



**OFFICIAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**STATES OF DELIBERATION**

**OF THE**

**ISLAND OF GUERNSEY**

**HANSARD**

**Royal Court House, Guernsey, Thursday, 31st October 2013**

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A. R. Le Lièvre, A. Spruce, G. M. Collins

**The Castel**

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Alderney Representatives L. E. Jean, E. P. Arditti

**The Clerk to the States of Deliberation**

S. M. D. Ross, Esq. (H.M. Senior Deputy Greffier)

**Absent at the Evocation**

H.E. Roberts Esq., Q.C. (H.M. Procureur)

Deputies M. J. Storey (*indisposé*), S. A. James, M.B.E (*indisposé*)

**Business transacted**

Evocation ..... 1625

Billet d'État XX

X. Transforming Primary Education – Debate continued ..... 1625

*The Assembly adjourned at 12.30 p.m.  
and resumed its sitting at 2.30 p.m.*

X. Transforming Primary Education – Debate continued –  
Propositions carried ..... 1653

*The Assembly adjourned at 6.22 p.m.*

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## States of Deliberation

*The States met at 9.30 am in the presence of  
His Excellency Air Marshal Peter Walker C.B., C.B.E.  
Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Bailiwick of Guernsey*

[THE BAILIFF *in the Chair*]

**PRAYERS**  
*The Greffier*

**EVOCATION**

## Billet d'État XX

**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

**Transforming Primary Education**  
**Debate continued**

*Article X.*

*The States are asked to decide:-*

5 *Whether, after consideration of the Report dated 12th August, 2013, of the Education Department, they are of the opinion:-*

*1. To agree to move towards a policy of two and three-form entry States primary schools as far as possible in order to improve educational outcomes, increase efficiency and ensure greater consistency in performance.*

10 *2. To agree that St Sampson's Infant School should merge with Vale Primary in September 2014 and St Sampson's Infant School shall close.*

*3. To agree that St Andrew's Primary shall close in August 2015.*

15 *4. To agree that discussions shall take place with the Diocesan Authorities to consider how Catholic primary provision is provided in future, with a view to determining whether it would be possible to move towards two or three-form entry in line with the Department's other primary schools, for example through federation or merger of Notre Dame du Rosaire and St Mary and St Michael Primary Schools.*

*5. To agree that over the next 5-10 years efficient and effective primary provision in the area served by Forest Primary School and La Houquette Primary School shall be revisited by a future Education Department.*

20 *6. To agree to give delegated authority to the Treasury and Resources Department to agree a capital vote to fund the associated modifications at Vale Primary School from the Fundamental Spending Review Fund.*

25 **The Greffier:** Billet d'État XX, the continuation of the debate.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Green.

30 **Deputy Green:** Mr Bailiff, Members of the Assembly, this morning I would like to deal right away with the issue of surplus capacity. I must thank Deputy Fallaize for his eloquent and analytical explanation of where the St Andrew's PTA figures are just simply wrong and I would like to give a bit more information on that.

The reality is that the St Andrew's PTA have based their modelling, which is highlighted in the graph that was championed by Deputy Soulsby yesterday, on spare capacity of 500 places and not the 800 or so places we can actually evidence. They have made a fundamental mistake.

35 The primary education system has spare capacity of over 757 places. This is not just theoretical; this is based on *actual* classrooms with real teachers in front of them today. This is based on *actual* classroom capacities in a maximum class size of 28 or 25 at the three so-called 'social priority schools'.

40 This is the case without reinstating the two single-form Year groups at La Houquette, which would increase our spare places to over 800. This is the case without including the reinstatement of a third form at Castel or a third form at the La Mare de Carteret Primary or the many other classrooms that exist across the education of the States, which Deputy Fallaize mentioned yesterday.

45 If we did include all of those, Members, we would have spare capacity of more than 1,000 spaces. Of the so-called 'receiving schools', St Martin's is the only school where not every classroom is big enough for 28 pupils; but we are led to believe that the headteacher of that school has, in fact, confirmed the school can cope with the proposed numbers of pupils – which is around 44 – that we are planning to transfer from St Andrew's to St Martin's. As I say, the St Andrew's PTA have erroneously based their model on spare capacity of 500 places; not the actual figure, the higher figure of closer to 800. Their figures are wrong and I would ask Members to put their faith in the Education Department.

50 I should add that some of the tables featured later on in the PTA's report are based on a maximum class size of 24 and not on the long held maximum class size policy of 28. In any event, we can access spare capacity in the Catholic Schools, if we need to; as happened recently when there was over-capacity at... I am not going to give way; I want to make some progress. Thank you very much. In any event, we can access spare capacity in the Catholic schools if we need to, as happened recently, when there was over-capacity of Vale Infants' and, indeed, parents were offered a place at St Mary & St Michael.

55 So, Mr Bailiff, there is simply no danger of us having to reopen closed schools in those circumstances in the future. I just wanted to say that, because there were some comments made yesterday which sought to cast doubt on the Department's figures; and I really want to put that to bed, because I have absolute faith in the figures that we have produced and I would suggest Members should do likewise.

60 I want to pick up where I originally planned to start. Mr Bailiff, Members, first of all I want to say how privileged I am to be a Member of the Education Committee today, because this policy letter shows real political leadership and real political courage – qualities that are not always seen to be present in Guernsey politics.

65 The decision to recommend closure of any school is a profoundly difficult one. It deeply affects the parents, the staff, the pupils, as well as the community and as well as the neighbourhoods themselves. It affects people's relationships. It affects their routines and it affects their highly-valued sense of belonging in their community. But a decision not to close a school, or schools, in circumstances where the spaces greatly exceed pupil numbers and where the public finances are under massive pressure, can be somewhat rash and imprudent itself. So, although the short-term effects for the schools can be extremely painful and unsettling, the longer-term effects can be positive and advantageous for all of our Island community.

70 This policy letter should be supported today by all who wish to tackle this Island's budget deficit but, equally, it should also be supported by all Members who genuinely are supportive of improving educational outcomes and opportunities for *all* children in this Island.

75 Guernsey simply must get to grips with its structural budget deficit. There can no longer be any suggestion of putting off difficult decisions. Most thinking people in Guernsey have always known that very difficult, very painful decisions are crucial to achieving our Financial Transformation Programme targets. It was never going to be a walk in the park. Those who now do not have the stomach for these hard decisions really should not have sought election to the States in 2012. (Several Members: Hear, hear.) Making substantial savings to our general revenue budget cannot be delayed or fudged any longer. The States of Guernsey does not have the equivalent of a 'Magic Porridge Pot' that keeps on giving. Digging into our reserves as a community cannot go on and will not go on *ad infinitum*.

80 These proposed closures will save between £680,000 and £800,000 per annum from general revenue. These savings comprise of the following: the saving from the headteacher's salary; school administration; caretaking and building costs, in relation to St Sampson's Infant School; together with the redeployment of existing St Andrew's staff into vacancies right across the Education Service. This will mean employing 9.7 fewer teachers within the service overall, which

creates the consequent saving. We do not anticipate any redundancies as typically there are more than 20 appointments in the primary phase each September. The savings are genuine.

95 The financial backdrop to this debate can hardly be ignored. That financial backdrop to this debate is one of the key political issues of our times. So, it is with some surprise that I hear some Members being seemingly happy to maintain a system of primary education that has around 800 or so unnecessary and unjustifiable excess school places, based on current classroom sizes. That inefficiency cannot be right and the Education Department would have been deeply negligent in 100 the extreme, as well as cowardly, to have sat on our hands when faced with so many excess spaces. That is what this debate is really all about. Any economist worth their salt would recognise such spare capacity as being the very opposite of economic optimisation and, in these tough economic times, that is simply indefensible.

105 We also know that there is hugely variable funding per child, per year, in primary schools right across this Island; and that unequal use of resources absolutely must be dealt with. Unjustifiable disparities in funding are part of a very difficult legacy that *we* have inherited, as a Board and as the States; and we must now show leadership on that.

110 So, yes, we need to save money as a community and, yes, we also need to tackle the inefficiency in the very heart of our primary school sector. The bottom line is: you can keep these two schools open, but at what cost? At what unnecessary cost to the taxpayer? With what defence for the inefficiency of the system and with precisely what justification for the inequalities in funding per child, per year, right across the Island? Do people want to pay higher taxes to pay for this? I suspect I know the answer to that: on the whole, they do not. The alternative to this policy letter is not the *status quo*. I do not know how many times we have to explain this; the alternative 115 to this policy letter is not the *status quo*. The alternative is a set of even more unpalatable cuts to the Education budget that will definitely have adverse impacts on educational outcomes. That is the very stark reality we will face.

120 What is so noteworthy about these proposals is the fact that, by moving to two and three-form entry primary schools, we will, in the medium to long term, in fact, be strengthening the educational outcomes and widening the educational opportunities. That is what the FDP does best; when it combines greater efficiency with better outcomes. The proposed closures are not a service cut; the pupils will receive a high-quality education in their receiving school.

125 I want to say a little bit about the advantages of moving to two and three-form entry schools. The significant advantages of two and three-form entry primary schools are set out with real clarity in the policy letter and I need not go through that in any great detail or any great depth, but many of those advantages set out – I am thinking primarily of paragraph 4.4 on page 1757 of the Billet – to me, they are just common-sense; because they confirm that there are benefits of having real economies of scale. So, with two and three-form entry schools, it is easier for teachers to work collaboratively; to share the greater resources available to them; to operate with greater flexibility 130 in delivering the curriculum; and to provide more support for children with specific needs, and those with the highest abilities as well.

135 None of that is to say that one-form entry schools cannot be very good schools, but the reality is that excellent and consistent outcomes can simply be more difficult to achieve in one-form entry schools; and surely we must all be in the business of making it easier for all schools to flourish and not making things more difficult for *any* educational institution. I did not stand for election in order to make life more difficult for any institution.

140 In addition, none of this, at all, is a reflection on the professional and personal abilities of the staff and leadership at the two schools at the very centre of this debate. They have been doing a remarkably good job in difficult circumstances and they deserve credit for that and I think that does need saying. (*Interjection and applause*) So, it is not – it is absolutely not – that we believe that St Sampson's Infant School and St Andrew's Primary School are bad schools. It is that we say the current model of primary education that we have is wrong. It is the model. That is a very important distinction and one that should absolutely not be missed by the hard-working and very professional staff of these two schools.

145 Once we had identified the need to move away from one-form entry schools, the next question that we had to face as a Board was which school should close. I was, personally, deeply impressed with the multi-criteria analysis that led to these recommendations. I scrutinised it very closely in Committee and I came to the ultimate conclusion that it was a very sound piece of work and, in fact, I have seen no analysis at all that casts any doubt whatsoever on the question of these two 150 schools being the most appropriate to close. I am not sure our opponents have either, for that matter. Given the overcapacity and the inequalities of funding, perhaps our opponents would like to suggest which schools should close, if not these two schools today.

In the final analysis, we believe, unanimously as a Board, that there is compelling evidence to support the benefits of a move to a policy of two or three-form entry schools, that will essentially outweigh the possible adverse effect on the local community. I personally do not deny that these closures will have some impact on the communities in question. I do not think anybody would say that, but I am genuinely optimistic that the sites themselves can remain as key social assets. I happen to think that St Andrews's site would make an excellent venue for a pre-school or for a family centre, or maybe both. We must all use our imagination with purpose here, to mitigate the effect on the local communities and to embrace the vibrant future possibilities for these important sites. To simply say that this decision will rip the heart out of the community, looks and feels like a failure of political and public imaginations to me.

So, I conclude by saying to Members: do not confine the FDP to an early political grave. Do not stand in the way of better, more efficient educational outcomes for *all* children in this Island. I am asking you to show some real courage today and I am asking you to show some real leadership. For the best educational and economic reasons, I ask you all again to show some real political courage today and to support this excellent, well-reasoned policy letter.

**The Bailiff:** Next I call Deputy Duquemin, to be followed by Deputy Laurie Queripel and Alderney Representative Arditti.

**Deputy Duquemin:** Thank you, sir.

I must start by declaring, again, that I have two children at Castel School: one daughter in Year 5, aged 10, and another in Year 3, aged seven. If St Andrew's School closes, my youngest daughter will be directly affected because Castel School is one of the receiving schools and the number of children in her class will likely increase when she is in Years 5 and 6.

Mr Bailiff, aware that I was predisposed to support the closure of the two schools, including her *alma mater*, one family friend asked me one thing about six weeks ago. She asked me to keep an open mind during the debate and listen to both sides. Sir, I have done this. I have done my homework. I have read and re-read this month's Billet; I have read the Billet from January 2009, when the closure of the same two schools was first debated. I have visited both St Sampson's School and St Andrew's School, going in each and every classroom and seeing every pupil. I have had a one-to-one session with the headteachers of both of the schools.

Sir, I have also, importantly, visited three of the main receiving schools and had one-to-one sessions with the headteachers of those three schools. I have recently visited two of the other receiving schools too. I have attended a number of presentations provided by the Education Department and read everything that they have presented to us. I have had a one-to-one session with, and challenged, the Director of Education; and, Mr Bailiff, I have read, listened to and watched everything that the PTAs have presented to us. Sir, I repeat, I have done my homework.

I was the Chairperson of the Castel School PTA for two years and I can fully empathise with the pride that both PTAs have for their children's schools, and applaud the passionate campaigns that have been conducted by both. Whilst I was upfront with them and told them that I would be supporting Education's propositions to close their schools, I did congratulate them on their campaigns and I repeat that message today.

Sir, it is a difficult, emotional debate, largely because of the PTA campaigns, the blue ribbons *et al*; but perhaps the most powerful and emotional single aspect of their campaigns albeit, as I understand, an unofficial one, was the YouTube video produced by one of the St Andrew's parents and featuring children at the school making a number of statements about Education's plans to close the school. Mr Bailiff, I am going to read out a number of statements from the YouTube video and I am going to use these as my subheadings, my bullet points, for my speech today.

In the first statement from the YouTube video, the children say, 'Education say two and three-form entry schools are better. This is wrong. Single-form entry schools are the highest achievers on the Island.' I have started with this statement because the Education Department has received a lot of criticism for saying that two and three-form entry schools are better. Education had even been accused of inventing this as a reason for trying to force through the closures and justifying the obvious economies of scale that exist at larger multi-form entry schools. Yesterday, in this debate, Deputy Soulsby even spoke about UK consultants coming up with a wheeze that multi-form entry schools offered educational advantages. Sir, this is not a new argument that Education have introduced at the eleventh hour – far, far from it.

During the 2009 debate, this cutting from the Guernsey press tells us that Deputy Jenny Tasker, a former headteacher, highlighted the greater flexibility when there was more than one class per Year group at school. She was not the only one; I vividly remember listening to the radio and hearing Deputy Geoff Mahy, another former headteacher, giving a superb speech that



215 explained in detail the benefit of two and three-form entry schools. Geoff Mahy had been  
headteacher for 22 years at St Martin's Primary School, including when the infants and junior  
schools merged. Even though he was not a UK consultant, Geoff Mahy knew, and I am sure still  
knows, a thing or two about primary education in Guernsey. **(Two Members: Hear, hear.)** St  
Martin's, in his time, as it is now, was a flagship school.

220 Nearly five years later, I wanted to listen again to Deputy Mahy's speech, so I got a copy from  
the Greffier and I downloaded it onto my iPhone. I am now going to read you a brief, but very  
pertinent, extract from his excellent speech, in which he argued for the closure of both St  
Sampson's and St Andrew's; and, as a headteacher of a Guernsey primary school, it would have  
been a decision that he would not have made lightly.

225 In the 2009 debate, Deputy Mahy said:

'There is no evidence to suggest that children succeed more in small schools in Guernsey; none at all. In fact, the  
opportunities that two-form and three-form entry schools provide, through a larger pool of teaching staff, points to  
children's needs benefitting more in larger schools.'

230 Deputy Mahy continued:

'If you want a school that is effective, you must have effective teachers. One of the best ways to improve teacher  
performance is by teachers working collaboratively in teams. Teams of teachers who question their own practice by  
sharing, planning and lesson delivery are the teachers who grow professionally the most.'

235 He continued:

'In a single-form entry school, consisting of only one class in each year group, opportunities for reflective practice are  
limited in comparison to two-form and three-form Year groups where there are regular onsite opportunities to discuss  
teacher practice and pupil performance, to raise overall standards.'

240 Deputy Mahy added:

245 'Teaching is known to be an extremely stressful occupation and working in teams is a recognised way of raising  
standards and reducing stress. There is also the added advantage of capitalising on teachers' strengths in specialist  
curriculum areas such as music and physical education etc, both through professional mentoring and flexible timetabling.'

250 Deputy Mahy also explained, in his speech, the merits of moving away from standalone infant  
schools. In many ways, I wish he was here again to make the same speech or at least I could just  
sit back and press play on my iPhone and re-play it to all of you. For those Members who were  
here five years ago, I urge them to remember what their former colleague told them.

