

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier  
Jersey | JE2 3RR

Jersey Youth Parliament Members  
Jersey Youth Service  
St James Centre  
St Helier  
JE2 3QZ

By email only: [lisamansell@jys.je](mailto:lisamansell@jys.je), [hello@jyp.je](mailto:hello@jyp.je)

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Dear Jersey Youth Parliament Members

Thank you for your letter of 25<sup>th</sup> February and also the link to your videos.

I am happy to provide answers to your questions below and please do come back to me if you require any further information.

**1. We previously discussed LGBTQ+ education becoming mandatory in schools. Is there a timeline in mind for this?**

Relationships Education, which includes LGBTQ+ and other groups under the focus of the Discrimination (Jersey) Law 2013, are already covered by statutory requirements in the Jersey Curriculum.

There is no timeline for formal planned change to the Jersey Curriculum document but there is scope for further training in best practice to support schools and to develop awareness of available resources and delivery approaches.

The Jersey Curriculum States that:

***‘Teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.’***

This covers the teaching approaches and culture within schools, much of which is part of the personal development of children and young people on a day-to-day basis. The Department is committed to inclusive education and the Jersey Curriculum is mandatory, supporting Headteacher’s to define the curriculum of their school.

Differences may exist in how schools shape and prioritise different areas of the Curriculum to reflect the needs or wishes of their student cohorts. In PSHE, this is also likely to change year to year, reflecting any current issues or interests that are relevant to a particular year group.

The Relationships Programme of Study within the PSHE Curriculum has been statutory since 2014. Schools have additional guidance from the PSHE Association (Programmes of Study Key Stages 1 to 5) to support teachers with their interpretation of the statements within the curriculum should they need this. This includes a wide range of relationships.

**2. What do you think are the reasons for a low voter turnout and how do you think these could be addressed?**

I believe the reasons for low voter turnout are wide and varied and are different depending on the age of voters and other demographic differences. The [survey](#) completed after the last general election in 2018 highlights just some of the issues we need to respond to if we are to increase voter turnout.

The 2022 election will be the first in living memory without Senators and many people are concerned that the loss of the Island wide mandate may further erode voter turnout. At the same time, we have a big increase in Party Politics, and it remains to be seen whether that will encourage more voters to turnout.

I think online voting is one area that will certainly help turnout, as making it easier for people to vote without having to attend a polling station will hopefully encourage greater participation. Additionally, the work of the Youth Parliament itself will hopefully help create greater engagement with the younger population who statistically have been much less engaged. I do hope a new generation of younger candidates will come forward as this can only help increase voter turnout by the younger generation.

Low voter turnout is a long-standing problem in the Island and I suspect it will take a sustained effort on many fronts before we see significant steps to improve it. I will take great interest in the forthcoming election and whether any of the more recent changes will have a positive effect.

**3. If designed, how quickly can a new PSHE curriculum be implemented? How willing are you to expand the curriculum?**

The Jersey Curriculum Council have agreed to look at the PSHE Curriculum in more detail. A full curriculum review requires experts, consultation and a thorough rationale for change, based on international research. This will take time should a full review be required.

The Curriculum Council would be willing to host representatives from the Youth Parliament to discuss any developments and thoughts in these early stages.

**4. (Question posed to the Infrastructure and Environment Ministers): Prior to COP26 the Ministers pledged to 'Put Children First' in their response to the Climate Emergency. In the CYPES Business Plan 2022 there is no clear allocation of funding to do this. How will work started by the Carbon Road Map be supported by CYPES?**

There is no funding allocated in the CYPES Business plan for the pledge because there is finance allocated within the CNRP (£200K) against this specific aspect of the project.

CYPES officers worked closely in collaboration with staff in Infrastructure and Environment in advance of the COP26 pledge and subsequently to have input into the CNRP objectives. This partnership working will continue to support developments going forward. I note the answers provided by the Infrastructure and Environment Ministers and can confirm my support for the five SMART objectives below.

The policy details five SMART objectives:

1. Carry out an education review regarding the quality and effectiveness of climate change education across the Government and independent schools by July 2022.
2. Share the best practice and recommendations with schools via Jersey Curriculum Council, Headteachers and ECO leads by October 2022.
3. Identify key training resources required to support teaching and learning and create a plan to address these by October 2022.
4. Develop a training plan based on needs and share this with schools by December 2022.
5. Appoint a Climate Curriculum Lead on a secondment by April 2022

**5. (Question posed to the Infrastructure and Environment Ministers): Young people would like to recycle at school but there is no consistent approach across the island. Have the Infrastructure, Education and Environment Ministers met to pursue this following September's commitment to do so?**

I note the answers provided by the Infrastructure and Environment Ministers and can add, that as well as twelve separate Parish authorities we do have autonomy of schools to deliver in considering any consistency of approach. I am a strong supporter of schools maintaining a high degree of autonomy as each is an individual entity with many differences to other schools. Parents and children expect a level of difference as each Head Teacher, teachers and students have an input to the way their school operates for the benefit of all. A one size fits all approach can work in certain areas but for others it is better to have that local understanding and ownership of issues to deliver the best results pertinent to the setting.

Autonomy can enable innovation and encourage creative thinking at a local level. The ability and empowerment to develop local solutions tailored for a school can be stifled when policies are developed centrally. I would encourage you all to take a lead within your own schools and learn from each other as you help to further improve recycling efforts at our schools.

Yours sincerely,



Deputy Scott Wickenden  
Minister for Children and Education

D +44 (0)1534 440152  
E [S.Wickenden@gov.je](mailto:S.Wickenden@gov.je)