



Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Quarterly Hearing

Witness: The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Wednesday, 7th May 2025

Panel:

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Chair)

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée of St. Helier South

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade

Witnesses:

Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier Central, The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central, Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Mr. K. Posner, Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.

Mr. J. Williams, Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.

Ms. J. Lancaster-Adlam, Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.

[9:30]

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Chair):

Welcome to this quarterly hearing of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. Today is 7th May. I would like to draw everyone's attention to the following. This hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent. I would ask any members of the public who have joined us in the room today to not interfere in the

proceedings, and as soon as the hearing is closed, please leave quietly. So now if we just start with introductions. I am Deputy Catherine Curtis, the chair of the panel.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée of St. Helier South:

I am Deputy Porée and I am a panel member.

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade:

Deputy Helen Miles, panel member.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Deputy Rob Ward, the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Deputy Carina Alves, Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Jonathan Williams, programme director for C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills).

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Keith Posner, interim chief officer for C.Y.P.E.S.

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Jane Lancaster-Adlam, associate director for Education.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you, everyone. The first set of questions are around the trans-inclusion guidance. The panel has been contacted by a number of members of the public who shared concerns about the updated trans-inclusion guidance, and also members of the public who have been supporting it. Minister, could you start by explaining your department's position with regards to supporting trans and gender diverse students in education and how the new trans-inclusion guidance reflects that?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, thank you for the questions. The trans-inclusion guidance is a reflection of the position in line with Jersey law. I need to say, in Jersey no child or person under 18 can receive any medical or specific therapeutic intervention, so this is non-statutory guidance supports our children receiving proportionate and supportive advice from appropriate services. The guidance, and it is really important it is understood it is guidance, is for schools and school leaders to enable them to respond

to any student who comes to them for advice. It also ensures that there is a consistent response to all our children, regardless of the school attended. I think they are the key points behind it.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Are there measures in place to protect then to questioning children from being subjected to bullying?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Well, that would be part of the school's normal anti-bullying policy. Trans is an identified characteristic within our Discrimination Law, and that needs to be remembered. But yes, it would be a normal part of anti-bullying policy within school. There are a number of issues that children ... you know, children are children at times, and they need to be checked every so often in terms of their behaviour.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Now I have to read out a fairly long question to be able to get the point across for my next one. On page 8 of the updated trans-inclusion guidance, it states that: "Gender dysphoria is treatable through a process called transitioning." It has been put to the panel that this statement fails to acknowledge that transitioning is not the only treatment option for gender dysphoria, and nor is it always the most appropriate one for every child, and that the statement risks discriminating against children who experience gender dysphoria but do not wish to transition. Could you describe the advice that your department received to frame the guidance in that way?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. First of all, I have to say schools are not medical professionals, and it is not their place to say what should and should not be done. I will say, though, that in the same paragraph that you mentioned, if you keep reading the next 2 sentences, the guidance discusses what transitioning could involve: "Social, medical and/or surgical intervention", and then it goes on to make sure that it is known that it is not available in Jersey, and also states it can only be "treated" by a medical professional and under the care of a gender therapist. It goes on to inform that there is no means under the age of 18 to see a gender therapist or to transition privately. I think you would have to go to the U.K. (United Kingdom) for that. They have different laws to us. So the process of transitioning is not supported in that way if you read the entire paragraph, and it makes clear that under the age of 18 there is no mechanism for that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. This sort of leads on to the next question, which is about the watch-and-wait policy that is mentioned. Minister, can you define and describe the watch-and-wait policy that is referenced in the guidance?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. I thank you for asking about this, because this has been sort of missed to some extent. Due to the fact that there is no available medical or clinical support for children identifying as trans in Jersey, watch and wait means that no medical or clinical intervention can take place. Schools will work with children and the family - very importantly - to ensure that there is support within, feel safe and manage their feelings in a proportionate way. There are clearly identified poor mental health outcomes, which disproportionately affect our trans community. Ensuring the right amount of support is in place to keep all our children safe emotionally, physically and mentally is of great importance to everyone in schools. Watch and wait is a term typically used in the medical field. Due to the fact that children who may state they are trans cannot have any medical or clinical support in Jersey, then no other policy can be employed. There is therefore a watch-and-wait policy. Keeping our children safe and ensuring that needs are met in a non-medical way is vital in making sure there is support in place for our children for their psychological, physical and mental safety threaded through the guidance. I think that is such an important point. Under the age of 19, there is nothing available. So there is clearly a watch-and-wait policy in place.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Another concern raised is about ... or maybe a very good thing, I do not know. But the case-by-case basis assessment and decision-making. Can you describe the structure that is in place to facilitate this? Presumably it would be difficult for teachers.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. This is the point about guidance. It is a very difficult space for teachers to be in. I would also say there are very, very few examples of this, which to some extent makes it even more important because it has to be got right. There is a flow chart on page 29. I just wanted to add as well that the watch-and-wait policy also comes into this flow chart, which does not place any pressure on the child to live or behave in accordance with their registered birth if they want to do that, or move rapidly to social transitioning. If you like, it is a neutral position of purely support that has been put in place because there is no facility on the Island to give a diagnosis or to act on it. So the flow chart - I do not have in front of me I am afraid but it is in the guidance - will give a number of options around that space. But the interpretation that has been made of saying that children are encouraged is simply not the case.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Can I just add something on the watch-and-wait approach? It is not something that is just considered in this scenario across schools, we also use it when we are dealing with scenarios suspected of autism, A.D.H.D. (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) or sexuality questioning, for example. It is not just an approach that is used within this guidance.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is a recognition that children grow and they go through periods of their life where they may experience different experiences. It is very important that watch-and-wait policy.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. We were talking about the assessing and decision-making on a case-by-case basis as well, because this is quite a responsibility for teachers, is it not? How is your department supporting schools to implement this guidance consistently, especially in areas where community views may differ? You may have some families who feel very strongly against this or for the guidance. How is the department supporting the schools?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. That is exactly the really difficult position that schools are in, and they are in those positions a lot of the time around any sort of social issue. Each school will have a designated safeguarding lead, and they are the person really responsible for supporting staff with the process outlined in document. I know from my own experience of being a teacher, if a child approached me with anything that they wanted to disclose, I would immediately say: "I am not going to keep this to myself because I think it is really important that you talk to somebody, and the safeguard leaders are probably in a much better position than myself" and then teachers in term. There is a mechanism to do that, to encourage children to be open about where they are, to engage with their family, to be engaged with other people as well. There is a much fuller support mechanism in place there. Young people have to come to terms with a lot of changes and how they are in their life, in their own timeframe, and I think it is important that people are allowed to do that without pressure being put on either way.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. The safeguarding leads could support the teachers as well in their ...?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

You have also got obviously the S.E.N.C.o. (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator), you have got mental health first aiders, and other kind of specialist staff.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is very important. Yes, thanks. Schools have moved an enormous distance, although it is not perfect yet because the need is growing across schools in so many areas, I absolutely recognise that, would not deny that. That is one of the challenges we have got in the future. But safeguarding the S.E.N.C.o., mental health first aiders, the way ... what was the thing I went to with the children where we were teaching them about how to resolve conflict resolution?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Resilience, yes; the resolution-centre stuff.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. All of these things are working so that children have ways to work through not just this, but lots of other areas that they find challenging in their lives. I think those are having real success in our schools to enable children to work things through.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

This next question is about where some children might want something, some other children might want something else. In terms of safeguarding on school trips and residential, how does the department support schools in balancing inclusion with privacy and safety, particularly with respect to dormitory arrangements for transgender pupils?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is done on a case-by-case basis. I have been on a number of school trips off-Island, and the risk assessment is a folder that thick on every single issue that you could possibly ... from crossing the road to what you are going to do to ensure children are in their rooms at night, for example, because children are children. Risk assessments, which must be completed, and any consideration and mitigation is catered for. This can be bespoke, so it may be separate sleeping arrangements, it might be a waking watch, but the safety of all children will be taken into account on a trip. There are scenarios when you go on a trip where you know that 2 children, for example, are in a relationship. You have to be extremely careful on a trip when that is happening. This is the reality of life when you are acting in *loco parentis* for a group of children when you take them away. This is just another area where safeguarding and a full risk assessment would be produced in terms of the safety of all children involved. Parents also have meetings with the staff running the trips, any questions can be raised, any concerns can be raised, because the last thing you want on the trip is a child not being

happy when you are in the middle of Barcelona or Rome or any place around the world that you may go to with a group of young people.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. So that is a case-by-case basis and full risk assessment of ...