255 The second part of the quote from the YouTube video said, 'Single-form entry schools are the  
highest achievers on the Island.' Yesterday, during the debate on the Dorey amendment, I went  
into some detail about school results. Mr Bailiff, yesterday, you urged me not to stray from the  
general debate and, because of this warning, you will be pleased to learn that I did listen and I  
refrained from reading out one paragraph from my speech. You were right, sir, because this  
paragraph is far more pertinent to today and I will read it now. *(Laughter)*

260 Forest School has been highlighted, during this whole primary transformation debate, as a  
high-performing school; but each child there, in the 2012-13 results, was worth 6.67% of the total.  
So, if one child – just one child – was one notch down on their Year 6 results, instead of being in  
the 90s and regarded as a stellar school, Forest School's results might have been below the  
Bailiwick average for both attainment and progress. But of course nobody is saying that Forest  
School is not a good school. Nobody is saying that St Andrew's and St Sampson's are not good  
schools. They are good schools; but my assessment and one that I offered at Education's first  
265 briefing to States Members at Beau Séjour ahead of this debate and one that I repeat today, is this:  
St Andrew's and St Sampson's are good schools *despite* the fact that they are a single-form entry,  
not because of it. They are good schools despite the fact they are single-form entry, not because of  
it!

270 In the next two statements from the YouTube video, the children say, 'St Andrew's is a good  
school; a nice school; a successful school. It should not close.' They say, 'If we go to other  
schools, some things will be worse, much worse.' I do not believe that anything will be worse for  
the students that are currently educated at St Andrew's and St Sampson's. To the contrary, I think  
some things will be better and I am going to touch again on the benefits of multi-form entry in a  
short while.

275 St Sampson's *is* a good school, but so is Vale. St Andrew's is a good school, but so are St  
Martin's, Castel, Forest, La Houquette and Vauvert. An inference that could have been taken from

the two PTAs' campaigns, albeit I am sure that it would not have been their intention, is that St Sampson's and St Andrew's are better schools than the others. They are not better.

280 What might be perceived as being better at St Sampson's are their weekly Friday afternoon assemblies, when all of the children, parents and grandparents, gather for a show-and-tell experience. I can understand why parents love this. I am a parent and I would love it. One fellow Deputy described it to me as almost being a bit like Little House on the Prairie and one  
285 grandparent asked, in an e-mail, 'What would happen to the Friday afternoon sessions when they move to Vale?' My answer is, it might be one of those lotteries, those nice-to-haves, that we just cannot afford to provide any more. Are these Friday afternoon assemblies worth spending an extra £2,000 on each child to provide – an extra 46% spent on each child at St Sampson's when compared to Vale Infants'? Is it fair that this sort of thing can happen at St Sampson's, but not elsewhere? The very reasoned parent that I spoke to from the St Sampson's PTA admitted that the dramatic disparity in cost per pupil was something that the PTA really had no answer to and she  
290 understood why this was a problem.

The education experience that will be offered to the pupils of St Sampson's and St Andrews when they move will be the same, but different; it will be different, but the same. On my personal road show – to visit the schools proposed for closure and the schools where the pupils will go, the receiving schools, and meeting in one-to-one sessions with the headteachers – I asked three  
295 questions to all of them and I urged them to be honest and candid; and they were. I would like to thank all of the headteachers for the time that they afforded me. I am not going to quote any of them directly, but I will provide Members with an overall view of their input into my thinking.

Firstly, the first question: will the quality of education, pupils receive at the receiving school, be any worse than at the school that is closing? The answers were no, it would not be worse. Not  
300 one headteacher said the quality of education of the children would be any worse. Only one – *one* – of the headteachers at one of the schools proposed to close did not want to answer that question, but I said this was her chance to convince me that they would suffer and she chose not to do that.

Secondly, will the quality of education pupils receive at the multi-form receiving school be better than at the school that is closing? Well, let me tell you that this was a little bit like trying to  
305 get blood out of stone because, understandably perhaps, no headteacher would want to be seen to claim that the quality of education that they can provide is better than another; but to my satisfaction, there was an acceptance by headteachers of the receiving schools – the industry professionals at the proverbial coalface – that there are advantages to the multi-form environment that would be enjoyed by the incoming pupils. One way I did ask the same question of them, was  
310 in a different way to get a response... was to ask if they would like to see their multi-form schools broken up into a number of single-form entry schools for educational reasons; and the answer was an unequivocal, no.

When I asked one current teacher – a member of the SLT, the Senior Leadership Team, in one of the receiving schools – whether the claims surrounding the benefits of the multi-form entry  
315 were solid, she told me that she had worked in both in Guernsey and they were both effective in different ways. She was non-committal and I thought it was another person who was reluctant to jump off the fence, but just as I gave up pressing, she volunteered, unprompted and I quote, 'But I would not have wanted to send my children to a single-form entry'. So we have the situation where the quality of education that the children receive will be at least as good, possibly, probably  
320 better, in the receiving schools.

My third and final question was a very important one and one that needed to be answered to my satisfaction for me to vote in favour of Education's proposals: will the change of school, that transition, make a detrimental impact on the education of the children who currently attend St  
325 Sampson's and St Andrew's or attend the receiving schools? All of the headteachers who I spoke to – that is St Sampson's, St Andrew's and the receiving schools – said this transition could be carried out effectively without impacting in a negative way on any child's education. That, for me, was a very, very important question that needed to be answered. (**A Member:** Yes.)

In the next statement from the YouTube video, the children are saying, 'But seriously, there are no cost savings, their figures do not even add up'. If Members did watch the video, this was the  
330 part of the video when that very cute little boy with glasses taps repeatedly into his big calculator. Let me tell you that this not-so-cute big boy with glasses (*Laughter*) has got the same calculator; and, like Deputy Fallaize, I have done my own number crunching and the unavoidable truth is that all I can see is a massive surplus of spaces in our primary sector, now and in the future, that needs to be addressed.

335 Let us ignore this word 'theoretical', these empty spaces, these surplus spaces are real and the cost savings that can be made by using them are real. Deputy Green reminded me of my opening speech at the Castel hustings at the 2012 election. Paraphrasing my mum, and probably yours too,

I said, 'Take care of the pounds and the £31 million takes care of itself.' Well, today, I hold up the same £1 note that I held up to my Castel neighbours at the hustings and I tell everybody that there is not *one* reason to support Education's proposals today, there are approximately 750,000 real reasons to support Education's proposals each and every year.

Now for the last two statements on the YouTube video that I will respond to: the children say, 'Lots of people think it is a complicated issue. It is not; I understand it and I am four.' They also said, 'We are here to explain why Education are wrong and why it is a problem for the whole Island.' Mr Bailiff, I have already told this Assembly that one of the reasons that I stood for election in 2012 was what I perceived to be the incredulous decision in the last term, in 2009, not to close St Andrew's and St Sampson's. Back then, I did not think it was a complicated issue and I was 38. Now, having done my homework as a 42-year-old, I am convinced again that it is *not* a complicated issue; and, yes, Deputy Soulsby, I am convinced beyond reasonable doubt that Education are right. The YouTube video says, 'It is a problem for the whole Island.' And this, for me, is very pertinent.

Sir, at the outset, I said that I had two children at Castel, one of the receiving schools. My youngest daughter will be directly affected because the number of children in her class will likely increase when she is in Years 5 and 6. Just in the same way that I cannot make a decision on the interests of my two children, I cannot make a decision today based on the interests of just two schools, or more accurately two lobby groups. To quote the YouTube videos for one last time, 'This is a problem for the whole Island.' We need to make a decision in the best interests of the whole Island.

On Tuesday night, I received an e-mail from a name familiar to me. The subject title of the e-mail simply said, 'Proposed Closure of Schools'. Knowing that the chap is a very community-driven, community-minded person, knowing him to be what I would best describe as a 'good egg', knowing that he is a grandparent of two children at Castel School, I pressed 'read' and I admit probably expected to read another e-mail in support of keeping the two schools open.

Sir, I will now read from the e-mail. The person wrote, 'I have spoken to many, many people on the contentious matter of the proposed closure of St Andrew's and St Sampson's Schools. None – I repeat, *none* – believe the schools should be kept open. I have not spoken to a single person who believes the schools should remain.' He continued, 'The issue is important to the parents of children who attend these schools and I understand all of the concerns expressed by them, that I have read. I have children and grandchildren and the arguments put forward by, and on behalf of, parents are understandable but in the main coloured by emotion rather than logic.' He added, – and I think this is the crucial paragraph – 'We all elected our Deputies at a very difficult time in respect of finance. We expect our elected Deputies to sort the finances out in such a way that secures the future prospects of the Island (**Two Members: Hear, hear.**) and whilst many people complain, our Deputies do seem to have a plan: the FDP, so this plan must' – in plain bold – '*must* be given a chance to succeed.' The e-mail continues, 'I read that Mr Charles Swainston of St Andrew's PTA was quoted as saying that, "to close St Andrew's School would rip the heart out of the Parish".' He said, 'Well, many right-thinking people believe that, unless the finances are sorted out, the heart will be ripped out of the Island.'

Mr Bailiff, I pressed copy on the e-mail and pasted into my speech, because I could not have said that any better – what this Islander has conveyed to me in his short e-mail. He was speaking out for, what I believe to be, the silent majority that Deputy Sillars mentioned in his opening speech.

Sir, I was critical of the last States and my opinion on their whole four-year term was largely based on just one decision: their decision not close St Andrew's and St Sampson's Schools. I know this might be provocative for some, but for me it was the States that wanted to show that it was not heartless, but in the process proved it was spineless.

Mr Bailiff, this is an important decision today, an important vote. I firmly believe that just in the same way that I formed an opinion of the whole four-year term of the last States based on one vote on 30th January 2009, many Islanders will form an opinion on the whole four-year term of this States based on one vote on 31st October 2013.

Sir, yesterday Members spoke about easy decisions, difficult decisions, horrible decisions. I think, even Deputy Fallaize mentioned 'lousy and miserable decisions'. Mr Bailiff, Members, the important thing today is the *right* decision. As a States, as a Government, let us make a clear statement today and, by a large majority, let us support Education. The right decision *is* to close St Andrew's and St Sampson's. (*Applause*)

**Deputy Soulsby:** Sir, can I make a point of correction? I do not know if Deputy Duquemin has read all the way through the last report of 2009, but the actual proposals from the Education Department then were to keep St Andrew's School open.

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**The Bailiff:** Deputy Laurie Queripel.

**Deputy Laurie Queripel:** Thank you, sir.

I am glad that we have had this time and this space between Deputy Fallaize's speech yesterday evening and this morning. Sir, it was such a brilliant speech, so compelling and full of good reasoning and use of figures, so wonderfully articulated that one might be tempted to think that it is probably game over. So, I am certainly now leaning more towards Education's proposals. It was not exactly a road to Damascus moment for me, but I am becoming a slow convert. My transformation is taking place. I started off, sir, in the same place as Deputy Perrot, stuck in the middle somewhere; I do not know if he has adjusted his position since then. There seems to be no room at all, sir, for doubt in Deputy Fallaize's speech. I am still not sure that the waters are going to part and simply come back together again and it will all be calm and plain sailing. So I have my doubts as to whether the transition will be seamless.

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Sir, the proposals might in some ways be viewed as progressive in that they should result in a more efficient use of resources, in fact, less resources, and probably not lessen educational outcomes; and the spend per pupil should be more equitable. So, that is a sort of tick in the social box. However, it is not progressive, sir, for pupils to be travelling further to school, for there to be more vehicle use, for more traffic congestion to be created or for some pupils to, perhaps, miss out on after-school activities because their only transport home is the school bus.

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A Member said yesterday, sir – and I think, once again, it might have been Deputy Fallaize – that no school is unique; and I tend to agree with that. All Guernsey schools are special and all have their own micro-communities. I visited both of the schools in question, sir, and there was a particular charm about them. Disregarding, sir, inside the schools and the use of the spaces and the activities taking place there, the outdoor areas alone. St Andrew's has a spectacular soft and extensive nature area. St Sampson's Infant School has a small play area attached to each classroom and directly accessible from each classroom. So, I do not know if that is unique, but, maybe it is the human trait, sir; we begin to value something more when we think we are about to lose it.

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I think those of us who have been undecided, sir, I do not think it has been a case of being overly sentimental; I think we are acutely aware, as I am sure all Members are, of what is possibly going to be lost if these schools close; but that said, we have to balance our natural inclinations or weigh our natural inclinations against our corporate and fiscal responsibilities.

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Sir, I have admired the way the Department, the Education Committee, has gone out night after night to face, what might be termed as, the inquisition that they have; but, in some respects, I feel that this matter has been handled rather badly, because that was not consultation in the truer sense, i.e. prior to a report being formulated – that is when consultations would take place.

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Sir, as a consequence, the Department has been on the back foot for much of the time, finding themselves having to respond to counterclaims and figures being put forward by the schools and the PTAs; and it concerns me that a day or so before the commencement of this States Meeting, Members were still receiving flurries of information, briefing notes from the Department, and in response to that, briefing notes from the PTAs. So much of this could have been avoided, sir, if a proper consultation process had taken place. If Education had taken on board the concerns and counterclaims *before* the formulation of this Report, they could have addressed them directly and that could all have been part of the Billet Report. So, this flurry of late information has hardly been ideal preparation for this debate.

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As a consequence, sir, I do have some questions and I must admit that when Deputy Green spoke, sir, I think that he answered some of those questions satisfactorily and I thank him for that. I must apologise too, if some of these questions have been answered in the briefing notes, but I am not sure that I have been able absorb all their contents. It is only right that reports and proposals are questioned and tested to see if they stand up to scrutiny.

450

Sir, I want Education's vision to become a reality; I want this transformation to be complete. But Members – particularly Members like myself who have been sitting in the middle for quite a long time – need to be convinced that Departments can *deliver* and I am sure the Members of the Education Committee can understand that.

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Deputy Green spoke about spare places in schools, but my concern, more, is about... it is one thing to talk about places, but is there sufficient space in these schools to accommodate these children comfortably? That is one of the questions I am asking the Education Minister. Are there

460 sufficient and suitable facilities: toilets; space in classrooms; decent places for these children to eat  
their lunches? We had an e-mail from a parent of a St Martin's School pupil, sir, and she said that  
some of the pupils are eating their lunches off the classroom floor. I do not know if that is true or  
not; I am just saying that is what we have heard in an e-mail and I want to ensure that that is not  
going to be the case. Thank you. I think it is only right and proper that you answer the question since  
we have been e-mailed with that kind of concern and those kinds of points.

465 In regard to St Martin's School, are they sure that no re-modelling or re-configuring is  
required, sir? I do not want to witness a spectre six months after these changes have taken place of  
extension work and building work going on at that school because Education have not considered  
the fact that there was not enough space there. Can the Department assure me, sir, that they have  
considered, in detail, development plans, expansion of residential areas, population migration; and  
that this will not result in perhaps a new school being needed to be built in five or six years' time?  
470 I do not want us to repeat the Jersey scenario.

Why haven't Education consulted with the Environment Department Traffic Committee to  
ensure that traffic impact assessments were carried out around St Martin's School and the Vale  
School, because clearly there is going to be more congestion, more vehicles? Has the Department  
got any idea as to how they are all going to be mitigated against – these problems – and ensure that  
475 the best safety measures are in place? In regards to the Vale School, sir, the car park of St Paul's  
Church is used as a drop-off point for some of the parents; and the Vale Deputies received a letter  
from the stewards of St Paul's Church raising concerns that they were already dealing with  
problems in regard to that car park and they can foresee more problems. Have the Department  
consulted and engaged with the stewards of St Paul's Church to understand those problems and  
480 once again to try to mitigate them?

So, I repeat, I want this transformation to work. I want this long-term vision to be realised but I  
have to be sure about these things before I vote in favour of the Education Department's proposal,  
sir.

Thank you.

485 **The Bailiff:** Next, Alderney Representative Arditti followed by Deputy Sherbourne and then  
Deputy Stewart.

**Deputy Arditti:** Thank you, sir.

490 The Education Department chose to submit this decision of theirs to us, the Assembly, and in  
the circumstances who can blame them for that? If I may, I would like to say a few words about  
our role, as an Assembly, when we are scrutinising a policy such as this. It has often been said that  
the closure of these two schools – St Sampson's and St Andrew's – is a test of our resolve as a  
States; that if we shy away from this decision, then we will not be able to make other difficult  
495 decisions which lie ahead of us next year.

Contrary to what was said yesterday, this is a difficult decision. It is not a decision which any  
of us relish. I just want to explore, briefly, what is meant by this decision being a test of this States  
for the difficult decisions next year. I understand that this conveys to some parents the false  
impression that there are Members of this Assembly and commentators who feel that their children  
500 must make some sacrifice for the greater good of the economy. Not so. It is, in fact, about the  
process, whereby we approach this – the first of several difficult decisions – and accept the  
conclusion which results from that process, even though that conclusion may be unattractive and  
unpalatable.

