

STATES OF JERSEY

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Quarterly Meeting with the Minister for Education

MONDAY, 5th DECEMBER 2016

Panel:

Deputy T.A. Vallois of St. John (Chairman)

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour: (Vice Chairman)

Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier:

Witnesses:

The Minister for Education

Chief Education Officer

[10:01]

Deputy T.A. Vallois of St. John (Chairman):

Just to inform you, although I am acting Chairman for the moment, because of the Chairmen's Committee, Jeremy will be leading this quarterly hearing as he is the Vice Chairman, I am just temporarily the Vice Chairman while our Chairman is out of action because I have to attend Chairmen's Committee meetings.

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour:

It's like the leadership of the Green Party having a bit of a job share. **[Laughter]**

The Deputy of St. John:

I shall pass over to Jeremy.

The Minister of Education:

Can we have a go then, just take it in turns?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Good morning, everyone, and good morning to those in the gallery. Again, just to remind everyone of our protocols and procedures, and just to confirm for the Minister and his delegation that they have read and confirmed the scrutiny statement that is before them and also to make sure that everyone has turned off their mobile phones off or put them on silent at least? Okay, so then just for the record ... are we ready, Debbie? Yes. Just for the record I will ask everyone to introduce themselves for the tape. I will go first, Deputy Jeremey Maçon of St. Saviour.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier:

Deputy Sam Mézec of St. Helier No. 2.

The Deputy of St. John:

Deputy Tracey Vallois of St. John.

Scrutiny Officer:

Mick Robbins, Scrutiny Officer:

Chief Education Officer:

Justin Donovan, Chief Education Officer.

The Minister for Education:

Deputy Rod Bryans, the Minister for Education.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Hello, and good morning, gentlemen.

The Minister for Education:

Good morning.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Right, shall we crack on then. So the first question on our agenda ... so we are looking to run for about an hour and a half, possibly less, depending how brief your answers are. Okay, so our first question is looking at the Jersey Premium. So I am wondering if you could tell the panel how the pilot phase is going.

The Minister for Education:

Well, it has done extremely well. I think you were aware at one of the scrutiny meetings we had that Justin and I were hoping to attend the presentation of some of the pilots that have been done by our heads. So we did not get to see it all but we did get some feedback off it which is that the pilots have been extremely successful. I guess from my position as a Minister, I think this is going to be probably one of the most profound things we do in Education here on the Island and we will be giving you ... if there is anything I say and you want some handouts, we have got some handouts to give you in relation to some of this anyway subsequently if we do. In particular, I have got a piece of information from one of our participating schools which I think highlights it for us. If I can just read this out, but again we will give you a copy of this, which is a case study from Beaulieu School. There is a little chart you will see at the bottom which is evidence of impact and if I just give you a couple of those, which I think highlight it for me. So pupil number 1 in year group, and this is relating to literacy. Number of weeks on the programme: 10; entry benchmark level 13; exit benchmark level: 20; entry single word reading test: 6; exit single word reading test: 7; and the thing that really defines it right at the end, it says: "Word reading age gained in months; 12 months." And you go down, there are 5 pupils that this relates to. Twelve months level of word reading age gained in months by going through this procedure, 12 months, 21 months, 18 months, 21 months, 21 months. So these children having this strategy in place, which relates to working with T.A.s (Teaching Assistants), has really lifted these children up from the position where they found it difficult to read in all circumstances, or even to spell, have increased incredibly. So I think this is a testimony and this is just one of the pilots that we have run. So the next step then is we have received confirmation that 2,422 children have been identified as eligible and, again, we can provide you with this sort of information. Four hundred and ninety-nine of these children are new claimants since last year and we are matching data and making sure we that have got all of the information we need on them; 1,925 on the list were identified as eligible for the Jersey Premium back in 2015 and have already been sent a letter informing them of their child status and additional help available from the school. So we are beginning to pull all this together. I think you are aware that it begins in January of next year as the roll out. Just to give you an idea of the funding. It is estimated the funding will be about 900 for looked after children, 700 for primary and 450 for secondary. Does that give you a bit of an overview?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes, thank you very much for that. So, yes, a lot of information there. I wonder if I could just ask you, though, again some fabulous results you have outlined there for the individual. I just wonder, though, how are those individuals then monitored. Because it is one thing to build them up again, but if there is slippage or it goes back down, how is that monitored in this scheme?

Chief Education Officer:

First of all, individual children are monitored through the in-school set up arrangements, but they are identified separately. They are sort of separated out. So when the professional partners arrive at school, when they look at the data for all the children, they look specifically, additionally at the children who are in receipt of Jersey Premium. Similarly, our evaluation framework, where we are going to evaluate the school's performance, again we separate out the performance of those children. Schools are aware of the fact that if it does not make an impact we will move the money to another scheme. So we have got 19 schools at the moment running 50 pilots. In the way that the Minister has suggested we are analysing those pilots in real detail to make sure that the money is making an impact. We have got to be a bit careful because sometimes it is a case of holding one's nerve. You can get some quick wins but there are some children who you need to spend a little bit more time with building confidence and building routines, getting them to school regularly before the impact comes along. So we do not want to be too trigger happy at pulling funding but, nevertheless, we are monitoring that performance very, very closely.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Then can I just ask, from this pilot scheme what has the department learnt and what has changed, if anything.

The Minister for Education:

Well, we did not have it before is the truth, and so what we now have got is the skills of high visibility to target the specific needs related to it. There are various things in play for different schools. So each school has their projects running, which has been discussed mainly with the head teacher and with the staff, that go from the chap who created this book, Mark Roland King, the speaker at the conference, and some of the stuff that we were doing was far in advance of what he had seen in the U.K. (United Kingdom). So you go from intervention sort of programmes, like the one I've just described relating to literacy or you will get programmes, one that Mark was particularly enamoured of, where the head has decided that leadership and the quality of teaching is the thing that she wants to focus on most. That kind of addresses some of the ... quite often we get asked, is this not just specifically for those with children? In context, yes, but in general things, all boats rise with the tide so when you get an increase in the quality of the teaching then you are going to get right it across the board. Do you want to amplify anything?

Chief Education Officer:

Yes. We are working the same with the National Education Trust and Mark Roland and he is with us on a regular basis and helping evaluate the pilots and have a look at them and compare. Because England has been running this scheme for several years, we have also learnt from their mistakes thankfully, and we have brought all that over. There is some very good evidenced research. For example, interesting, one of the cheapest interventions, the development of

metacognition in schools, is also proving to be one of the most successful in terms of long term. So we are getting children to think about how they are learning and have learning strategies. It is having an enormous impact so we are learning from the English experiment. Worth probably mentioning, it will be slightly different in January because in January we will be rolling out not only to more children, as the Minister says, 2,400 or so, but also we will be focusing on children who do not yet qualify for benefits because they have not been on the Island long enough. So those children come into play from January and there will be another 200 to 300 young people joining in that category. We are working with Social Security to make sure we can identify those families.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

That sort of leads into what I wanted to ask. Have you had any communication from head teachers who have been able to look at the students they have at their school and who, because they obviously know the kids really well, might be able to just identify a few signs that there are kids who could potentially really benefit from this? But, for whatever reason, do not necessarily fit the criteria that has been set. Have there been any communications from head teachers about improvements they might foresee to the criteria to make sure it does capture all the people that they want it to.

Chief Education Officer:

That is definitely an issue, yes. Most of the heads have come back and said ... there are some errors in our data. So, for example, we have twins and one has qualified and has not, it is just a mistake in the date. So they are cleaning the data for us and using their knowledge for the families to say: "I do not think this is quite right" but that is very small cases. There are kids who are right on the barrier, right on the boundary and what heads are doing there is saying: "Well, we have to have a cut off points somewhere." So what heads are doing is making sure that the strategies they are developing are not focused on named children, they are adopting across the school as a whole. So, for example, one school is looking to recruit family support workers to work with vulnerable families. That family support, while focusing on no children, if there are kids as you describe and there are, those heads have used their discretion to involve those families as well. So we are trying to get a balance between focus on the children for whom this money is set aside. But, at the same time allowing head teachers to make sense of all professional judgements about supporting children.

The Minister for Education:

It is also worth underlining that one of the other projects that sits behind the thing is this cluster idea, so we now have schools sharing good practice which was not around before. We were doing it on an ad hoc basis but now we have got them clustered around geographical points so they can begin to share the information they have got on them.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

You mentioned the cut off points. Do you foresee any changes to where that cut off point lies in the future based on how the pilot scheme has gone so far?

