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

That is to the hub. That is the mental wellbeing hub, yes, but anybody can go, so people can self-refer, so concerned parents, children themselves. We have got the full range of professionals.

The Minister for Children and Education:

This is what we are saying, maybe if it is going through the triage, through the family hub and the member of C.A.M.H.S. is there, if it is something urgent, it will be addressed immediately. People do not need to wait for 3 weeks, so help is there, the provision is there and ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

That is our primary concern.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Exactly.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Excellent.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I did not know about this as well, how it is accessible, before I became the Minister, so this is the knowledge that we need to get out there.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I also have a supplementary question about the transition process. We understand that there have been issues about the transition process for people from C.A.M.H.S. to adult mental health services. Is there now a service level agreement in place between those 2 organisations?

The Minister for Children and Education:

So first of all, between C.A.M.H.S. and adult mental health, they now have monthly meetings, so this is something that is consistently happening. All young people open to C.A.M.H.S., when they are approaching 17½, so it is 6 months before they are 18, are discussed at this meeting with transition plans agreed, so per child there is a transition plan. If it feels it is too early ... so we have 39 - I checked yesterday - 39 young people who reach 18, but they are still with ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

My next question, 39 steps there.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Thirty-nine, so there are some ... because it is really important to make sure that it is all ready, that they will not fall in between services, which I remember I was helping last previous term when it happened. C.A.M.H.S. continue to support, like I said, a number of the people and where it is clinically important because there is a relationship. This relationship is really between therapists and the young person and will continue.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Because we were obviously concerned about the transitions between the 2, but ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. At least we do have now from 6 months before they are 18 ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

You have a plan.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I have a plan, which is agreed between 2 services.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you, Minister. Finally from me, you will be glad to hear, you published priorities reference the new data and recording systems that would be used to monitor performance standards and produce an annual report in 2023. Please can you provide the panel with an update about these systems; that is the new data and recording systems?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. This is where I started. I probably touched on it a bit when I said it in 20 to appoint a quality assurance manager and data officer.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

The work was completed. We developed these performance measures. This will be used as part of ... this followed the U.K.: "Children and Young People Improving Access to Psychological Therapists model of treatment", I am reading: "and Child Outcome Research Consortium." The system is in place, the person is in place and we would receive clarity on how this would work. Basically current C.A.M.H.S.'s measures are children global assessment scheme that will be used as a pre and post-measure. This will be completed by the practitioner delivering the intervention and it will be recorded, so what has happened pre and what has happened after. Current review, which will be completed by the duty practitioner and by the C.A.M.H.S. practitioner involved in the intervention, so when they come in because they attend the first practitioner who assessed before it is going into full involvement process. Service user feedback, this is based on the experience of service questionnaire and will again feed back on C.A.M.H.S.'s input from children, young people, their families as a post-measure, so we have a feedback form and other measures on a case-by-case basis can be used when there is a clinical need that requires further assessment. This is kind of 4 things.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Quite a level. The only final question on this topic is obviously this officer will be working towards a report. When will that be released in 2023 or have you an update for us?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think it will be working through the year and I will work with the officer. I think that I would like to see it mid ...

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

I think we will have the first one in draft shape for about the end of January, beginning of February, Minister.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you very much.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

We are in the compilation of that just now.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you. That is my final question on C.A.M.H.S.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, I have a question which is still about C.A.M.H.S. This has been brought to our attention quite a lot in the panel and it is about information really, so what information was provided to children and families about what to expect before, during and after an assessment appointment at C.A.M.H.S.?

