



Attorney General's Direction

The conduct of Parish Hall Enquiries

Supplementary Direction 3/2016

Prosecution of offenders under the age of fourteen years

The Parish Hall Enquiry has been recognised, particularly in the case of children and young people, as an excellent way of diverting the great majority of children away from the youth justice system in a positive and constructive manner. The rôle of the Parish Hall Enquiry needs to be preserved and enhanced so as to ensure that it is a swift alternative to court based justice and ensures that children's needs are considered in a private, local, timely, sensitive forum in order to deal with any difficulties they have, if possible in the presence of their parents, social workers and any other persons who may be able to assist them. In particular, where appropriate, the children attending Parish Hall Enquiries should be assisted by the Children's Service and, where appropriate, voluntary supervision by the Probation Service. If at all possible, the Parish Hall Enquiry should also allow children the opportunity to make good and repair any harm done by their behaviour to any victim or the community as a whole.

Although the age of criminal responsibility remains 10 years in Jersey, henceforth I direct:

- 1) That in relation to children aged 10 or 11 years prosecution should only occur in the most exceptional of cases and only with my consent.
- 2) In the case of children aged 12 or 13 years there should be a presumption against prosecution and prosecution should only take place with my consent or the consent of a Crown Advocate or Legal Adviser from my Department.
- 3) Consent to charge under this Direction shall be given in writing (including by e-mail).

These guidelines are to take effect immediately.

30 September 2016