

**REPLY BY THE MINISTER OF
THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
TO A QUESTION ASKED PURSUANT TO RULE 6 OF THE
RULES OF PROCEDURE BY DEPUTY M. J. FALLAIZE**

Question 1

Two of the States' social policy objectives are: 'Greater quality, social inclusion and social justice and greater equality of educational opportunity.' Furthermore your Department has advised that among its aims are: 'Creating opportunities for everyone to develop their learning, releasing potential in people to make the most of themselves; and achieving excellence in standards of education and skills.'

Is the Board elected in May, 2012 of the opinion that those objectives and aims are more likely to be fulfilled by maintaining selection at 11 or by adopting a comprehensive system of secondary education?

Answer

As you are aware, the new Education Board has just published the results of its recent public consultation on streamlining the current eleven plus selection process and will be implementing the agreed changes from the new academic year. Further information on the outcome of the consultation and agreed changes is available on the Department's website <http://www.education.gg/article/1843/Streamlining-11-process>

The Board acknowledged that the consultation did not consider the wider question of whether to abolish or retain the selection process but concentrated on making the current process less stressful for pupils, parents, families and schools. However, the Board was unanimously of the view that the system of selection itself should be reviewed within this political term.

As widely reported, the Board is in the process of developing a vision for the future of the Education Service which it plans to publish before the end of the year. The timescale for any such review of the system of selection will be included within this vision document.

The Board acknowledges that this is a controversial subject that elicits passionate views both for and against the eleven plus. It believes that both sides could legitimately argue that their view would better achieve the social policy objectives.

However the Board does not wish to pre-empt the outcome of any such review which will necessarily involve public consultation on the future of selection at eleven.

Question 2

I am told that recently the media have reported that your Department may be preparing to re-examine the appropriateness of selection at 11+ If that is correct:

- a. When will the policy review commence*
- b. What form will the review take and how long do you expect it to last?*
- c. By whom will the review be undertaken*
- d. When do you expect to submit a States Report – whether in 'green paper' form or containing substantive proposals – in order to provide for the island's government to debate the merits or otherwise of selection at 11?*

Answer

The response to question 1 goes some way towards answering your questions.

It is still early days and as advised in the Department's media release and Executive Summary of the consultation, the Board intends to publish a timescale for the review of the system of selection at eleven as part of its wider vision for the future of education services which it plans to launch by the end of the year.

Please be reassured that any review will include full public consultation on the issue as well as paying due regard to the views of teachers, head-teachers and education professionals. Such a review will not be completed quickly but at this early stage it is impossible for the Board to indicate when it may be able to come to the Assembly with proposals for change, or otherwise.

Date of Receipt of the Question: 24th July 2012

Date of Reply: 26th July 2012