

**Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel
Scrutiny Review of the Proposed Government Plan 2023-26
November 2022**

1. The NASUWT welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Government Plan 2023-26.
2. The NASUWT - The Teachers' Union - represents teachers and headteachers in Jersey.

GENERAL COMMENTS

3. The NASUWT welcomes the significant additional investment that has been made in the education service in recent years. This goes a long way to demonstrate the value the Government rightly places on education.
4. That said, the Government also needs to recognise that additional funding for resources and infrastructure, though very welcome, can only go so far in improving standards.
5. Put simply, if there are insufficient teachers in the system, additional resources and infrastructure will count for very little. There is plentiful research evidence which shows the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers.

6. Jersey is in the midst of a recruitment and retention crisis, and without matching investment in the workforce, it is unlikely that additional investment in the system will reach its full potential.
7. It should be noted that due to the short time available to provide comments, the NASUWT's comments are limited to the sections specifically highlighted in the Panel's letter dated 9 November.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Education Reform – Inclusion Review – p.50 of R.146/2022:

8. The restructure and additional investment in special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) provision in Jersey are extremely welcome.
9. The plans that have been unveiled to date by the Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES) Department are ambitious and, if realised, should place Jersey in a very good place in terms of SEND provision.
10. In particular, the expansion of Additional Resource Centres should provide much-needed extra SEND provision capacity.
11. The success of the proposals will, however, hinge on the ability of CYPES to recruit additional SEND teachers and support staff, which, as noted above, may well be challenging.

Demographics and Needs Assessments – p. 51 of R.146/2022:

12. This section appears to be comprehensive in its consideration of the demographics of the island, including the likelihood of decreased numbers of pupils attending fee-paying schools as the cost of living crisis grows.

Jersey Premium – Virtual School – p.52 of R.146/2022:

13. The one line that appears in the document under this heading states:
'This investment is intended to provide additional support to eligible looked-after children in school settings to best practice standards.'
14. From this, it is difficult to ascertain what the funding will be used for, especially as it simultaneously refers to 'virtual school' and 'school settings'.
15. More detail is required in order to be able to fully comment on this item.

School Meals – p.52 of R.146/2022:

16. The NASUWT concurs with the document's assessment of the value of the school meals service.
17. The NASUWT, however, does not believe the statement is ambitious enough.
18. There is plentiful research and international evidence that universal free school meals has an impact across all children, and, in particular, removes the stigma that may be attached to receiving means-tested free school meals.
19. Universal free school meals are now in place for Key Stage One pupils in England, Primary 1-5 pupils in Scotland, whilst all primary-aged pupils in Wales will receive a free school meal from 2024.
20. The NASUWT urges the Jersey Government to replicate this and adopt some degree of universal free school meals.

CYPES Post COVID-19 Requirements – p.83 of R.146/2022:

21. The NASUWT concurs with the assessment of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education system.
22. The NASUWT fully supports additional measures to prevent and/or limit the spread of the virus and avoid the situation in other jurisdictions where the virus is essentially assumed to no longer exist.
23. Although not mentioned in this section, a significant number of pupils are also likely to be still experiencing issues due to falling behind during the pandemic. The Government must ensure that sufficient funding is provided to allow these pupils to catch up with their peers.

New school and Educational Developments – p.57 of P.97/2022:

24. It is vital that all pupils are able to learn and teachers are able to teach in fit-for-purpose and safe schools.
25. The additional funding outlined in the document is welcome. However, in addition, the Government should ensure that where asbestos exists in schools, a programme of phased removal is instigated to ensure that no child has to attend a school containing deadly asbestos.

Upgrade to CYPES Estate – p.57/58 of P.97/2022:

26. The NASUWT also welcomes the investment in additional and new facilities in the wider CYPES remit.

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