The Minister for Children and Education:

The C.A.M.H.S. initial assessment provides the review of presenting issues, a formulation and intervention plan agreed with the young person and the family. The moment that the plan is agreed the C.A.M.H.S. initial assessment provides this review, from what I understand. It is currently happening very promptly post-referral. For some young people an additional C.A.M.H.S. practitioner may be allocated, such as psychiatrist, psychologist, therapist or a nurse, depending on what input would be helpful. Some young people receive diagnostic assessments. Some young people will receive continued input from the nurse completing the initial assessment in the way of brief intervention. At times other services will be involved in any support plan but, as I referenced earlier, what I feel really is missing when C.Y.P.E.S. are doing everything well within the C.Y.P.E.S., but at the moment that C.Y.P.E.S. concluded, how we are making clear to the parents and young people and children what is next and if there is a problem where to go. This is how I would like to see a person who basically will be a co-ordinator. It is not necessary we need a person from C.A.M.H.S., it can be somebody from schools. We are looking into this child and family-centred approach from all services.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes, team around the child.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, team around the child.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

We need a worker who takes on a co-ordinating role; that is part of the practice model that we have in place.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, what we have heard has been missing is very general information as well, so that if someone has arranged to get an appointment, for example, for an autism assessment, they have a letter with an appointment time but nothing about what the process will be.

The Connétable of Grouville:

What to expect.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I got you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

About just really general ... almost like if you are going to have an x-ray, a sort of general leaflet about what to expect.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, you get a leaflet, do you not?

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, it would just be helpful to them.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I would like to hear from Sue because I do not know about this particular thing.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

I think it is helpful to say that that is partly why we have redesigned our pathway around particularly the neurodevelopmental pathway, so I think ...

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Is that autism and A.D.H.D. (attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder)?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, A.D.H.D.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

A.D.H.D. and other different neuro-diversion issues. I think that process was quite difficult. There was a long waiting list. The assessment was not clear. Some of the investment that the Minister referred to at the beginning of this element is about the new neurodevelopmental pathway, working with colleagues in Health and Community Services, so therapists, O.T. (occupational therapist), physiotherapist. We are working on and we have been doing this with children and families as well,

so that we have a much better, clearer situation around: “Here is the information about what the assessment will be.”

The Connétable of Grouville:

That is important.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

“Here is what some support could be, here is who you will meet, here is how long it will take, here is what you will get at the end” because we have also been aware that for some people getting that diagnosis is really important and the label is seen as slightly an access or a golden ticket to services. We are very clear that for some children they may not get a diagnosis, but there may be some presenting issues or behaviours that are still needing support. We want to make sure that the diagnostic element links with the support element and that people get good, clear, plain English information about that. You do not want people apprehensive, thinking: “What is going to happen when I go here? How do I help my child prepare?” We know that that has been something that has needed improvement and we expect to see quite significant improvements in people’s experience of that process and a much better process.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Obviously Susan is Group Director from integrated services and maybe between you and Darren, where once these papers will be finalised to share with the Scrutiny to see, so for your feedback.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Absolutely, absolutely, or even a briefing, if that would be helpful.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Because it obviously can be quite a daunting process for young people. It would be nice to have a little bit of background.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Also, after completing an assessment, if that person does not need any particular support from the services, maybe that could still be useful for them to have a little information sheet about: “These are organisations which may be of interest to you” so that they do not feel completely left on their own with it.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, and it is appropriate for A.D.H.D. families I think now, things like that ...

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

I think the Children and Families Hub is trying to be a hub for all that kind of information so that people can go and get service directories and all those contacts. People should be able to access on the website information about those things ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

But I think it is different ...

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

... and we of course want to have people signposted. I beg your pardon, Minister.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, but I think what Catherine is saying - and I completely agree and this is what I mentioned a moment ago - that when they have finished engagement it is to have this closure conversation with handed papers, not just given to you to go online and I think it is about ...

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

No, I think that is right, it is a step down.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It could be quite a general thing as well, but it is in recognition of the process they have just been through. Okay. It is me now as well, but this is moving on to children's services more generally. My next question is about Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Is there any specific support available for children with a diagnosis of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder?