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

But, sorry, could I just make the point though, that would be the case on so many different areas? This is not a new thing to work on a case-by-case basis.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. This next question is something that I was actually quite puzzled about. Minister, section 29 of the guidance highlights the potential need for additional support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities in understanding their own identity. Could you outline what evidence or research has informed this approach, and also confirm what resources are available to support staff? Because I am just not sure what it was getting at there.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think this is where the specially trained, especially the S.E.N.C.o and a designated safeguarding lead, and mental health first aiders come into effect. Where children are in a specialist setting, for example, with significant needs, there may be issues around identity, there may be issues around a number of different areas of their being, which require multi-agency approaches to them, and that would be part of the process of saying: "Okay. How are we going to work through this?" Remember that context always behind this, that there is no under the age of 18 mechanism at all for any diagnosis or any medical treatment. So any issue that is written must be addressed by the support by talking, by - I do not know what the phrase -- talking, I suppose.

[9:45]

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. It is just the way it was written, I did not quite grasp what it meant. Is that referring to children with special educational needs who are gender questioning? Is that what it is referring to?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

No. I think it is wider than just gender questioning, it is about in terms of their identity, as their behaviour age, their ...

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is finding their way in the world, is it not, and understanding themselves?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. Their social age. If a child with a ... sorry, to interrupt. A child with a specific educational need may be older but may not have behaviours that fit around that age. I think that is the most frequent example of that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. I still do not quite get it, because I would have thought they knew as much about their identity as anyone else would, but anyway I will leave it at that.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think it is the word “identity” that is the issue there, because identity is a much broader issue, but also that is an important word because it is around identity as you grow in the world. If you have severe needs - no, severe is the wrong word - significant needs that need to be addressed, one of the issues may be is what the Deputy here said, how you find your way in the world. I think what has happened there is the word “identity” has been used. I mean it is a I do not know how many thousand-word document, so the odd word you have to be careful with. We can look at that, absolutely.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Can I just ask, would you say that the schools can act as a safer place for children to explore their identities?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Schools should be a safe ...

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Without judgment or ...

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Well, I think schools should be a safe place for children, full stop. But one of the most important comments about a school is the relationship between the school, the child and the family. When those 3 things, that tri-number of relationships go well, then I think schools deal every single day with challenges from across the board. Those relationships are really important. One of the first things you would do as a teacher is try and engage with family. That could be about: “Why is your child late every morning?” to all sorts of issues and disclosures. Yes, it is a very difficult thing to do. We live in a complex world and children have complex experiences. But teachers are doing their

very best to do that. Remember, at the same time, they are trying to deliver a curriculum, get results, and then challenge some results, which are published in the newspapers, out of context. It is a really challenging role.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think sometimes school can be a safe haven for a lot of young people where their family or home life may be very different, so it does provide that level of stability and safety to them. I think that is really important that all schools do that, and they do have that option, so that any student can feel comfortable and know that they are safe.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

But that is wider than any one issue. That is across so many different areas.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

If I ask one more question on this and then see if the panel members wanted to ask anything else. What indicators will you use to measure whether the guidance is improving the school experience for students, and how will that feedback be captured?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is difficult in terms of indicating in terms of quantitative indicators, but there will be a review of schools with the children and families that have called to be part of the process outlining trans guidance because children and families were included, and this will take place in October 2025. I think that the evaluation needs to go around what is different, what has worked well, where do you see problems, where have there been challenges?

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Just to also pick up as well, on page 10 of the guidance, staff training is recommended every 2 years.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

This area has been highlighted recently, and perhaps it is healthy to put some clarity when we answer questions today. But this is not something that is new to schools. Schools have dealt with these issues and dealt with lots of issues for many years. There is not an agenda for any school other than to look after their children, make sure all children feel safe and secure in being at school, and hopefully achieve really well, do well, go and get really good jobs and earn lots of money and pay their taxes and pay all our pensions. I keep saying that, it is a bit of an extrapolation there.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Sorry, I may have missed what you said about the evaluation. You said October 2025.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

2025, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Who will be asked about how that is?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It will be effectively anyone involved with the guidance and any schools. See, this is the thing, because it is small numbers, I think the best thing would be to go to schools and say: "Okay. How have you used the guidance? Where has it fitted in? What has worked well? What has not? Are there families that have had a problem with the guidance? Where have those problems been?"

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It would be headteachers who would be asked then, I expect?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Well it would be staff, probably the designating safeguarding leads, the S.E.N.C.o.s would be our perhaps most appropriate person to do that, with the headteachers having an overview.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Have you had any initial feedback, or early feedback, from parents to the department, or teachers to the departments? Because it is quite a newly published policy that had quite a high profile.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. To be absolutely honest, not really. Because I think schools just look at it and say: "Well, we are dealing with these issues all the time. There is new guidance. Thank you very much." Because they are small numbers ... I will be controversial and say perhaps a lot of teachers will only read it when it becomes relevant, and therefore most teachers will never read the guidance. They are getting on with their day-to-day jobs and caring for children. There will be many teachers who will say: "Look, I really think I know how to care for children. We are not trying to promote anything either way. I have been neutral throughout my entire career. Thanks for the guidance. I will use it where it is appropriate." I think that is going to be the way that this develops in terms of saying okay ... I think that is the practicality. Where is the issue that we are trying to address? What is the issue

in our schools? Is there something that is growing? Is there something that has become a real problem? If so, does the guidance help us with addressing that issue? If it does not, then let us address that guidance and let us address where we are going. But at the moment, I may be wrong, but I have not seen massive issues in our schools.

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

No. Schools actually wanted the guidance. It was headteachers that came forward, and that is how it was driven forward.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. Because this is a difficult area, I think some things have been conflated together regards with this. One of the issues was around toilets. Now toilets were refurbished in schools because basically old toilets, as a child said to me, and this is not a reflection on the school at all because the headteacher had his head in his hands when he was being shown around by the children. I just remember the child has said to us: "The old toilet, you did not go in there because they were full of people vaping." The poor headteacher had his head in his hands. I said: "Well, what about these ones?" He said: "They are much better because you have got privacy and they come out on to a corridor." As an ex-teacher, if I was on duty, I could stand at the end of that area and supervise children going in. I could say to them: "Wash your hands", which is always a good thing to do, and I think that is it. That children now feel safer going to the toilet at school because they have a private floor to ceiling door. Many of them have sinks in. It is better for girls as well, during their period, for example, it is more private, there are bins. So that sort of became an issue, when really it was to improve the experience of young people to use the facilities basically. If you speak to young people, there has not been an issue there, they feel safer. Now you can label them men's and women's if you want, or you can just, for practicality, you probably could build a lot more toilets for a school of 900 children, but there is only so much space. There is a real practicality to this, which is they are better places and if they cannot vape and smoke and bully people, that is even better. Let us be honest, that has become a by-product of that and headteachers are very pleased with that, and so are children. I do not know how we got on to toilets, but we did. Sorry about that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, okay.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Just a change of focus on to the Educational Psychology Service, please. Can you outline for us, Minister, please, how your department is monitoring the effectiveness of the current Educational Psychology Service in terms of quality and the impact on children and young people, particularly in complex cases?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. I have to say I have a table of data here and it is too small for me to read. I have my contact lenses in and it is not helping, so whoever printed this, it is too small. In terms of the case numbers, Jane, you might be able to read that data because I am afraid I cannot.

