

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
BY DEPUTY M.R. HIGGINS OF ST. HELIER
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 25th JANUARY 2021
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 1st FEBRUARY 2021**

Question

Will the Minister advise members how many children in the Island's schools have been assessed as not having access to a computer or iPad, and explain what steps he and the Government are taking to overcome any educational disadvantage these children are experiencing with regards to home learning, especially during the pandemic?

Answer

The latest information that we have after surveying all GOJ schools in January 2021 is that they need 1200 devices. Schools have done a tremendous amount in reducing the original figures that they shared in March 2020 through re-directing their budgets or petitioning Jersey organisations for financial support.

Schools have an excellent understanding of how to mitigate against the challenges of supporting their children who do not have access or full access to a device. They have provided 'hard' copies of work that has been set on a weekly basis. They have also encouraged the use of phones by photographing written responses to work that is set and then responding to the photographic images. Naturally, this is not ideal but it shows how schools have tried to address the matter.

The Director General CYPES is working with Modernisation and Digital and others to source funding to purchase additional devices as required.

Currently, the vast majority of children are attending school. The experiences of the past year means that for most of these children, moving to a full closure or part closure would be managed effectively by schools. The teachers have been trained in online learning and they are experienced in preparing hard copies for those children who do not have access to devices.