

STATES OF JERSEY



SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY: REVIEW

**Lodged au Greffe on 3rd May 2005
by the Deputy of St. John**

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to request the Education, Sport and Culture Committee to review its primary school admissions policy and, in particular –

- (i) the criteria used for admission when a child already has a sibling at a particular school; and,
- (ii) the ‘distance from school’ policy;

and to report back to the States within 4 months.

DEPUTY OF ST. JOHN

REPORT

Recently, old established families in St. John have received letters from St. John's School which explains the policy of the Education, Sport and Culture Committee on children attending St. John's School (see letter at Appendix).

I believe the policy should be reviewed given that it allows families with children with no previous connection with St. John and, in some cases, families who may have just moved to the Island, to take precedence over local children.

A family who may just have moved into one of the new luxury homes built in the Parish but close to the School takes precedence over children in the more remote parts of the Parish like Le Mourier, Bonne Nuit Bay or Sion where families have lived and attended St. John's School for generations. Because of the Committee's policy, these families are being denied places because of the 'distance from school' policy. The second issue in the letter is the sibling policy. Can it be right that a "(j)" Category family move to the Island, living in the east of the Island are given a place at St. John's School for their child as a vacancy existed, then a second child comes along, instead of Education making it clear that when a vacancy is available in this family's own catchment area, the child would need to move or at the very least, any future children to the family would not necessarily be given a place at St. John's School but would be allocated a place in a school within their own catchment area with the option of moving the first child from St. John's School.

As the existing policies have been in place for many years, I ask the Education, Sport and Culture Committee to review their admissions policy and report back to the States within 4 months.

I do not believe there are any financial or manpower implications arising from this proposition as the review should be undertaken by officers of the Committee.

APPENDIX

To parents of September 2005's Reception intake who live in St. John's School catchment area.

Dear Mr. and Mrs.

I am writing to inform of the situation regarding allocation of Reception places and to let you know that this year I will not be able to offer places to all children in catchment, as we are heavily oversubscribed.

On Tuesday, January 18th I had a meeting with Mr. Jim Westwater, Head of Planning and Projects from the Education, Sport and Culture Department regarding this matter. We are working closely together to ensure that places are allocated in accordance with the Education Committee's admissions policy.

In line with the Education Committee's admissions policy I am to firstly offer places to children who have siblings in school. This year there are eighteen children who meet that criteria. This therefore means that I will only be able to offer places to eight out of the seventeen children in catchment. Once again in line with the Education Committee's admissions policy I will be offering these places in accordance with the criteria of 'distance from school', in other words to those children who live closest to school.

I know that you are keen for your child to come to St. John's School and that this may be very disappointing news for you but I felt it was important to let you know well in advance.

You will receive a letter by post from me on March 5th informing you as to whether or not your child has been allocated a place at St. John. If I am unable to offer you a place you will also receive a letter from the school that Mr. Westwater has allocated to you.

Should you have any enquiries then please do not hesitate to phone Mr. Westwater.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Pam Pitman
Headteacher