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes. We tracked the data consistently within the department of the number of cases. We have termly P.A.R.M. (planning and review meetings) meetings at every school, at which there is a multidisciplinary team there. They maybe ask it with an educational psychologist. Currently, we have had 155 requests for involvement for this academic year, and we have had 97 records for involvement, which have been completed; 44 that are allocated and waiting to be done. So, with our exceptional action, we have had a total of 70; 57 of those are completed, and we have got 13 outstanding, which are due to have been completed by 21st May. I have to say that all of this work is our statutory work, and we have prioritised at the current time the statutory work that we are required to do in law.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. I mean you have told us there about what you have done. My question is about effectiveness. How well have you done it? How do you monitor the quality of the interventions that your psychologists are delivering?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is a really good question. I think you are going to have to answer it.

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes, that is fine. The statutory work is around actually assessing young people, and they are standardised assessments and observations. Those are compiled into a report for each young person, and then those reports are used if a young person is going to have a record of need. They are monitored, and obviously the people that are carrying out those reports are all registered practitioners with the H.C.P.C. (Health and Care Professions Council).

Deputy H.M. Miles:

How do you ensure that the practising educational psychologists are appropriately supervised and supported in practice, and what is the process for monitoring their adherence to those H.C.P.C. standards?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

From the point of view of supervision ...

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I know about supervision, but go on, carry on. I was going to say in terms of supervision, there is this thing called supervision, which is across the health service. All our educational psychologists have supervision. One might be from the U.K. at the moment in terms of the supervision.

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We have got mixed supervision.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Mixed supervision. But that is an important integral part of that maintaining professionalism and knowing where you are, and that relationship between professionals is really important.

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Our current psychologists at the moment practising within the team are having external supervision now, as well as supervision with specific cases from the lead psychologist.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just add quickly, I just have to say, every school that we have visited lately, and we have asked the question: "How is the Educational Psychology service working?" They have said: "It is not working." I just wanted to add that in, and we will listen to what you are saying, but this is the feedback we are getting.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Can I just ask, how many schools was that?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

In the last month, the last couple of schools we have visited.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Is that 2? When they say it is not working ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Well, I am not thinking back further than that at the moment, but this is the same response.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. It would be interesting to get some other feedback on that because if there is an absolute: "It is not working", it would be levels of it not working, and I think the only way you can solve that ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

They just shake their heads.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

But I think that is what we need to address, and we need to look at what that means so that we can address that. That is really important to us.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

It is important to say that in terms of the statutory work that is being completed. But there are other elements within the psychology service that are not being completed. It may be in terms of training, for example, not doing enough of that. There will be absolute references, and we have to take that on board. But we are absolutely committed to improving the service over the next 6 months.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Sorry, what I was going to ... it would be really interesting to understand what they are. That is exactly the point. I think it is around the fact that, as you said, the statutory work is happening that has to. That is being done. But it is those extra bits that would be done that we need to be able to address, and that needs to be improving as we go into the future. I absolutely accept that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

How is the department ensuring that the assistant psychologists, because you have got quite a few of those at the moment ...

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Two.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Only 2, okay ... who are not fully qualified, are appropriately supervised and supported in their practice?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I think the lead educational psychologist supervises the post-training supervision, supervision compliant based on the education ... As they are assigned each of the individual work with the class, for example, and team meetings can also take place. It is an ongoing process as they get

involved in their assessment. To put it really simply, I see it as a sort of on-the-job training and supervision as you go forward.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is there a difference in the workload and the quality of the work between your assistant psychologists and your fully qualified educational psychologists, or are the assistants having to step in?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

No. The assistants support fully qualified psychologists. The assistants support with training and development. We have been doing some training and development, and if they have been doing that, then the psychologist that was with them will do supervision post that. But then they also work on individual cases alongside education, and that is obviously how they learn and develop, and they have their supervision then with that lead fully qualified.

[10:00]

Deputy H.M. Miles:

How many full-time educational psychologists have you got in post at the moment?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We have got 2 full-time educational psychologists and one part-time, in that they are on-Island 2 weeks a month.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. The total team then is 3 educational psychologists and 2 assistant psychologists?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Correct. And a clinical psychologist.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

And a clinical psychologist is based within C.A.M.H.S. (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

The team. No. It is based within the educational P.A.W.B.S. (Psychology and Well-Being Service) team.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you. What is the current strategy then at the moment to recruit and retain educational psychologists?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

The strategy at the moment is to hopefully get to the point where we have a full complement working in post, which would be 5, with a clinical psychologist in 2.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Have you got an ongoing recruitment process?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes, we have a plan to ensure we get up to capacity by the beginning of the next academic year.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

The next academic year?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes, for September.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

This September?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

This September, absolutely, yes. We are also looking widely around the service, making sure that we are going to address some of those needs that you picked out around schools. The service is able, with increased capacity, to start dealing with the range of different activities that they need to do.

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We also use off-Island psychologists for our early years' work. We have been doing that for the last 3 years. We have 35 cases that will be commissioned there.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

When you say "off-Island", do you mean the work is being done remotely?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

It is done remotely.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

How does that work, from an educational psychology perspective? Is it not a face-to-face service?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

It is generally a face-to-face service, but this is the early years, so this is very young children. We have a lot of different reports that come in, whether it is speech and language. We use Teams, so it is face-to-face, but they are not physical meetings.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It is not ideal though, is it?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

No, it is not ideal.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

No, it is not ideal. There is another issue, and we can feed you for later on, as we look at the increasing need in the coming years- and we are doing some work which we will present as a holistic thing about the future of education - the reality is, and it is a reality we all have to face, future government after future government, is need is increasing. We will need more of those resources into the future.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That is why your recruitment strategy is important and that is why we are asking.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Absolutely, yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It just sounds like a long way off, September.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

September, in terms of getting back to the full complement for the numbers we have now. Yes, you are right, we have to look at the throughput of psychologists coming into the team. We also, as the Minister said ... and I am sure at some point we will talk about wider need and what the service will look like going forward.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

There is also perhaps the hope that we can train our own.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

That would be good. I know C.A.M.H.S. are doing some good work training clinical psychologists.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, absolutely. Something for the future, because it is sometimes nice to look ahead, that would be a very good thing. We have young talented people coming forward who could train and become an integral part of that provision on-Island.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Can you provide us with a breakdown of the annual expenditure on the psychology locums since 2020? If you do not have that information to hand, you could put that in writing.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I do have that. From 2020?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I have no data for 2020, I am afraid. 2021 was £40,566.62. Do you want the pennies or shall I just round it up?