Chief Education Officer:

No. I would like to say yes but the answer is no. There is a balance between ... we have a pot of money and I think if we were to stretch it out past the 2,500 children we are working with, the amount of money available per child would not make the impact we need. So we are trying to get the greatest impact on the greatest number of children we can. We think if we stretch the resource any further it will start to lose its impact. What we are trying to do here, which I certainly never cracked in England and England could never cracked, but I think we could here if we are careful, and that is to build in a bit of flexibility so going back to your point about feedback from heads, heads are saying to us: "There is a child here that has been identified, we have allocated £700 to support this child, they just need a little more attention, we do not need the £700. There is strategy we can adopt and is not cost us anything. What we have done is focus our mind on the needs of that child but we already have that resource in place. But there is another child that is really struggling and we would like to spend double the amount of money on them." At the moment our rules of engagement make that difficult for heads. So one of the lessons we have learnt from the pilot is to try and flex that up slightly to give heads some room to manoeuvre there, so they can be a bit more imaginative. So there is still focus in on the main children but they can move their resources around a little bit more flexibly than is currently the case.

The Deputy of St. John:

Can I ask, in the context of how many children overall, you said there is 2,422 under this but how many children in total are in the schools, comparison wise?

Chief Education Officer:

So in total in our schools is about 16,000 children enrolled, yes. Within that 2,500, it goes back to the last point we were making, there is a continuum of need. There are some very needy children who need very significant input and there are others that just needed a bit of helping hand.

[10:15]

The Deputy of St. John:

How are families brought into how this works? How are they understanding the process or are they engaged in the process at all?

The Minister for Education:

I think there are 2 things. Initially there is the work we have done with the Social Security, which is paramount because we do not have the free to school meals issue, like they do in the U.K. So I think they have done a remarkable amount of work working with some of our officers in the department to identify how we can come up with a way of filtering those things through. They have done that and that is the first initial discussion that begins with the parents because then equally we have to then ask the parents if they would give permission for that information to be used. A very small minority have said no, but we can understand and appreciate why they would do that. So that continues. In terms of information going out to the parents, once we have identified these pilots our next bit is to get communication with the parents.

Chief Education Officer:

It might be worth pointing out that from a previous scrutiny committee, if you remember, we looked at special needs. One of the recommendations was to establish an independent parent forum and while that is now up and running, so we have an independent chair, that has met on a few occasions, it is early days yet, all those parents are being trained, there is some overlap obviously between children ... not exactly the same cohort but there is some overlap between children with special needs and these children. So this parent forum will be quite helpful in terms of holding a mirror up to what it is we are trying to do. Then over the course of this academic year we are going to broaden that parent forum out to wider issues, including this one.

The Deputy of St. John:

You mentioned the rules of engagement, I believe that is what you stated; would it be possible to see what that is? The rules of engagement, so we are just aware exactly ...

Chief Education Officer:

The criteria we use.

The Minister for Education:

We have what we call a toolkit for Jersey schools so we can give you a copy of that. I did not want to hand it out as it is a substantial document.

The Deputy of St. John:

Thank you.

The Minister for Education:

Yes, you have got that.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Can I just ask also, from this what training for staff was put in place?

Chief Education Officer:

Two things really. One, there is general training about purposes behind Jersey Premium but more particularly there is training which runs out of the pilot. So, for example, I mentioned metacognition, we laid on 20 programmes for staff of that and we had to run it 3 times because it was so popular for the staff that came out. We have had a whole day where staff came together to exchange ideas and best practice and they all came with their U.S.B. (Universal Serial Bus) sticks and pinching each other's ideas and taking materials away. So it is early days yet but the pilot itself has generated a lot of training and that will continue as the scheme runs out. I think we will continue to learn ... although the pilot comes to end we are going to continue to learn over the next 3 or 4 years, I think.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay. Have any kind of consistent themes come out from the pilot which suggest certain areas of training need to be focused on?

Chief Education Officer:

Yes, I think 2 really so far. One is, it sounds terribly obvious, simply about the precise nature of teaching vulnerable children. A really detailed understanding of what the blockages are to learning, is it because they lack confidence, is it their spelling techniques? What is it that is ... so focus on really understanding the learning required to the individual children. The second is the importance, again these are fairly obvious things, but just reinforce the importance of reading. Because without reading, particularly reading for fun, kids just picking up a book because they want to read, that unlocks so much more of the curriculum. Those are the 2 key themes that have emerged. We have got a list here which I can leave you of all the pilots. It is a list of all the schools and all the pilots which are carried on. It will give you some idea of the themes that run throughout it.

The Minister for Education:

But equally behind that we have ... I think you will have heard of E.C.O.F. (Every Child Our Future), they have made that part of the mission here on the Island to bring up the literacy level.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Anything else you would like to ask? No? We will move on. Question 2.

The Deputy of St. John:

Okay. The Education Department vowed in September that they would introduce additional safety measures following an incident of a child being removed from school by a social worker. Can the Minister advise what these additional safety measures are?

The Minister for Education:

Okay, we just need to advise the panel the particular parent of the child has advised us that he is considering legal action, so I would just be very careful not to name the school.

The Deputy of St. John:

We will not speak about the specific case but if you could just tell us.

The Minister for Education:

Okay, so if I just mention it was a rare incident that resulted from a series of unfortunate coincidences, similar names, ages, family circumstances but there was no security breach. The H.S.S. (Health and Social Services) staff member was known to the school and expected on that particular day. So immediately after the incident the designated safeguarding officer undertook a review and we put in an additional double check involving a requirement for a photo I.D. (identification). That was the initial thing. I subsequently met with the father the following day.

The Deputy of St. John:

So in terms of moving forward, I know you stated that this is a rare occurrence, but it may have shaken some parents up or concerned some parents so what confidence can parents have moving forward that this will not happen again?

The Minister for Education:

As soon as it happened the first thing is we had an emergency meeting within the department and we went through the procedures that we already have in place. In fact, in relation to this particular child, an individual had turned up at the school the previous week wanting to pick the child up but was not known to the school and was not allowed to take the child at that point. So we knew that our procedures, if you like, were in place and that was important to us but the key part that we felt was missing was the identification which was simply answered by the simple addition of putting a photographic evidence into it.

The Deputy of St. John:

In terms of multiagency team working, is it as robust as it could be or should be in terms of working across departments?

The Minister for Education:

I think it is. With all these things you can obviously say things could be better but in our situation, particularly to do with the Social Services, I think with the schools they are so professional in terms of their context I am quite secure in knowing that now this bit has been put in place that sort of occurrence will not happen.

Chief Education Officer:

If I turn up as a social worker now, I not only have the name, the address, the date of birth, I have a photograph of the child and can look at the child, is that the right child? It sounds pretty basic. Teachers, of course, know the children but social workers change cases a lot so now they will not be allowed to take unless they have a photograph so it cannot happen again.

The Deputy of St. John:

So trying to look at it from the other point of view in terms of potentially adding any bureaucracy on top of it, what effects may this have in terms of working, going forward. Will it cause more problems between multiagency working or ...?

The Minister for Education:

No, it will just mean you have photographic ... that was the whole point of the meeting was to identify something that may seem erudite in its approach but is the simplest answer and the most effective answer. We felt that the situation that we found ourselves in is that everything had been done by the school that was necessary to have been done. We then subsequently had discussions with Social Security, so the officers met to discuss it and that was the procedure they wanted to work on. They thought it was the most effective.

Chief Education Officer:

I think you have to bear in mind the child was given to a social worker not a stranger.

The Deputy of St. John:

No, no, that is understandable. I say it is understandable but what I think I am trying to get at here is the States is one entity and Education and Health are very involved in families' lives, whether that be in a school context or in a health context. So I am trying to understand the workings between the 2 that it had to come to this, for a social worker to have a photo I.D. What happens in terms of discussions beforehand at the higher levels in terms of what is needed or what is supported in every day work?

The Minister for Education:

To be fair, most of those discussions had taken place well before this particular incident. Like I said at the beginning, it is a rare occurrence and it was a combination of some really difficult little factors

that made it problematic. I think up until that point both Health and the schools themselves were very confident and comfortable in terms of what they were doing. The missing key bit was identifying the child by the photograph. So I am quite secure in saying that should never happen again.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The next area about the retention rate for teachers in Jersey. On 11th October you answered questions in the States from Deputy Tadier and you mentioned that we have a retention rate of Jersey graduate teachers of 86 per cent. Could you just talk about how those levels are reached?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, we have got a Jersey Graduate Teacher's Programme, which you are probably aware of and I got have documentation relating to that we can pass on to you. I think the retention rate I have down here is 87 per cent. I think in 2007 we had 6 graduates. Since that point we have put 66 graduates through the training programme. We had a bit of a glut in one year, which resulted in a couple of teachers moving on because we had too many teachers at that point in time without the places for them to go to and that has resulted in that small aberration. But in terms of our retention rate, the figures stand up for what they are. It is difficult to explain why teachers move on but this is one of those transitory Island where people getting qualifications and then see a situation and possibly move back to the U.K.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

What do you attribute those figures to then, you say it is difficult to tell exactly because obviously everybody's life is going to be different? What do you think the key themes are to deciding whether somebody is going to stay in that profession or whether they are going to move on? Is there anything structural that might have an impact on that?

