



The second full year of the Jersey Education Partnership

January 2017

On 30 September 2014, the States of Jersey and the NASUWT signed a groundbreaking social partnership agreement.

The aim of the Education Partnership created by the agreement was to establish a new and positive way of working to continue to deliver the high-quality education to which every child and young person is entitled.

At the heart of the Education Partnership is recognition of the fact that the workforce is central to securing high standards of progress and achievement across the education system.

The States and the NASUWT are clear that good working conditions for teachers and the provision of meaningful and engaging educational experiences for teachers are not mutually exclusive goals. The signatories to the agreement believe that securing improvements to the working lives of teachers is an important means of influencing the quality of learning in classrooms.

Since the Partnership was established, it has secured important achievements for the teaching workforce and children and young people.

Jersey Teacher Workforce Survey

One of the first issues addressed by the Education Partnership was the need to gather evidence about the challenges that teachers and headteachers face currently and the barriers they encounter in their work to meet the needs of children and young people. The Partnership therefore identified the need for an Island-wide survey to allow members of the teaching workforce to share their experiences and perspectives.

The survey, undertaken during the summer of 2016, provided an important insight into the opinions of teachers and school leaders on key issues affecting education and on the state of the teacher and school leader workforce. On critical issues, including pupil behaviour, professional development, workload, leadership and management, the survey provides important professional perspectives on the strengths of Jersey's education system, as well as identifying some of its most pressing challenges. The survey highlighted particular concerns in respect of teacher and headteacher health and wellbeing. The NASUWT has already engaged actively in this area through its involvement in the States-wide steering group on staff wellbeing. The Union also sits on the education wellbeing group.

The survey has yielded a rich source of data and information that will enable the Education Department and the NASUWT, through the Partnership, to continue to work together on addressing the issues that matter most to learners and to professionals working across the education system.

The Partnership will shortly publish information about its plans to take forward work to address the survey's key findings.

Jersey Premium

The Partnership has recognised the importance of ensuring that vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils are able to benefit from the educational opportunities available to their peers. To this end, the Partnership has engaged actively in the development of the Jersey Premium.

The Jersey Premium has been designed to provide additional resources to support disadvantaged pupils using objective evidence of the types of intervention that are likely to have the greatest impact. The model developed for Jersey has sought to reflect the distinctive circumstances of its education system and avoid the shortcomings in models adopted elsewhere. In particular, the need to avoid excessively burdensome and workload-intensive practices and to ensure that the Premium provides effective support for teachers and school leaders has remained a key concern for the Partnership.

Workforce modernisation

The States of Jersey continues to progress its workload modernisation agenda. The NASUWT has continued to engage actively in this work, ensuring that all parties can benefit from the experience gained by the Union elsewhere on workforce issues and that the principles of the Education Partnership are reflected in this work.

School accountability and autonomy

The Education Partnership has continued to focus on issues of school accountability and autonomy as key priorities set out in the Jersey Education Plan.

The Partnership is clear that, as publicly funded institutions, it is right that schools are held to account for their work with children. However, it is essential that they are held to account for the right things in the right ways. Partners are clear that accountability should be undertaken in ways that recognise the full contribution individual settings make to learners' development but that are also supportive of the work of teachers and school leaders in continuing to raise standards of educational development.

On school autonomy, Partners have agreed that it is important to strike an appropriate balance between the flexibilities given to schools to take decisions for themselves and the responsibility of the Education Department to secure consistency and coherence across the education system. Partners are clear that it is important that schools have enough scope to act in order to meet their particular needs and circumstances within the context of an Island-wide education system that secures all children and young people's common learning entitlements.

The Partnership will continue to focus on these issues in future meetings. However, discussions to date have confirmed Partners' views that further development on accountability and autonomy will:

- not involve the introduction of an Ofsted-style inspection system or the publication by the States of school performance league tables;
- retain system-wide frameworks for teacher and school leader pay and conditions and for the setting of term dates;
- continue to operate a central system for the safeguarding of children and young people;
- ensure that robust financial controls remain in place, while exploring the extent to which schools might be given some additional flexibilities in this respect;
- continue to ensure that all children and young people in States schools can access their learning entitlements under the Jersey Curriculum; and
- be clear that any additional flexibilities will only be granted to those schools that have demonstrated their capacity to use them efficiently and equitably.

Education Partnership website

Information about the work of the Education Partnership will be available on the gov.je website. These pages will include all Education Partnership notes and other information relevant to its work.