Deputy H.M. Miles:

No. This is about the locums, yes?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, 2022 was £43,994. That increased to £101,000 in 2023 and £174,000 in 2024. To date it is £54,115.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Has any research been done on the outcomes of the value for money of the locum model? Is it a good model?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We want to be in a position where we are not having to use anyone outside government. This is the position we find ourselves in. We obviously have statutory work we need to complete and it is part of that process.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. The figures that you have quoted there for the locums, is that just the wages? Presumably on top of that you will have travel, accommodation, et cetera.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I cannot answer that. That is the figure I have.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We need to come back to you on that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, if you could.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, we need to come back to you on that. I want to reiterate, it is not necessarily where we want to be, but in order to keep the service going, and we want to build on that, we want to get it into the right place and we want it to be working well, that money has to be spent at this moment in time.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. Is there any formal protocol governing the referral of the handover of cases between C.A.M.H.S. and Educational Psychology?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

No. Referral from C.A.M.H.S. is made directly by the school S.E.N.C.o. If there is a request for involvement, which is what Jane talked about, there is a service which requires parental consent before we share with colleagues and C.A.M.H.S. The school can identify, but then there needs to be parental consent to share with C.A.M.H.S. Is that right, in the way it works?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Schools can refer to C.A.M.H.S. directly themselves. If C.A.M.H.S. have been working on a case and they contact us, Educational Psychology, we would then have to seek parental consent for that information to be shared jointly.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. So the fact that you are both within C.Y.P.E.S. does not enable that data sharing?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

No.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Are there any shared responsibilities in funding arrangements between Education and C.A.M.H.S.? Does C.A.M.H.S. charge you for Ed.Psych and does Ed.Psych charge C.A.M.H.S.?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

No.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. It is one across the board?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

There are a lot of multi-agency meetings where I do not think anyone, to some extent ... it is not important which department they are from, they are all working on the same thing around that child. There have been many iterations over the years and will probably change again as to how best to do that but, yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

While you are all under one umbrella there are no cross-charging mechanisms?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

No, I do not believe there are.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Thank you. Can you tell the panel what action you are going to take to expand the early intervention capacity in secondary schools?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, it is about training another cohort of E.L.S.A. (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) in the spring term. Then at full capacity there should be the offer of training, support parent training, delivery workshops for parents and school staff, support curriculum evenings, and community-based events with stories and activities. There are a number of wide-ranging things to try and get to families and communities, in terms of early interventions in secondary schools.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Do you already have E.L.S.A.s in secondary schools or have you only got them in primary schools?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

In some secondary, yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

In some, not all. Okay. Is that going to be facilitated through C.A.M.H.S. or specifically through the department at C.Y.P.E.S.?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Through C.Y.P.E.S., yes. That is an important point and a good point that you make, because in primaries, and then there is an extension into secondaries, when you see the value they extend out. However, we also have to make sure that that value is there.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

How many secondaries have you got them in at the moment, if not all?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

I would have to check the data. I can get you that.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

I am going to ask you some questions regarding the secondary education review follow-up. My first question is: what progress has been done on the commitment to review the Education (Jersey) Law 1999?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, the main change was the alignment of the formula with the available budget. There was an adjustment to the formula. Rather than just reducing the output from the formula, the formula was adjusted in terms of the funding that is available. That change was made in terms of saying we have to work within an amount of money. Do I want more money? Of course, always want more money. We always need that. I hope we can talk about that later, because I am more than happy to.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Is that the funding driving policy?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. It will do because you are within a funding amount and you have to fit it into it, of course you have. That has been published, and we said that we would publish that, and it is available, yes.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

What about in terms of work being done regarding the rights of the children? Is any work being done in that area at the moment?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

What do you mean “in terms of”?

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

For example, to consider your review with the compatibility of the U.N.C.R.C. (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child), has that been looked into?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I am not sure that that is something that we are directly doing as a project, no.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

When you are reviewing the law, you are seeing how it aligns with U.N.C.R.C.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, that is right. Yes, absolutely. I am trying desperately to think of an example, because there was one the other day where we had exactly this conversation. It will come back to me, apologies. Let me write down U.N.C.R.C. and it will stimulate my memory.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Okay. Would you be in a position to clarify what progress you hope your department to do before the 2026 elections?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

What we want to be able to do in general?

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Yes.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

There are a few things that I am very keen on. We have done some work, as you know, with nursery provision and those hours.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

This is about the Education Law.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Oh, the Education Law. The main parts in the Education Law that I want to address are around looking at a statutory provision for apprenticeships and see whether that is available. Whether that will be done by 2026, I do not know, but we could certainly get the bases in place there. Once you have a statutory provision it helps you develop what you are going to do longer term. I will be producing something that gives a longer-term view of where we need to go and the options that are there for the future for whoever comes into the role over the next 20 years, because there are long-term things that are needed. What are the other key things that we are doing this term?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We are in a position where, through the work that we are doing within the department, that will then feed into what changes need to be made in the law. Then the specific work will start, in terms of then working with the policy team and then the drafters. We are in that discovery phase in terms of what that is going to look like.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Would it be fair to say that presently you are more focused on continuous work rather than looking at new project implementation?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, you are right. Putting in place the things that we want to put in place, yes, in terms of delivery. Apprenticeships are the example of that that sprung to mind. I have always said that we want to know that we are able to do things before we simply change the law. For example, we want to make sure that there is a genuine provision up to the age of 18 for everybody before we say: "We will make it compulsory for 18." It is easy to do that, to say: "Everything is compulsory to 18" and then there is nothing available. Another example is the 2 to 3 year-old provision for nursery hours. I have said very clearly that we want to make sure that provision is available before we offer those hours, otherwise it is a false promise. We are at a very clear point now where that is available. The work that has gone on has enabled that. I am really pleased. I will not say anything today, but in the coming months I hope we can talk clearly about that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

We have some questions on early years, if we get to that point.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, you are right, the actions that we are taking, rather than just changing the law, are important. The Education Law is such a huge piece of work, it would just take up all the time and we would rather get on with other things.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Thank you, Minister. You have responded “partial-accept” to the panel’s recommendation to review the Jersey system of academically selected transfer at age of 14. You also said that you could not commit to a review at this time, but that it would be necessary to consider options due to the forthcoming challenge of changing demographics.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Please can you describe any work that you will be commencing in this area and advise us of any particular timelines and how you envisage that will have an impact on the demographics of the education programme?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

A huge amount of work has already started. One on the demographics, and we presented to you privately the demographic changes. We have presented those to teachers across schools. A lot of work has been going on with those. That was presented to headteachers in general as well. What we are trying to do is put clearly on the table the challenges that we face in the future and - I am going to use this word purposefully - the opportunities that will come to us in the future with changing demographics. The other piece of work that is going on that is linked to that partial acceptance is the work on post-16 provision. This afternoon we are going to another school. We have been to 2 schools already to talk to students. Here is a remarkable idea: when we start doing work on post-16 we are going to talk to the young people involved first. They are an excellent source of information on the post-16 provision. We are talking from students from year 9 up to year 13 to talk about what is available to them, what do they want to be available, where are the challenges, what works well, what would they like to see changed?

[10:15]

As we look forward with demographics, the reality will be, in the next 3, 4, 5 up to 10 years, that the provision that we make post-16 in the Island needs to be much more open and accessible to everybody. When that happens there may well be an effect on the provision before that because of

demographic change. We have to have a realistic, honest, open and intelligent conversation about that. What that is going to look like in the future. Can we sustain what we have now? If we keep the money we have now, going into a smaller system, we can meet that need better. That is what we are going to do. That is why it was a partial acceptance. To be quite frank, the conversation around post-14-plus transfer now will just become a huge distraction to the much wider issues that we have to face in education, which is: what is the future of education going to look like in the next 10 years as demographics change, as demands increase, qualifications change, future qualifications change, the skills that are needed change, the abilities that are needed change? There is an opportunity now.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

For Deputy Porée's next question, it is important right now for 14 year-olds, is it not?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is not going to change before the election, in particular.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Minister, in terms of academic and pastoral support, is there any in place or what support is there for the pupils impacted by the 14-plus transfer, particularly for those who feel left behind? Is there further support for those?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. Our 11 to 16 schools are working incredibly hard with every single one of their students. There are opportunities for students. Some choose not to have transferred at 14. If you do not transfer at 14, there are still those expectations of your achievement. Your courses are delivered. A full range of G.C.S.E. (General Certificate of Secondary Education) are delivered across those schools.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