I repeat, none of us wants to close these schools. The process of scrutiny by the full Assembly  
505 of a policy decision by a Department is, or should be, similar to the process of scrutiny by the  
Scrutiny Committee of the Assembly. We must ask ourselves the question: is there something  
obviously wrong with the conclusion reached by the Department? *Objectively*, is there something  
material which the Department has taken into account and should not have done, or is there  
something which the Department has failed to take into account and should have done? It is not for  
510 us to second guess a difficult conclusion reached by one of our Departments, in my submission.  
That *would* be bad governance; not least because of the time, effort and resources which they have  
applied to this issue and we have not.

It is not our job to simply substitute our judgement for the Department's judgement, unless  
there are good and clear reasons to do so. This is little more than sound, rational delegation by an  
515 Assembly which is both a legislature and an executive. Difficult decisions – decisions which have  
consequences, which in our hearts we would rather avoid – are no excuse for losing our heads and  
jettisoning sound principles of delegation and scrutiny. There have to be grounds for overturning a  
decision reached by a Department to whom we have delegated a function. The test for us today, in

advance of the other difficult decisions ahead of us, is our ability to follow due process and accept the result.

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As for this particular policy and the impact which it will have upon the closure of these two schools, I have read everything and, like the rest of us, I too was truly impressed by the application and devotion of the parents who, in the main, put forward their case with such skill. I have approached this debate with an open mind and, having heard the case on both sides, I can find no basis on which I could justify substituting my own judgement for that reached by the Education Department.

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I would like to add that I am not surprised to find insufficient grounds to interfere with the conclusions reached by this Education Board. We have come to know the Members of this Board well: Deputies Sherbourne and Conder – two men steeped in education; Deputy Le Lièvre whose credentials for caring are impeccable; (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) Deputy Green who is fast catching him up; (*Laughter*) and the Minister, Deputy Sillars, who has shown himself to be a sound, diligent and reliable Chairman. These people are neither incompetent nor are they wilful, ruthless or unprincipled, which has been the implication or corollary, unintentional no doubt, of some of the more impassioned speeches yesterday. I am left in no doubt that they have looked at this policy carefully and diligently and have *not* settled on this conclusion lightly.

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Lastly, I am grateful to Deputy Fallaize who has actually proved the case for the Education Board beyond doubt when, according to due process, the burden of proof was on those who would set aside the Board's conclusion. It does not please me in any way, but the Board has my vote and I thank them for their fortitude.

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Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Sherbourne. (*Applause*)

**Deputy Sherbourne:** Thank you, sir.

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I rise to make an *individual* contribution to the collective effort of the Education Board, that I am proud to be a member of.

Before I do start my speech, I would like to declare some interests. I have had four children go through our primary system: two at La Mare de Carteret; two at Castel. I currently have five grandchildren: three at Castel; two at La Houquette. I spent 40 years of my working life contributing to the Education Service in a variety of capacities. To suggest that I, along with my fellow Board members, would be party to *any* proposal that would disadvantage *any* child in this Island, would be a travesty. I have spent my professional career trying to widen expectation amongst my students and my pupils, trying to improve the opportunities that they receive and I believe that each generation does that; it looks to improve upon what you have experienced yourself; it is a natural progression in human life. I, like so many of my colleagues, respect and admire the efforts made by the parents and the PTAs of the two schools in question. Their efforts have been extremely professionally put together; I do not want to sound patronising over this; I genuinely believe that because, as a parent and as a grandparent, I would probably do the same.

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We have been challenged by the PTAs on data and my colleague, Deputy Green, has answered some of those challenges. I read their report, I also looked at the videos and was very impressed with the way they were put together; but there were fundamental flaws, which have been outlined this morning, and you have in front of you Education's up-to-date position with regard to spare capacity in the Island. Of that, there is no question; whichever way you look at the data, there is sufficient space to accommodate our children's unexpected population rise over the next six years.

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I tend to agree with those who advocate smaller classes. I would, in the ideal world, be advocating the same sort of arguments that Deputy Fallaize has mentioned. He nailed his colours to the mast with regard to small classes. I agree with that, but I would like to see smaller classes in bigger schools, (**Two Members:** Hear, hear.) and we are not actually talking about big schools. There are many of you sitting here today who were educated in classes of 35 and 40, in three-form entry schools, in this Island. I do not want to go back to those days, I want us to move forward; but the reality is that, at the moment, we cannot afford to reduce the numbers as we would wish; but we can change the infrastructure that maximises the opportunities for our children and I have absolutely no doubt that a move towards two and three-form entry schools are the way forward.

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I have had, during a long career, the privilege of management opportunities in two primary schools – one-form entry primary schools. In fact, one was an all-age school – it had a secondary element which was St Anne's in Alderney. Actually, this is where I part company with my colleague and friend, Deputy Le Pelley, who mentioned the Education Board had no-one on board with primary experience. I managed two schools, one in Alderney and restructured and managed a school in an island larger than this and 2,000 miles away. I am extremely aware of the challenges

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580 and problems associated with managing staff, resource, curriculum, facilities – the problems  
associated with a one-form entry schools and my two Alderney Representative colleagues here  
today face that day in, day out in Alderney. Alderney, in particular, at the moment is facing great  
problems, not just economically, but educationally as well. By the time that I was headteacher in  
585 the school there were over 200 students; there are now under 130 and managing that – providing a  
full, vibrant, exciting opportunity for all children; and all children deserve that – providing that is  
very, very difficult.

Geoff Mahy and I started teaching exactly the same year – 1965. We both taught in  
Southampton. Geoff Mahy was a P. E. teacher there; I was teaching a subject called engineering  
drawing, having started my life as a trainee design draughtsman. Geoff Mahy, as well as being a  
590 friend, has been a colleague for many, many years and his words *are* words of wisdom and they  
are words of experience... and I actually experienced the downsides of one-form entry schools and  
managing to the best of our ability the sort of opportunities that we wanted for our children.

Many of you will know that I have not been a great supporter of the FTP. I have abhorred, I  
suppose is the word I would use, the arbitrary imposition of 10% cuts across all Departments, but I  
595 do actually subscribe to one of its main purposes, which was to challenge Departments: to think  
smart; to look at existing services; assess whether they can be improved; whether they could be  
provided more efficiently and more cheaply.

Although the FTP target was not a driving force for the Education Board, the actual philosophy  
of re-thinking where we are now was very central to our process and I actually welcome that. Our  
600 vision, produced in March and unanimously embraced by this Assembly, suggested that there  
needs to be a rethink across the board, from birth to grave, with regard to provision in this Island.  
In the early 1970s, Finland took brave and radical steps to change a rather stale education system.  
Since that time, it has become the world leader, because it re-thought, it was brave, it took steps  
that were necessary to move us forward. Not so with Guernsey.

605 Guernsey has missed constant opportunities over the last three decades to rationalise and  
radicalise our education provision, (**Two Members:** Hear, hear.) not just at primary level, but at  
secondary and at tertiary level. That is why you had before you in March a vision of what could be  
possible for Guernsey. Agreed – it did not have all the meat on it that it required, but the basic  
skeleton structure is there for us to become a leading world authority in education; a leader instead  
610 of a follower.

Yesterday, Deputy Le Pelley asked why we should be assessing ourselves with the UK. Why  
do we look towards the UK? And I tend to agree. Let us look at the best; let us look further afield;  
let us see what we can actually provide for our children that will be an advantage for our children  
in a competitive world. We want the best for them and this Island is rich enough to do that; but,  
615 again, as we heard yesterday from Deputy Soulsby, our investment in Education, over the last two  
or three decades, has been bare minimal. We lag behind in terms of investment and in fact FTP, at  
the moment, is pushing us further behind. We have to address that issue at some time.

Guernsey missed the opportunity on what my colleague, Deputy Green, mentioned as legacy  
issues which have accrued over the last 20 or 30 years; issues that have been kicked down the road  
620 and brought us to where we are today. We need to take those difficult decisions and we need to be  
brave. The failure to close the Forest Primary School has resulted in the predicted falling rolls at  
La Houquette. They were predicted at the time. You ask any La Houquette parent whether they are  
happy with the falling rolls and the gradual move to a one-form entry school and you will have a  
unanimous, ‘No, we are not happy. We want to return to those two-forms as quickly as possible.’  
625 The inability of the last States to bite the bullet in 2009 again has exacerbated the situation and  
brought us to where we are today.

If changes had been made earlier than the FTP process, we would have been able to use our  
resources to improve a large number of shortfalls in investment. There is no doubt about that. We  
would probably have pre-school education already established in this Island. Sadly, now, because  
630 of FTP, that is a process that is going to be put back. We all know that and the unfortunate Dorey  
amendment has actually knocked any opportunity of us investing in our early years provision. You  
can imagine how frustrated the Education Board feels with that situation.

For years, Guernsey’s public have been led to believe that the education provision in this  
Island – no, I will not give way.  
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**Deputy Dorey:** It is a point of correction.

**Deputy Sherbourne:** Sorry, I thought it was –

640 **Deputy Dorey:** You said it was Deputy Dorey. I think you meant Deputy Storey.

**Deputy Sherbourne:** Oh, I do beg your pardon. *(Laughter)* You are quite right. *(Laughter)* That is certainly something I would never complain about from you. *(Laughter)*

645 The Guernsey public have been led to believe that this Education provision has been excellent. I believe complacency set in some years ago. In our now more open and transparent world, we now know that that is not quite as we were led to believe. We know that we have gradually slipped behind. Our primary schools are not – *are not* – performing to the level that we need and require.

650 Whether it is to do with investment, I am not so sure. Whether it is to do with recruitment of teachers, I do not know the answers; but the facts are there in this transparent world, because now we have data to look at, to assess. Again, we *do not* match UK performance and best UK performance seems to be beyond our grasp at the moment, and that should not be the case. This Island deserves more, our children deserve more. So, we have got to take radical steps to put that right. *This* is one step along the way. It is a painful process, for the parents, those associated with the school, the staff especially. As a teacher, I work hard for my children and I know that every single member of staff in this Island does the same for their children. They become very close to those who they meet day after day. I want to support them. I do not want to make their lives difficult, but I do want to look to the future, which is what you are being asked to do today. Look to the future. You have supported our vision; now enable us to get on and deliver it. I urge you all to support Education's proposals that are before you today.

655 Thank you.

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**The Bailiff:** Deputy Soulsby.

**Deputy Soulsby:** Sir, yes, a point of correction. Again, I think Deputy Sherbourne and the Education Department are being misleading in terms of the number of spaces. They are saying that they will be moving around... 44 people can go to St Martin's and there is available space beyond that number, but I challenge them when they say they had real spaces of 103 at that school. I do not think that they will and I know that they cannot make an extra 60 spaces in that school without investing more money to fit those children in.

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**The Bailiff:** Alderney Representative Jean, then Deputy Hadley.

**Deputy Jean:** Thank you, sir.

675 Yesterday's speech by Deputy Fallaize, I found remarkable. It was remarkable because of his own experience from within Education Committee and now outside Education Committee. The speech that could look from the inside and the outside too, giving us the benefit of his wisdom and I congratulate him on that speech.

680 Where people are concerned, I take my responsibilities very seriously and that is why I shall and have decided to vote with Education. I am sorry but I was here in the 90s. We could have left these schools alone, now we cannot or the public will have to pay more in tax. This they cannot afford. I am the States of Alderney Representative on St Anne's Management Committee, St Anne's School and we have heard of the difficulties there from Deputy Sherbourne. We are making some painful decisions there because of our decline in school roll. If it is not easy to be a politician now in these times, these decisions will not be the last, but are difficult for us to take. This is an economical decision as well as an emotive and emotional one.

685 I have spoken to some really nice people and I have read many e-mails and I have listened to you all yesterday and today, but my duty is to vote with Education. These proposals cannot be ignored anymore. To us now, they have been before the States of Guernsey and I too am getting to know the people on the Education Council and I too find them admirable men, and very understandable, very rational and very reasonable men and I respect them immensely.

690 A high price has been paid by Education Council in the past and yet the same proposals are here. We all know these are nice schools and there is no denying that or for the dedication of the staff who run them and the PTAs attached to them and the wonderful fight that they put up to keep their schools. But this is part of a programme of rationalisation and we must try to support it, hard though it is. It will not be the last time we are placed with difficult decisions and I take this one with, I assure you... the weight of responsibility rests heavily upon me and, yet, I shall vote with Education.

695 Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Hadley.

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**Deputy Hadley:** Mr Bailiff, yesterday I came to this Assembly minded to vote against the amendment put before us by Deputy Dorey. I then voted to guillotine the debate. That vote did not succeed and I was eventually persuaded by the evidence of Deputy Dorey and voted to support his amendment. In the same vein, I hope that he will listen to my arguments today.

705 In the debate on the amendment, Deputy Dorey talked about good governance and lack of consultation. Well, that issue is here in spades. On BBC Radio yesterday morning, I complained of the lack of consultation and Deputy Sillars, who was with me, said there had been massive consultation and he did not know where I had been. Well, I will counter this by saying it is a pity he does not understand what consultation is.

710 In the last Assembly, I spent many hours on the Scrutiny Committee with Deputy Brouard developing the policy on public consultation. Our Committee decided that public consultation on issues of major importance should be the norm; and the Committee's policy says that it should take place over three months and the process should be undertaken before a decision has been made. It is quite ironic to hear Deputy Arditti, the current Chairman of that Committee, telling us that we should not be second guessing the Department; we should not really be overturning this decision at all, because we should leave it to that Department. I think we have got to remind

715 Members of the Assembly that every Department has five Members, out of the 47 of us that sit in this Assembly, and it would be quite wrong for this Assembly not to oversee and question the policies that these Departments come up with.

720 Talking about the lack of consultation, I must say that the decision has come at such a late stage, it has been a rather difficult game of football with fouls being scored by the Education Department, because we listened to Deputy Sillars saying, 'Oh, no, no, no, it is not 800 spaces; what we are talking about is a more realistic 500 spaces.' We have heard Deputy Sherbourne say, 'Oh, you know it is 500 spaces.' The slide put up by the Chief Officer of Education said, 'We are talking about 500 spaces.' So as soon as we base our argument on 500 spaces, what happens?

725 They come back and say, 'No, no, no, no, we are not talking about 500 spaces; we are back on 800 spaces.' So we like to move the goal posts. Well, good governance has certainly been breached on this issue. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

730 Mr Bailiff, I worry when I hear that a Department has a vision. I fear that something nasty is about to happen and it is a bit like the global petrochemical company BP having a green logo. They think we are daft enough to forget they are responsible for most global pollution. Well, now we have it, the Education Department has a vision and they want us to ignore the nasty bits. Their intentions may be laudable, insofar as meeting their FTP targets, but they have made it very clear they want to save money. That is the nasty bit and the sugar on the pill is that it will improve the education of our Island's children.

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Now, quite early on in their Report they make it clear that, in their view, the current system of primary education does not make the best use of available resources. *They* say there are 800 surplus spaces. *They* say that two or three-form entry gives us better outcomes and this is borne by the evidence from the UK. So, Deputy Jones, I am sure, will be supporting it, as it is a UK initiative. *They* say that two or three-form entry schools provide more peer support, a strong place in the community and greater staff continuity. *They* say that the consistency of leadership across this Island needs to be improved. *They* say they can achieve these laudable objectives by closing St Andrew's School.

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745 Deputy Sillars said, in his opening speech, 'The closure of St Andrew's is simply a process of rationalisation.' Well, I think it is a little more than that. Cost is quite clearly – whatever they say to the contrary – their most important issue. Let us look at the cost of St Andrew's School. On page 1789 of the Report, it shows that the cost of educating a pupil in each school across the Island and you will see that St Andrew's School is one of the lowest per pupil on the Island; it is one of the five cheapest. Deputy Green said we have to look at economies of scale. Well, we have already got one of the cheapest there; we do not need to alter the scale to fiddle the figures. Again, if you look at the figures produced by the Parents and Teachers' Association of St Andrew's School on page 16-18 of their report, you will see that St Andrew's provides best value in *every* area you look at, whether it is cost per square metre, cost per person, energy per square metre or water usage, whatever aspect you look at. And let us not forget that the Education Department do not even own the school; it is owned by the parish.

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The Minister of Education tells us that two or three-form entry schools give us better outcomes than a single-form entry school. Yet, they have also told us in the past that the Forest School is one of the best performing schools and that is a single-form entry school. Let us look more specifically at the results of St Andrew's School. Again, St Andrew's School has got very good results when you compare their results with other schools in the Island, but if, more specifically, you were to compare their results with the social priority schools, they perform *exceptionally* well. Why would

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I want to do that? Well, it is significant, because St Andrew's only just misses out for recognition as a social priority school. The Director of Education told me that it could be reclassified as a social priority school. The main defining statistics of whether or not it is a social priority school are whether a third of children come from social housing and the number of children who have parents who have help buying the school uniform. The percentage of parents at St Andrew's who have the school uniforms paid for them is 19%, which is just below Vauvert which is 23%.

