

STATES OF JERSEY



PROMOTION OF POLITICAL EDUCATION (P.1/2025): COMMENTS

Presented to the States on 24th January 2025
by the Privileges and Procedures Committee

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Proposition

Deputy Andrews’ proposition requests that PPC organise a timetable of political education visits to schools to be undertaken by Members of the States Assembly to commence from September 2025.

Background

Political education is a top priority for increasing engagement with the States Assembly, amongst both children and young people, and the Island’s adult population. This is the reason for PPC supporting the recruitment of an Education Manager (joined November ’24), an Outreach Manager (started July ’24), and two Education and Outreach Officers (to be recruited during Q1 2025) to the States Greffe.

Political Education to date

Member engagement with children and young people through educational programmes and visits goes back many years, with the annual Youth Assembly established in 1999 and primary school visits to the Chamber in 2008. However, since the introduction of the Digital and Public Engagement Team in July 2020, and more recently, the role of Education Manager, the range and volume of education activities has increased significantly and is being tracked more closely. The below table includes Member engagement with children and young people in the Chamber, as well as in school/college settings.

Member involvement with education activities (as at 17/1/25)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Year 5 visit to States Chamber	18* 44 visits in total	11 40 visits in total	25** 41 visits in total
Visits to the Chamber and to schools (other school year-groups)	9^	3^	5**^
Democracy Week visits	9^	12^	13^
Jersey Youth Assembly	8	9	N/A
Jersey Youth Parliament	4	6	N/A
TOTAL	48	41	43

* Data only available from Jan 2023

** Subject to change as it includes those booked in and ones that have happened. Typically requests come in from schools throughout the year

^ Some visits have multiple Members present (e.g. a panel Q&A session)

+NB. due to recruitment challenges, the Education Manager post was vacant from November ’23 – October ’24, meaning there was reduced capacity for proactively organising school visits

In addition, it is important to acknowledge that several Members organise visits, assemblies and other activities through their direct relationships with the schools and/or colleges in their constituencies or where there is a personal connection to the school.

Furthermore, political education is not limited to the sessions delivered by Members and a wide range of lessons, workshops and tours are delivered by States Greffe Officers (where Members are not present). These involve schools and colleges as well as extra-curricular associations and clubs, such as Brownies and Cubs.

It is also important to note that political education is not limited to the States Greffe and that schools include it in their own curriculum and some teachers are happy delivering it unsupported.

Resources

The Education Manager regularly prepares schemes of learning, lesson plans, and teaching resources, tailored to the age-group and learning objectives defined by the school and the Jersey Curriculum.

2025 plans

- the Political Awareness and Education Sub-Committee of PPC (which the Assembly agreed would become a standing committee in 2024) continues to provide robust oversight and challenge to the Digital and Public Engagement team, including the Education aspects of the operational plan
- recruiting two Education and Outreach Officers to support the expansion of this area of work
- bringing together the best elements of the Jersey Youth Parliament (previously run by the Jersey Youth Service) and the Jersey Youth Assembly (run by the States Greffe) to provide an enhanced offering and more opportunities for young people to engage with States Members
- developing and disseminating a wider range of resources for teachers
- establishing a ‘touch-point’ with Year 8 students by implementing an annual Island-wide public speaking competition with a political ‘theme’
- piloting a CPD programme for teachers to increase knowledge and confidence, along with the number of subjects embedding links to the Assembly in their learning
- political education updates included in the newly established, termly ‘Curriculum Updates’ newsletter sent to all school leaders, coordinated by the Education Department

Considerations

In 2022 the Education Manager (during a previous period of employment from July ’22 – October ’23) carried out a review of secondary school political education to understand the:

- Current political education provision
- Barriers to delivering political education
- Opportunities to support schools and increase political education

These confidential conversations brought about many useful learnings, several of which have been used to shape plans and the development of new resources. However, the most significant learning was that a ‘one size fits all’ approach won’t meet the needs of Jersey’s schools due to their timetabling and current delivery of the citizenship curriculum. Rather, we need to work with the schools and tailor support that works for them. Practically, this makes the implementation of the proposition challenging as Member visits cannot be forced onto schools/colleges and this approach risks compromising the work undertaken to build strong relationships and respond to the feedback received as part of the review.

It is also very important to consider the exam schedule, particularly for GCSE and A - level (or equivalent) groups.

Furthermore, it is of note that changes to the School Review Framework mean that the PSHE curriculum (where political education sits) will be scrutinised more closely in schools too. This may result in more emphasis on political learning.

Finally, the Committee wishes to highlight that any form of direct access to schools in the months preceding the elections in June 2026 would need to be carefully managed in order to ensure no unfair advantage is derived by existing Members seeking re-election over prospective candidates.

Recommendation

As outlined above, the Committee feels that this work is already underway and that this proposition is unnecessary. The Committee therefore asks Members to reject the proposition.