How do you identify the support needed? Is it on a case-by-case basis? How does it work?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

We highlighted in our report that it was brought to us by headteachers about children who had all their friends, perhaps, going to Hautlieu, sitting on a table on their own at lunchtime and so on, feeling that they have failed, all this sort of thing. Is there any extra support being brought in since we highlighted this?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. The fact that that is recognised by headteachers means that their pastoral support system within the school should be addressing those issues. I am sure that they do. That is the work of form tutors. I have been a form teacher, Deputy Alves has been a form tutor, and you are very aware of the young people in your classroom. Yes, that is a particular time when you do need to be very aware and support those young people. They may need to make new friendship groups as they may not have the friendship groups that they had before. Absolutely, it is one of the issues around 14-plus transfer that we do have to address. Is there extra support in those areas? I would suggest that, yes, of course, but it is not formal support in terms of, okay, now we are going to intervene with this. It is knowing your students.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

On a case by case.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Head of years and so on will know their students.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Okay. With regards to staff, Minister, you did accept the panel's recommendation to provide more information about the use of zero-hours contracts for staff in schools. Please could you confirm when you will be able to provide that information to the panel by?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We will have to come back to you on that.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Would you be able to?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Certainly.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Thank you.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I am not a fan of zero-hours contracts, if I am honest, to put it simply. Where is there a situation where that would be necessary? I do not know, to be quite frank. We have supply staff, would you call that a zero-hours contract? I suppose in some forms you would. We are looking at a different

system for supply stuff, which we will come back to you with, which would take away that issue and would be more effective for our schools, starting with primary schools first of all.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Yes, that would be good. Perhaps looking into how zero-hours contracts affect staff.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

We have the understanding that has been shared with us in the Panel that some staff prefer that, but the Panel heard different confirmation, so it would be interesting to see how that impacts on the staff and moving forward can those numbers be reduced and if so how.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, absolutely. The underlying principle behind it all needs to be if somebody is employed in education they need to be happy with their contract. They need to feel part of the organisation and need to be part of the school that they are in.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Who are the zero-hours contracts benefiting, the staff or the department?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I cannot tell you that off the top of my head. It is also the opinion of those individual staff.

Assistant Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I will say that some staff have been offered fixed-term contracts with hours each week, but they have declined. That has been our experience.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is purely the flexibility, is it not? It could also be - I am making a mass generalisation here - if staff are retired and want to come back a few days a week they also might want to have that flexibility to say: "I do not want to do these 2 weeks, because I am off somewhere or I am doing something in particular."

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Yes. That is why we want to hear from yourselves, as well as those not positive, some that may not be working so well for staff.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We might be able to give some examples. I do not think we will be able to give you a definitive answer in general because it will change by the very nature, but, yes.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Yes, thank you for that. Is any new data collection being produced to track the progress of 14-plus movers and their post-G.C.S.E. destinations?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Post-G.C.S.E.?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, when they have gone on to A-levels, to separate those G.C.S.E. and A-level, because once they have been moved to Hautlieu at 14, presumably they will have a better opportunity; that is the understanding of going to a school with more academic choices. Is that data being collected and analysed?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

There are a few things there. First of all, the students are not moved, they choose to go. They are not forcibly moved. That is an important point to make. Second, in terms of academic choice, not necessarily; there will be a range of G.C.S.E.s in all the other schools available. There are choices in those schools. I do not think we can see it that way.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Possibly we are looking, like the chair mentioned, in the sense that some will go on into further education, but some may choose to go into academic technical courses or apprenticeships. Have you got some sort of data collection of how this is happening, the choices the young people are making?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

We just want to know if this is being tracked to see how it is working.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, if you mean at 16, when they have finished their G.C.S.E.s at Hautlieu.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

After G.C.S.E.s, after A-levels, is any of it being tracked to see how effective it is?

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

After 14-plus.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We have pupil level data, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Is that analysed and compared to children in other schools and how they are doing?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

There are 2 challenges there. One is that post-16 every child would not remain in the 11 to 16 schools by nature. If you want to track at 18 where they go to, they will either end up doing A-level ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

At G.C.S.E. then?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, at G.C.S.E., as to what destination they go to for A-level, yes, we can track that. If you are academically selective, you select on academic performance, by definition. Therefore, you are likely to have most of those students go on to an academic pathway.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

One of the interesting things that we heard is that some pupils that stayed in the feeder schools and then went on to a different school to do A-levels, did not perform as well at their A-levels as those who had gone at 14, whether you have data on that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

It would be good to have the data and see if it is being analysed.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

You are right. We do track that data. How we would present that is another question.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

You would be looking for an attrition rate of those that have gone to Hautlieu from the feeder schools and then a success rates for those, a comparison, how well they do at A-level.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

It is probably best we take this away. There are a lot of different components in there. All I can say is that we have very good data on pupils, how they progress, all the way through their journey in school. We can have a look at that data in a number of different ways.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Can I also say, we must be very careful not to undervalue the vocational pathway.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I get that, but this was very specifically just about the academic achievement, after the 14-plus transfer.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is a very good question. That is exactly the type of question we need to address into the future.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes. If you could follow that up in writing that would be good. My next questions are about funding for schools. We had prepared a number of questions following the updated funding formula. Also following yesterday's *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)* headline, we have asked a little bit more. Minister, the *Jersey Evening Post* headline was: "Schools more than £2 million in debt." One of the objectives of the introduction of the funding formula was that it was to help reduce the financial deficits of schools and to provide financial support for additional needs. Is the formula working? Are you concerned by the deficit?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, we are obviously concerned by any deficit. My view on this is simple. For many, many, many years we have not had the debate around funding of schools that we need to have. To some extent, I welcome the news report. I will say there are some inaccuracies in there and there are some conflated issues that are put together, but that is what newspapers do in order to fill column inches. There were a few bits of context that we have to have here. One is that the budget for schools is £182 million. If you are talking £2 million, it is about 1.14 per cent of a difference, so let us put it in context. We do not want to have schools overspending or not being able to provide for what they want, but this is in the context of increasing need that we are aware of. To give a context of the longevity of this problem, I know that when the Mason Report was published, there was a suggestion that what was needed was £18 million to address special needs. What was allocated was £6 million, one-third of the money required 2 or 3 years ago. That is a 66 per cent reduction, but schools are still 1.14 per cent out. They are working absolute miracles with the money they have. There are 2 things about the report. I do not like the fact that schools are compared with schools. I never like

that. It is unfair. Each school has its own context, has its own challenges, has its own staff, has its own cohort of young people and has its own specific challenges within that school. We need to address that. The other thing that we need to remember is that we are coming out of a challenging time for schools over the last few years. Not just COVID, but in terms of industrial action and in terms of recruitment and in terms of the recognition of the need within those schools. Yes, we do not want schools to be in deficit. It is impossible to say, but without the funding formula being where it is, that focuses on the types and levels of need that we have in schools, those overspends may well be worse. They may be more challenging. My argument for more money is always there. Can I say, I know I am taking a bit of time but if I may, I do not have a problem with having this debate; we need to be open about it. In the end, there are a couple of big things coming through. One is if demographics change and we are going to see that as an opportunity to spend less on education, this issue is going to repeat itself. We have an opportunity going into the future to say, as demographics go down because the numbers are still high in schools, some of the comments in the paper were just inaccurate today. Numbers are still high because of the bulge coming through. There might be less in some schools but there are more in others, so those numbers are still high and comparable. As those numbers go down, maintaining the funding that we have will address these issues in the longer term.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The only thing is that the questions we prepared earlier about the updated funding formula are all about cuts in certain areas. Anyway, if I continue with this bit for now. I was going to ask if you can explain how this has happened with the deficit, but you have said that. What are you going to do about the deficit?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is a good question. We need to address where we are with those. We also need to be sure that those numbers, as they are now, will be maintained throughout the year, because we still have time to go in the year and there are different spending terms within schools. Let us, as much as anything, see where we are as we go through the year. If there are areas in schools where there are costs that they do not need to have ... one of the issues we have had in the past is that inflation has been at 10.4 per cent or 12 per cent and the increase in funding for those areas that were affected by inflation has been around 4 per cent. That will accumulate over time. We need realism in what is happening there in terms of the costs for those schools. Yes, this is something we are going to have to address. However, too often we have addressed it a bit at a time. What we need to do is have the conversation longer term about what is sustainable, what is the sustainable funding model for schools, and how can we get there.

