

Education Law Consultation – a summary of the process and feedback from the public questionnaire (18th January 2023 – 6th March 2023)

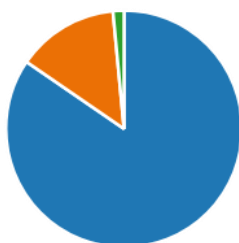
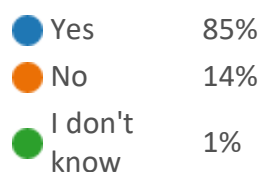
In developing the Committee’s policy proposals, considerable consultation and engagement has taken place, during both the current political term and the previous term when the work on this review first commenced. This has included key stakeholder working groups, presentations, workshops and two public surveys.

When the Committee started to develop its policies at the start of 2021, the previous proposals were brought up to date by overlaying the latest context, including: the recommendations of nasen’s Guernsey and Alderney SEND review; the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; and the updated inspection framework. The work of the review was also all considered through the lens of the priorities and commitments of the Education Strategy. Alongside this, the Committee considered the results of the previous questionnaire.

The charts below show the results of the most recent questionnaire. In total 735 responses were submitted. 40% of the respondents identified as parents or carers of a current learner, 27% were education professionals and 18% answered as a member of the community. The remaining participants were made up of learners, those representing organisations, grandparents or those who did not select any of the respondent options.

The percentages shown for each question below relate to the of responses for that question, for example for the first question (on compulsory education age) was answered by 732 of the 735 people who submitted a response to the questionnaire.

It is proposed that the new Law retains a compulsory education age. Do you agree that this should remain as it is now (age 5 to 16 years) noting that schools would continue to accept children into Reception in the September following their 4th birthday?

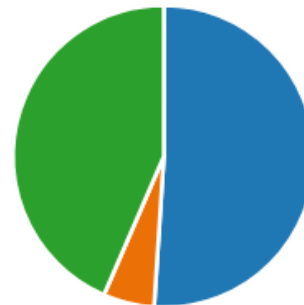


The majority view supported retaining the current compulsory education age of 5-16 years.

From those who added specific ages the majority selected 5 as the lower age. 97 people added comments about the upper age, with a range of between 14 and 18 suggested. The majority suggested 18, but many of those also expressed that there should be flexible learning pathways between ages 16 and 18.

Do you think there should be a requirement in the new law for all young people to remain engaged in some form of learning beyond the compulsory education age?

- No – there should be no requirement for people to undertake any learning beyond the age of 16 if they don't want to 51%
- Yes – it should be compulsory for people to remain in full-time learning until they are 18 years old 6%
- Yes – it should be compulsory for people to undertake at least part-time learning until they are 18 years old (for example, an apprenticeship or a training course alongside employment) 43%



The majority of those who responded did not feel that this should be a requirement in law.

Reasons given for not having a participation age were linked to poor experiences in education, and the belief that there needed to be flexibility for young people to learn or work after the age of 16.

The Committee acknowledges the results of the questionnaire and has also considered other feedback it received from across the community. This influenced the decision to include an enabling power to future-proof the legislation, but to recommend that the education participation age provision should not have effect when the Law comes into force.

Do you agree that every child should be entitled to free Early Childhood Education by law?

- Yes 66%
- No – access to free Early Childhood Education should be capped based on household income (as now) 32%
- I don't know 2%



The majority of respondents agreed that the entitlement to early childhood education should be included in the law. Respondents were also asked to indicate if they believed the number of hours of pre-school funding should be increased, again there was support from the public consultation to increase the provision.

Many of the respondents referenced the benefit of additional hours in supporting working parents.

The Bailiwick has its own curriculum which schools must use when planning teaching. It is not proposed that the new law defines the individual elements of the curriculum, but it is proposed that it sets out that the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture is required to specify a curriculum

How strongly do you agree with the proposed approach to the curriculum?

- Strongly Agree 31%
- Agree 49%
- Neither agree or disagree 13%
- Disagree 4%
- Strongly disagree 3%



80% of respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed with the proposed approach

Alongside general comments on the current curriculum the key themes from additional comments included:

- 1 The need for local content to be included in the curriculum*
- 2 The expectation that the curriculum includes life-skills and provides a global perspective*
- 3 The belief that the curriculum must be inclusive and relevant to learners with additional needs*

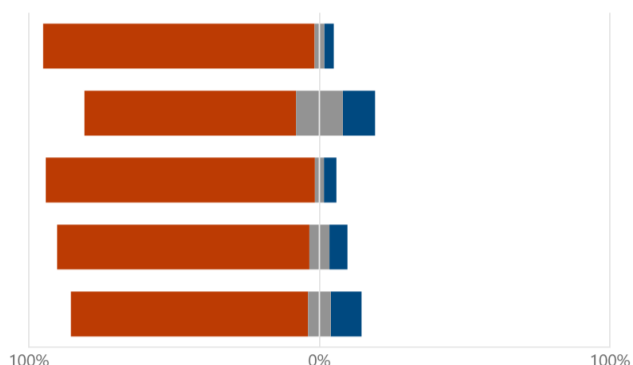
In response to these comments the Committee has ensured that these are reflected in requirements for a curriculum.