The Minister for Children and Education:

First of all, it is important to really clarify that the Foetal Alcohol Disorder is sitting with the Minister for Health and Social Services at the first instance and I need to work with her. I have learned that since I have been elected. I had engagements. I have checked with my inclusion team and the head of La Sente Primary and Secondary there. She has extensive experience. Before she came to Jersey she worked and she knows how to support and work with the children, including 2 senior staff within her teams that have extensive experience working with children and young people with this disorder. This is the reason that they brought the training from C.A.M.H.S. to La Sente Secondary at the beginning in September to give all staff understanding. This is on our part, but I think the recognition needs to be much earlier and much earlier it should be done through the health

visits, which is health-related. We need to prepare our staff to work and this is what we are doing and the Health Department needs to recognise in an earlier time. We know that there is no pathway really suspected for Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and this is concerned in light of identifying high rates of alcohol use in the pregnancy on the Island and this is how it should start there. The new neurodevelopment service, which will be launched in 2023, screening for F.A.S.D. (Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) would be included. We will include it in our service and it will be there, a paediatrician in the service to consider this and other genetic and physical aspects.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

We have had this raised with us by more than one person as well and it just seems like that there needs to be some sort of strategy, something more to find about F.A.S.D. and that the children who have this at the moment are perhaps not getting the treatment that they need, either in school or more generally.

[11:00]

The Minister for Children and Education:

Since we restructured our special education and mental health at La Sente, we have a development of therapeutic provision, including specialist staff, in the school. From the school perspective, education perspective, inclusion perspective, there are professionals who worked and trained and they are providing special tailor-made plans. Also, because we recognise the importance of this from 2023 to a multidisciplinary team working in neurodevelopment service together to do the screening, including a paediatrician, including a psychologist, including the whole team will be rated if we will recognise it, we will deal with it. What needs to be done ... and this is like something that we really need to work with the Health Department because we can assume if it is high-level alcohol consumed during the pregnancy we will see this coming.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, and from the point of view of education as well, if we are thinking of the principal inclusion, solely having that expertise at La Sente presumably would not be a very inclusive way to do it because it might be that some children with this condition would be able to be at just the usual schools, if we are thinking about inclusion more generally.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think it is important to see how we are moving towards the inclusion and that we have expertise in La Sente, it does not mean that the head teacher will not contribute to the whole inclusion team. Because the inclusion team working with ... our main goal is to have children in the mainstream education, not to exclude, it is to include them. Because it is multidisciplinary work they will work

with the special education needs co-ordinator and see if it is possible to arrange. As we are increasing funding to inclusion, we might have more staff who will be able to provide what is needed in the mainstream, but currently we do not have it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It could be something to work towards, having children supported in mainstream schools.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Because then the whole idea about the inclusion it is to bring children who are excluded, for whatever reason, if it is F.A.S.D. or it is anxiety, from the mainstream education and bring children back to the mainstream education, regardless of their condition to provide the support in.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Going on to a slightly different subject now about social workers, are social workers for the children's service permitted to work remotely from outside of Jersey?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Not now. We have 2 social workers that work with children that are on the Island because we do have placement on the Island and we needed somebody that ... even though the children are of the Island they are still our children, we have still full responsibilities and we need to make sure that they have full ... somebody will reassure that everything is provided and they still can connect it. But all our social workers are expected to work on the Island. I know where the question is coming from because during the pandemic it was wide open, for various reasons. This is not the case now and it is not considered acceptable going forward, unless you have very specific needs to a specific child who is of the Island and we need to address it for that particular child, but not as an option who is working on the Island and working with the children on the Island. All social workers need to be here.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The next part of my question is also somebody who might be based in the Island but working remotely, so does this happen much with social workers where if they are working from home, are they not impacted and they are not having face-to-face meetings with a child? That is happening then.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, maybe if it is some COVID or mental health-related, but it is not something ... if you know, please share with us because it is not the practice that it should be.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Staff are expected to be working from the office. There may be times where somebody will work from home because they are preparing a big report and it is about getting your head down and getting your report written. Staff are expected to work from the office.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I have got another question, which is very much part of what you may have answered already, but what are the requirements or best practice guidance in relation to face-to-face working for social workers and children's services? Is it written down - and I believe there has to be a certain amount of face-to-face meetings and so on - and that is adhered to?

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes. Minister, may I ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, sure, please, because you are running operations and I really need to ...

