

22.09.20

**6 Deputy R.J. Ward of the Minister for Children and Education regarding cover staff for Secondary Schools (OQ. 88/2022)**

Given reports of expenditure of nearly £1 million over the last 2 years on cover staff in secondary schools, will the Minister state the projected spend for the autumn term in this area and will she also advise how many teaching vacancies are currently unfilled in all schools?

**Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North (The Minister for Children and Education):**

The projected spend in this area for the autumn term is in the range of £230,000 to £270,000. It is not possible to be more accurate with the forecast as cover costs vary significantly due to the various factors such as sickness, parental leave, meetings, P.P.A. (planning, preparation and assessment) for teachers, leadership release, courses, and so on. Schools will have some control over this but especially around sickness is something unknown, and also COVID impact is obviously a factor too. Teacher vacancies in all schools total 37, not including parental leave. These roles have been covered by schools until recruitment is completed. The additional 10 teacher positions are being covered due to the parental leave.

**9.6.1 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

Can the Minister confirm whether U.K. (United Kingdom) agencies are being used to fill vacancies, both with cover staff and with staff in a temporary basis? If so, how much more expensive is it to do that?

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

From my understanding and data that I have in front of me, we do not use U.K. agencies but I am happy to go back to the Deputy. From what I know, all cover is internal and used for all of our supply teachers.

**Please note that the Minister for Children and Education subsequently provided the information below -**

There is currently one secondary school teacher employed via an agency contract until the end of this year, when a substantive permanent recruit starts in January. The rate of pay is less than Government rates, but due to accommodation costs the overall cost is circa 50% more expensive than sourcing local cover.

**9.6.2 Deputy T.A. Coles:**

Does the Minister know the number of cover staff available in Jersey at any given time?

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

It is really very, very dependent because some people are available only for limited amounts of times; some people are available for a year. It is really very difficult to give exact numbers because on Friday, I received a letter and there were lots of unexpected things happening. But what is important to emphasise is that we do have a solution, and we do have flexibility, and we are working hard so there will be a teacher in front of each class and lessons will proceed as planned.

**Please note that the Minister for Children and Education subsequently provided the information below -**

Primary teachers	67
Secondary teachers	39
Both primary & secondary	18
Teaching Assistants	37

[10:30]

**9.6.3 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

The Minister just stated that there will be a teacher in front of a class and lessons will proceed as planned; can she guarantee that that teacher will be a specialist teacher, for example, in subjects such as maths, English and science for exam groups, or will lessons proceed but not really as planned, but just to have a body in front of the class?

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

Thank you to the Deputy for his question. I will need to look into this to make sure that it is exactly. Another thing which is really important to raise for the Deputy's question, we recognise a shortage in teachers in science, for example, and this is the reason that this year we have graduate teacher training which added a £25,000 bursary especially for the subject where we have shortages, so we ensure that during the year we would train teachers for the subject that we do have shortages. These shortages are around the U.K. as well.