The issue of social priority schools is an important one when you look at the information about surplus spaces on page 1791 because it says there that there are 9.7% surplus places at St Andrew's. Also, in the Report, they tell us the smallest class in St Andrew's is 25 and the largest is 29. Well, if you considered St Andrew's as a social priority school, it should have no more than 25 students in a class and on that measure there are too many students at St Andrew's School, if you would have a shortage of spaces.

At one of the presentations, one of the parents said that one in five of the pupils at St Andrew's School have learning difficulties. I found that extraordinary, so I thought I would ring up the Director of Education – we can be making him work for his money these days – to find out what the real figure was and he confirmed that, in fact, that is right. One in five of the pupils at St Andrew's School have learning difficulties. When you then look at the results that they are getting, it is absolutely amazing that the school is achieving the outcome with its pupils when 20% of them have learning difficulties and they are in class sizes larger than would be ideal.

**Deputy Fallaize:** Sir, may I... Deputy Hadley is misleading the States and I issue a point of correction or whatever we call it these days.

Thank you.

Deputy Hadley is suggesting that St Andrew's is unique in this way. If he looks at the figures for Hautes Capelles and if he looks at the figures for Vale Junior, he will find very similar percentages of students on the special educational need and, if he looks at the percentages of St Martin's and Castel, he will find more students in receipt of clothing grants. So, when he is comparing the figures for attainment between St Andrew's and then choosing Amherst, Houquette and La Mare, he is misleading the States, because he needs to compare the attainment at St Andrew's with that at Hautes Capelles and Castel and Vale, and all the other schools which have very similar rates of children on clothing grant and with special educational needs.

**Deputy Hadley:** Mr Bailiff, I am *not* misleading the Assembly. The comparisons I have made are perfectly valid. Just because Deputy Fallaize wants to compare them with other schools (*Laughter*) does not mean that my comparisons are invalid. I think *he* has misled the Assembly and I will come to that later. (*Laughter*)

On one of my visits to the school, I met a parent – Sorry, that interruption has made me miss a paragraph. I do beg your pardon.

At the beginning of this Report, the Education Department said that two or three-form entry schools provided more peer support and a greater sense of community. Well, I really think they should look more closely at St Andrew's School. On one of my visits to the school, I met a parent who was assisting in one of the classes and I was told this was not unusual. On another visit, there was an assembly for children – sibs who were not yet old enough to attend the school – and parents. Last year, the PTA raised £25,000 for a new playground. It is a pity the Department did not give them an inkling then that the school was going to be closed. The community created paths to the woodland on the school side and the school has an award for it help with Floral Guernsey in St Andrew's. The PTA have produced a brilliant rebuttal to the Education Department and mounted a dedicated and spirited fight against closure. What more of a sense of community do you want? The Board tells us that two or three-form entry schools lead to better staff continuity. Well, when I went around the school, I was amazed at the length of time the teaching staff had been dedicating their lives to the school: 17 years, 16 years, 15 years, 11 years, 10 years. Actually, fortunately, they have got some new teachers, otherwise we would have been criticising it for not having enough new blood. Yes, I think we have got enough continuity at St Andrew's, despite the cross it has to bear by being only a single-form entry school.

The Education Department also said that the single-form entry schools did not offer consistency of leadership. Well, the school's leader, the head, has been there for 11 years. One thing the Education Department did not make clear was the effect of the closure on the school and the community; and Deputy Sillars said that is an issue they have not considered at all; it was not relevant to the argument.

Many of us believe that the parochial system in Guernsey is an important part of the governance of the Island. It has evolved over hundreds of years and is an important part of our

825 culture and heritage. Its destruction would be unforgivable and the closure of St Andrew's School, at the heart of the community, would damage the important fabric. Deputy Sillars said that when the school in Torteval closed it did not destroy the parish. Well, not everybody would agree with him. One of my telephone calls was a former teacher and resident of Torteval who assured me that the closure of the school did have a disruptive effect on the parish. Deputy Bebb told us that he did not see how a primary school helped to provide a community focus. That really surprised me. Perhaps we had better talk churches as he is more into churches than schools. (*Laughter*) I think he can understand that when he goes to church he gets to know his fellow churchgoers, he may even socialise with them. In the same way, the school is part of the focus, as many of the children walk to school, neighbours meet there frequently and that is the same case, if it is a pub or a shop. If we said we are going to close the church in the middle of St Martin's and people will be scattered all round the Island to go to different churches, I think you would see that there would be a loss of community. We have the same thing; that loss of community happens with the school as well. The school is very much the focus of the community. As I have said, the children walk to school and neighbours meet each other.

840 As St Martin's is also in my electoral district, I visited it with Deputies O'Hara and Soulsby and the head immediately said to me, 'Well, this is a blast from the past, seeing you here again' because my children went to St Martin's. She said, 'You will remember how difficult it was to park and get the children into the school.' And so we said, 'Can you accommodate more children?' And she said, 'Yes, no problem accommodating 20 across all age groups. We can accommodate 25.' And I understand recently she has upped that to, 'I could accommodate 40,' But do not forget that St Martin's represents 106 of the 800 spare places, so we have certainly accepted half of them almost not usable, so it does make you a bit suspicious about the 800 places. Again, when we were at St Martin's we saw 32 pupils in one of the classes. It is important to talk about these surplus places, because we know that there is pressure on places in St Martin's at the moment. Year 3 has been full for two years; Year 4 has been full for a year.

850 The presentation that we all heard on Monday by Mr and Mrs Gardener was interesting, because they moved to St Martin's so that their children could go to St Martin's School and the first two did. Unfortunately, there was too big a gap between the second and third child, for the third child to go to St Martin's as a right, so that child went to St Andrew's. So although they live within walking distance of St Martin's School, their child goes to St Andrew's School and they are now campaigning to keep St Andrew's School open, because much to their surprise it is such a good school.

855 The truth is there are not enough spare places. There will always be spare places, for obvious reasons. There are a different number of babies born each year. You cannot even the birth rate across the decade. There are more babies born in one parish than another. So you are never going to be able to use all of your spaces efficiently unless you keep reorganising the school on a yearly basis.

860 If I had to design a primary school on this Island – I had to give value in educational, social terms – I would look very hard at St Andrew's. Here is a school that is deeply imbedded in the community. It gives much to the community and in return the community unstintingly gives its support. It is often said it is difficult to move across social divisions so, when we see that St Andrew's has a third of its children from social housing, we can see that is certainly helping. It gives value for money by being one of the cheapest on the Island. And as I have said, far from classes being short of students, there is a good place for saying it has more pupils per class than is ideal. Its property costs are not high and we believe that the cost of future work on the Island has been exaggerated. We have had the school looked at by architects.

870 I must say, that I did not expect to cross swords with the Education Department in the way that we have, because I know their expertise in education; and, despite the expertise they have, they were wise enough to bring on board a very experienced, high performing educationalist, Mr Denis Mulkerrin. As we know, he was awarded a CBE – just short of a knighthood – for services to education in the UK and we are lucky indeed to have his advice on educational issues in our Island. We are lucky indeed to have him on the Board (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and as our educational service is improved, some of the credit must go to him.

875 I know that some of the opponents of closure have directed their ire at Mr Mulkerrin in particular and this is most unfortunate, because I know that Mr Mulkerrin did not suggest the closure of St Andrew's. *In fact*, he suggested that they make savings in the Education Department itself and he is *absolutely* correct. The Education Department saw an increase in the money it was spending last year of £370,000, which took its budget to nearly £5 million. It is madness to continue this expenditure at the centre and fund it by damaging primary education around the Island. They might not make the savings at all as they try to cram extra pupils into the schools,

885 increase the salaries of headteachers into then larger schools; and pay the additional transport costs. It really is important to deal with this issue of savings, and we keep coming back to it, because the only way the Education Department can make the savings they are talking about is making eight teachers redundant. I suppose, in light of what has been said this morning, this bit of the speech might not make much sense, because at the present time –

890 **Deputy Sillars:** A point of correction, if that is alright. We are not making any teachers redundant. I do not want to interrupt, but I cannot have that go unchallenged.  
Thank you.

895 **Deputy Hadley:** Well, alright, sorry, I will rephrase that. Reducing the number of teachers by eight, we all know that a large number of teachers on the Island have applied for redundancy under the terms the States are offering. I heard that on the radio this morning. (*Laughter*)

900 If we take the figure of 500 surplus spaces – and, yes, they can say, ‘Oh well, we have changed our minds, we are going to the stick to the figure of 800, because we cannot make it stack up at 500,’ but let us take the figure of 500 – if we take St Andrew’s out of the system, on their figures, it reduces the capacity of the school to 4,000. We know that in 2019 we will have 4,190 pupils to go to the primary schools. This is not guess work because these are the children who were born this year, last year, the year before, the year before that and so on. These children have been born; they are progressing towards the age at which they need to start at primary school, but the Education Department says, ‘And, of course, after that the numbers will decline’. Well, how do they know? Do they know how many people are going to have babies next year? I think it is amazing, but let us just deal with the 4,190. There will be 200 spaces.

**Deputy Trott:** I know one who is having a break, sir. (*Laughter*)

910 **Deputy Hadley:** Sorry, I missed that. Is Deputy Trott going to add to them (*Laughter*) Oh, he is going to add more? (*Laughter*) Well, in view of that statement, if that is spread across the Island we can see that we are in real trouble. (*Laughter and applause*)

915 So, if we let the number of teachers decline by eight now, we will in future have to recruit more teachers. No savings will have been made, but we will have irrevocably harmed the education of a large number of our children. Any savings in the short-term will have been eroded by the fees paid per capita, the alterations to existing schools. The whole point about this is that FTP savings are supposed to be sustainable and what I am saying is that these savings will *not* be sustainable.

920 Deputy Fallaize seemed to get the praise from some of you for trying to persuade you that there will be no problem in accommodating 4,200 pupils, as they have done it before. However, he is ignoring the fact that in 1998 one presumably needed the teachers. It all comes back to the number of teachers that you need to have. It is not difficult. You can only save money if you reduce the number of teachers and if you reduce the number of teachers you are not going to be able to deal with the people who are coming on.

925 It is worth going back again to one of their own Board members, because Deputy Sillars and Deputy Luxon told this Assembly, quite categorically, that they would never do anything that would harm the education of our children. There is no dispute on that, is there. Well, Denis Mulkerrin said, ‘The interest of the children must be the first consideration.’ He said, ‘If there is a compelling reason to close a school, it has to override the undoubted harm this could do to the children and the local community.’ I do not understand how these two eminent Deputies, and no doubt others, can square their commitment to improve the education of the Island when Denis Mulkerrin has said so emphatically that closing a school undoubtedly harms both the children and the community. I repeat again that it was *not* his suggestion to close St Andrew’s School.

930 We have heard Finland quoted at us. They have a class size of 21. We have been told that we are heartless and spineless if we do not support the Education Department and that it will be a brave decision to support the Education Department. I think it will be a brave decision to do the undoubted harm that you will do to St Andrew’s School for an unproven financial benefit. I urge Members to vote against the Department’s proposals. (*Applause*)

940 **The Bailiff:** Does anyone else wish to speak or has everything been said that can be said? No? Oh, sorry, Deputy Brouard.

Sorry, there are so many people leaving the Chamber, I could not see you standing.

945 **Deputy Brouard:** Thank you, sir. I have not written a speech. I should have done. I have a jumble of notes so, when you hear it, it will be as much a surprise to you as it will be to me. (*Laughter*) It sounded really good in the car driving home last night.

I, too, have a vision and it is probably not that dissimilar to the Education vision. It is that parents are happy to go to whatever school they have been selected for; that the results in the exams, and the success generally of pupils, are outstanding and beating the world; and that children are helped from day one of their life, and their parents before they are even born. That is my vision. But there is nothing in this Report that lists those spirits or guides me to that way. It comes down to a very marginal: is this saving and is there a benefit from going forward with it?

The problem I have is that most of the Report is all about teachers making the difference; and I am not sure how, having closed the school down and moved all those pupils to other schools, making those classes bigger, somehow has improved the teaching. Okay, there is a little bit about: some teachers may not be so good, therefore, they are going to need help from their colleagues and in a bigger school you can do that. I do not think that is quite right. I think Education needs to... If teachers need help, they need to give them the help and to lift them up, because not all teachers... I think, as Mr Mulkerrin said, 'You can have an outstanding teacher who can look after 28 in a class.' Yes, great, maybe they can but can an ordinary teacher... I was an ordinary banker; there is nothing wrong with being average – you are what you are; I do not think I was outstanding. But, when you have got little Johnny messing about at the back and Sally is doing something else over there and you have got 28 in the class, you cannot be all that focussed. It is great if you have got children who are absolutely sitting there, rigid bound and taking everything in, but life is not like that. We have different children with different needs and at different stages; and not all teachers are going to be outstanding by definition; you cannot have, otherwise you have to have some teacher somewhere else. So, I am a little bit disappointed that there is nothing in this that lists the main goal of Education, which is to get teaching right up to that very top level.

I am nervous of Education. I am sorry. I have given Education, I hope... and we have some of the best people we have got in the States to do that job. We have given them Deputy Sillars, a man of business; we have given then Deputy Le Lièvre, who has experience from being in the States for many years; two people from Education; an advocate who can sort out all the problems as well. But, we have given them a really big animal to ride. It is the second biggest budget we have got in the States. I think of Grange House as some large elephant and when you are sitting on the top of it, I do not know whether they have always got the levers over the control of that elephant and I think sometimes the elephant goes where the elephant goes and it takes the Board with them.

There are probably two things in my States career which really got up my nose and one was the firemen's dispute – thank you, Deputy Brehaut – (*Laughter*) and the other one, was how could we have let Education slide so far, so fast and no-one knew about it? There we were thinking that we had a really good education system; and the irony is, it was Deputy Sillars who was one of the main people who went in there to find out that it was not; and we have a *Guernsey Press* headline, 'Eight years of GCSE decline' and we all thought it was doing really well. I thank Deputy Sherbourne for actually coming, not clean, but actually recognising the fact that it is not as good as it should be and we have got to improve. That was a disappointment for me; that we put a team in there to run Education last time and they asked all the questions but they never got to the bottom of that elephant. (*Laughter*) So, I come now thinking, have we really got to grips with this elephant?

The other one that they came up with, of course, was, 'Education was going to look at pre-school' but they went into that like an elephant in a china shop. (*Laughter*) They really did and, yes, you can all laugh, but it was not funny for the businesses involved; it was not funny for the pre-school groups who were all there already giving the services. Education at the time did not even know that Health Services actually was the regulator for it. They just bludgeoned in and now, of course, we are left... pre-school groups – I am responsible for a small charitable one – we are left picking up the pieces. Some of our funding was cut because everybody thought, 'Oh, the States is going to be taking this over.' So, when you do these things, think about it and I have got a feeling, as well, there has been very much... this elephant from Grange House has been a top down system; it really has.

1000 **Deputy Sillars:** Sorry.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Sillars.

**Deputy Sillars:** I am not quite sure of the phrase that I should use, but I was just wondering which Education Board you were talking about, because 'elephant' is a favourite phrase of yours,

1005 but actually this Board is working very closely with the GPLA. So, I do not know if you are referring to the previous one.

So, there is a point of correction. The previous one, you may be right, I do not know; but this Board is working very closely with the GPLA.

1010 **Deputy Brouard:** Thank you very much for that. That is very helpful.

What I am trying to say is that my history with Education colours where I am now. Are you saying, now, you have got the elephant, you are in control, you have got the reins? I am not so sure. That is one thing, sir, the results do need to improve; and another one was Mr Mulkerrin. We had the report in 2011; 50% of the children leaving primary school had a reading age below what they required for going to secondary. That was really disappointing: 50% from our schools. I do not know how this move of closing St Andrews helps me in that goal – to get that fixed. In fact, that review of education did not come from within Education, it came from Commerce and Employment. It was Deputy Sillars, Deputy Storey, Deputy Spruce and I think Deputy Gillson who got the Skill Strategy up and going, who went out and actually found that our results were not quite so good.

1020 Walking to work and the Environment Strategy – as I said, it was going to be going all over the place. We have got an environmental policy. I do not know how high this sits against all the other priorities, because you can pick your arguments where you like, but the environmental policy says that the aims of the environmental policy are to ensure that consideration of the environment will be core in *all* policy decisions - *all policy decisions*. This is a new policy decision; it is closing a school down in one area and moving the children to the four corners of the compass. Where is the environmental consideration?