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Social work is very much a relationship-based profession. For me - and I am very clear about that as a professional social worker and that is my trade - there is nothing that beats face-to-face contact. During COVID of course we had to adjust working practices; essentially we are now back in the norm. Best practice would be that people see people, they build relationships. That is how you develop the best chances of support and intervention. There are standards about levels of contact and we expect people to see children who may be subject to a child protection plan once a fortnight. Looked-after children, we would expect to see that 6-weekly. I personally think that should be much more; you have got to make that connection. We have a performance system and we are able to check that, we get daily reports and we have a monthly performance meeting in the service. We are very clear if there are issues about children not being seen. But we have seen a significant improvement in those rates, so we are very clear about the importance of children being seen physically by someone.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is reassuring, because it had been brought to our attention about the recent case in the family courts, where a social worker was outside of the Island for 8 months while they were supervising a child in Jersey, but what you have said is that this is not happening.

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

That is not acceptable. It is very clear, I am quite explicit with staff and staff know the expectation. Some staff of course may apply for consent to work flexibly in the way that anyone in the government can and there is a procedure for that, so that will go through a formal process, but that is not a number of months off the Island, absolutely not.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think you might be referring to something that happened in 2019, 2020. We knew that it happened, but if it is something that you are aware that it is happening now, I would like to know. I mean, we are not discussing private cases in the public hearing, but offline, please bring to my attention because this practice is not acceptable, not to me and not to Susan.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So you could confirm there is no current cases where the social workers are working from a base outside of Jersey while supervising a child in Jersey?

Group Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes, I can confirm that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is great, okay. That is fine, I think, for my questions on that matter.

Deputy B. Porée:

My question now. The panel understands that a site workforce oversight group was established in September 2022. What are the initial issues that group will be focusing on?

The Minister for Children and Education:

We have 2 big recruitment challenges, one within the education space and one within social workers, children's service space. The group started by piloting a new way of working with the education space and this is how well education and children mix, it is very difficult to separate education from children. I mean, just recently, I think probably last week, I have been told that we are recruiting the teacher assistants (T.A.s) and we did have a successful response from the first steps and apparently 11 - or 15 maybe already this week - posts were secured. It is very detailed work going forward. There is other ... this programme will continue over the 3 or 4 months and we need to see how we are establishing the H.R. (human resources) professionals for the education, because the education came first, as we had schools running and resignations and we need to have a teacher in front of the class. The social worker will start to work from January because it is really detailed work by the delivery unit in newly created Cabinet Office, so in January that it will be a project focused on improving the recruitment outcome across the government. Quick wins which have already been,

for example, we are looking into this system that you do not need to do 3 paperwork, you can do just curriculum vitae (C.V.), instead of C.V., 500 words and another letter, so we are kind of making it easier for people to do the first step. It is the delivery unit that is bringing people from our department and from People Hub, so it is tailor-made, child professionals that are working with specific focus. A pilot team have been set up to help hiring managers and provide better candidate management experience to improve the success, because to be finding the way from the government, from the application to when you have been signed now, it is very difficult. After piloting at schools that we started now, from January we start to pilot more around social worker recruitment. Also we need to update social work microsite with enhanced compare and narrative consistent as “extraordinary every day” branding based in 2023 of quarter 1, so there is a big programme in place. What I am really grateful for the Council of Ministers that education and social work and children were put as a priority. We had the first one on this new scheme of recruiting.

Deputy B. Porée:

I was going to ask you a bit about the membership of that oversight group. You obviously mentioned child professionals. Any other sort of group? Say, for instance, political representatives and that ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, we are always involved there, so obviously it is direct communication with myself, with the Chief Minister, with top officers and even they are not sitting all the time there. Like we had discussion about teaching assistants this week and ...

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

We get updates at the team meeting, do we not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

We have got team meetings, the Ministers will get full updates, but even more than updates I had a conversation with the Chief Minister, the Chief Minister had gone to the policy officer, we have gone to the delivery unit and it is something in progress that was raised through engagement direct with the teaching assistants or somebody that had teachers bring it to me. I feel like I have a direct line for the people who are leading this campaign within. I hope we will see the changes, but when you have this ... we found the department with 50 per cent of agency staff and social workers; to turn it really around you need time. It will not be within 4 weeks or even a year, it will take time.

