

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier
Jersey | JE2 3RR

Deputy Louise Doublet
Chair – Gender Pay Gap Review Panel

Sent by email only to: k.boydens@gov.je

07 December 2021

Dear Chair,

Gender Pay Gap Review Panel - Jersey's Gender Pay Gap (follow-up) Review

Thank you for your letter of 26th November 2021. I detail below my response to the questions raise and please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

We would like to receive an update on these recommendations and receive any data (qualitative and quantitative) your department has collected in the areas mentioned. We would also be grateful to receive written responses to the following questions:

1. Do you think there is an issue of gender segregation in subject choices at school?

The Education (Jersey) Law sets out the basis for the education of children and young people in Jersey.

It determines a basic curriculum (the Jersey Curriculum), which forms the foundation of what students should know, be able to understand or do, by the time they leave school. It determined the subjects that should be taught at different ages and stages and it 'may specify a range or ranges of subjects that a child may elect, at any particular stage of the child's education, to be taught' Education (Jersey) Law 1999, Part 4 (Article 16).

The Jersey Curriculum remains broad and balanced throughout primary and secondary education until the point where young people select their GCSE or other exam options to ensure all pupils regardless of gender or cultural background have an entitlement to experience different subject disciplines and to make informed choices.

Once pupils reach the stage of GCSE, they will have experienced a broad and balanced curriculum and are well informed as to their talents and strengths so that they may make choices regarding their options for the final 2 years of compulsory schooling.

Options are published by schools on their websites. In many cases, curriculum options are designed around the interests, talents and progression plans of pupils and are only confirmed after all pupils have been interviewed.

Schools report that the vast majority of pupils are offered their first or second choice of option subjects. We are not aware of any data that can substantiate the claim of gender segregation by policy or practice. The gender profile of some subjects has altered over time for example IT/Computing, where the proportion of girls has increased over the last three years.

However, with 4 single-sex schools and 5 mixed-secondary providers, both fee-paying and non-fee-paying, and in many cases, schools operating small class groups to ensure maximum curriculum choice, it is difficult to make useful comparisons on gender alone. Each school aims to match their curriculum to the needs and aspirations of their pupils, whilst operating within the constraints of their particular budgets.

Where an individual pupil is not satisfied with the curriculum offer made by their school, schools are open to discussion and are best placed to answer the detail in this question.

2. If yes, in what ways could they be addressed?

See above.

3. What level of importance would you put in pre-schools and primary schools ensuring gender neutral practices?

All children, regardless of gender are exposed to an early years curriculum that supports their well-being, involvement and individual needs and interests. Teachers observe children in their play and plan for experiences that support their learning and development, this would involve challenging any stereotypes and creating diverse, equal and inclusive opportunities.

There would for instance be books and displays with positive images of girls involved in STEM activities and professions, in sport, e.g. football and rugby. Early Years settings were invited to be part of the Primary Engineer Programme that the Education Department facilitated.

Girls would be equally encouraged to build, design, be doctors, pilots, etc. Boys would not be prevented from dressing up, or wanting to dance, cook, sing...etc. Children are viewed as unique individuals, with rights, needs and interests that are valued and supported by all staff and through the supporting documentation we have in the early years- the Early Years Matters Quality Framework and Statutory Requirements.

We review our statutory requirements annually and will ensure diversity, equality and inclusion are fully reflected in all areas.

4. What about school culture and ethos? i.e. “boys will be boys” and “you run/throw like a girl”.

School Vision and Ethos – schools have re-developed their own vision statements and ethos in recent years, which guide decision-making and the formation of policy and subsequent actions within their school. These are built in consultation with the community and therefore sensitive to the social and cultural make-up of students. Equality and Diversity policies stem from these and are shared with parents, which offer each school’s statement of intent. Sample statements (from Le Quennevais school):

- ‘We will provide a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging;’
- ‘We will provide positive non-stereotyping information about different groups of people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age.’
- ‘We will plan systematically to improve our understanding and promotion of diversity; actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage.’

All schools are required to tackle bullying or discriminatory language under our Behaviour, Counter-bullying and Safeguarding policies.

The School Improvement and Advisory Service work on a weekly basis in all the Government of Jersey schools. Senior Advisors and Advisors work alongside school leaders and undertake visiting lessons, speaking with students and analysing school data. If there were discriminatory practices prevalent in any of these schools, such practices and behaviours would be challenged automatically. It would be viewed as unacceptable. In addition, all Government of Jersey schools are reviewed every three years. The review team look at all aspects of the school and use a wide range of sources, which include meeting with school leaders, meeting a wide range of students, observing lessons, analysing data, examining how learning is recorded and surveying school staff, parents and carers. This intensive two days culminates in a report being written and published about the school. If discriminatory practices were seen or noted in any school, this would reflect poorly on the leadership of the school and would be commented upon in the published report.

5. We understand that the School curriculum states: ‘Teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation’ and that this includes gender. In what ways are teachers supported in order to undertake this duty? Do they receive ongoing support in this area?

- Training available to all school staff on Virtual College (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace); the training
 - clearly highlights the language of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination and how to avoid this in the context of the workplace (i.e. schools).
 - ensures that staff are aware of unconscious discrimination, which may happen through ignorance or thoughtlessness.
 - Is relatively new and in the process of being adopted by schools
 - CYPES is also in the process of developing a strategy to respond to Diversity and Inclusion, which will involve further training coming on board in this area.
- Staff contracts – In the Teachers Terms and Conditions: ‘Teachers must not endeavour to exert an undue influence with regard to personal attitudes, opinions or behaviour’ therefore dissuading or exerting influence on young people and their subject choices or their wider learning behaviours with reference to gender would not be appropriate.

Yours sincerely,



Deputy Scott Wickenden
Minister for Children and Education

D +44 (0)1534 440152
E S.Wickenden@gov.je