Chief Education Officer:

The first thing to say is these are really good, almost 9 out of 10 stay for a while. I think there are 3 reasons for the very high retention rates. Firstly is we are very careful in selection. So we have very able people who have made a conscious decision to move from industry or commerce into teaching. So it is a big step for them, we are very careful in selection. Secondly, the training is very good and they are mostly in school but they have a lot of training, a lot of support, a lot of mentoring so the feedback we get from them is that it is hard going, it is high pressure but well supported, good quality training so the dropout rate ... and then, frankly, once they are trained, they have been carefully selected and well trained, they are going to schools full of lovely kids. I mean really nice kids in good buildings. It is a great place to teach. So if you have made that conscious decision to become a teacher, we have selected you very carefully, trained you very well and then put you into

the school which is well resourced with great kids, I think those are 3 reasons why we have such good retention rates. Long may it continue.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Sure. The point that has to be brought up now of course is the States in this M.T.F.P. (Medium Term Financial Plan) debate has endorsed your decision to want to reduce N.Q.T. (Newly Qualified Teachers) salaries, this has obviously been very controversial and something that has been debated a lot. What do you see happening to those retention rates now that that decision has been made and you will presumably go on to implement it?

The Minister for Education:

Obviously this does not affect teachers already in situation and will not affect them until it comes on board, and it still has, as we said in the States, to be negotiated with the States Employment Board. I think the point to make and reiterate again, because you are quite right it has been spoken about a lot in the States, is that when we have been bringing new qualified teachers on to this Island, back in 2000 a decision was made when the States were flush with cash at that point, as it was said to me by a union member, that the decision was to increase all salaries across the board and then subsequently, since 2004 we have been paying newly qualified teachers on level 3. That figure is around £38,000. Level 1, which is where most newly qualified teachers come in, so if you are coming into Guernsey, Isle of Man, U.K., is down around £31,000. So what we are effectively trying to do is we want to make sure that the unions and the Assembly understood our direction of travel to begin to move the staff figure back to what they should have been in the first place.

Chief Education Officer:

Just to add to that, the whole point of that is to give us some flexibility to respond to the market. So at the moment instead of saying we will just pay all teachers, no matter whether we need to or not, a very high salary, what we are saying here is by having a default position, which is still well above England, well above London but lower than it currently is, that frees us up to pay additional funds to those short of subject. So, for example, if we are very short of secondary school mathematicians we could continue to put a starting salary in place of £38,000 if we want to. So we are not suggesting that we would reduce the starting salary of all N.Q.T.s, what we are saying is that we will have the freedom to recruit and to focus particularly on hard-pressed areas. So if we find we cannot recruit we will raise the salary until we can and pay over and above the market rate. What we are saying is it is public money, we should not be paying above the market rate unless we have to. If we have to, the funding is there. But at the moment we are paying it whether we need to or not.

[10:30]

Which just does not seem sensible in terms of public expenditure.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

You mentioned that this will not apply to people who are currently in teaching but you will, of course, know that the 2 main teachers' unions on the Island are very much against this and this is not going to affect their current members. Their argument is that it is about the profession and they worry about moral with teachers being paid different rates for potentially doing the same amount of work, and they worry about retention. What discussions are you having with them to take on board the things they might want to contribute on this particular subject and are you regularly in contact with them about that?

The Minister for Education:

We have always been regularly in contact. We have a partnership which I think is fairly unique. It is quite envied in the U.K. We have had that for some time now. We have regular meetings. We had a meeting directly after the States decision at that point in time, we had a robust conversation. It was fairly one-sided from the union's point of view, who went some way to explaining to us their feelings about it, which is obvious. In fact we have meeting in for this Thursday, so we have a regular meeting always with both particular unions and with the head teachers' unions. We have taken on board what they have said. We still discuss the matter but the situation resides, as you would imagine because the States have reinforced our decision.

Chief Education Officer:

Some of it is in the department's own hands. It is not in the scale. So for the last 4 years the department has taken it upon itself to offer £6,000 more than it need to. When N.Q.T.s come to the Island it is just in the habit of giving those N.Q.T.s £6,000 more than they need to contractually if you look at the salary schemes. So we start up the salary scheme instead of on the bottom where they should start. Part of this is simply the department deciding whether or not to use its discretion. It goes back to the point I made earlier, we would use that discretion if we were struggling to recruit but not if we had a good supply of very effective teachers. So it is not all to do with changing the pay scales, some of it is to do with decisions made within the department. But even doing that we need to consult properly with the unions, as you quite rightly say.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

When you say it is not just about pay then, so will you be looking at the wider terms and conditions, because I know one concern that I have heard from teachers' unions have been comparing the hours that teachers in Jersey are contractually obliged to do contrasting with what the U.K.'s teachers are contractually obliged to do and then looking at the pay scales there. Is that something that is being looked at as well?

Chief Education Officer:

Yes, although the hours that teachers are contracted to do in Jersey, they do not teach more hours in England, that is a paper exercise but we certainly want to be ... as we mentioned, we need to spend the next 6 months or so tidying up our teachers' pay and conditions of service. They have kind of evolved over the last decade or so and there are some contradictions in there that both the unions and the department struggle to understand. So the first thing we need to do is to streamline and agree what the current T.s and C.s (terms and conditions) are, and part of that will be the contracted hours. But, yes, contractually teachers in Jersey should do a lot more hours than England but they do not. They do the same. In fact we teach 5 fewer days here in Jersey and we have 2 training days and an air show, whereas in England they have 5 training days. I say an air show; it is difficult to train when you have a Lancaster bomber surfing above, it is hard to concentrate.

The Minister for Education:

It is probably also worth saying that the director and I visited ... we started the pan-Island meeting at the beginning of my term of office and we have now travelled across to Guernsey and the Isle of Man 2 or 3 times, each of us, and one of the things that struck me when we were first talking about this after the States, of visiting a primary school, I think I mentioned it at one point, meeting a teacher who had come back on to the Island and said: "I will I could get to talk to some of these potential new teachers because the difference is massive. You have a modern school here with lots of resources." The whole outlook of the way in which we are doing things is completely different if you look at what has just happened recently in Guernsey, they are in a matter of turmoil and here we are we have just opened a brand new primary school and we are opening a brand new secondary school shortly. So we are far in advance of what we can see around us. So in terms of recruitment we think we are in the best position probably than our sister Islands certainly.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

You spoke about the good relationship the department has with the teacher unions. When they are so diametrically opposed to you on this issue of pay scales for newly qualified teachers, do you worry that that relationship could suffer very much from this disagreement or when you have spoken to them, do you think that good relationship can continue when there is an issue so contentious like this where they hold such a different point of view to you on it?

The Minister for Education:

I think so. You have seen it yourself in the States, we can be talking from opposite sides of the Assembly but at the end of the day when you are talking about the much wider remit, this is just one aspect of it, the considerations between us are not adversarial. In fact, they are very co-operative and once again we have been asked to go and speak, or at least to attend, the N.U.T. (National

Union of Teachers) conference in the U.K. The reason for that is because we have a partnership that works. So you can have contentious elements of it but at the end of the day we are all working towards the same aim, which is to have quality teachers here on this Island.

Chief Education Officer:

Can I just add to that? I have worked a long time in the world of education and the unions here, I think, are different in a very important aspect. They are able to separate out, so we are having really productive conversations about the Jersey Premium, very supportive. Very supportive of our new evaluation framework, very supportive of progression diploma, and at the same time we will compartmentalise disagreements over pay and condition service and they will be very robust, not rude but very robust, and assertive in their views. We are in no doubt of what their opinion will be but that is carried out in the meeting which is chaired by the Minister of E.S.C. (Education, Sport and Culture). When we meet in our partnership meetings we never talk about pay and conditions, we only talk about the curriculum, assessment, children, and progress, and they bring to the table a lot of expertise and both the big unions have very big education departments with access to research. So it is healthy here that we can have a disagreement over the details of T.s and C.s in one meeting and then that is parked so when we get to our partnership meetings we simply talk about that. It is difficult sometimes to separate who the union reps are and who the officers are. I have never come across that before. I would like to credit the unions for doing that. It really helps us move forward.