One of the proposed objectives of the new Law is to protect learners and ensure their safety by implementing and maintaining high standards of safeguarding, ensuring that the educational environment supports their health and wellbeing.

Achieving this objective could be done in many different ways. Please indicate your view on each of the following options. Do you agree that the new law should include:

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

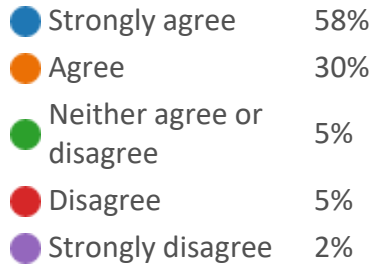
- The need for education premises to comply with minimum standards for recreation and physical...
- The provision of school meals and, subject to criteria, free school meals, in case this is needed in the future
- That good behaviour of learners should be promoted by schools
- The ability of the States to provide financial assistance (for school uniforms, for example)
- The need for there to be a school transport policy and that the policy must align with the States'...



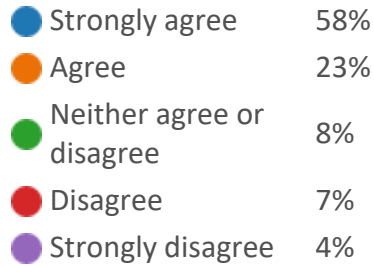
External Inspection

Two questions were asked about external inspection.

How strongly do you agree that all schools should be subject to external inspection (by an appropriate independent body)?



How strongly do you agree that reports of these inspections should be made public?



88% (642) of respondents said they Strongly Agreed or Agreed that all schools should be subject to external inspection (by an appropriate independent body).

81% said they Strongly Agreed or Agreed that inspection reports should be published.

In response to written comments the Committee has clarified in its proposals that inspectorates such as the Independent Schools Inspectorate will be approved.

The current law does not recognise the three Colleges that receive grant funding from the States (The Ladies' College, Blanchelande College and Elizabeth College) as independent schools. To make it simpler and clearer about which requirements of the law will apply to different types of schools, it is proposed that they would fall under an updated definition of an independent school.

● Strongly agree	56%
● Agree	23%
● Disagree	7%
● Strongly disagree	5%
● Neither agree or disagree	9%



79% of respondents Strongly Agreed or Agreed with the question, written responses also supported consistency in approach to standards, but highlighted the need to avoid unnecessary Government interference in the independent sector.

How strongly do you agree that the new Law should require there to be a Code of Practice, which sets out processes for supporting learners who may need additional provision to help them learn?

● Strongly agree	66%
● Agree	26%
● Neither agree or disagree	6%
● Disagree	1%
● Strongly disagree	1%



92% of respondents (674 of 730) said they Agreed or Strongly Agreed with this proposal.

Throughout free text responses there were comments about the need for education provision to support all learners (whether in Early Years compulsory age or post-16), and to ensure that processes are clear and easy to follow. Respondents also commented on existing arrangements and there being unmet need within the system.

The Committee believes its proposals for a law with a focus on inclusion, updated terminology and a learner-centred approach will improve equity, for the benefit of all.

Do you agree that the power to administer fines against a parent/carer and pursue a criminal conviction for their child’s non-attendance should be included in the new Law?

- Yes 46%
- No 40%
- I don't know 14%



Although a higher percentage of respondents agreed that there should be a power to administer fines for non-attendance this was less than 50% of those who completed the public questionnaire.

From those who answered the questionnaire as an educational professional, the support for fines was higher with 57% agreeing with the proposal (and 27% disagreeing).

Like education participation age, this is an area where the Committee believed that to future proof the law should be available to future Committees (subject to the approval of the States).

Home Education.

Do you agree that a definition of home education should be included in the new Law?

- Yes 89%
- No 5%
- I don't know 6%



Do you think it is appropriate that the Committee has the ability to set out what levels of monitoring and support for home educating families are desirable?

- Yes 78%
- No 13%
- I don't know 9%



Do you consider that it is sensible for the Committee to determine when it would be appropriate to intervene?

- Yes 76%
- No 12%
- I don't know 12%



As well as being included in the public survey these questions about home education were also asked of parents/carers who currently home educate.

A smaller majority of home educators supported the need for a definition, and there was an even split of views around the level of monitoring, support and intervention.