1025 While I am touching on that, I was expecting a *balanced* report from Education. When I went to the presentation – the first one – it was, ‘Small schools are not particularly the best place to deliver education and, by the way, larger schools are.’ There was no real recognition of the fact that small schools can do well. It was rather ironic really because I listened to the radio, to Mr Mulkerrin, and he was saying, ‘Well, we have got this information from the UK but locally the evidence is the opposite way round’. So we are going to use evidence from the UK to counteract something that we know locally is different. So, I am concerned about that particular aspect.

1035 Class sizes will go up. I do not want to have larger class sizes. Why do I want to have larger class sizes? That does not go well with me at all.

Short-termism, I think, was a word that was used by the Minister and he asked the rhetorical question, ‘Do you think we are into short-termism?’ Well, you certainly are on maintenance, because your maintenance is not being done as it should be done and I have now been told that this is because you have decided to make sure you stay within your cash limit, making maintenance cut off. That, I think, is short-termism, because I think, in the end, maintenance will catch up with you and I think we should be doing it. Trying to get a straight answer on that little tiny point... The amount of effort and e-mails I had to do to get that, you could not make it up. So, if that is the sort of effort that teachers and other people do have to go through, to the elephant at Grange House, well, I am disappointed.

1045 Another one – I probably should not bring this one up, but I will – at one of the meetings, it was almost – I must choose my words carefully here – that Education were not over-happy that these nurture groups were happening at St Sampson’s and at St Andrew’s and it was almost like, ‘Ha, ha, ha, they must have too much time on their hands.’ That is roughly the gist of how I took it. I thought that is the wrong way to look at it. I was thinking wouldn’t it be great if they said, ‘Isn’t it fantastic that these things are happening and how can we do that in other schools and how have they managed to do it?’ Would that not be a better way round?

1050 I think Deputy Bebb mentioned – as I said, it is a complete smorgasbord here this morning – Roman Catholic and their schools there. Very good results from the Catholic Schools and they also take in children who are Catholic and come from the continent. A lot of them do not have English as their first language and they still manage, with absolutely cracking results.

This probably should come at the end, but I will put it in here now. Do not spoil this Island with what you think Hampshire should look like. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) (*Applause*)

1060 FTP, I think that has come up before. It is a blunt instrument. It started off as quite a honed precision instrument. Each Department came up with where they could find savings and that was put into a heap. But, when the heap did not look quite big enough, the blunt instrument came out and said, ‘Right, it is 10%.’ So, there may be some Departments which may not be able to deliver 10%. There may be some Departments that can deliver 14%; I do not know. It is a guideline; it is a bit like in Pirates of the Caribbean – this ‘parley’ bit is a guideline. If education outcomes are going to be effected, or the quality of life in Guernsey is going to be effected, then you have to

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take that into account as well as the environmental movement of children, and as well as our social and inclusion of groups.

1070 Be careful, as well, of the syndrome of: do not feel sorry for... I do not know what the... there is probably a technical name for it but, because Education had a hard time at the presentations, we somehow have to feel sorry for them and have to back them. Please just do it on the merits of the argument. The arguments were very fine, because Deputy Sillars did not come – as far as I understand – into Education as Minister after the election and say, ‘Right, let us get on and close those schools.’ He had to go on that journey to be taken there. So, who is driving? Who is holding those reins of Grange House?

1075 Deputy Fallaize always likes to have procedure and policy in place. I do not get this, ‘must have a policy with regard to the number of form of entries for schools,’ I think that is a complete, absolute red herring because you are going to then have a position... Should we then have a policy that two is actually worse than three or is five better than two, but not as bad as three? It is ridiculous. Look at the diversity we have across the Island and accept it.

1080 I think, also, if you want to solve it... I would much rather we have the different, separate parish schools. If you want to make savings, do the savings by perhaps closing some of the three-form schools, through natural wastage, down to two. Then you have got a building; then you have got some spare space; then you can have places to have their lunch in a different area; you can have an I.T. room; you can have a cinema room. You can do whatever because the main cost of all this is the teachers. I think 70% of it is salary. So, the fact that the building is there, whether every classroom is used to its utmost is neither here nor there in the scheme of things.

1085 I would rather have those smaller schools in those communities. It works quite well because you go into a small school that is local, that you can walk to, that is close, that is part of your community and, of course, in the social plan – because we do not bother to read that bit, it is just inconvenient at the time – we are looking to build up communities. What better way of building up a community than with a school. Yes, communities like St Saviour’s have suffered; it has taken years for them to now slowly bring back Mont Varouf into some sort of community centre; a long, hard slog.

1090 While we are on that – a school that has been there for 200 years, we say here, as one of our top aims... this is higher than FTP, higher than all us 47; it is what we say is up there. We will, as the Government of Guernsey, aim to protect and improve the Island’s environment and the unique cultural identity and rich heritage. Well, wouldn’t St Andrew’s School fit into that?

1095 Education mandate. Again, I looked through the mandate yesterday. It is all about education; it is not so much about – (*Laughter*). It is not so much about saving money and closing it; it is more about the provision of services and things.

1100 Through life, one goes from a small local school, one then goes to the bigger secondary school which tends to be a bit further away. Some of our children who qualify and want that experience may go to university, which is even further away; and then some people will go on studying even further and they will go to universities around the world. That is how the stage works. It is just really sad that we are suddenly going to make that first stage a much bigger jump.

1105 Headteachers. I think in the context of the Education elephant, would you, as a headteacher of a multi-form school... What could you possibly say to the question, ‘Is your multi-form school better or worse than a single one?’ Or if you asked the headteacher of a single-form entry school, ‘Is it better or worse?’ What a question to ask. I think there is some level of reluctance for some of our teachers still to be able to be as open with the Grange elephant, because I think there is still that culture which I hope this new team here, the new Board, will really come down on and really have that open dialogue, because if you really believe – and I do as well – that teachers are the key, then unlock that door. Do not leave them stifled.

1110 You are lucky – the end of the day. Finally, you can put as many arguments out whichever way on this particular position. I have dragged up a few; we have had Education put in a few. At the end of the day, it really comes down to what you really feel. Do you really think education is going to be improved vastly, substantially, a tiny bit, by closing a successful school, with a great community in the centre of the Island? If you can really answer, yes, to that, go with Education, but I am going to stick with keeping St Andrew’s School.

1120 Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop and then Deputy Quin.

**Deputy Gollop:** Sir, thank you.

1125 All that talk about elephants, herrings and smorgasbords makes me feel quite hungry (*Laughter*) but I do acknowledge the sincerity of Deputy Brouard’s views. Indeed, I agree with

many of his points, particularly in response to Deputy Duquemin's hard work that he did in meeting the teachers and headteachers.

1130 I think the reality is, with professionals, not only might they be guarded as to what they say to Deputies and the dialogue between themselves and, perhaps the Couperderie, but they are not going to wish, without good reason, to professionally challenge, in any way, their colleagues. It reminds me of the phone-in, when an educational expert was asked to describe leadership in schools and he named at least two extremely able headteachers on the Island and, of course, inevitably within half an hour somebody rang up and said, 'What about Mr X or Mrs Y?' It is a  
1135 dangerous role to play, because I think we all believe that everybody, as far as we know, is working to the highest possible standards.

Hearing the chuckle from Deputy Sherbourne, I actually found much common ground with what he said. I think, if you look back at the budgets of the States of Guernsey – going back into the 1980s, 1990s, the Millennium – the difference between Education and Health spending was  
1140 much lesser than today. Health spending and welfare spending have increased, whereas Education spending has not necessarily. To a degree I wish the Board had, within the context of their vision, taken a sterner political line perhaps against Treasury and Resources, who have imposed a very tight straightjacket of financial reductions upon that Department, which inevitably influences some of the decisions and harder decisions that have to be taken.

1145 Like Deputy Hadley, I think that it is not enough, in scrutiny terms, as a Member of this Assembly, to argue the Board had completely made the wrong judgement for the wrong criteria; because any measure that comes before us, we have a right to vote, yes, or, no, on and indeed, based on our manifestos and pledges and policies, it is somewhat an absurd model of Government that everybody stands on manifestos, whether they are worth reading or not, and then delegate to  
1150 five people the key decisions that they made promises to their electorate on.

Deputy Green, of course, made an eloquent and measured speech, but he did stress looking at the model. As Deputy Sherbourne identified in some, but not all, areas of Guernsey's education, there has arguably been a slippage against the very peak, best performance we could potentially obtain. One or two comments yesterday suggested we should not follow England and I entirely  
1155 agree with that, but in some areas, the average across southern rural England, in comparable areas to ourselves, is greater than the Channel Island norm and we have to address that issue. In fact, we should not even be trying to benchmark that; because as an offshore, independent community, we should go that level above and therefore look across on a global level, best practice in other places.

Deputy Green's point – Members who are against the Education Department proposals are therefore backing a historic model that really has to be reformed – is not quite right, because Deputy Bebb, for example, talked about the new Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition policies of free schools. We have seen in the past, under the Labour Government, other initiatives such as the academies and specialist schools. We heard Deputy Soulsby talk about a sort of confederation of linked schools in a rural area. I think they are all ideas that could work for Guernsey. It is a  
1165 different model, but what we should be doing now is gradually abandoning our current model, but looking for a better model. The decision we are going to make today does not guarantee a better model.

Some Members and personalities have suggested we should look back to the days when Torteval School and St Saviour's School and St Peter's School all closed in the 1960s and 1970s  
1170 and it effectively... out of the ashes came the La Houquette School. That misses the point really. The country schools in that time were no longer performing as well as perhaps some other schools on the Island and they were being replaced by something that was manifestly better – a new school in a green park; new facilities, the shock of the new. St Andrew's School is not being replaced by a new school nor really is St Sampson's Infants'. We are, effectively, just allocating the pupils – in  
1175 the case of St Andrew's, a very wide diaspora across different parts of the Island – with increasing class sizes.

I have never been a particular fan of the Financial Transformation Programme. I think that however you beat it up, however you project it, it has two fundamental flaws within its concept. One is that, effectively, you are delegating political analysis and policy choices to unelected  
1180 individuals and/or potentially not badly-paid consultants and analysts. I notice McKinsey and Company are mentioned in the Education Report and so on.

The other problem with the FTP is that it stretches efficiency; and the very nature of politics and Government is you are sometimes supporting people and things and projects that are inefficient, in a strictly commercial sense of the word. So, you are confusing one culture with  
1185 another. But, of course, it also cannot take on board actuarial ideas. The Chief Minister, in manifestos and statements and the thrust of the population debate, has implied that it is not unreasonable to suspect that the Island may see a degree of measured population growth,



especially of the right kind of people who can work in our public services and generate income and skills for our economy. Should that take place, and in a way that is an optimistic scenario, that has the potential to lead to an increase both in the birth rate and the importation of families with children. I am taking a more pessimistic scenario that Island incomes may drop. One might be left with a declining demand for private education. Should that be the case, then children who are currently generally within the private sector – which must be several hundred – would be entirely and appropriately legally eligible for primary school places. We have to consider that in our numbers as well.

As a committee member of Living Streets – currently chaired by a former Deputy Minister of this House, Deputy Tom Le Pelley – we have met as a committee and, as implied in the St Andrew’s report, thoroughly endorse the principle of local community schools where the majority of pupils and parents have the opportunity to walk to and from the school. The policies contained within the Education Department generally go against that outcome and it has to be noted too the comments of town Douzenier Richard Lord about the role of the school in conserving habitat and the particular regard for St Andrew’s with its wildlife and flower gardens. Indeed, I was impressed on a visit to the St Sampson’s Delancey School to see, indeed, the work that the children had done on gardens and what opportunities were being presented to them at a very young age.

I have mentioned the inefficiency of the models and I would stress again the points Deputy Hadley made about the social nature of St Andrew’s School. With a population of approximately a third from social housing estates and a figure of one-fifth with extra special learning needs, I note his point that a senior figure at the Education Department, perhaps the Director, suggested that it could be reclassified as a social school. That, of course, is not only about resources; it would effectively mean that they would be going for a goal of class sizes of 24 or 25, rather than the general 28 and of course it changes the numbers and the dynamic of the argument significantly, as well as the knock-on effect on another social school, the Vauvert. St Martin’s, which although perhaps not a social school in the pure sense of the word, has nevertheless had a long and worthy tradition of nurturing pupils and, of course, has been recently the recipient of various tenants with social housing issues from other parts of the Island.

There have been some curious arguments made in Education’s points during the last few weeks. One being that you will attract very high calibre headteachers for larger schools, because of the career challenges and perhaps enhanced pay scales. I do not really think we should look at professional development issues in this nature. Comparing ourselves to the Isle of Man or Jersey, which is a reality in our industrial field is an interesting exercise, because St John’s Parish and Trinity Parish in the north of Jersey and St Mary’s, are rural areas with populations of around 2,000 people – in the case of St Mary’s, about 1,700; and they have parish schools, one-form entry, with approximately 200 pupils.

In one respect, I was surprised that the Alderney Representatives had come down on the side of Education because, as we heard from Deputy Sherbourne, the Alderney School, which achieves incredible results in many ways, has declined numerically from over 200 pupils to perhaps around 130. What we do not want to see is any suggestion in the future that the Education Department might try to close the school – but it falls outside the model now, completely. One has to bear in mind that – listening to what Deputy Le Lièvre said on the radio this morning – it is pretty obvious that, if the States accept the rationale today for the two schools that survived narrowly in 2009, the next school to be looked at for closure would be the Forest School (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) or even La Houquette, because it clearly falls outside of the policy framework that Deputy Fallaize has raised. I am opposed to that, in principle, as well for all kinds of reasons, from community cohesion to the models. I have just had a note about the little Herm School, with six pupils.

Actually, sometimes, when we watch regional television from the UK we hear about school closures – Deputy Soulsby referred to them – from perhaps areas of Cornwall, Devon and Somerset; but, when you look into those stories and the hard decisions local education authorities have made, those schools really struggle for numbers. Some of them have 10, 20, 30 pupils. We are not in that situation – apart from Herm Island, all of our schools are quite large. We are quite an urban society. We are also quite a moneyed society.

The Isle of Man apparently has enough resources – and Deputy Duquemin knows this better than anyone – to run a school entirely, almost on a whim, of parents who wish their children to speak Manx; whereas we are struggling to keep a community school which is effective, efficient and, as we have heard, value for money.

Then, I come onto the issues of the finances. We not only have the arguments being clearly made that St Andrew’s School is one of the most cost efficient per pupil, but intriguingly enough the energy costs of the building seem low per capita. The ones that are high, like Les Capelles and a few others, appear to be those that have been built in recent years; which goes against the

perceived wisdom that the new-build has been more energy efficient. I appreciate there may be more facilities, but, nevertheless, statistics can always be used in different ways. On the arguments about spare capacity, the spare capacity argument, has been argued against, of course, in the St Andrew's projections about projected school rolls and so on; but I do not think we need to go as complicated as that, statistically.

We have seen, with La Houquette School, the problems where there is a border zone between a one-form and a two-zone entry and, if we matched the private educational sector that people pay their money for... if we matched Finland, Denmark, other parts even of the United Kingdom, with lower class sizes, we would not have this overcapacity issue; it is only because we are using the model of 27 or 28. But it is not one size fits all because, as we have heard, some schools on the Island are allowed to use the notional 24. That does not seem – to quote Deputy Fallaize – an entirely egalitarian outcome.

I will come on to two other points here. There may be a call to reopen these schools. I have been long enough in these States to see incredible circularity in politics. How we went from an Education Department desperate to close the Forest School and failing, to one where they spent a relative fortune on reconstructing it and praised it as a model so that it could operate in parallel with Le Rondin School, as an experiment and a useful synergy between different kinds of education.

Then there was a time, of course, when the Education Department decided to close Oakvale School and create excellent new models at Le Rondin and Le Murier that have been successful and a credit to the Island; but the idea of an intermediate school in between special needs and main stream curriculum – which Oakvale to a degree, in a way, represented – did not disappear entirely, it kind of, like Doctor Who, rebirthed itself into Les Voies School, in a way, in the same place.

I think we have to be wary, sometimes, of the advice we get from experts. I mean Deputy Luxon yesterday said he might change his mind depending upon the figures, but of course we know in other Departments that figures have changed radically in the last two or three years and that estimates and criteria change; so one has to base judgements on political instinct and not just upon evidence and advice.

For me, I do not have a particular interest in saving either of the existing schools. I can listen to the arguments that two or three-form entry can be a better educational model. Mr Mulkerrin and others have suggested that there are at least 100 academic papers on this subject of which probably 70% come down in favour of larger schools, usually based on the UK or elsewhere. At times, of course, some of the activities of the campaigning groups have been rather robust and have perhaps offended people and, by its very nature, campaigning groups are likely to campaign from their side of the street rather than for the whole picture. I accept all of those reservations but my reasons really for supporting them and voting against the Education Department is the logic of the Education Department's own position. Although, I can imagine how and why the Board came to this decision – they have had to make cuts and savings – they have tried to make them in areas which cause the least possible educational damage to the delivery of education and services.