Deputy B. Porée:

Thank you. After this hearing, would you feel comfortable to share a copy of the group’s terms of reference with our panel?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Okay. Yes, I will.

Deputy B. Porée:

Yes, if you are okay with that, thank you.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Sure.

Deputy B. Porée:

The panel understands that there is a recruitment review being undertaken by the delivery unit within ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

This is what I talked, yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

Sorry, okay. Are you happy with that? Yes, okay. With regards to Greenfields, one of the areas identified for improvement on the last inspection report from the Jersey Care Commission was in relation to building work to improve the environments to make it more homely. The Care Commissioner reported that: "It is imperative that the building works and refurbishments are completed as soon as possible." Please could you confirm whether funding will be provided to undertake those works?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, we have funding for this. Yes, and it is in the Government Plan and it was in the previous Government Plan and we continue to work on it.

[11:15]

Deputy B. Porée:

Thank you. Has any other progress been made with the area identified for improvements by the Jersey Care Commission?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, absolutely. First of all, we had extensive refurbishment, repairs and upgrades in 2022. We included a visitors' room, which was changed, admission and welcome room and also the classroom going through the refurbishment. Any damage that has been included in the windows and the

appearance of the courtyard, windows were repaired, we have proper windows and the courtyard. The football area has been cleaned and the lines renewed. The courtyard will get further attention in spring 2023 and also we are waiting for homely furniture for the common area to be delivered. It has been ordered but it does take time to deliver. Unfortunately now we are all aware about the delivery challenges, but it has been ordered, it is on the way and I hope it will be delivered very quickly. Also we had improvement of the new floor in that junction. It was also raised about the education, so we have the classrooms that were refurbished, we have teachers who are coming in. We have also virtual school, what we call older children who look after, that they have their own plans. It is not always the children and young people would engage with everything that we would like them to learn, but we need to find what their interests are and through this to basically to hook on something that they are happy, and if it is art and through art, start to engage with other things in education. It can be cooking and games and some skills, so we really need to find where on what they can progress and be interested in.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Give them that hook.

The Minister for Children and Education:

To find this hook and it is because ... and we have heard about that somebody can be interested in cooking or in paintings or in sports and through there you can get all the other stuff in. The staff would be trained in Maybo, so basically we have planned training. Sorry, I have learned about this Maybo as well, so there is ...

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

It is de-escalation ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

De-escalation of the behaviour and one of the Care Commission's recommendations is that the staff will be provided with this training to manage challenging behaviours.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

They get an extra layer, do they not, of training?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

There is like the standard one that you might get in schools ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Basically what the Care Commission said: “The registered provider must review and firmly apply it relating to the de-escalation and physical intervention model to include training provided to all staff in respect of managing challenging behaviour.” This was the recommendation. After completing research into secure homes providers in the U.K. and exploring alternative prevention and management of violence and aggression models, no model basically was identified than the current model that we use, which is better that it is most important that they know how to de-escalate and manage challenging behaviours. They did have training this year and they have another training planned for January and February into March. This will include train the trainer training, which aims to have one member of staff fully competent to deliver Maybo training. If a person that we needed to get the skills in, we will train a member of staff who will be able to train staff going forward.

Deputy B. Porée:

Could you just spell Maybo for me?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is M-A-Y-B-O and I do not think it is any ... I tried to find it online as well, if it is any ...

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

If it is an acronym, no.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, no, it is just a name. I thought it was an acronym, but it was not.

Deputy B. Porée:

Thank you, Minister.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

We have a question about fostering and adoption and then a few questions about the early years ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Bear in mind because we need to be at 12.00 p.m. at the Centrepoint.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so just a short question then about fostering and adoption.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Sure.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

What support is available to foster carers with regards to housing requirements? Because I know this is a difficulty.