The Deputy of St. John:

You stated that it was the discretion of the department to pay more in terms of the salaries, so why was it you had to come back to the States to reduce?

The Minister for Education:

Because the discretion is just £6,000 and we think we might need to come back a little bit more so that is what we will negotiate over ... besides which, if we have been doing that for a number of years it becomes customer practice and in my view that is still something we need to consult over and talk because we are changing something that has been the case for several years now.

The Deputy of St. John:

There is a select committee in the U.K. that are looking at the retention and recruitment of teachers at the moment and there is some interesting evidence that has been provided. If you have seen any of this specific information would you share, or if you have not would you go away and look at that and see whether it is similar to the way that teachers are feeling or what the teachers are seeing in Jersey? I am very aware that the curriculum in the U.K. being put on to the curriculum in Jersey in very similar fashion that a lot of the pressure that is coming from that is some of the reasons behind

the recruitment and retention which has been showing in that evidence. So I do not know whether you have something specific to say on that area?

Chief Education Officer:

They have forgotten I do not work there anymore so I still get sent papers that I do not think I should get sent so I do have access to select committee papers and the rest. A lot of it, a few weeks later, is available on the website anyway so it is not all that secretive. It is very different. So the select committee evidence you will find in terms of morale of staff is focused not on pay, they are not focused on pensions, they are not focused on holidays, they are focused on 3 things. One is the Ofsted regime, great concerns over teachers and some teachers resigning during Ofsted inspections or when Ofsted inspections are due, taking 6 months out and then re-enlisting as a teacher in a school that has just been Ofsted inspected in order to avoid them because they are so unpleasant. That is one. The second is the behaviour of children, which is becoming problematic, particularly in some of the inner city schools, the assaults on staff are on the rise in England. There is a lot of evidence around that. The third is the volatility of the system itself. So you now have in England every single school able to have its own assessment arrangement, schools having their own terms and conditions of service, schools being able to set their own holidays. The list goes on. So the concern of the profession in England is that volatility, increasing behavioural issues and Ofsted. We do not have them to the same extent here. We have other issues. So we will watch that play out, but much of the difficulty that England is facing this Island has stayed away from. I think we have stayed away from some of the fantastic things that have gone on in England as we need to import those but sometimes you can learn from other people's mistakes and there is a lot of mistakes taking place in England at the moment. We try our best not to replicate here.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Moving on?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Talking about class sizes, how many schools, which have a planned maximum of 26 per class, but can increase numbers for children in the catchment area to 28 and then up to 30 for exceptional reasons, how many are above the 26 children in a class?

The Minister for Education:

I am just handing you the figures that give you directly what we are trying to do. Again, we set our own class sizes, this has not been specified for us. We try to keep to the 26 but, as you can see, it fluctuates depending on all the various aspects a school has to negotiate. I think we only have one school at the moment, which is St. Peter's, which is at the 28.3 level but on average the class sizes are down at 24.8.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

That is on average so do you know what the absolute number of classes that are above what you are aiming for is? Because you have some classes with a much lower number ...

The Minister for Education:

That is why I provided you with a list so you can see directly where these relate to. They do fluctuate. I sit on all the appeals for these as well, so it is in my sight that I am trying to keep class sizes down as close as we can to the desired 26. But, again, due to things like special educational needs or various factors relating to family we can increase those with speaking to the heads of the schools.

Chief Education Officer:

I see the point you make. So if you go back to St. Peter's at 28.3, the chances are one of those classes will be set at 30. We do not have that data with us but we do have it. We can get that to you. Just so we are being straight with you, the number of classes slightly over 26 or 28 has grown very slightly in the last couple of the years. As the bulge has come through we try not to have to have the cost of opening too many new classrooms. We have opened 14 new classes in terms of capital build and extra teachers. But that bulge is working its way through the school. What we do not want to do is open too many classrooms and then have them lie empty. So that number has increased but we can get you those figures. We do not have them with us.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, that would be helpful. This is helpful in itself but those alternative stats will be helpful as well. You spoke about the bulge, presumably you will be able to anticipate what class sizes may be simply based on knowing ...

Chief Education Officer:

Yes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

... how many kids are born in the Island. So do you anticipate these numbers going down then?

Chief Education Officer:

As the bulge works, it is the current perception. So as that works its way through, there was another slight bulge a few years ago which is coming to the end of primary, that is all heading to our secondary schools. The Island has got a really good record of forecasting its figures pretty accurately. We know the birth rates. We get that and also we have got historical trends of migration so we know more or less. The older the children get ... so secondary schools, for example, our

figures are plus or minus less than 1 per cent because we know where these kids live. It sound a bit threatening but we know where they live. Birth rates are more difficult to predict. We have to second-guess people's romantic inclinations so it is quite difficult. What we do not want to do is open lots of classrooms for a short problem and then leave them sitting empty. What happens is primary schools particularly are very good at making use of empty classrooms, they will turn into all sorts of stuff but then they have to heat them, run them and maintain them and it adds to the cost.

The Minister for Education:

It is interesting the dynamic, not all teachers are prone to say smaller class sizes are great. I was speaking to a head the other day who likes the large class size because she thinks the dynamic is so much better in the room.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

What are the current legal requirements regarding capacity and how do you balance meeting those requirements with the inevitable occasional period where there is a year group with a particularly large number of children there? How do you find that right balance?

[10:45]

Chief Education Officer:

If there is any class that is going to go above 26 or certainly get past 28 we will always sit ... we have a ministerial briefing every fortnight and we will bring those to the Minister and we will explain why it is we need to go past. We also take the view of the head teacher. So some of our schools, for example, if you go back to the Minister's point, could take 33 or 34 but, of course ... and you could still have a really well run lesson. But others where you have very needy children who need a lot of attention you need to keep the class sizes smaller. So we need to get a balance between making sure as many children as possible can go to their local school without having to travel and also where their peers are going but at the same time have a mind about the quality of education in the schools. So we take each case individually and think about the nature of the kids in that class, where the children live and then we will talk it through with the Minister.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Do you anticipate any problems in the future based on the stats?

Chief Education Officer:

No, it is always going to be tight. It is always going to be difficult but we have got enough flexibility I think to get that balance about right. Very few parents are disappointed with the school they go to and even when we have parents who we ask to send their children to a school not of their first

choice, once they visit the school they are usually very happy wherever they go. It is very small numbers.

The Deputy of St. John:

Can I ask then part of this business plan is to improve standards in schools? How does the size of a classroom impact on that, or does it at all?

Chief Education Officer:

It is important. The average class size here is 24.8 puts us below England. Secondary class size is about equivalent to England. Because of the nature of our children and the well-designed buildings we are already at an advantage. Should we have the same class size as England I think we are at an advantage already. The fact we have got slightly smaller classes puts us at an additional advantage. The main issue for us is the quality of teaching, the quality of assessment, knowing your children well. An extra one or 2 children either side makes a difference but not as significant as the quality of the teaching.

The Minister for Education:

We have very open conversation with our heads, so that notion of autonomy, the heads making decisions about how many in each class and the like and using the T.A.s, it is really open and again from the particular position when I am on an appeal one of the first things I will do is if I get a really very difficult decision, I will speak to the head about the situation. They can then articulate what their views are.

Chief Education Officer:

When you walk around our schools, one of the very first things you will notice is they do not feel squashed, they do not feel busy, they do not feel as if there are too many children there. There is space. They are civilised, they are relaxed, they are orderly; they are calm on the whole. We get the odd flair up. So we have got the right number of children in our schools. I have a number of concerns but that is not one of them.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

With the possible exception of St. Luke's, which they do wonders on the small site they have.

Chief Education Officer:

Even there, it is tiny but it is quirky. It is a lovely school and it works fine at St. Luke's.

The Minister for Education:

You have to use what you have got. The size of St. Luke's is what it is but the director is quite right, every time I have been there, and I have been there 3 or 4 times now, we are highly delighted about the quality of teachers there.

Chief Education Officer:

We are about to put a nursery in there, of course.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Anything else, Minister? No. Okay, so moving on. Looking at the statistical breakdown that we have received one thing that I think struck the panel was looking at children with English as an additional language or second language, or English not being their first language, however you want to define it, when we looked at it it broke down to about a fifth of all students, which struck us as perhaps being higher than we realised or appreciated. I wonder if you could just tell us how that impacts upon the education service.

The Minister for Education:

Okay. We have provided it there so you have it on the same sheet as the breakdown again. In terms of how we accommodate it, obviously again it is down to the heads to identify what the needs are at their particular schools. You will see some of the schools, like Rouge Bouillon in particular has a very high level of that and within the department we make sure that that is covered by support.