[10:30]

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. That is longer term. Is there anything that will be done to address it in the short term?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Short term, do you want to add anything to that?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

All I would say is that we work really closely with schools, we are supporting schools, that we are forecasting overspends for this year, and we want to be able to understand why those overspends are being forecast and see if we are able to bring those back in line with budget. If not, then plan for how we are going to manage that. That comes through the partnership working. It acts as a nod to listening to the front line, listening to headteachers and understanding those concerns. Putting those processes in place as well as improve financial data and reporting, understanding the ebb and flow of schools ... they are complicated places, in terms of the way that recruitment is done. All of that has to be understood even more so when it is pressurised when budgets are tight. We want to look at practice. This then leads into our inclusion space and how we deliver inclusion within schools and seeing where we can take some of the pressure off schools as well. All of that is a very active part of the officers working in the department at the moment.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Financial data, reporting and these meetings, are they already happening? Have they been happening in the last few years?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

They have been, yes. It is something that we have introduced this year to provide that support, to provide that understanding of why schools are overspending. This is not about blaming. This is about understanding and working with schools. One of the things we talk about often around the complexity of need in schools is this is very new. Schools have always dealt with need, but to the levels and in terms of the strategies that then need to be employed within the environment, with the teaching that we have, we need to assess how we are going to improve that in the future as well. Again, listening to the staff and listening to the leaders in schools about what we can put in place to, in a sense, make that more effective with the resources we have. Obviously the Minister has his comments on funding as well.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. We get a lot of F.O.I.s (freedom of information). F.O.I.s are a snapshot in time, which has then been reported thoroughly. I do not like the comparison between schools. I do not think that is fair

on schools. It isolates schools. There will be specific circumstances for each specific school and that is what we need to address as we go along. In terms of funding, longer term and shorter term, we have to have an honest conversation about this. We might not like the outcome and that is fine. I am the person sat here saying: "Yes, I am happy to have that conversation. We need to have it."

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Those meetings about financial data and reporting, you said from the start of this year?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

There have always been meetings between finance officers and schools. That has been going on for a long time. What we have done is put more support in there and to get right underneath of some of the analysis of data.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

More regular meetings?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes, absolutely, with those schools that we are forecasting having a more challenging spending environment.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks. In the updated funding formula, 2025 report, we see that mental health and well-being for primary schools was funded and now it is not funded in 2025. Please could you advise the panel a reason for this change and how it will impact services?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That was for some specific projects, was it not? Jonathan, would you like to answer?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes. The headline, first of all, as the Minister has described, is that in 2025 we changed the methodology in the formula. Rather than taking what the aspiration is and then pulling it back down through a rebalancing process to available budget, we have changed some of the underlying components of the formula so that it sets out available budget balances from the start, if you like. We made a change to 2 dozen-plus lines in there. It is dealt in the appendices at the back. We had to look at taking money out of a number of areas. The word "cut" was used before; it is not a cut. It is a different way of getting to the same available funding.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

How is mental health and well-being for primary schools funded now then?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

There was a small allocation of a supplementary allowance point beforehand. That has been removed. The responsibility still lives with the teachers. That is shared across S.E.N.C.o. and shared across the other roles that have been described. It might be out of E.L.S.A. support or it might be out of S.E.N.C.o. support because it was felt that the supplementary allowance was not particularly driving anything different.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is an important point. You do not solve that issue simply by putting in an SA2. Unless you put other areas in, such as E.L.S.A.s, such as S.E.N.C.o. support and training, then you can also address that mental health as an integral part of the school at the same time. We have to be careful when we just fund an SA2 4A project. An example for me would be ... I do not think you can deal with the issues of violence against women and girls by simply putting an SA point into a school. It is a cultural change within that school. It has to come from everywhere.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

There is not any specific funding allocation?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Not for that SA2 point. That was an SA2, was it not?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

It was, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

For mental health and well-being in primary schools.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

There is a lot of money that is put towards mental health and well-being in schools, absolutely there is, just not that specific area.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The panel sees that teacher sickness days in a year for secondary schools has changed from 5 days in a year funded at the supply rate of £240 per day to 3 days in a year funded at a supply rate of £295 per day. Can you advise the panel of the reason for the adjustment?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Can we look at that?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes. A lot of these will be similar answers in that the goal was to look at the underlying components of the funding formula and make sure that the output equalled the available balance, as a different methodology from pulling the recommendations of the formula down. That was another adjustment that was made so that the day rate was adjusted up. That was £295, as opposed to £240, so it reflected the cost of supply. With the number of days pulled down, that aligns with lots of other work that is ongoing to generally support teachers - or any workforce really - to have fewer days off, in terms of sickness.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is per teacher, is it not?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I would have thought that the average would have been taken to say if you average it out it is about that many days, but we were not paying enough per day, so we can make that change. I would also say that if that does not work, we have the flexibility to change that again. With this funding formula with the components as are, you can look granularly at whether those components are working and see whether they are. I hope, and this is going to be the test to some extent, that if we get these components right and we show them all to be working, the argument for the availability of money becomes stronger, because we are very specific in our spend. It is not a generic spend. It is: "I can tell you why we need this extra money. There we go. There are all the components that we have." I hope it will work that way.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thanks. The next point is regarding minor works for both primary and secondary schools. The panel notices that this has been reduced from a call rate of £7 per square metre to a call rate of £6 per square metre. Can you advise the reasons for that change?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is to do with Jersey Property Holdings' role and what we are going to pay them.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes, the rationale for making changes is the same. In terms of that change, it is part of ongoing work with J.P.H. (Jersey Property Holdings) around what activity is undertaken by them and what activities are funded directly through schools. The majority of funding, in terms of capital improvements, which are above and beyond minor works are dealt with by J.P. H.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Have you received feedback from headteachers about this change and what was their feedback?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Not specific line items, no.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Too many headteachers are having to deal with their own repairs, I will be honest with you.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes. Can I ask a question about that? It is a formula across all schools, depending on the square meterage of the property.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

That line is, yes, and age as well.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, that was my question. You have a brand new school, like St. Martin, that is clearly not going to need as much as some issues that you have potentially have in some of the town schools. Do you not allocate according to condition?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes, absolutely. There are 6 or 7 variables there, which are based around the age of the school, where that is a proxy for the condition, and the newest school has the smallest level per metre and the oldest school has the highest. It is imperfect, but it is a very good proxy and we have used that with J.P.H. for a number of years.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

It is also just worth noting that we do hold money centrally as well for some of the bigger minor projects, if we can say such a thing. For example, if a school needed to place a lot of fencing, that can be very expensive, so we would not expect that to be drawn from the minor works budget.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Can I point out one thing as well? It is interesting that below that line is the exam fees, and you will note that exam fees have gone up. There are some pressures on us with exam fees, they have gone up significantly. These are some of the pressures that we have to try and deal with as well. They are quite boring areas in a way, but they are reality and they are huge.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, so there is that to deal with as well. Minister, the budget for teaching and learning materials has also been reduced for both primary and secondary schools. The rate for primary students has been reduced from £115 per pupil to £95 per pupil and the rate for secondary students has been reduced from £200 per pupil to £180 per pupil. Please can you advise the panel about the reasons for this change?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I do not know the reasons for that change. I am not particularly happy with that, but there is a specific reason behind it.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Again, all of these changes come from that same rationale, which is we have to have the aggregate from the funding formula equalling the available funds that we have. There are a number of different lines, and you are reflecting on 2 or 3 in your questions, which have been adjusted either up or down accordingly.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