The Minister for Children and Education:

We know that it is a difficulty and this is how we work together with the Minister for Housing and Communities and if somebody would be able to be trained and happy to get a child in, but they do not have sufficient accommodation, this needs to be resolved on the ministerial level to provide the necessary housing.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Would that be a possibility?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. No, there is a possibility that is there because we are very clear, we want to keep children on the Island. We need the best place after home, after being with the family, family is not sufficient and second best is to be with foster families. If something will make it or break it to become a foster family or not, it is the accommodation, it is our duty to arrange it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

If someone is interested in being a foster parent ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Absolutely.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

... but they think maybe they have only got a lease that has lasted a year or something and it is not suitable, they could come and speak to the team?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. Also we provide furniture, for example, if somebody has a home but they feel like they do not ... how it will be to arrange the room, so anything for this child would require from a bed to pillows to everything will be provided by us.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, that is great. I think the next question from me, I am not sure we move on to early years ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

I think that has pretty much been answered, has it not?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes. Could we move on to our early years questions?

Deputy B. Porée:

This one is more specifically to Deputy Doublet. In the quarterly hearing on 20th October 2022 you, Deputy, advised the panel that a pilot scheme to establish integrated development reviews for children at age 3 was underway and would be completed by mid-November. Please could you provide an update on that work, if you have got any?

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Sure. Yes, 3 settings have completed, has taken part in the pilots. We have had d’Auvergne School, Centrepont and Busy Bees Nursery and so 50 children have been through that pilot. There will be lessons learnt and I have asked for that to be reported to me in early January and then it will then be discussed among all the stakeholders. I think perhaps Nicola might have more information on who the stakeholders are, if you wanted to ...

Head of Early Years, Education:

Yes, happy to follow up, yes. As Deputy Doublet said, it has been a pilot scheme to look at how effective that is. It is between educational professionals, parents and health visitors. It happens onsite, so there is going to be a survey of practitioners and a survey of all parents that were able to take part. I am assured that it was extremely high take-up of parents and when they could not access an appointment at that time, schools and settings were very accommodating to enable more parents to have the opportunity. I believe it is going really successfully. There has been opportunities for early intervention, referrals to speech and language, considered safeguarding issues. I think the feedback and evaluation process that we will go through and feed back to Deputy Doublet in the first instance, it would be really valuable then to see how we can look to roll that out sort of from a universal level from these pilot lessons.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

The questions that I have been asking, because this was already in train when I came into post, for me I want to know is the 3-year one that we are piloting, together with the 2-year check that is already in place, those 2 points in a child’s life, are they the best times for us to be making contact with the child? I have asked for evidence to be looked at as to whether those 2 are the best points because it might be if we are doing a 3-year check, 18 months might perhaps be a better time and

then it is kind of an equal level. That is the point of view I am taking as well and I also want to make sure that if we are implementing a new check that it is accessible to parents, that the parents can take it up and that it is not just a box-ticking exercise. Because I am very cautious about anything that is just about measuring children and I do not want parents to feel like they are being judged. If we do go ahead with it and roll it out universally, my ethos is that it would be very much a supportive process and I want to implement additional things alongside it. One of my other responsibilities is libraries, so I am in discussion with the chief librarian about additional book-start resources that we could perhaps get some funding to give books to families at that point. It is very much for me not just about a tick-box check, but it is about Government saying: "Look, we are here for you and these are the resources that we have got that we can help you with. This is what we can give you."

Deputy B. Porée:

That would be really nice if you could keep us further down the line updated with your progress. Thank you.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Happy to, yes, and happy to take ideas if you have any ideas on improving it.

Head of Early Years, Education:

Can I just add one small point, that children were involved as well? Going right back to the beginning of children's rights and how the voice of the child is heard, even in early years I am not surprised any children have a lot to say about how they feel about the situation and the process and we will be looking to collate that as well just to see how children felt about being part of that triangulated, 3-way conversation when their parents and the childcare worker are in the room.

Deputy B. Porée:

Very good, thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is good, yes. Still on the same subject, early years, at the last quarterly hearing Deputy Doublet advised that nurseries and early year settings were struggling to recruit staff. What can the Government do to support that essential infrastructure?