Chief Education Officer:

Yes, bear in mind the 23.8 per cent there, that includes children who while English is not their first language they are fluent nevertheless. In fact we have some children who are almost fluent in 3 languages. It is not that a quarter of the children cannot cope with the language in schools; that is not the case. The second thing to say is that interestingly in Jersey, and like anywhere else, it is often seen as a problem and it really is not. It makes our schools more interesting. Children who are acquiring English acquire it very quickly. Our job is to meet the needs of children as they go through, whatever those needs may be. If they are shy, we deal with that; if they struggle with their reading, we will support that; if they do not have English as a first language, we will deal with that issue. So it is not a problem for us and it is not unusual. We have a support service which is based at Rouge Bouillon that is also peripatetic and we will go out to schools and work with children. I spent the day with them working with those children and they have an enormous impact. The tricky bit for us is the children who arrive who are a little older without English as a first language, because they arrive in our primary schools ... particularly very young children, you will know yourselves, absorb languages like a sponge and within weeks they are functioning and within months they are fully learning within the curriculum. If children arrive here and they are 13, 14, 15 without English as a first language that is more problematic because they do not absorb the language quite so

quickly. So we have to put a lot of resource into them quickly. But if you look at the data, children without English as a first language ... look at Grainville, for example, has a lot of secondary school children without English as a first language, they make some of the best progress on the Island. If we look at their starting point and where they finish they make really good progress. So it is something we are aware of and it is something we will continue to monitor. If the numbers rise we will have to think about moving additional resource to meet the need, but it is part of the day job for us. It really is not an issue.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

In terms of the stats for this, on this sheet we only have the primary schools, it would probably be useful to have a look at the secondary schools for the reasons you say about it.

Chief Education Officer:

It is similar figures.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The nature of learning English is different the older you are. Also, within these stats we initially cannot see what the breakdown, if there is one, of proficiency in English. Because obviously your second language could well be one that you only speak a few words of or it could be one that you are virtually fluent in, it just happens to be the second one you learn. I remember when I was at school there were some children from Portuguese families for whom English was their second language but who spoke it and wrote it better than some of the Jersey born kids, they were so proficient at it. So do you any sort of grading system to work out just how good someone's English is when it is their second language because if they are completely fluent then of course they will not need any extra support. It will just be like learning it in their first language, but if they are not so good how they feature in these stats could potentially be misleading.

Chief Education Officer:

Yes, that is a good point. We do but it is not good enough. Our E.A.L (English Additional Language) service has a filtering system that meets all the children, talks to them, grades them and sets up individual learning programmes but it is not recorded as well as it should be. It is recorded well in schools, this child is here, this one is here, they know what they are doing but as a department we are not recording that. We do not, for example, even record ethnicity. We record on language but not ethnicity. That will change when our new M.I. (Management Information) system kicks in, which is being introduced as we speak. So the training is rolling out across our schools now. So our new system will be in place during the summer and we will use it from 1st September. We will correct it at that point. So what we have at the moment, to be frank, is a spreadsheet in the E.A.L. service with all the kids' names and all their assessments, but it is not on our system because the current

system we have could not cope with it. So we will build that into the new system. So we are comfortable that the professional part is when the schools look at this data and are comfortable, we simply do not have it at the centre. It will be this time next year before we have it.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

When you do have it do you anticipate how you allocate resources may change when you get a greater understanding of it?

Chief Education Officer:

Probably not because the service that allocates the resources does have this data. I am told by the person who runs the service: "Well, I have it, why do you want it?" "I am interested." For all the reasons you suggest. So I suspect not but I think it is data we ought to have because we ought to track those children's progress as they go.

The Minister for Education:

But, equally, we have always had a very inclusive profession with regard to the children and I think it makes for a good socio-economic background out there. We do not have the concerns that other jurisdictions have because the children have been through this inclusive society where these things are dealt with right at the beginning.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Shall we move to question 6?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes. Okay, on to possibly, I think, one of our favourite subjects. Following questions in the States regarding nursery education funding, could you explain exactly what the issues are with regards to this delay?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, it is a couple of months now since the decision was made in the States. I think to some extent we, as a department, possibly were caught a bit short thinking we would be able to convince the States that it was not the thing to do to bring in the means testing right across the board. Having got to that position now and because we have gone through a trial by fire with regards to the private nurseries and all the other nurseries, we wanted to get to a position where we were back on a level playing field again. So we had some meetings with them at which the director in particular has been privy to. I have only attended one since that point. The concerns there related to how can we make it effective, how do we move forward with the situation we find ourselves in and in particular we wanted to make sure that the heads of the primary schools were on board and understood what the

situation was. As we started to dig into, we felt it was far more complicated than we had perhaps already identified. In that circumstance, we needed then at the time to begin to discuss it a little bit further. Certainly that was the indication from those around it.

The Deputy of St. John:

So what is the actual complication?

Chief Education Officer:

I think one of the problems with the decision is a lack of understanding of how the 2 systems are completely different. The first thing to say is that our concerns over this remain. This is a damaging decision. So if you compare our system with similar systems, we already have a States nursery ... let me go back a bit. Perhaps I should not be rehearsing this but I feel strongly about it so it is an opportunity to do so.

The Deputy of St. John:

We will bring you back to line, do not worry.

Chief Education Officer:

If you look at the education system that our children have to go on, it is a marathon. They start in nursery and they finish in the sixth form. That is a marathon run over a long time. The nursery year is so important because it is the one they learn social skills, it is a really important start to that continuum over that period of time. When we run a marathon we do not give everybody else a head start but here in Jersey we do. So in Jersey we only give 20 hours of free nursery provision at the moment to anybody who lives on the Island. Elsewhere it is 30 so we have already cut by a third the free nursery provision. Now what we are going to say is instead of everybody gets a free nursery place and if you can afford it and want to go private, you earn over £100,000 you have to pay for it, but everybody can go for free on the Island. We are now saying not everybody can have a free nursery education. I think it is retrograde step. The problem is that if you means test just the private bit it is terribly simple because we have service level agreements, we have a funding model ... well, it is relatively simple to do. If you want to means test every single family on the Island with children then that becomes a much bigger piece of work that Social Security need to work with us on. Having reduced our nursery to 20 hours from 30, having then said it is not going to be free to everybody, we thought: "Well, let us get this right or else we are going to do even more damage to what is a really important part of the education system." We have 2 choices: we could introduce means testing in the private sector straightaway because we are geared up to do that and make that saving and then follow the following year, but we thought that would be terribly controversial and people would be very upset by it. The nature of the debate in the Chamber was all about parity so we thought rather than rush it and make even more damage in the nursery year, we will take our time and get it

right. Work with Social Security and work it through. It gives us a problem in terms of our savings in the first year and so what we are asking the Treasury to do is that some of the money that we are going to give back to the Treasury as an underspend in one or 2 areas, to allow us to have some of that back as a carry forward to offset that saving. So instead of making the whole saving during 2017 what we are saying is in terms of our carry forwards, allow us to carry forward a bit of that underspend to cover that saving. If not, we will have to make savings elsewhere, but we are worried we will get this wrong and it will cause confusion. We need time to get it right.

The Deputy of St. John:

Can I just pin you down on some of the things you just said then? You said it was a damaging decision. What part?

[11:00]

Was it the amendment that was the damaging decision or was it the department coming forward and saying: "We need to means test"?

Chief Education Officer:

No. I think the decision to say that we cannot have a free nursery education for everybody on the Island is a mistake. We are going to rewind it all. Let us take year 1, kids are finished nursery, they in year 1, you have 3 choices: you can send your children free to school; or you can send your children to a school and pay part of it; or you can go completely private. What we are proposing is exactly the same in nursery. Everybody could go to nursery for free but if you decided you want to go private you pay for one year only.

The Deputy of St. John:

But nursery is not part of your legal requirement.

Chief Education Officer:

Neither is sixth form. It is exactly the same, sixth form is not a legal requirement.

The Deputy of St. John:

Are you applying the same context to sixth form?

Chief Education Officer:

No, I am saying that is the logic of means testing nursery for all children on the Island. You could apply that for sixth form. So you get to the end of ... it is the same thing, it is not statutory but we would not dream of starting a means test sixth form provision. What we will do in Jersey if we are

not careful is treat nursery as if it is an added extra, it is not; it is part of that continuum. So I think it is the wrong thing to do but that is the decision so we are going to do it, but if we are going to do it and it is something we do not think we should do it but we are going to do it because that is the political will, let us do it properly. Let us not rush it and get it wrong.