This is a cut in learning materials for children at school?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is a cut in the base rate, in terms of the amount of money available, but there is also other provision around other areas, which will have higher increases. Yes, you are absolutely right, these are areas which need to be looked at and we need to look at the impact of that. If those are having a profound effect, we will change it and we will have to go somewhere else. However, this is going to be one of the arguments in terms of our overall funding levels.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I am just trying to work out the percentages quickly. Is that about 20 per cent?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

It is about 10 per cent. Those are based on a rate of £200 per pupil. There are also other issues within schools in terms of different subject cost less than others. It depends on that balance of subjects as well. There is a complex calculation there. That simple base rate ... I would like to see that with regards to different subjects, to be quite frank.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Basically it is a cut. In the report it mentions rebalancing rates, grades and hours, which have been reduced to bring the allocation within budget. No bottom line adjustment is therefore required. Can you describe how the reductions and rebalancing will impact on front line teaching?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

In terms of the numbers of teachers? It will not.

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

It is the same number, it is just arrived at through a different mathematical process.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

There were 2 things we had to do with the funding formula. We have to do 2 things. We break it up into the different features of what that funding formula is going to be made of. We have to put that all together to provide an amount of money for the school that fits within the amount of money that is available to you. Of course, you do. You can increase that amount of money and then we can increase those things. At the moment, we do not have that. We have a set amount of money, about £182 million for our schools, which we have to fit the formula in. These have been adjusted accordingly to try and fix, as best as possible, where they are. Would we like to change those again? Absolutely, of course we would. However, in order to do that, we are going to have to have the discussion about overall funding. That is the reality of where we are. Absolutely happy to have that conversation on where we are. We need to be open about it. This is the first time we have had to be able to be this open about the way that schools are funded and the different elements of school funding. One of the areas, for example, is that ... where are we? We are on base funding, so a record of these base funding, it is stated at 10 hours and gone from £10,288 per pupil to £11,173 per pupil. There are significant increases in other areas. I do not have a problem with those increases, they need to be there. If you were to give me absolute free rein, I would probably increase them more. Of course I would, because we want to get them right. However, that is the balance that we have to have and there will be challenges within that. What the funding formula should be doing - and it is not perfect yet - is addressing the needs where they are.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you for answering those questions.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Could I say one more thing about that? That analysis of how that is working and the impact that is having is the important part of where we are, because then that can be changed.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It is like a big recipe, is it not really? You are making a cake. If you put too much baking powder in, it rises too much. If you do not put enough in, it sinks.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. That is an analogy I had never thought of, yes. What we want to make sure is that the education cake is rising all the time, let us be honest about it. That is a wider discussion we are having in our society.

[10:45]

Deputy H.M. Miles:

This leads into my questions around leadership and leadership stability. You have talked about the funding formula. It is interesting how those decisions are made. To what extent do headteachers have any kind of impact into that funding formula? What consultations do you have with them?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

If I take this back to the very start when we were first building the school funding formula as a replacement for the funding methodology of A.W.P.U. (age weighted pupil unit). We created a working group which had a number of primary headteachers and secondary headteachers, alongside some central staff from education and also finance business partners. That group, while it has changed shape in terms of the faces around the table, has maintained headteacher representation from both primary and secondary. They have been very much able to direct things all the way along, and we would hope to continue that process.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

It is the Minister that has the final say?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, I have the final say. I have the final say on everything, I suppose. I am the person to blame in the end, I absolutely accept that. That goes with the job.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Of course it does. Can you provide us an update on the 2 headteacher roles that have been seconded to C.Y.P.E.S. as part of the recent leadership changes in C.Y.P.E.S.?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, I will start and you might want to add in the details. The 2 headteachers are on secondment to the department from schools to look at the working relationship between the department and schools. This is an important project. We have schools and the everyday running of schools ... it is interesting that what we have are 2 teachers sat here as officers. Our dialogue has changed over the last year because of that distinction between the 2 areas. It has been recognised by the department that what we need to do is have a greater understanding. Every person in C.Y.P.E.S. should understand what is happening in schools and the reality of what happens in the front line of schools day to day, not particularly at a granular level and have the experience of teaching because they may not be teachers, but to see the demands that are being made. Equally to have that understanding in the way that C.Y.P.E.S. works and the mechanism of C.Y.P.E.S. working for schools would be equally as important, so that everybody knows where they are working together. That is the role of these 2 headteachers, to go in and talk across the board. I hope, and I am more than happy, for them to bring back some challenging findings and say: "This works. This does not. You need to do this better. That is working really well, do more of it." That, in summary, is the role of what they are doing.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

How are those 2 headteachers' roles being backfilled in their respective schools?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Do you want to address that specifically?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

They have been backfilled through the leadership team within those schools. Funding has been provided to those schools to be backfilling those roles. It is a great opportunity for senior leaders in those schools to step up to that headteacher position.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

How many schools have you got across the piece that are led by acting headteachers?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Those 2 schools for 3 days a week.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

For 3 days a week. That is quite a significant chunk of the working week then when those headteachers are away.

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

That is right, yes. Those headteachers are in contact with their schools.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

What is your expectation of that permanency? Is this a short-term arrangement for those headteachers to be going to C.Y.P.E.S. and then will they go back?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

The current arrangement is until the end of the academic year.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

This academic year?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Then will you choose 2 other headteachers to do the same thing next year?

Interim Chief Officer, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We have not decided yet.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

That is a good question and that is a decision that needs to be made. If this is something that is successful and if we get that insight then perhaps it may not be 3 days a week, perhaps it will be one. That link with schools and link between schools and the department is important. The greater understanding there is the better. I can simplify this: when you are sat at a desk doing some work, if you know where that is going to then you can see it. There has been some great work done around school meals, for example. The people sent to me were really in touch with the schools when it was happening. They worked so well together. Therefore, the work they did was so much more targeted within those schools. It worked really well. That is a model we want to keep going.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

I can understand that, but obviously this model has a cost to it, the back-filling budgets that you are having to put into those particular schools. You might not be able to tell us now, but we would like to know what the total additional cost has been.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, I cannot tell you that now, but, yes, of course.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you. The other thing that we talked about at the last meeting was a system between Social Security and C.Y.P.E.S. to identify unregistered children. We were wondering how that is going and have any children been flagged so far?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, this is a real challenge and it was a really good question. It is a project that is ongoing as we speak.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay. Perhaps you could update us.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

One of the issues we have, obviously, is immigration to the Island. We are a part of the U.K. going this way but not that way, in terms of checking, so there is always going to be a challenge here. Everyone should be registered with Social Security. There should be a record there. I do not think there is a problem with sharing those records. We keep track of those. It is anyone who does not register. Then that is knowing the unknowns. What we have to do is find a way of showing that we know the unknowns. It is a real challenge, absolutely. Jane, do you have anything to add to that?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Yes. At the moment, we have just started cross-referencing the JY numbers, which Social Security are sharing, when children are registering for school, so at that age. However, we are still aware, as the Minister has just alluded to, that that is reliant on somebody having registered with Social Security.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Is there any link in with Family Nursing, who might be doing health visiting or anything like that?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

Not at present.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Again, those are exactly the types of things we need to look at. We have had a problem for years in government with joining up records. They are improving. May I say, you have a good obsession with this. Yes, you are absolutely right and we want to make sure we get that right. We are certain it is very low numbers, if at all, but we want to get it right. This is something we need to be 100 per cent right with.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

When you do get a family that you realise has children and the children are not in school, and I guess that could be from home-schooling purposes as well, what follow-up action is triggered and what are the safeguarding thresholds for a home visit?