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, we have very much heard that message from the private nursery sector. We have set up regular meetings with J.E.Y.A. (Jersey Early Years Association). I will meet them at ... you were with me, were you not? Was it all 3 of us?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, all 3 of us.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

All 3 Ministers met with J.E.Y.A. because it is so important, so not just me as the Early Years responsibility. We have also set up officer meetings so that our officers are in regular contact with J.E.Y.A. It is being prioritised and really listening to them about what they need and how they think we can help them. I think that is not settled yet as to exactly how they ... I think there is not complete agreement about what they want for help.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think there is an ongoing conversation. I know the U.K. are changing their ratio and their status in the early years and the nurseries. It is about qualifications and what type of qualifications would be required. What does it mean about the number of children? There is much complexity and I think we need to also understand how much in private nurseries when they work as a private business and the oversight and accountability of the private business about terms of employment because we can see differences between different nurseries as well.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, and for me I want to make sure that the quality remains high in nurseries because we have got some fantastic nurseries where the quality is really high. I think changing the ratio so that there are more children per staff member, I am not really in favour of that because I think it is ... yes, I know it is being talked about in the U.K. but that is not something that I want to do, really. In terms of the qualifications, the level 3, we are really trying to get more level 3 qualified staff, which is that kind of quality of staff members in there and also current staff, providing them with additional C.P.D. (continuing professional development) opportunities because I think what staff want when they are in a role is they want to be able to progress and develop their skills. The course at Highlands is free now, is it not, the level 3? There is no charge for that.

Head of Early Years, Education:

No, it is being funded. Do you mind if I ...

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Go ahead, yes.

Head of Early Years, Education:

There is a fortnightly workforce meeting with officers and representatives from the private nurseries, J.E.Y.A., to maintain those ongoing relationships in terms of how we can mitigate and support them

through this at this challenging time. Yes, we have worked with Skills Jersey, so through the Trackers apprenticeship programme; it is funded. I am just looking at the numbers now. We have got 29 starting in January and then another 23 starting the following year. People have worked so, so hard to be supportive and co-operative and have listened. Where there are barriers we have been able to overcome them to get these level 2 practitioners quicker, quicker ... that's another word, more swiftly ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Let me write that down.

Head of Early Years, Education:

... in the Early Years you see, so yes, we are still learning.

The Minister for Children and Education:

We really want to do it quickly, but swiftly.

Head of Early Years, Education:

Yes, it is, so more quickly and swiftly into that pipeline so we get those more qualified. As Deputy Doublet said, that quality is maintained within those settings. It is a really positive move that we have got all these level 2s moving into the systems.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, and it is about trying to think about creative ways to solve this problem because it is a problem across many sectors. But childcare is so essential, it is so important and we want to make sure that these private businesses are able to succeed and provide that essential support to families. Yes, it is trying to find creative ...

Head of Early Years, Education:

Retention is key, so for young people coming into the profession they see it as a career pathway. They can see that their progression is valued, so we want to get more students and practitioners through from level 2 to level 3. We want to keep them because it is quite a challenging role, so to try and reward them through additional C.P.D. I think is really important.

[11:30]

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, and I am thinking again about one of the recommendations, which it was after the hearing where you were asking me, Chair, about the university, the graduate workforce, because I had

almost put that to one side thinking we must get the level 3 problem sorted, but having reflected on that I think it is something that we can work on alongside. This is following nursery visits as well, I went to visit some nurseries over the last couple of weeks and spoke to staff and managers and I think it is really important to do that, as the Minister has been visiting schools, so that we can get that real understanding of what it is like in the nursery. I have asked to speak to officers about that, so we will be reflecting on that in our next meeting; we have fortnightly meetings. Yes, so we will update you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The last question, please could you confirm whether the Youth Service has a statutory status? What proportion of Jersey Youth Service is funded by Government?

