

Dear Mr Ward

Thank you for your letter of 4 September seeking the NASUWT's views on the Jersey Review Framework.

The NASUWT has always maintained that as bodies providing a critical public service, schools should be held accountable for the contribution they make to supporting pupils' educational progress and achievement and enhancing their future life chances. However, it is critical that schools are held accountable for the right things in the right ways.

In other jurisdictions, particularly those in the UK, this critical test is not met. Accountability systems in these cases often remain founded on the publication of crude pupil performance league tables alongside punitive and debilitating inspection regimes. The NASUWT has remained clear that Jersey should resist the introduction of similar systems and, instead, develop an evidence-based accountability framework that identifies schools' strengths and supports them to address any areas of development.

The NASUWT was, therefore, encouraged that the former Education Department recognised these principles in the development of the Jersey Review Framework (JRF). Critically, the JRF acknowledges that where areas for development are identified, the Government of Jersey has to recognise its responsibility for the quality of education provided to all children and young people and to play its part in assisting all schools in their improvement journeys. This sharing of responsibility for securing and sustaining school improvement is a distinctive and positive feature of the JRF.

Feedback received by the NASUWT on the implementation of the JRF to date has been broadly positive. However, it is recognised that implementation is an iterative process and that the JRF will be subject to further refinement as the experience of all participants grows over time.

Where problems have arisen, they have been the result of a misinterpretation at school level of the JRF's requirements. Initially, some schools sought to impose unnecessary and burdensome planning and assessment tasks on teachers on the basis that they would assist in securing a favourable JRF outcome. Such attempts to game the JRF process are entirely unacceptable and will be challenged robustly by the NASUWT. The Union is pleased to note that this view is shared by the Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department and the NASUWT continues to engage constructively with the Department on this issue. It is expected that as understanding of the JRF process grows over time, all schools will develop their appreciation of the fact that their experience of the JRF will be enhanced if they ensure that that time, efforts and resources are focused on supporting the ability of teachers and school leaders to concentrate on their core responsibilities for teaching and leading teaching and learning.

The Panel will be aware that instead of introducing the JRF, the Government could have outsourced the inspection of Jersey's schools to Ofsted. The NASUWT notes that such a policy has recently been adopted by the States of Guernsey. The Union welcomes the rejection of this approach by the Government and will continue to engage constructively with Ministers and officials on this critical area of education policy.

Best wishes

Marina Mauger

NASUWT Jersey Secretary