The Deputy of St. John:

Is it not because there is no clarity over what nursery is or what parental choice is when it comes to nursery because, like you stated, you do not start education legally until 4, 5. You have specifically referred to nursery education but there is parental choice in terms of learning through play or just being at nursery in terms of childminding. So maybe if you could set out exactly what you mean from the N.E.F. (Nursery Education Fund) point of view. Is it purely that add-on educational part or is nursery more than that?

Chief Education Officer:

There was a lot of confusion over this. N.E.F. is just a budget. The N.E.F. is a pot of money. That is it.

The Minister for Education:

Which is under threat.

Chief Education Officer:

Yes. It is an overspending discretionary grant which was overspending by about £500,000. So the N.E.F. is not a provision. It is not a form of education or charm. It is a pot of money. Forget the N.E.F. for a moment, in Jersey you can send your children to a free nursery programme or you can send them private. It is as simple as that. The N.E.F. is just a pot. So if you are going to send them private we will pay for 20 hours. The N.E.F. itself is not a provision. It is just the budget and I think there is some confusion there. So I think we are doing exactly the right thing because, as we said at the time, if you have got any family who have earned over £100,000 who now would have to pay if they chose to send their children private. We could pay for 4 of the children we were talking about earlier in terms of Jersey premium. We are spending ... well, more than 4, we are spending £700 on those children. So I think this is absolutely the right thing to do. I think the outcome of the debate is the outcome and that is it. We will do it. I am perfectly entitled to say I think it is the wrong thing to do but we will do it and we will do it in such a way that it causes as little damage as possible. I think getting the administrative mechanisms wrong in identifying the wrong families; it would be too chaotic.

The Deputy of St. John:

Would you not accept that having a debate about nursery purely in a budget context though does not assist or help anyone and that we should be having a debate about what nursery should be?

The Minister for Education:

I think you said before about communication. I think communicating the difference between childcare and nursery education is something that we do need to do. I do not think people appreciate it or understand it. What they are driven by in this society in Jersey is the need to go out and earn and look for nursery provision and nursery childcare which is one of the reasons behind this. We have been saying to the private practitioners: "We close our schools at certain times. What if you took those over and you could offer more provision, so more holistic wraparound care for the children" because that is something that we are looking for. We need to articulate all of those points of view and I think you are quite right, I do not think we communicate that enough and I think that was one of the arguments or the discussion or the debate surrounding more about the actual funding itself and the parity sort of rose to the surface as opposed to understanding the clarity between what we are trying to adopt. In the U.K. they have been very clear what they mean about nursery education now and that is becoming ... that is the point we were making about putting qualified teachers in at that point in time and having a continuity running through the school.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I am just conscious of time so we will drop question 7 and then if we move to question 8. That is Deputy Vallois, back to you.

The Deputy of St. John:

During the last quarterly hearing you mentioned financial autonomy and delegated financial management and you stated that there was a gap between the rhetoric and the reality of the situation. What is the reality?

The Minister for Education:

Are you talking about what we have spoken about in terms of autonomy of schools and in terms of how they can handle their budgets? I think that is what you are about. Yes. I mean we have been saying right from the beginning ... we had our 4 principles set out there, which was to do with increasing standards, working with families and in particular autonomy and that was, in some respects, greater freedom. I think what the director has attempted to do is to give more latitude in terms of the way the heads design their budgets with more information behind that so that they can make better informed decisions but I think there is probably some way still to go on that. Do you want to articulate?

Chief Education Officer:

Yes. Of the 4 areas we put our hand on our heart and say our priority is of raising standards. We are slightly ahead of where we plan to be. We are certainly ahead of where we plan to be in terms of rewriting the curriculum, Development Assessment Framework. We are bang on schedule for working with families. We are slightly behind on freeing schools up, as we talked about. Lots of reasons; good reasons for that. Nevertheless, we have gone some way. For example, schools have much greater freedom now in terms of recruiting staff. We are devolving to schools from 1st January. The first 4 schools with the special needs bases. Those bases will devolve to schools so schools' head teachers will manage those bases rather than at the centre. All of them will be devolved by the following January. So we have head teachers sitting on our Senior Management Team. That is 4 members of the S.M.T. (Senior Management Team) making decisions for teacher decisions. We have a head teacher on our special educational needs because that is one of the more volatile spending areas. Senior Management Team, we have head teachers making decisions over exceptional needs funding and the list goes on. So we have freed up an awful lot but there is a lot to go. In terms of the money I would say there are 2 things which are problematic in terms of the heads of financial planning. The first is they only have a one-year budget. In my view, in order to manage what are very large budgets, in the case of secondary schools, multi-million pound budgets, you need at least a 3-year budgetary framework. You cannot budget on a year-by-year basis running a business.

The Deputy of St. John:

But that was the point in the M.T.F.P. (Medium Term Financial Plan).

Chief Education Officer:

But we only settled on one year. So we have not been able to give out 3-year budgets until now. So giving schools 3-year budgets I think will make a big difference rather than year by year. However, that is only helpful if you allow schools freedom over the 3-year period and at the moment we have a fixed point of carry forward of 3 per cent. Now, if you are a school and you know you are going to replace your I.T. (information technology) system or you know you are going to develop your nursery or you want to ... you need to save for financial management. Our schools, if they go over 3 per cent, the money is under threat and it can be clawed back, so we need to change that not least because, of course, we run on academic years, not financial years. So there is lots in the detail but the 2 big issues are giving schools a 3-year budget and control over carry forwards within reasonable measures. In England, for example, if you go above 8 per cent it is looked at but if there is a good reason, even at 8 per cent, then that is fine. If you are not careful you end up with schools at the end of the year and if they have got a little bit of money rather than carry it forward they will spend it to stay within the 3 per cent. That is poor financial management. So there is a lot of detail but the 2 big ones are 3-year budgets but then the ability to roll money forward without it being at risk and I think that is a better way of using money.

The Deputy of St. John:

So in terms of carry forwards, rather than suggesting changing the 3 per cent to 8 per cent like the U.K. in fact carry forwards are just a problem in themselves?

Chief Education Officer:

No. My own view is that carry forwards are sometimes seen as underspends. They are not. It is called financial management. I mean if we spent everything we earned within 3 per cent each month for each year we would never go on holiday. Christmas would be off. We cannot afford Christmas in one month. Well, I cannot. That is what we are asking schools to do. We are asking schools to manage in a straightjacket rather than a framework. What we want to do is to expand the financial rules for schools. So they have got a framework, because this is public money, and those are the 2 big areas; 3-year budget and then for us to look at carry forwards and monitor them carefully but there is a default position, it should be, it is okay to carry money forward if you operate on a different year than the financial year. It is inevitable. If you run September to September and most of your staff come and go in May and September you are going to have a carry forward and at the moment our schools are working hard to avoid what is natural financial activity because of the academic year. Academy chains, for example, in England have changed their financial years to academic years and the problem has gone away. So those are the kind of things we need to look at and to be fair to colleagues in the Treasury and to our schools we have not got to this yet so we have not made our case yet.

The Deputy of St. John:

You are an accounting officer and therefore you have to abide by financial directions. Have you not got the ability to exempt yourself because of the different year?

Chief Education Officer:

No.

The Deputy of St. John:

Okay.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Who sets these percentage rates? Is it the department or is it the Treasury?

Chief Education Officer:

The Treasury. But we have an F.D. (financial director) that works very closely with them.

The Minister for Education:

We have a very open dialogue.

Chief Education Officer:

But understand, I am not moaning, I understand the need to monitor carefully and the rest of it but the schools need a bit more freedom and I think the money will be spent more efficiently.

The Deputy of St. John:

I think this has been an ongoing issue for quite a few years though because of the different year spend in a school compared to a department.

The Minister for Education:

Yes, I do think even inside the Treasury itself, I do think that Treasury is beginning to understand it and appreciate our position.

Male Speaker:

Is it her fault?

The Minister for Education:

Tracey has probably made the right noises in the past.

The Deputy of St. John:

I think you need to look at the Minister for Treasury and Resources.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Just on the issue of autonomy, looking at Highlands College and Jersey University. I was up there recently speaking to one of the lecturers who identified a few issues and problems with being part lumped in with Highlands College and I wonder whether there has been any discussions about possibly separating them out.

Chief Education Officer:

There has not been but I think it is a fair point; financially, culturally, all sorts of reasons. You finish college and you go off to university and you go back to the same campus. So we have had very early conversations about it but to be honest it has not been on our priority list so far but I take the point.

