

4.6 Deputy R.J. Rondel of St. Helier of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the total births in Jersey in 2012 against deaths:

Given the United Kingdom's unprecedented baby boom, would the Minister advise the Assembly whether the same situation is being experienced in Jersey and also advise the Assembly of the total births in Jersey in 2012 against deaths? Just to be clear, I am in no way suggesting that the Minister may be responsible for any increase. **[Laughter]**

Senator B.I. Le Marquand (The Minister for Home Affairs):

I do bear some responsibility indirectly in 2012 because 2 grandchildren arrived of mine **[Approbation]** which means, for those who are trying to keep an account of this, that I now have 4 but there we are. The answer to the question is that there has been an increase in recent years in the number of births. We do not have a final figure yet for the year because there is a delay in the registration process for outlying Parishes sometimes but it will not be significant. The figure was 1,160. Numbers have been increasing in recent years but curiously enough, they are now back to just fractionally above the level in the mid-1990s. I can give you some figures: 1994, 1,147 was the peak. Then they dropped away to levels in the mid-90s for a number of years and then have come up. So, yes, in recent years, we have started to increase although it has only just taken us back to the 1990s level. The figure for deaths so far, because there may well be more coming from outlying Parishes, is 752 so we have approximately 400 more births than deaths.

4.6.1 Deputy R.J. Rondel:

I thank the Minister for that answer. My concern really is as Governor of Rouge Bouillon School, the implications ... because I know 2 years ago one was considering doing away with the primary school in St. Helier and now the reverse is potentially being spoken about so would the Minister agree that discussions with the Council of Ministers should take place as quickly as possible. If they do see a trend, the implications for schools are important.

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

That is the right area but of course I do know of conversations in the Council of Ministers already with the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture who was very concerned to be seeing a substantial increase above what was expected in his talking about the possible need for a new primary school. I am looking at him and he is nodding back at me. But this is not, I think, just related to the numbers of births having gone up. It is also related to the number of children as dependants of other people who have been coming into the Island in recent years.