The Minister for Children and Education:

There is 2 things. First of all, we do not have statutory status and I think it is even in my manifesto and we have a discussion if it needs to be statutory. I need to speak with the Comité des Connétables. My personal view it should be statutory, but there is a history that I am not ... we need to have this conversation. The Jersey Youth Service currently, Government provided £1,119,000 a year and receives an additional £253,550 from 11 supporting parishes. These are the numbers currently, plus there needs to be a discussion because I can provide you the differences in the numbers. Some parishes put more, some parishes put less, some parishes provide space, some parishes because they have their own youth club facilities which are built by the parish and it belongs to the parish. Some places paying rent by the Government, some places pay rent by the parishes. The system is so complex, but the numbers are the numbers.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right, so something maybe to look into.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Absolutely. I am not sure that one of my first propositions for the amendment for the Government Plan it is to bring twice I have done with the Youth Service, to make sure that the Government is taking responsibility. I do believe Government is taking responsibilities. We do have discussions and some disagreements with the Constables. I would like to have parishes' contributions. I think our parishes are an important part of it. We need to find the model when the core services formats are provided by the Government and support of extra, so it is kind of it will be fair between all parishes because I do not feel it is fair between the parishes. I see the numbers, some of the parishes give 38 per cent and some of the parishes give 50 per cent and some of them ...

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Very different running costs though, is it not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is very different in running costs and some of the parishes give just 6 per cent.

Deputy B. Porée:

It would be interesting to see the figures between the rural parishes and the town parishes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is also very, very different because, for example, in St. Helier ... no, we have St. Helier and St. Helier is subsidising, we have 3 youth clubs running at the same time, compared to country parishes when it is run.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Grand Vaux is on the border, is it not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Grand Vaux is in St. Saviour but it is St. Saviour, so it is on the border. Move on Café, it is used by all parishes because Move on Café, it is by the station, it is open to all parishes and children from all parishes coming in.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

It has got the highest running cost.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Has the highest running cost and St. Helier is the only one that is contributing for the rent, okay, but even though that it is open for everyone ... and this was my fight in the Assembly once. We need to do the work.

Deputy B. Porée:

The Chair said, yes, we could look into that ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, 100 per cent, I am not letting it go, we need to look. To be honest, if Scrutiny wants to help with it I would be really welcoming Scrutiny reviewing that point, especially ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

You have got a Constable sitting right here.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Especially you have a Connétable in sight.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Exactly what I do.

Deputy B. Porée:

Would you please do a review for us?

The Connétable of Grouville:

It is just that the relationship is a little confusing and I think it would be ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is really confusing.

The Connétable of Grouville:

... nice to have a statutory system that we could say concrete: "That is what you do, that is what we look to do" and it would be nice.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I cannot agree more and this is the reason for the 3 years that I was as a Back-Bencher, I tried to bring it in. It was not easy and now it is here, but this is how the big engage. What is happening with the Youth Service, there is some stuff that is more urgent for me than to start to do this review and I need to find a way how I start the review. We do have also some challenges with recruitment. Also we are putting training and progression because we would like some of them getting degrees through their work. We need to upgrade 3 at least youth clubs, that we have money in the Government Plan in the budget to make sure that they are up to more than standards. We are also creating a targeted youth support, so there are children who have difficulties at school, difficult behaviours. We found that they engage much quicker with the youth worker than with their parents and social workers. There is a big piece of work going into intensive use of support. It is not the time. Saying it is really important, I need to find the time. Thank you for bringing it again to my attention through this public hearing and let us see how we work together, because the direction of travel for me was clear before I was the Minister but this is how we work with the parishes and each parish has their own views.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Surely not.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Maybe the Comité des Connétables can come first with some suggestions and agreement between Constables before ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Good luck with that.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is not the time. I think somewhere, but yes, I think that we agree on the principle that some consistency is required.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, it needs ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes. Sorry, Chair, but I mean, from our point of view we find it an invaluable service to the children of Gorey and all over the parish and we are absolutely convinced the service has incredibly high attendance rates, that we are keeping those kids on the straight and narrow and that is the very basic terminology I will use. But it is absolutely true and we have seen a marked difference, the Honorary Police have seen a marked difference.

Deputy B. Porée:

Fourteen per cent out of 50 per cent. No, 14.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, but one of my associations also gives a large sum as well.

Deputy B. Porée:

Just checking the numbers.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I sign the cheques.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. I must say ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

I can leave this with the Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

If there is anything else anyone wants to say, we are finished, we are done, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Thank you very much.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you very much, everyone.

[11:38]