Associate Director, Education, C.Y.P.E.S.:

If any child is identified, if a member of the public comes forward from a safeguarding perspective, and says: "I do not believe these young people are going to school", we then immediately do a cross-check on name and address against our school systems. That is the first point. If the child does not come up then we will send out straight away a member of the E.W.O. (education welfare officer) team to the house to check. If there is nobody in, they will leave a note asking for them to call the department with a named officer. If we do not hear anything, they will go back again. Then there will be a conversation with the adults on the property.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Okay, thank you. I am very conscious of time. Are you happy for me to ask my last few questions?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We can answer anything in writing that we do not get to.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, we have quite a lot more yet.

Deputy H.M. Miles:

Yes, we had some questions about violence in schools as a result of the F.O.I., but we can put that into writing.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, please do.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Minister, with regards to the early years' plan and pilots, you previously confirmed that baseline child development data has been collected and termly assessments are underway. Will you commit to publishing anonymised progress data by pilot setting?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. If they are very small pilots, we have to be careful.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, but that will be published.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes. I do not think we have too small numbers in any of the pilots, do we?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

We will end up with a couple of them in the 10 to 16 range, so we will take advice from our data governors colleagues to make sure if there was to be a publication we did it appropriately. The inference on data collection is correct, in that we have baseline data and then we have periodic reporting against that in terms of improvement.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We would want to do that, because the data will be very pleasing. Even if they are small numbers, perhaps we can give it to the panel privately.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, that would be good. With what might be published as well, when do you think that would be?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

The pilots conclude ... 12 months would be in the autumn term. It might be that we want to draw some conclusions at the end of this academic year. Things are very positive already. The sense from those people leading the pilots is they will only get better, so we could probably start drawing

some conclusions early. In which case, the Minister might wish to publish before the start of the next academic year.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, it has to be meaningful data. With one proviso, children do not improve in a linear way. We can publish really good data now and then we publish again and say: "We have not gone anywhere." That is not fair. We need to come from the baseline. Each time we need to come from the baseline, because children are children and they go through different phases. They are children, let them be children.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can you explain, Minister, how you are engaging with the private nursery providers to work out how best to do this new work?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

There are a few things. In the context of understanding cost of provision, which is important if there was to be a rate set for a new support for 2s and 3s. It is important to understand the actual cost of provision. The Minister was grateful for work that the private sector is undertaking with our economy team to share a lot of the cost models. That is out of our direct sight at the moment. That is between those providers and the economy team, but at some point that will become something that is shared formally with the Minister. That will then inform and influence what happens. Looking through a workforce lens, there has been for some time now a workforce group that has a number of different external stakeholders involved and I know they are looking to conclude on the first phase of activity, determine what has worked, what has not worked and what should be done in the next phase. They are going through that bit of analysis at the moment. Also, the Minister has spent some time recently with childminders talking about opportunities.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We have had some very good conversations with childminders about understanding what their needs are and where they are. They were not included in the N.E.F. (Nursery Education Fund), but I would like them to be included in 2 to 3 funding. We have also had provider surveys going on. One interesting statistic from that is that 93 per cent of settings are now paying a living wage. We are moving forward here in terms of nurseries. Our dialogue has been consistent and open. There is stuff where the Economy Department is really good. We have not seen that yet on purpose. There is an independent view of what the costing would be. Whatever data comes from that, we can go: "Look, we have been through this process." The work that has been going on with those involved with this has been absolutely excellent. It has really moved things forward.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is good. We have organised organisations like J.E.Y.A. (Jersey Early Years' Association), for example. They have been involved in this work on cost of provision, workforce lens and anything else. Do you think that they could be involved more?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Best Start Partnership; I went to the Best Start Partnership meeting. I will try and attend again. They do tend to have their meetings at the same time I have my Ministerial meeting on a Friday. I have said to them about that, but I will try and get along to those. We are trying to have open dialogue. I am learning as much as everyone else. We want to get this right. We are very close to being able to make that offer, from the data that we have.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

You do not think they could be involved any more than what they are?

Programme Director, C.Y.P.E.S.:

What we have described is what has happened up to now. There is a huge amount of stakeholder management required for the next phase. We have described the work around the cost. That needs to be exposed and talked through further. That will require more engagement. The Ministry is developing and offer. That needs to be shared. At the moment we have talked very loosely about and offer for 2s to 3s. What rate? How many hours? How many weeks? What is the expectation within those hours? Who would be eligible? All those things are being developed and in the next 6 weeks need to be exposed to many different industry providers, so that we can get a sense of what might work, what might not work, where is there a hit or a miss, how can we change as we develop it. There has been some good work done so far, but there is plenty ahead of us. Another important bit is the Minister's reference to capacity. That is enough places in the sector to deal with what might be the demand for places. It feels like it is much closer. We mentioned that in the last hearing. That is based on an interpretation of the provider survey from quarter 4 of last year with some of our demographic forecast overlaid. We now need to get together and say: "We think this is what it means. Is that what it means to you?" There is a suggestion of lots of capacity, let us say 40 to 60 places, but is that genuine capacity that a parent would want? It is one thing saying: "I have some spaces," and another thing saying: "Those spaces are in demand from families," but if it is 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. on a Friday, that might not be very useable. It might, nonetheless be reported as capacity. Again, further engagement required to test some of our assumptions and be satisfied they are reasonable and they are valid.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, thank you. We are just coming up to 11.00 a.m. now. Do you have another few minutes or we could draw it to a close?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, we can go for another couple of minutes. I wanted to say something at the end, if I could?

[11:00]

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, yes. In fact, I think a lot of that has been answered already and we could send some of these in writing. I will ask a question about the Highlands College development. Following the funding allocation agreed for 2025, what progress is expected to be achieved at Highlands College over the course of this year and are there any risks already identified that could delay the start of works?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

What I have here is: a prioritised programme of works has now been agreed between the college and J.P.H. J.P.H. now commence with the tender process for various work items in the next month and will be awarding contracts and mobilising for start on site. Monthly meetings are being held to ensure progress is being made in line with the programme. The work is ongoing and should be starting soon. I would imagine that the best time to do that would be to start in the summer holidays when there are less people there, although I believe it is used in the summer holidays.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Yes, but there will be less use still, less capacity.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We can send you more details.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, please. That is good, but it was in October or November last year when we saw water coming through the roof and so on. It has taken a long time, but anyway.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

We have J.P.H. actually doing some things there. That is all I am going to say and that I am very pleased that they are. Thank you very much.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

I concur.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you. You said you wanted to say something.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

I wanted to say one thing, if you are finishing. Tonight I am attending something which is ... a book has been launched on Island by our students who have written a book. Do you know the X-Files? This is a book called *The Jersey Files*. It is a series of 15 short stories in conjunction with an author in the U.K. It is available online to buy. It is a wonderful book, wonderful work from our students. So often we hear about our students and issues with social media and all of these things. When they produce something that is a literary piece like this, it would be nice to support it. I want to mention it because for those students tonight it will be a celebration of their work and I am very proud of them. Their teachers should be proud and certainly their parents are and they should be proud themselves. It is called *The Jersey Files*. It is available from all good booksellers online. There we go.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so people can just search *The Jersey Files* and it should come up?

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Yes, *The Jersey Files*, yes, brilliant.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

All right. Thank you very much, everyone.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

Brilliant, thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That brings us to an end.

[11:03]