In the additional comments there was a strong view that whilst safeguarding is important, any additional monitoring frameworks should be developed in collaboration with home educators.

The Committee recognises the importance of working in collaboration with the community when developing policy and has included this in its proposals.

It is proposed that the new law will require the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture to identify children missing education. To do this all children of compulsory education age will have to be either on a school roll or a home education roll. Do you think this is the correct approach to take?

- Yes 89%
- No 5%
- I don't know 6%



There was strong support for this key safeguarding responsibility, which was also supported by those who home educate, and in written responses from key stakeholder groups, like those representing families of learners with addition needs.

Governance

The public were asked how strongly they agreed with the view of the Committee in relation to the following statements.

All States education settings (all schools and The Guernsey Institute) would benefit from strategic oversight by a governance board that can represent the community it serves and, in doing so, support and hold to account the leaders of the setting for the decisions that they take and the quality of education that they provide.

Strongly agree	34%
Agree	40%
Neither agree or disagree	16%
Disagree	7%
Strongly disagree	3%



Governance boards should be designed to include people with specific skills that might be needed to support the development of the setting at the time. For example, some governance boards might require people with proven leadership skills or who have insight around specific areas of importance in education.

Strongly agree	34%
Agree	43%
Neither agree or disagree	14%
Disagree	6%
Strongly disagree	3%



Some key governance roles should be shared across more than one education setting. This is because the Committee believes this will foster closer working relationships between schools and enable some governors to benefit from working with leaders who bring different approaches, skills and strengths to their schools. This would mean that some settings would share some governors, for example across a cluster of primary, secondary or special schools, and also means that fewer governors will be needed overall.

Strongly agree	20%
Agree	38%
Neither agree or disagree	24%
Disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	7%

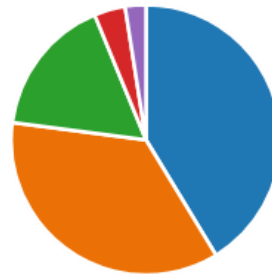


Governance boards should be primarily focused on:

- the needs of the children, young people or adult learners who attend the setting
- the quality of education that the setting provides
- its strategic development over time.

This would mean that, although all governance boards would be accountable to the political Committee from a policy and regulatory perspective, the boards should not be political. For this reason, the Committee proposes that the new Education Law will not provide for political membership on any education governance board.

Strongly agree	41%
Agree	36%
Neither agree or disagree	17%
Disagree	4%
Strongly disagree	2%



The role of the Chair of an education governance board is a significant responsibility that should make a positive difference to the quality of education and leadership across education settings. For this reason, the Committee proposes to invest in these roles by paying a nominal financial allowance to Chairs, many of whom the Committee proposes will be the Chair of more than one governing board.

Strongly agree	16%
Agree	33%
Neither agree or disagree	28%
Disagree	15%
Strongly disagree	8%



Overall, consultation responses relating to the five specific questions that the Committee asked regarding governance were favourable and in support of the Committee's proposed direction of travel.

Feedback regarding matters relating to:

- the establishment of governance boards for all settings;
- a requirement for appropriate skills, pertinent to the needs of each setting; and
- the proposal that governance boards should be apolitical

received particularly positive responses. On average, around three quarters (74 – 77%) of all 735 respondents to the survey supported the Committee's proposed direction in these areas.

Feedback was less positive regarding proposals relating to the sharing/clustering of governors and payment for Chairs. For these specific questions, whilst the majority of respondents do agree with the proposals of the Committee (58% agree with the

concept of clustered or shared governance arrangements for some settings and 49% agree with the payment for Chairs), a significant percentage of respondents (24 – 28%) did not have a view either way and a percentage disagreed, strongly or otherwise in reference to clustering/sharing governors (18%) and payment of Chairs(23%).

Principles and Objectives

The principles provide shape and guide the fundamental elements of the law. The objectives describe the outcomes to be achieved through the updated legislation and supporting policy.

How strongly do you agree that the principles and objectives provide strong enough foundations for the education system for Guernsey and Alderney to deliver on for the next 50 years?

● Strongly agree	27%
● Agree	55%
● Neither agree or disagree	12%
● Disagree	4%
● Strongly disagree	2%



Most respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed that the principles and objectives were strong enough (80%).

188 Additional comments were added and themes from these can be summarised as:

- *Education should meet the needs of all learners, including those who are most able and those with additional learning needs.*
- *Education environments should feel safe and be well resourced (with particular mentions of behaviour management).*
- *The principles and objectives should recognise the importance of staff (including their development, standards and welfare).*
- *The importance of positive Health and wellbeing (including mental health).*
- *Curriculum should be broad enough to capture life skills, reflect a diverse and multicultural world and support lifelong learning.*
- *That the principles and objectives could be more defined and regularly reviewed – 50 years is too long.*