I agree with most of what Deputy Le Pelley said yesterday in a sterling opening speech, but I perhaps got a bit worried when he started talking about reorganising, for example, that model of excellence: the Schools' Music Service. I think we need services like that that really enhance the life culture and career structure of the Island; but, nevertheless, when one looks at the questions of the schools, let us look at the logic of the Education Department's current position.

A few years ago, there were one or two applications from parents who wished for an alternative school from that in their catchment area, which we know do and can change; and they wished to go to one of the two voluntary Catholic schools. Apparently, the headteacher of the day was happy with that move; there was spare capacity in the school and we know that schools, despite being small, have an enviable and excellent reputation; but the Education Department, albeit with a different Board and a different Chief Executive Officer opposed the move quite rigorously and took it all the way to an administrative tribunal. Now we hear, in various speeches, that we can access spare capacity in the Catholic schools – well, they are not really Catholic schools, because they are State financed, but never mind – if we need to, as happened recently when there was over-capacity at Vale Infants' and parents were offered a place at St Mary's and St Michael's.

I thought we had a policy, which I do not support by the way, of telling parents where their catchment area is and giving them no choice; but there, there is choice being offered and it would appear that if you are a baptised baby in the Catholic religion, which is not even our established church, in that sense you and your parents have a wider choice than any other parents on the Island – in a secular age as well. Why is the States allowing children who have not even made a theological choice, and should not be expected to, a difference of outcome from all the other

1310 children? How can the Education Department justify funding two Catholic schools when, they argue, not me, that there is spare capacity? And how can you balance secular... We are getting an extraordinary situation of a Catholic school, under the diocese of Portsmouth, right next door to a States' school in St Peter Port South where both apparently have spare capacity to take people in from St Andrew's.

1315 Another situation is in Delancey Park, where you have a States school whose head is on the chopping block for closure and a Catholic school which could take extra pupils. This is supposed to be a secular, non-sectarian society. It does not make sense and I would anticipate that there will be judicial reviews and applications for administrative review from parents who have been outraged by various U-turns and lack of focus about all of this.

1320 This is not a clear policy of going for a future of two or three-form schools; one size fits all, but the same state-based secular series of values and judgements across the board. This is a smorgasbord policy, of choosing bits and pieces to open or close. It makes no sense in its own terms and so, as a scrutineer in a sense, I have to reject the policy letter, despite the arguments for two or three-form entries. This does not make sense and should be reconsidered for a new vision which delivers a new outcome.

1325 So what is my new vision? I have mentioned some of these points already... might require higher state expenditure, but that is for another day; but I would make... it might not actually, it might not because there are two points that have not been mentioned at all in this debate, with the exception perhaps by Deputy Soulsby, and they are democracy and choice.

1330 Whether we agree or not, it is pretty obvious that the overwhelming majority of parents of the St Andrew's School current catchment area and the St Sampson's current school catchment area want the school to remain open. We can argue in an intellectual way that we can provide just as good an education for their children elsewhere – possibly true – and that two or three-form entries have their advantages – they have their disadvantages too. We can argue on that but their voice, 1335 their choice on the ballot box is to keep the schools open and I think, too, we should be moving towards a model across our education system of fewer civil servants in the centre, less cost in the centre and more choice across the community; so that parents can look at the different schools – possibly voluntary schools, free schools, Catholic schools, whatever – and chose what they consider to be the best education, with the States providing the majority, if not all, of the resources 1340 for their child. That is the vision that I think would deliver not only happier parents and communities, but better results and, therefore, more productive citizens for the next two or three decades. *This model is wrong. (Applause)*

1345 **The Bailiff:** Next I call Deputy Quin and then Deputies Trott and Dorey.

**Deputy Quin:** Thank you, sir.

Well, we have been here before; exactly the same arguments are being put forward and I am looking to see what is different and I cannot find a lot.

1350 One of the things I noticed is... I was sitting where Deputy Soulsby is last time and I had an e-mail from a campaigning young Deputy, who shall remain nameless, who said, 'If I get elected I will not vote for any closing of the schools.' Well, then he was on the Education Board and he helped or tried to push through the closing of St Andrew's. What has happened now? We have got exactly the same thing; two of our Deputies from the parish who vowed to keep the school open at the meeting have now changed their mind, which is their right to do.

1355 Thank you, Deputy Brehaut, shall I carry on on my own? *(Laughter)*

1360 Is St Andrew's different? Yes, it is. Apart from the obvious, that it has got no coastline. If you go to the school there is a different feel, a different atmosphere. One of the champions of that very thought is Denis Mulkerrin. In his report is a passage about links with parents: the parish is different; St Andrew's more so. From the man himself! Exactly. Last time it was said that they did not come to the House to close the school but to keep it open. Yes, but that was a dog calling a dog a cat – it is still a dog.

1365 I made the promise to the people of that parish that I would fight for that school and I am going to do exactly that and I am going to stand by my word. One of the reasons is that I believe if you say something you have got to stick with it but, secondly, I believe their argument is right. What we face now is this: do we believe this report over this report? Well, this is the big choice. Undoubtedly the PTA had more opportunity because the Billet was up; it is easier to pick holes in something established than not established.

1370 So, I think they have done an excellent job. I can be critical of some of my parishioners; the way they behaved at the public meeting, which I thought was very unwarranted. I personally apologised to the Deputy involved, Deputy Sillars, who took a lot of unnecessary stick. He is

doing a job that he thinks right. I do not agree with him and he knows that. We have had a civilised conversation where that is where we are. I cannot see anything to change my mind that we would better off without St Andrews's. We would not.

1375 I find myself on the same side as the famous green campaigner, Rosie Dorey, today, which is unusual for me, when she spoke about getting to school. When I visited St Andrew's I asked child after child after child, 'How did you get to school?' The answer was virtually uniform, 'We walked.' Now we are talking about splitting the children up and putting them at various schools all over the place, so we are going to have to get bussing. We all know what bussing is like in Guernsey. Deputy Gollop will fill you in with that. It is not there when you want it and when you

1380 do not want it, it is. So, that is a minus; that is obviously a minus for the school and for the parish. I cannot see what we are going to gain. We will gain financially. Yes, Deputy Green said how much we will gain. I went to a meeting at Education – I believe Deputy Spruce called it – and after a lot of argument and argy bargy, the question I was asked by Deputy Le Lièvre, 'Have you got anything to say, Francis?' I said, 'Yes. Is this all about money?' Only one Deputy said, 'Well, yes, it is,' and that was Deputy Green. He was honest enough to say, 'It is about money.' And this is it

1385 ladies and gentlemen; this is what it is all about. Is saving this amount of money a reason to close an excellent – more than excellent – school, that that parish relies on? Someone said, 'That would rip the heart out of the parish.' Yes, it would. Deputy Gollop has touched on the social aspect of that school, the possible closing of the Forest School. It is a cost-efficient school. Deputy Fallaize said that one of the problems with that school is that a lot of maintenance is needed, 'It is in need of renovation' were his words. I ask myself this: is the lack of maintenance payments by the Education to do with the fact they had closing the school in mind? Was this, 'Let us not spend that money, because we intended to close it anyway'?

1395 Also, something else he said in his speech was, 'If we vote to keep these open, we will be back here in four years' time.' We can do that. We have had various educationalists here today saying the whole thing needs re-looking at. Well, it does but how do you know it is going to come back with the same answer. I heard you also say, Deputy Fallaize, that... when it was mentioned about Forest School being closed, you said, 'Hear, hear'. So, where is this going to end up? A big monster school in the middle of the Island with everyone being bussed in? Do you want that? Well, I know that is an old fashioned thing to say but, as a Guernsey man who believes in keeping his word, I will not be supporting this and I urge other people with the Island and parishes in mind, to do the same.

1400 Thank you. (*Applause*)

1405 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** Thank you, sir.

1410 I need to declare an interest. I have two nieces and a nephew at St Andrew's Primary School. They are as delightful as the school itself.

1415 Sir, a few months ago, I was asked, 'Which Board within our current States was the most impressive?' And I said, without reservation, I think it is the Education Board. I think the balance of skills on the Education Board make it a very impressive unit; but, I suspect, sir, that the very high standards that they set themselves will draw them to the same conclusion as me; and that is that, on occasions over the last few weeks, in very difficult circumstances, their performance has not been as stellar as they may have hoped it would be; and that, I think, has contributed to some of the concerns that have been raised, particularly by members of the St Andrew's PTA.

1420 Now, sir, any accusation that the St Andrew's PTA have been aggressive, I think is unfounded. In fact, I would go as far as to say that, in my 13 years in this Assembly, the manner in which they have approached – their analysis, their scrutiny of these proposals – has been as articulate and as impressive as anything that I have witnessed. I think that is very much to their credit. And, as others have said, whilst the St Sampson's Infant School PTA's campaign has been much lower key, they have for slightly different reasons, been equally as impressive.

1425 Sir, there are a couple of facts which I want to remind the Assembly of, which is one of the reasons why I have been struggling to reach a conclusion on this matter. St Andrew's School is one of the cheapest to run. That is a fact undenied by the Education Department. It produces excellent educational results, undenied by the Education Department. And the best performing States primary school is the single-form entry school at the Forest. So, you can see, I am sure, sir, why so many of us are confused, because the messages that we have been receiving as part of the Education Department's vision are not always consistent with those important salient facts.

1430

Now, sir, I have a set of questions which I would like to ask my very good friend Deputy Sillars. I would ask that he does not struggle to write them down. I shall send my notes up to him afterwards.

1435 Question 1 is: will the same number of teachers be needed in 2016 as we have now in 2013 in the primary sector and, if not, why not?

Question 2: with an ageing population, it will be essential to increase net migration if we are able to reach an acceptably high dependency ratio moving forward. Does the Education Department accept this point and have they factored in this crucial data?

1440 Thirdly, does the Education Department accept that they have been unable to prove that there will be any determinable education benefits over what is already in place at St Andrew's primary?

Question 4: is it true to say that the expectations laid out in this States Report are *not* achievable without additional investment which is not accounted for adequately in this States Report?

1445 Lastly, sir, is the Minister of the Education Department aware that an actuary, independent of this process, has confirmed the PTA's analysis as reasonable on pupil number predictions, based on the information publicly available?

1450 The Scottish legal system, as I am sure you will be aware, has a particular outcome and it is an outcome known as 'not proven'. Right now, I believe that is where the Education Department is, and subject to the satisfactory answers that I get to those five questions, sir, it is still possible to sway my vote. I think that the answers to those questions will be extremely revealing and I look forward to receiving a detailed answer. If I do not, I shall jump to my feet at the time, as I am sure the Minister for the Education Department would expect.

Thank you, sir.

1455 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Dorey.

**Deputy Dorey:** Thank you, Mr Bailiff.

I voted, in 2009, to close both of the schools; but I have been on a journey. Let me try and take you through the journey I have been on.

1460 For just a bit of background, I was on the Castel School Committee since the beginning in 1996 until the end of 2010. During those 15 years, I visited many schools, including even the Forest School before it was redeveloped. I spoke to many teachers and headteachers, and observed classes. I have three children who have all been through the Castel Primary School. They had very different academic and practical skills.

1465 Based on the combination of experiences, I have reached the conclusion that the best model for primary school is the three-forms per year, so that in the key subjects – particularly literacy or English and maths – children are set. But, for me, and again this is based on all the conversations I have had over the years, the model only really works if there are between 58 and 70 pupils per year, so that the lower ability classes normally need the extra help and they are a smaller class. I have seen it with my own eyes and even with my own children – that has had a big effect... and through the support they need in those classes.

1470 So, my ideal is: there are three-forms per year – 50 to 70 per year. But the proposals are for two-form schools and three-form schools; and they want to fill all the three-form schools beyond 70; 70 works out at 23 per class. So, I have a real problem with the proposals.

1475 Part of my journey... Let us look at available classrooms. Deputy Fallaize spoke about the academic year 1998-99. Castel Primary School had for four forms, three classes per year, and for three forms had two classes per year; but there was a serious lack of space; there was not the capacity there.

1480 I was on the, as I said, the School Committee. We were so concerned, we wrote to Deputy Ozanne, as he then was the President of the Education Council. We copied in all the Castel Deputies and Conseillers who lived in the Parish, saying there is no I.T. room or music room, resulting in the school not being able to cover the curriculum effectively; there is no special needs room; there is no technology storage or work area etc. So, although Castel effectively had the buildings, it was completely lacking in facilities and we were so concerned about it, we had to write to the Education Council to explain the situation.

1485 Of course, since then, the school numbers have dropped and, basically, they have made use of the spaces that have become available for those facilities and they now provide them. We had a situation that – at the Castel School – when a special needs teacher needed... often the headmaster had to leave his office because he had no space. That was the only room that was available –  
1490 totally unacceptable. So, he spoke about that academic year. I do not think that is something that we should be looking back with pride on.

I have been taking a great interest in education for many years and, when I became a Douzaines representative, I asked a whole series of questions to Deputy Ozanne – that was in 2003 – because I was really concerned about the amount it cost to run each school and the different approaches. One of the things in that, which was in 2002... Vale was separated into two schools then – Vale Junior and Vale Infant. Vale Infant, it said, had four classes in Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6, but he added a note, saying, ‘For example, Vale Junior School, where the classrooms are particularly small, there are four classes running rather than three. This is imposed by the relatively small classrooms.’ So, what I am saying is, I think it is wrong to look back at schools and say we have capacity with a bulge, because it did not seem to me there is the capacity that was at least there in those years.

Let us look at predictions. As I say, my interest... you go back to 1996, when the Education Council produced a five-year plan for Education. They said:

‘St Sampson’s Infant School new primary school: in order to provide for the expected rise in pupil numbers in the Island’s northern primary schools, the Council considers it may be necessary to close existing St Sampson’s Infant School and build a new two-form entry school on the side.

Castel School: extensions to the existing building are likely to be required in order to accommodate the increasing number of pupils attending the school.

La Mare de Carteret Primary School: extensions to existing buildings were required in order to accommodate the rise in the number of pupils attending the school.’

So, predictions have changed many times over the years and in 2009 we were told that the number of pupils was falling, but now they are going to increase. So, we have a change around and, if I recall correctly from that 2009 debate, there was the beginning of the blip of the increase in pupil numbers and we were told, ‘Oh, it is just a blip. The trend is down.’ But in fact the curve has changed and it has declined.

I went to the presentation on Monday. Unfortunately, I missed the start which is probably the most important part, but I watched the video since then. I was extremely impressed with the presentation to us; particularly, when I watched it, the presentation on the numbers. I really have a problem with the numbers because I think the slide from the Education Council presentation was displayed in that video and I will remind people of the slide. It said:

‘All 148 existing classes (those currently operating now) are operating at approximately 670 places below maximum capacity. Not all classes are big enough for 28 pupils. Let us say half those classrooms we say have a maximum capacity of 25, that would cut the spare capacity across the Island, excluding the Catholic Schools to 513. The Board has always referred to surplus capacity of around 500 places.’

That was Education’s presentation they did and it was dated 16th October. I really have a problem: we seem to have had so many different predictions of what the number of places are and it does not inspire you with any confidence; because I have not been inspired with confidence. I think that 500 spaces seemed to be a realistic prediction. So, I am really concerned that the bulge we are going to have is going to mean that we will not have enough classes.

So, I cannot vote to close St Andrew’s if you are going to need those classrooms in three or four years’ time to cope with that bulge; or are we going to fill all classrooms to a maximum resulting in a negative effect on education? If they came back with a radical strategy – Deputy Sherbourne I think used those words – for a three-form model, based on 58 to 70, I would rethink; but they want to rebuild a two-class school at Mare de Carteret and in proposition 1 it is two or three classes.

I must admit I was very impressed with Deputy Gollop’s speech. I think Education came with a new vision. They need a new radical vision on primary education. This is not a radical solution; this is just doing a little bit on the edges. I agree with him about parental choice; I think that we have to face up to parental choice. So, I would like to see a far more radical solution and that is one of the reasons why I cannot support these proposals.

In the 1996 report, it mentions about building work going on at St Sampson’s. I think the Housing Target Areas had been identified then. We know that Vauvert, Hautes Capelles and Vale are basically near to full or full. So, where are the pupils going to go if we have the Housing Target Areas and the developments?

Sir, I have changed my mind: the biggest part is the predicted number of pupils. As I say, if I recall correctly, in 2009, questions were asked about the predictions and then we were told it was a blip; but it is not a blip, it has proven to be a change.