The Minister for Education:

But you understand that this is an early bird in terms of where it came from. It came from the same source so it comes in to the new director and everybody else trying to identify what we have been trying to do all along. So at the same time you get myself with a new Minister, a new director. You have got the new head of Highlands who comes up with a concept and so this is very early on in that embryonic stage and I think it amplifies the situation we find ourselves in that there is a desire for a university college of Jersey and it seems to work exceptionally well. So I think the director is right. It is just early days in that.

Chief Education Officer:

It has worked up until now but it is expanding now. There are more courses but it does need looking at.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Some of the issues identified; so, for example, because they share the same I.T. system when they are given assignments looking at human trafficking or something like that, the students cannot, for example, go and research on the system topics or videos on those particular subjects and considering that this is now adult education, it is forming some problems. So I was just wondering whether ...

Chief Education Officer:

Yes, it is fair point and also if you go into the canteen ... I mean it is a lovely canteen. The students are terribly well behaved. It is a very civilised college; it is a delight to be there but you have kind of grown up a bit and you feel as if you need to be in a slightly different arena. So we have started looking at it and we have started looking at possible sites but it is very early days yet.

The Minister for Education:

Even to the point of we have contacted the National Union of Students and said: "Should we have a similar situation?" They have said: "We cannot quite do it this year but we will look at 2017." We have already got students who initially have come forward to me and said ... takes on board some of the stuff we have already traversed today. "We were contemplating going to the U.K. but for whatever reason we have not done that. We found ourselves here and we think it is fantastic. Can we sort of amplify that? Can people be more aware of what we have here on the Island?" The answer is yes and part of that will be having a student body of some kind.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you. Shall we move on to question 9 which is me? At the last hearing you mentioned the introduction of a scheme called Progress 8 and this is understood to be in connection with the value added concepts. So if you could just explain to the panel what exactly you mean by that?

The Minister for Education:

Okay. Can I just give you a hand out that kind of gives you a flavour of the points you brought up?

[11:15]

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes, thank you.

The Deputy of St. John:

I feel like I am at school. What are we learning today, teacher?

Chief Education Officer:

Okay. This is quite complicated but there is a logic. You mentioned earlier that we follow the English system. We do that for a number of reasons. Most of our trade is with England. We speak English. The vast majority of our kids go to English universities and a lot of them go. So there is a logic of going because we did look at whether that is necessary but we have got an English system. The approach here is to adopt but then adapt the English system. England, in my view correctly ... I say in my view correctly because I was on a panel that devised this, International Government, and it took 5 years to do it so I cannot say it is a bad idea. It was not my personal idea but I was on a group that designed it. There were 2 big problems with the English system. Firstly, if you go back to the 1980s when the G.C.S.E. (General Certificate of Secondary Education) was introduced the whole point of the G.C.S.E. is to have no pass and fail. The idea was instead of O Levels where you pass, G.C.S.E. was a range of grades and you found yourself ... the English population decided within about a year that if you did not get a C you failed. It was never set up for that. So you still ended up with a G.C.S.E. We might as well stick with the O Levels because it just replaced them. For years England has been holding schools to account over the golden measure of 5 grades A* to C including English and maths and the targets were set. So in England if you are a school and you are below 45 per cent of that measure you are seen to be below floor targets and you fail. The big problem with it, it only measures half the population because if you do not get 5 A* to C you are not included on any of the data and if you are not careful that means those children are just ignored. The problem with ignoring them at 16, schools are beginning to ignore them at 12 and 11. So these kids were coming in at the age of 11, schools were quickly saying: "This is not a kid who is going to get 5 A* to C." Outrageous because you have got them for 5 years, you ought to do all you can to get them. So we have kind of given them the worst teachers. We have kind of given them the smaller classroom. I mean it was all subconscious stuff. It is not a plot but there was a definite trend towards a focus on the higher attaining kids because of this measure 5 years later. So what England has done is say: "We are not going to measure you on that. You can get as many kids as you want

5 A* to C including English and maths. We are going to measure you on the progress every single child makes irrespective of what they get at the end of it.” Now, that is a big change in the English educational system and it is beginning to change the nature of the curriculum timetables. Who the best teachers go to. Teacher training. It is having a big impact. Here in Jersey; Jersey was not part of that debate. It was not part of that conversation so it is not quite ready so we are delaying by a year. We are going to follow the English, see how many mistakes they make and learn from a year. So that is the main thrust behind this, to have a broader set of principles to which you measure the progress of all children across a number of G.C.S.E.s. So what that looks like in Jersey, because it is different ... I have not given you the English system here. This is a page from a handout that we are working with heads so if you go to the top there are 3 buckets of subjects and the technical term, I am afraid, is bucket. We should have come up with something better. I cannot remember who came up with it but it was in England. What we are saying is the focus here should be on English and mathematics. These are key subjects. So when schools are tested and when children get their progress measure and their attainment measure it counts double. So whatever they get in English counts as 20 per cent. Whatever they get in maths counts as 20 per cent. Children are encouraged to do both English literature and English language. That is really important. We can talk about that all day long but I am absolutely insistent the kids should do English lit if they possibly can. If they do not, they do both but whichever one they do best in is the grade they get. If they only do one that only counts as 10 per cent. Then the second bucket, they have to do a science qualification plus 2 others and you have noticed in science we have got computer science in there because of the importance of the digital economy and the digital world so that now counts as science. Then there is modern languages and humanities. In Jersey we have included Portuguese for obvious reasons. Where it says Chinese it is Mandarin. We had to go for one or the other. The other subjects there are available including Polish and Mandarin and England so we have added Portuguese for a reason. Then 3 more from the subjects below and you will see then how it works out. So there is 2 examples here. Pupil A on the left at the bottom there ... so the added confusion, we are changing from A to G to 9 to one and that is going to change over the coming years. That was not my advice. I argued against that at length, as did the entire advisory panel, but that advice was ignored. So if they get a grade 5, which is the equivalent of C+ it doubles up, becomes 10. English lit, they have only done ... it doubles up, becomes 8 and see how it goes. Now, whatever the number of subjects the children do, whether it is 8, 9, 10, 11, the final score is divided by 10 and that gives you their average progress, their average attainment level. That is the first thing. So that is now given a score across a broad range of subjects but putting focus on English and mathematics for all children. It is a big step forward. Second step is to take that score and then look back to what they were capable of doing and understanding when they were 11 years old, 5 years earlier. So when the kids come into say Grainville School that is the benchmark. Five years later this is how they did against this broad range of subjects. How much progress did they make? If they make the same level of progress as the whole of the English population then they get zero. So if they are

making better progress they get a plus score. If they make less progress they get a minus score. That is called Progress 8. So Jersey 8 is straightforward what the kids get but no longer 5* to C including English and maths so all kids get a score, there is no pass or fail, and then progress is measured in terms of the progress made over a 5-year period. When we report our results in our evaluation framework on the website progress will always be communicated first because that is the measure that we really ought to be measuring ourselves on. So a child may end up with a very low attainment score but have made fantastic progress to get there for all sorts of reasons. So that is the system. So we have adopted the English system because we think it is a good system but we have tweaked it to include slightly different subjects. Add to that you will see ... if you go back up to that box where it says "select 3" I think it says somewhere. Qualifications Panel. It is on the footnote at the bottom: "Subject to agreement Jersey Approved Qualification Panel." When we looked at this as a curriculum council we had a number of our schools doing G.C.S.E.s which we thought did not have value in that they did not provide a secure progression route at 16. We did not want children pursuing a course to 16 and then it going nowhere, either at Highlands College or in the sixth form, so we have set up a panel of classroom practitioners and head teachers and if you want to introduce a new G.C.S.E. to Jersey you have to get it past the panel. You have to demonstrate to the panel that it is a good qualification, it is worth doing, and it allows progression at 16. The panel has met for the first time, 4 subjects came forward, 3 were agreed and one was dismissed. They said: "You cannot take it." So we have got some checks and balances to make sure that the courses we are running are *bone fide*. The last thing I will say on this; we are encouraging our schools to adopt the same syllabuses so that they can share training. They can share expertise. They can swap curriculum materials and teacher materials. They can exchange children's work and compare standards and progress and we will see. That would not have been easy 4 or 5 years ago because the syllabuses were so different. Now, if you look at the various syllabuses they are virtually identical so there is no need to have a plethora of exams. So that is basically where we are. I hope that is clear.

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, just about. Where do they start? How do you get to the starting point then at 11 years old? So you have gone through primary. You just talked about the secondary, you know, there is a crossover.

Chief Education Officer:

The benchmark?

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes.

Chief Education Officer:

I was hoping you were not going to ask that.

The Deputy of St. John:

Okay. I take it I am not going to like the answer.