So, the question is, how do we finance this problem we have in keeping these two schools open? Deputy Soulsby, yesterday, mentioned a federation; I think that seems like a good solution. We have one headteacher for two schools: Le Rondin and Forest. They are not on the same site –

1555 okay, they are either side of a road. Why can't we have a federation of Vale and St Sampson's and save a lot of the costs of the headteacher, which is the big factor? Then we will not need to spend the money on the capital works for the Vale.

1560 FTP... These proposals will not propose most of the savings until 2015 – way beyond the end of the FTP. T&R have said in their Budget that they accept that and they are going to essentially finance the savings from that reserve; but is that the best way of spending our money? We had the Budget debate on Tuesday. I spoke – and Deputy Hadley supported me – about T&R's changes to thresholds for document duty. That was going to result in £500,000 – the permanent changes, loss of income. Would we rather do that? There was no call for it, no need for it. Give away £500,000. Wouldn't it be better to put that into Education? We do not charge marina users the full rates when we have reports on that; we subsidise people going on holiday; *but* the electricity and water consumer, we expect to pay the full cost of revenue and capital costs of those products. It does not seem right, does it?

1570 So, I have been on a journey. The other point that I wish to make is about governance. I think – and again perhaps I find it difficult to say these words, but – I definitely agree with Deputy Hadley (*Laughter*) on good governance. In 2009, the report came out, as I understood, three to four months before the debate. Surely, for such a radical change, which affects so many of our community, families, children, it is absolutely unacceptable to have produced this Billet at such short notice. We spend so much time thinking about good governance and we just seem to have thrown it away for this Assembly. It is not good. It is not right and, as a process, it is wrong.

1575 So, for a combination of those reasons, I think I have been on a journey and I am going to, unless – I do not quite close the door, I will listen to the rest of the debate – I hear something very different to what I have heard up to now, I am going to vote to keep both those schools open.

**The Bailiff:** Does anyone...? Deputy St Pier.

1580

**Deputy St Pier:** Thank you, sir.

Treasury and Resources' view on the Billet is set out on page 1821 and I do not really intend to speak as Minister for the Department; I am speaking as a Deputy.

1585 Of course, since the Report was compiled, there has been quite a lot of information presented. I, like many Deputies, have visited both schools. We have all, of course, received a huge amount... a number of representations and briefings. It has been a huge struggle to read them all and to keep up, but I have done so and, as others have said, those, particularly from the two PTAs, have been very impressive and as a result of that I have had a range of reactions, emotions, and questions as all of that information has come in. Contrary to Deputy Soulsby saying yesterday that it was an easy decision to support Education, I would profoundly disagree. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) I think it is actually a very, very hard decision to support Education.

1590 We have had some superb speeches so far. I think, actually, the Minister's and Deputy Sherbourne's, placing the case *for* the Billet, have been superb. I think Alderney Representative Arditti's analysis of the role of the Assembly in this case was also particularly helpful; and I think Deputy Soulsby's speech yesterday was particularly passionate and certainly put the case extremely well for retaining the schools. I would also, personally, like to thank Deputies Fallaize and Brehaut for sharing their personal experiences and observations as parents of children at the Vale and St Martin's as receiving schools; because I found it particularly useful to have that insight. Deputy Fallaize's speech yesterday also, I thought, was an excellent analysis of the situation. I would also like to thank the Department for responding comprehensively to the questions which the St Sampson's Deputies collated and presented to the Department.

1595 Sir, for me the composition of this particular Education Board has been a key factor. This is not a group – and, again, I think Alderney Representative Arditti very well summed up the nature and character of the Members of the Education Board – of FTP groupies, FTP lackeys, FTP cannon fodder. (*Laughter*) I think, at best, you could describe them as FTP sceptics. Certainly in my experience of dealing with the Department in the last 18 months, they are extremely robust in their dealings with my Department and putting the case for funding and so on; and I think they, as has been acknowledged before, have done a superb job as a new Board, in the 18 months since the election, in moving forward with FTP in a whole range of areas, given that they, as has been acknowledged, were essentially starting from a standing start and this, of course, is one of quite a number of initiatives that they have had to take.

1600 Deputy Fallaize referred to a press quote from me yesterday. I can confirm it is correct. Actually, I have only been misquoted once overtly and the press did acknowledge that. So, I did describe it as a classic FTP project. In the St Andrew's PTA paper, they have said the FTP is not supposed to cut front line services and indeed Deputy Soulsby, yesterday, said something either

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exactly the same or certainly very similar, certainly representing that sentiment and I think that that is a mischaracterisation of what is going on here. Children are not going to be left uneducated; we are simply delivering... what is being proposed is the delivery of that service in a different way and in that sense –

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**Deputy Soulsby:** Sir, a point of correction.

I think, if you say that you are cutting the number of teachers and at the same time you are increasing pupils' numbers, that is a cut in frontline services.

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**Deputy St Pier:** As I say, for me, this is about... The FTP is about the delivery of services either at the same standard or a better standard for the same cost or less cost.

There have, of course, been a number of arguments about whether the financial benefits really are there to be realised or, in other words, whether the savings are there. And of course, actually, as an FTP project, in a sense if the Department's best estimates are awry to any extent, it is irrelevant, because of course, if this is approved today, their cash limits will be reduced by the amount.

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Again, in my experience of dealing with the Department, they are very, very cautious in all their budget estimates and forecast. If I was generous, I would say that they suffer from pessimism bias; but, perhaps being a bit more cynical, I would say they are extremely adept at under-promising and of over delivering. I think one example of that is in relation to the wide area network – the WAN. That is a fixed price contract so there will be no change to the overall sum going out the door to pay for that. But, these two school closures will release around about £15,000 a year for credit elsewhere in the system; and I am sure Education can make good use of that additional capacity elsewhere and that has not been accounted for in any of these figures. Ironically, perhaps, as I noted in the Budget debate on Tuesday, if this is not approved, then Education will not have any ready access to the Budget reserve – unless they can find other FTP projects of course, or make other reductions in their spending to keep in line with their cash limits.

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The acid test for me, right from the beginning of this issue has always really been: will the education outcomes be impaired? That is a question which I have put to all the professionals I have met, including at the schools affected as I have gone round and, to be fair, they have a vested interest in telling me that, in fact, that would be the case, that educational outcomes would be impaired; and to their very great credit, that has not been the message which I have received. I think, given the performance of the receiving schools, I can find no significant risk of that. It is clearly dependent on good planning and I think that has been recognised by the Minister. That is an issue that I have taken up with him privately in the last few weeks and it has been recognised in his opening speech which I am delighted to hear – acknowledging the need for that, in order to ensure the successful integration of pupils into the new schools.

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For me, really I would just like... if these propositions are accepted, I hope that Education will then get on and accelerate the two or three-form entry policy to the rest of the system and actually accelerate the discussion with the Catholic schools in the diocese. I am delighted to hear that they do plan and have the ability to make use of capacity in the voluntary schools; that is very good news. There has been a considerable amount of talk of the number of toilets, classroom sizes, parking. Of course all of those, I acknowledge, are very important details and issues; but, actually, for me, the focus has to be on unequivocal leadership – and that is unequivocal leadership by the Department and by its Board, and ultimately at school and headteacher and teacher level – to deliver the quality that we need; to deliver better outcomes; and to deliver the vision which we have all supported.

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For those reasons, sir – it is not an easy decision by any means; I can assure Deputy Soulsby of that. I will be supporting the Education Department's propositions.

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**The Bailiff:** Members we will rise now and resume at 2.30 p.m.

*The Assembly adjourned at 12.30 p.m.  
and resumed its sitting at 2.30 p.m.*

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**Transforming Primary Education**  
**Debate continued**  
**Propositions carried**

**The Bailiff:** Members, we resume the debate on the Education Department's Report into Transforming Primary Education. Who wishes to speak?

Deputy Le Tocq.

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**Deputy Le Tocq:** Thank you, sir.

Sir, much has been said and I will try not to repeat, but I want to speak on three particular issues that hopefully will tie in some of the comments that have been made.

1680 First of all, I would say and reiterate what I have said to both parents from St Andrew's Primary, who I have spoken to, and St Sampson's Infants', and that is with the degree of care, concern, support and passion that they have argued their case that their children have nothing to worry about in terms of their future education, never mind what happens (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and that is because firstly we have very good education in Guernsey; and secondly, education is an extension of parenting, and when parents support, strongly, their children, rather than abdicate at the school gate, then in a sense it is much easier for that partnership to work, never mind what particular ideology you believe in.

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So I would start from the premise of saying that I do not believe that we have anything to fear and comments such as 'my children will be scarred for life' are absolutely ridiculous and not true. I was glad when I spoke to somebody who had said that and they admitted that they would work and they would still fight for the best education, because that happens at any school. A parent needs to take seriously their responsibility, as I have said before.

The first point I want to make is one of community. This is, in my mind, the only point that I think those opposed to closure have got that I can fully agree with: closing any school, because it is a community, will affect that community. There will, no doubt, be a few years where it will be a little harder and it will be more difficult. There will be new things that have to be learned, both for the children and for the parents, but communities come and go. The schools themselves, many of them are results of communities changing and coming and going over many years. Many schools originally were very small schools: primary schools and infant schools and parish schools came as a result of the combination of other schools over time. Within living memory, and it has been mentioned, the schools in the south west of the Island have merged to make the La Houquette school today, and that is a thriving community.

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It was interesting to be almost lectured by Deputy Hadley on changes in church situations, (*Laughter*) but I would like to assure him that I can speak, certainly, of experiences of church communities that go on in Guernsey to this day, where mergers occur and closures occur, but because communities are essentially people where people are committed to one another and are willing to work at it, new communities can prove to be better communities than the sum of their older communities. So whilst I accept that there will be an effect upon the community, it is not an effect that I believe is insurmountable; it is one that I believe we need to grasp at this time because there are all sorts of things going on in our community – and I will come onto ideology next – and for me this is also a question of ideology. It is a question of ideology because I have said, and I am on record as saying, that even if it cost to do this, I would vote for it, and I do that for two reasons.

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The first reason is that I am a parent myself of three very different girls, who have been through the system, and all girls were different and had different challenges. We were very grateful at the time of experiencing first-hand the opportunities for one of our girls, who was particularly gifted at a young age, to have the sort of attention that she could by putting her in a form where they could group together those, who in literacy and numeracy particularly could be stimulated beyond what was average for that particular year group and that worked very well to her advantage.

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Similarly, one of our other daughters, who struggled to begin with at school and later we found out was dyslexic, but during that time, because she was beginning to be led off in different directions that was not helpful for her, they were able through the school, through involvement with the school. As good parents we sought to express that need and we were able to see children separated into different forms so that she could have the attention that she needed, and she is now thriving. So, as a parent, I believe ideologically that multi-form entry schools, and preferably more than two-form entry schools, but that is better than single-form entry schools, give greater flexibility, educationally and socially for the multiplicity of needs and issues when we are dealing with our Island community as a whole.

1730 Secondly, I saw on Education, when I sat on the old Education Council in my first term in this Assembly, how a small school that was struggling, one of these schools at the time had difficult times in the 1990s, where indeed parents were asking for their children to come out of catchment area to the Castel School at the time and how it was difficult and far more problematic to find answers to those particular needs of leadership in the school and change in the school because the flexibility was not there in the senior management team. The flexibility was not there and as a result of that it was also difficult to recruit. Those were real issues and we faced them.

1735 Now, we have, there is no doubt, two very good schools that are before us for closure today. There is no doubt about that, but these are effectively snapshots of where we are today. In order to look at things you have got to go far further back and see over a period of time the sorts of challenges that do emerge and will come again on smaller schools and when you are faced with that and when members of our Education Department are faced with that challenge, they will find  
1740 the same issues, the lack of flexibility, the difficulties of parents, if they face those sorts of challenges again and then it will cost us a lot more, there is no doubt about that.

But, as I said before, for me it is not an issue of money; it is an issue of *value* for money. I believe and wholeheartedly would say and support the rights of parents to have choices and to make choices in the education for their children. I believe that is right and it is good. It is good that  
1745 we have had the opportunity in our open democracy to hear what these parents feel as that is right and proper, but when it comes to making decisions on behalf of the whole of Guernsey, it is not right for a Government and it is impossible really for a Government to provide a plethora of ideologies. We have to go for what is best overall and that is why, ideologically, I am opposed to single-form entry schools. We can disagree on that and I have done with those people, but I think I  
1750 have had that opinion for many, many years. I believe that in the long run and for the maximum benefit of all in our society, particularly those at each of the bell curve, in terms of giftedness and academic need, that the flexibility of multi-form entry schools gives the leadership of the school greater ability to work with parents to provide the best quality education, and I would say better than could be found in single-form entry schools in the long run.

1755 Parents have asked questions, and in fact Members of this Assembly, sir, ‘Would outcomes be affected?’ I believe not adversely. In fact, because of what I have said, I believe there are two reasons why outcomes would be improved, again in the long run, because so many parents take their children’s education so seriously that those I have spoken to would say, ‘What happens is not what we would prefer. We are going to work still with the new schools and with Education to make it better.’ So we have got a partnership there and I have not heard anyone say that they will not do that, because they are good parents.

But, secondly, we will be able to address those issues which currently in the long term we are not able to address in single-form entry schools and when they occur we will be able to address them more effectively, with greater flexibility and given greater options for teachers and parents.  
1765 So, yes, there will be change. Yes, there will be challenges, in terms of community, but I fundamentally believe it will be for the better of Guernsey.

Sir, I will make my final point... I could say a lot more. I believe this, the third issue that we have heard in these last two days, brings together many points that have been made very ably by Members of this Assembly, the issue of leadership, and this covers two points.

1770 Firstly, the leadership of schools: we need to have the best leaders, senior management teams, best headteachers, deputy heads and assistant heads in our schools. We need to have that flexibility to be able to recruit to that in the day in which we live. I, too, am not a great fan of the British system, but at the moment we are aligned to that and it is going to take us a time if we are going to move away from that in any way. This is not the debate before us today. I am willing to talk about that, but what is right for Guernsey, I believe, is providing the opportunity and the system for  
1775 better leadership of schools in the long run, because had we had this debate back in 2000, I can guarantee that the parents of one particular school would not be lobbying like they are at the moment. We have to look at the long term, not snapshots.

And the second aspect of leadership that I would speak and encourage Members of this  
1780 Assembly to take very seriously is the leadership that we need to provide. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Part of the reason we are where we are today, where tempers are somewhat frayed perhaps, where passions have been raised in certain quarters and some of them with self-control, others not so, but part of the reason is, I believe, matters have been handled badly in the past. This should have been done a long time ago. *Post hoc ergo propter hoc*. We are where we are today – yes, I  
1785 did Latin at school – because of what happened in the past, and things are a lot worse now because the issues that we are having to face and the difficult decisions – and this is only one in Education – but we all said that in our campaigns last year, ‘There will be tough decisions to make’. This will not be the toughest decision – I can almost guarantee that.

1790 It is hard because it involves children and the next generation and parents who feel vehemently about things. I, again, reiterate that I would support the rights of parents to do that, but they have other options if they want to do that, if they have ideological positions. But for us, as leaders, we need to swallow the pill and make some tough decisions, because in the past this States has flip-flopped and not had the courage to make the decisions, based very often on how we think the voters will vote for us at the next Election. We need stronger leaders than that. (**Two Members:** Hear, hear.) We need people who will say, 'I believe this is the right way for Guernsey and I will defend it. I am not going to chicken out.' Please do not chicken out. If you feel very strongly about these sorts of issues, then what we have been provided with by Education, who everyone I have heard has said have worked very hard, both in terms of coming to where they are today and defending their position and getting as much advice, we need to honour that, trust them and work with them and the parents to deliver a better education for all of our Islanders in the future. This is what the proposals offer: let us vote for the proposals.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gillson.

1805 **Deputy Gillson:** Sir, I stand to support Education. This is not going to be an easy decision for people, but I think it is the right decision, and I will support Education closing two single-form schools. Since I am willing to do so, I must, before anybody else points it out, say that I am Chairman of a single-form entry primary school and so I think I first need to square the two positions.

1810 I am Chairman of Ladies' College, and therefore Chairman of Melrose and it is a good single-form school. It is a very good single-form school, but it is different and unlike any primary school in that it has very strong links to a senior school, and I will use a quick example. Melrose girls, some of them learn sciences in the senior school laboratories. They are taught by specialist teachers who teach GCSE and A-level science and so it has got the benefit of being a single-form school, *but* has got the benefit of being part of a much larger school. I think it is in a unique position there.

1815 Sir, a lot of the questions and the issues seem to relate around capacity and I have considered the question of capacity and I have looked at the documents. I am satisfied there is spare capacity. I am satisfied with the explanation Deputy Green gave this morning. There has been, in some of the documents being issued and some of the things said, an indication that Education had moved the goalposts from 2009 when they wanted classes of 24, to now saying 28, and that has been done to try and just create some capacity.