Chief Education Officer:

No, you will. It is just that I have not got a slick answer. The problem is that while all this was going on, what England have also done is abandon levels. So when the national curriculum came in we had levels at which children would operate. By the time children ...

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Those were S.A.T.s (Standard Assessment Tests).

Chief Education Officer:

The S.A.T.s tests, okay, which we did not have the S.A.T.s test here. We have assessments at the same level. Yes, Standard Assessment Tests. Then when you left school at the age of 11, primary school at the end, you should have left with a level 4 in English, maths and science and you were ...

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Level 3.

Chief Education Officer:

Okay.

Male Speaker:

But you caught up.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Because I am dyslexic you see and we did not have the support in those days. Anyway, moving on.

Chief Education Officer:

Anyway. So levels have been scrapped under the new curriculum. Now, the problem is Jersey came to levels a little later than England and they have just got the hang of them. It is just now in the D.N.A. (deoxyribonucleic acid). England got bored with levels 4 or 5 years ago but Jersey has not yet. In 4 or 5 years' time Jersey will be saying: "Let us get rid of levels." We have not got to that point. So the Government is to remove levels but it has not replaced it with anything. That is the problem. That is why, going back to the point I was making at the Select Committee, teachers are

now saying: "Well, what am I assessing?" Every single school has to create its own assessment arrangement, its own assessment regime; every single one. So what is happening in effect is the academy chains; each chain is setting up their own assessment framework. Groups of schools that are not in academy chains are coming together. Local authorities have tried and failed to set them up. It is a shambles. It is a problem because we need to be able to hold schools to account and also to give schools a launching pad, as you say. These are what the kids can do now in 5 years' time. So those tests are not there and the levels are not there. So as an interim measure, 2 years only, while we get this sorted out, we have introduced our new assessment framework because we now have an assessment framework, unlike England, designed by schools for schools and all schools have adopted it but you need to run it for a few years before it is consistent across the Island. So we cannot use that data because it is not yet consistent enough. It has not been standardised. So in the meantime what we have done is brought in a test from G.L. (Grenada Learning) and we have put every child on the Island, in this September, the start of year 7, sat a test of English, maths and science which was marked off-Island, standardised off-Island, and we have now got that data back. So all of our secondary schools now have a standardised assessment in English, maths and science of all of the children in the current year 7s and that gives us an indicator of what they should be able to do in 5 years' time. We will probably run the same test next year and then hopefully the year after that our key stage to assessment will be secure enough for us to rely on.

The Deputy of St. John:

So are they doing the S.A.T.s at the end of year 6 or the beginning of year 7?

Chief Education Officer:

Beginning of year 7s. It is not a S.A.T. because they do not exist anymore but it is similar. It is a standard assessment and this year we did it at the beginning of year 7 because the decision making for Government in England took so long we had to delay it so that data is in. We have not published it yet but I can tell you that in English and science, bear in mind this is the same test sat by thousands of children in England, we are ahead, significantly ahead of England in the tests in English and science this year. Bang on the English. I would argue slightly ahead of England in maths but our statisticians say no, it is not. It is level.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Statistical significance, yes.

Chief Education Officer:

Yes, that old chestnut. Of course, if we are slightly below I play that card but we are slightly above. I am told by our stats people I cannot have it both ways. So ahead in English, ahead in science, bang on England in terms of mathematics.

The Deputy of St. John:

So are they doing the tests in the U.K. at the beginning of September as well?

Chief Education Officer:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. John:

At the beginning of year 7, sorry? All at the same time?

Chief Education Officer:

All at the same time.

The Deputy of St. John:

So they have got the whole of the summer to revise for it.

Chief Education Officer:

Yes, and our kids did not and we still did better. It is not the kind of test you can revise for easily.

The Deputy of St. John:

Brush yourself up on that.

Chief Education Officer:

But that is the same for all the kids who sat it. So if we are ahead ...

The Deputy of St. John:

So this will be next year and then ...

Chief Education Officer:

Next year ... well, we will do our ... we will carry out our year 6 assessments and then we will analyse them across the schools and if it is consistent next year we will use it. If it is still not consistent enough we will not publish it, we will not use it, and we will sit this test again. What we will not do is rely on data and publish data that we do not think is consistent across the Island. That would be reckless. We always knew that it was not going to be consistent first time round. The levels were not. The levels took 3 years to settle in. So we ran the assessment through the system and we also

did some pilot S.A.T.s and used that to test the veracity of the assessment. It was not reliable enough so all the kids sat this test. I suspect we will have to do the same next year. Fingers crossed we will not but I suspect we will have to and then the following year our assessment arrangements will be spot on. Going back to the point we were talking about autonomy, in England where there is no assessment framework, it has been thrown away, here in Jersey while we talk about autonomy of schools it would be within a framework and there will be 4 key pillars, which will not be up for negotiation, and one of them is the curriculum reassessment framework. There is no point having a Jersey curriculum and a Jersey assessment framework and then make it optional.

[11:30]

So that will not be optional. That will be one of the 4 key pillars of the new autonomy and schools know that. Interesting; that was insisted upon by the unions who were very keen on that.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Is there anything anyone wants to ask on this section? No. Can I ...

Chief Education Officer:

We could do a whole day on it.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes, exactly. It is ...

Chief Education Officer:

The trouble is I am really interested in it so I could rattle on all day about it.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Exactly. Is this form going to be taken to your Parents' Forum because I am sure they will have plenty to say? Very briefly then the last question from me. What connection does Education have with Social Security in relation to courses being offered?

The Minister for Education:

I think this is in relation to your ... going to your level 3, you are concerned about the dropping of your course at Highlands. Is that the situation?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

There might be a relation.

The Minister for Education:

No, I mean it is just a drop in numbers in relation to the students who want to take this course but for 2 reasons really, one is that the degree courses, we have increased the level of degree courses there so there has been more interest. Then the second thing is that there is ... so they are more interested in bringing ourselves, in some respects, up to date so the curriculum is perceived to be a little bit outdated and so the change has been made to reduce the sort of economic side of things and increase the psychology and that is where the interest of the students lie now. So there is a sort of relationship with Social Security, you are right, in terms of income support but the key to why we have found ourselves in this position, where your beloved course has disappeared, is because of student numbers dropping.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes, and certainly when I went up there to speak to the students one of the issues which they raised with me is partly because of the drop in numbers is how it is viewed by Social Security. So I wonder if, as Minister for Education, you can confirm or otherwise, certainly when I took it, the social sciences degree course was seen as a key qualification to go into public sector employment. Is that still the case?

The Minister for Education:

Well, I was surprised and I think it was ... I saw a comment come through where somebody, I do not know if it has been noted here, a student had said that it had been suggested when they went to Social Security that this was not something of value to them or whatever. I mean as far as I know that is not the case. We get this situation every so often where independent individuals have their own viewpoint on it and elicit them. As far as I am concerned, no, everything that we offer as degree courses is considered to be a degree course and the value for that should be considered. So I do not quite know where that kind of concept has come from.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay. So if we are saying that nothing has changed then, how education views the social science degree course because we know that the Minister for Social Security has a list to decide, for example, the nursing course and I think for the teaching course; the individuals can still get their income support from Social Security if they go for those particular educational courses but, for example, the social science course is not viewed in that same light it, therefore, does not have that crossover. I just wonder what discussions there has been between Education and Social Security given that the Minister for Social Security seems to have changed the list of the courses that are recognised in Social Security?

The Minister for Education:

I was not aware of that factor that you have just given to me there so I need to have that discussion. I was not aware that there was a change of any kind of consideration so I will need to go back and talk to the Minister for Social Security about that.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

In that case I will thank the Minister for that and we look forward to your response. Are there any other questions that the panel would like to ask the Minister? No. Can I just ask, as far as your work programme is concerned, is there anything you would like to raise and flag with the panel just so that we are aware of anything going forward?

The Minister for Education:

Yes, just one thing which is kind of nice to be able to say at this point in time is that when both, the director and myself, took office we were very keen in wanting to have a teachers' conference to get some of this information out there to the public and going back to the point Tracey was making earlier about communication. We just felt at that point in time we were not able to for all sorts of reasons, particularly to do with finance but this, in 2017, we are now focused on having a teachers' conference towards the backend of the year. So a 2-day conference that would hopefully, I think, the second day would be open to the public. So that is just something we are aiming for.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

If you advise us of those dates, as and when, I am sure ...

The Minister for Education:

We will definitely be telling you.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Might try to attend if we are able to. In which case, can I thank you both for providing evidence to the panel today? I will draw this session to a close and can I ask the media and public to exit in line with our protocols. Thank you very much.

[11:35]