Let me read to you from the Billet:

1825 'Schools are expected to maintain an upper limit of 28 where possible.  
[...] There is a misconception that the Board has fixed class sizes at 24. This has never been the case. All families are likely to have been aware that at times their children will have been in classes above 24.'

1830 That is not from this Billet; that is from the Billet of 2009. So any suggestion that Education have suddenly *increased* their target sizes to create capacity is false.

So, like many people, I think the PTAs are from excellent companies and it is a good credit to them and it is clear, I think, that Education has lost the PR battle. Certainly, if they win it, they have been down from a position of defence, rather than offence. But losing the PR battle does not mean their case is wrong. Losing the PR battle is *not* a reason to not support them. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

1835 I am just going to comment quickly on a couple of arguments which have been put forward against closure. One of the most emotive ones is 'heart of the community'. And it is true, a primary school is the heart of the community, but only while your child is going there. As soon as your child leaves the primary school... I would suggest that the majority of people are parents in here and as soon as your children leave the primary school you never set foot back in the primary school. While your children are there, it is a community and as such it is part of the community for quite a small proportion of population.

1840 St Andrew's is very fortunate in that those buildings are owned by the Parish. St Sampson's Douzaine have got an opportunity, which they should be grabbing with both hands, to turn those schools into buildings which could truly be the heart of the community for the whole community and not just a narrow proportion of the community. When I was a Constable for St Sampson's, I would give my eye teeth to be able to have a building like that to create a community facility. So it is actually an opportunity; it does not necessarily mean the *death* of a community. This could be turned into a very good community centre.

1850 I think Deputy Laurie Queripel mentioned the traffic at the Vale. I went there one day to have a look at the traffic and actually I was surprised, it was not as bad as I expected, and it certainly was not as bad as Capelles. But what you need to remember about the Vale is there are two main entrances. There are two main collection points. One road is for the infants and the other is mainly for the juniors and most traffic congestion, where the church car park is, where most parking  
1855 tickets are given out is where the juniors are collected, and whether more infants go to Vale will not affect the traffic along that road. So all references to problems with St Peter's Church car park and it not being available at the time is not totally relevant because that is really where juniors are collected and this is not increasing the numbers of juniors.

1860 Reference is being made about finances. It is not all about finances, but a large part of it is about finances. I think the savings are there. If you believe the capacity is there the savings will follow, and it is important that we make savings. I think that they are there and to suggest they are not, I think is wrong.

1865 As Deputy St Pier said, the key and one of the overriding questions has to be quality of education and we are really very lucky that we have actually got some good junior schools and that they are all of a similar standard. I think we are lucky that we are not standing here having to close schools because they are failing. But the schools which are going to be the receiving schools are offering good education and the children will get a good education. It may be a slightly different education, because of different styles of head teaching, but it will be an education of the same quality. So we are in a position of being able to offer an education of the same quality whilst  
1870 making more efficient use of resources.

In some ways, sir, we seem to have a split of arguments, based on two slightly different viewpoints. One being a strategic viewpoint and the other being a single school based viewpoint. Single form schools can be good and I am not going to suggest they are not. St Andrew's results are good. But they are, and other people have explained why, more challenging. Education is not  
1875 responsible for one school; it is responsible for the whole education system for the Island. Where we have finite resources to be allocated across many schools, that is where you really get the benefits from a multi-form school and so if you can use your finite resources more efficiently and more effectively by having multi-form schools, then that is where you will, over the whole education system, see benefits. You are not going to see, as Deputy Brouard, a magic bullet of this suddenly changing and results suddenly increasing tenfold; but the more efficient use of resources means you are likely and going to be more able to make improvements and so it is better for the whole system.

1880 Education has a responsibility, and because it is responsible for all schools it has to take that strategic view, and I think we, as a parliament, have to take a strategic view. Now, no doubt, this is a difficult decision. It is difficult for parents and I understand the concerns, and Education I do not think has won the hearts and minds of the public. There is genuine concern of parents about the effects of their transfers and this concern I think is made worse by Education not having won hearts and minds. There does seem to be a lack of trust and I just going to make a suggestion for Education to think about, but it might be worth them co-opting onto the school committees a  
1890 Deputy from the one of the Parishes, preferably one who has voted against the proposal or will vote against the proposal, to be involved in the transfer and that might just give parents a little bit more comfort if they know that there is somebody being involved in the transfer, who has got a different view, looking after their interests and the interests of their children as it might go some way to giving comfort.

1895 So, as I said, it is difficult, but I think heads must rule hearts and so I take no pleasure, like Deputy Bebb said, and it is not a decision which anyone is going to take pleasure in, but I think supporting Education is the right decision to take.

1900 **The Bailiff:** Deputy David Jones.

**Deputy David Jones:** Thank you, Mr Bailiff, Members of the States.

I was interested... well, I have been interested in all the speeches and I have to say from the get-go, that I disagree entirely with my good friend, Deputy Soulsby, because this has not been an easy decision for any of us. If you strip out the emotion, and I very much supported the Parish Schools last time, I was hoping upon hope that our economy would recover enough that perhaps  
1905 we could continue to have some of the things that are nice to have, rather than the things that we really and truthfully can no longer really afford, that kind of education system, and we have to make the changes.

1910 But I was interested also in Deputy Sherbourne. I was educated at school with a class size over 30. Now, I knew that and I can remember that because I was the ink monitor (*Laughter*) and so I used to have to collect all the ink wells and fill them up.

1915 Also, my two children were taught by ex-Deputy Mahy and they had a very good education at St Martin's School. They then went from there to Beaucamps and they had a very good education there. I know that the education system across this Island has been questioned over the years about its standards, but speaking from a personal point of view, as a father of two children who have grown up now, I wanted my son to be an advocate, but he decided to be a plumber because he did not want to take a drop in salary. (*Laughter*)

1920 And, of course, the trauma of children moving is something that we have experienced with my grandchildren. They originally went to Vale Juniors'. My son bought a house somewhere else, in a different catchment area, and the children have had to move and they now go to the Capelles and for a very short period, because they had built up friendships and everything else at the Vale School, I asked both the girls, 'Are you happy?' But after a few weeks they had forgotten about their friends at the Vale, as they had made new friends at the Capelles. Children are very resilient, although I do understand it is a very emotional time for the parents in the Gallery and those who are going through this process.

1925 The parents' report, the St Andrew's PTA report, was very well written. The irony of it, of course, was that it was slicker than Education's Billet and it was very well put together. There were aspects of it you could argue either way, and I think there was always going to be a dispute between Education and the parents over the figures, the number of empty spaces etc, and that is what this Assembly is here to sort out.

1930 But, for me, the financial reality of where we are was ably relayed to us by Deputy Scott Ogier the other day, when talked about the Contingency Reserve. The fact of the matter is that our economy is still flat-lining, whether we like it or not. There are some signs of growth around the corner, but we simply have to bite the bullet on this. I agree with something Deputy Le Tocq said, and I think it is a point made by others. When I stood in the last election, I knew very well that we were facing the next four-year term when we, as elected Deputies, were going to have to make some very, very difficult decisions. Well, here is one of the first ones. I also believe that in retrospect, had we gone ahead with the closures two years ago, we would have been in a much better place today than we are now.

1940 The other point I want to raise is that I think the Treasury Minister this morning killed the myth that these savings will not be made. He said clearly in his speech that the money will not be available. The allocation to the Education Department will be adjusted to take into account the savings that are made. They have taken £600,000 out of the centre and I, like a lot of you, have still got this niggling feeling that perhaps we are not there yet; but the FTP is a rolling programme.

1945 Deputy Sillars, the Minister, has made it abundantly clear on many occasions round the Policy Council table to all of us that this is not a done deal yet. They are still looking at the centre and they expect to be able to make further cuts and savings.

1950 The other thing is I had lunch today with our 747 pilot friend, a Member of Treasury, and he said something also that reminded us all that this £7 million FTP saving is not a one-off. This is year, on year, on year that we have to find that money and you have got a choice, really. I think Deputy Fouquet used to say – well, he used to say lots of things (*Laughter*) – but his favourite saying was, 'You cannot have the penny and the bun.' The problem is we have got 20 pence in the pound tax rates, but our public want 60 pence in the pound services, and I am afraid the economy has hit the buffers in terms of what we can afford to have.

1955 The days when we had £40 million or £50 million-a-year surpluses coming in, we could afford to ignore the efficiencies that we ought to have been making during those times because we simply had the option of throwing money at it. Well, I am afraid we do not have that option any more. All the overspends that we had that were historic during Deputy Trott's time on the Board of Administration (*Laughter*) have been eradicated – he always tells me off when I remind him of that one – because they simply had to be, because the money is no longer there to be using money, as I think Deputy Perrot said, 'like a drunken sailor'. I am afraid that this first decision about the schools is going to be one of many that are heading our way.

1960 The other reason I am going to support Education is this: when I look at the people... well, there are two things. One that Deputy Fallaize raised in his speech was that three separate Education Boards have come to the same conclusions on this particular issue. A very irate somebody on the phone said to me, 'But you are not listening to me because the staff have stayed the same and in Education it is the staff who make all the decisions.' He was one of the people, referred to very unfairly by Deputy Hadley, who was blaming Denis Mulkerrin. Mr Mulkerrin was not there on the previous two Boards and in any event he is not asking for that school to be shut,

1970 and so there is a lot of misinformation going on, even with people who think they have got a strong argument and ring you at home.

**Deputy Soulsby:** Sir, a point of correction.

1975 Again, I think I made the point this morning that the last Education Board put in the Billet not to close St Andrew's School.

**Deputy David Jones:** Okay. I accept that –

**Deputy Kuttelwascher:** Sir, could I make a further point of correction to that?

1980 There was a Proposition not to close St Andrew's School, but you could vote against it and effectively close it. So the choice was there.

**Deputy Soulsby:** Yes, but that was not Education's proposal.

1985 **Deputy David Jones:** Am I still in this debate? (*Laughter*)

**The Bailiff:** We cannot have people just interrupting across the Chamber like that. Deputy Hadley, do you...?

1990 **Deputy Hadley:** I not quite sure of the point he is trying to make about what I said.

**Deputy David Jones:** Right. (*Laughter*)

1995 Okay, I will try and help my fellow Deputy Minister of Housing. You made the point that Mr Mulkerrin was being blamed as part of Education for bringing this to the table, and that simply is not true. That is the point: I was supporting your argument. You do not have to thank me. (*Laughter*)

2000 Right, we go back to the Board and the other, that I thought was a quite brilliant speech this morning came from Alderney Representative, Mr Paul Arditti, because he laid out the stark reality of what this Chamber's job is and what this parliament's job is. I look at the Education Board and the first thing you have to ask is the question about trust and have Education got this right? The next thing is about the integrity of the Board Members. Well, they ticked two of those boxes already for me.

2005 The next one is about us. It is about our ability to govern, our ability as a parliament to make difficult decisions and govern this Island, and that is why you were all elected and we were all elected. But every time we come to a decision that is going to upset a certain section of the community, we find that decision difficult to make and we simply kick the can further down the road or kick it into the long grass, or whatever metaphor you want to use. As I said at the last Election, it was made abundantly clear that those decisions were going to have to be made and we are all here now today having to make it.

2010 Going back to Deputy Soulsby's first comments about how easy it is to take the easy way and close these schools, I, like many of you, lost some sleep over this particular issue, because originally I was –

**Deputy Soulsby:** Sir, a point of correction.

2015 When I say 'easy', I meant 'easy' as compared with 'difficult'; not 'nice' compared with 'not nice' and 'pleasant' compared with 'unpleasant'. It is a completely different thing.

**Deputy David Jones:** Sorry, but when I went to school I thought 'easy' was the opposite of 'difficult'. But anyway...

2020 So, I, like many, have thought about this because originally when I first saw Education's Billet, I thought, 'No. We are not having this. Where is the evidence for this?' As this debate has gone on and as I have read the e-mails – I apologise to everybody out there who did not get a response from me, but there are just so many of them that you would have to stay up for two nights on the trot trying to get through them all – I have been slowly persuaded that Education is right in what they are doing.

2025 But the final thing comes down to what I said before: do I have trust in the Members of that Board? These are all decent hardworking people as Deputies. I do not believe than any single one of them has come to this decision lightly and I respect them for that. I also respect the Minister. It must be the hardest job in the world to say at the hustings that you will do what you can to support

2030 parish schools and then find yourself in a position where the arguments do not stack up and you have to change your mind.

So on balance, I am going to support Education in this matter.

2035 Can I just say, before I sit down, I have a huge amount of respect for the parents of both schools who have put together their campaigns. In fact, when you look at the St Andrew's PTA, it is a salutary lesson to us all of how things ought to be presented sometimes.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Robert Jones.

2040 **Deputy Robert Jones:** I was not going to speak, because pretty much everything that I wanted to say – I have not prepared any notes – has been said. But the one thing for me over the last four or five weeks, this debate has been, for me, a debate where I feel that I am fully informed as to the arguments against and the arguments for. We have seen a very, very good campaign from the PTAs. We have seen some very, very good speeches from individual Deputies, both for and against.

2045 This decision will be difficult to make for me, personally, not only because of the emotional and heartfelt side of things, but it is difficult for me because throughout the debate Education has been challenged and scrutinised and the difficulty for me is borne out of that scrutiny on the basis that their figures have been through the mill. The difficulty for me is, similar to Deputy Perrot, that I came to this open-minded, completely open-minded. I had to read the Billet from Education. I have read all the documentation that we have been fed via e-mails through all the campaigns, so the difficult decision is my ability to trust what Education has put before me – that is the difficult side of things.

2050 We still have a few more speeches here. I think my mind is pretty much made up, but there are certain questions that the Minister for Education has been asked to respond to and those questions came from Deputy Trott, and so I will listen with interest there. I will also listen to the two remaining Members of Education, who are yet to speak, and I assume that both of them will. The questions that they have to put before us or to answer before us now, I think Deputy Conder will address and some of the other issues in relation to savings and the FTP.

2060 I was also grateful for Deputy Le Lièvre's intervention on the radio this morning. We do have to put trust in the Departments to which we delegate various mandates – we really do. That is not to say that we do not challenge them robustly. That does not mean that we have reports placed before us and we accept them without the challenges that have gone on. That is what makes this decision difficult, because they have been challenged. They have been put through the mill. They have been scrutinised. The difficulty we have now is working out whether we can trust what they put before us. I have to try and put trust in Education. I believe they have got my trust. We have got another 45 minutes to an hour, possibly, of debate and that may change, but I can assure everybody here in the Public Gallery, the electorate and my fellow colleagues, I feel informed and you can trust that any decision I make, one way or the other, will be based on a very, very well-informed set of information that we have received and all that type of thing. It is going to be difficult.

2070 I do not think I am going to add any more, because most of the argument has been made. I welcome the remaining speeches from everybody else. It will be useful, in terms of cementing the decision which I think I have come to a reasonable conclusion, but I can assure you that conclusion has been made on a well thought out Billet from Education and an excellent campaign from the parents that it affects.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Le Lièvre.

**Deputy Le Lièvre:** Thank you, sir.

2080 Members of the Assembly, like Deputy Brouard, I started with a speech, but I have scribbled over it so much that I will probably 'wing it' to some degree anyhow.

2085 Beware of compliments from Deputy Trott, because they are invariably followed by a poke in the eye. (*Laughter*) Nothing I say, Deputy Jones – that is Rob Jones, not Dave Jones – nothing I am going to say about capacity and numbers is going to convince you at this late stage. You have heard it from the Minister, you have heard it from Deputy Green, you have had a notelet from Education about class sizes and you have heard it in a brilliant speech from Deputy Fallaize. I cannot surpass that and I am not going to try. Education has put the numbers through the mill itself. We believe them. We are staking our reputation on them. We will live and/or die by them. So nothing I say at this late stage is going to change that.

2090 During the course of the debate – and this is what makes the figures issue so complicated – I have heard about a demographic time bomb and the dependency ratios. I have heard about class size and every aspect of the individual items that will affect the numbers game. I do not think I can add to that at this stage.

2095 One of the things that most concerned me is the consistent references to the community and I would accept that there is a very strong feeling of community in St Andrew’s, and I respect that. It is a good thing. However, it is not the only area of the Island that could be considered to be a special community and we have heard – I forget who mentioned it – there have been several mentions of the St Peter’s and Torteval Schools, but in particular somebody mentioned about possibly ripping the heart out of Torteval Parish. Now, this is a statistic that I have used *ad nauseam*. I used it as a civil servant and I have used it in this Assembly on any number of occasions, but there are more houses in the Bouet than there are in the whole of Torteval, considerably more, and there are more families in the Bouet. It is a community. It has had its bakery ripped out and along with it the wonderful smell of baked bread in the morning, which I used to wake up to. It lost Jamouneau’s Farm, it lost Ash’s Farm, it lost Camps Farm, it lost three shops in the space of the Pitronnerie Road traffic lights to the Red Lion... maybe it was four shops. *That* is a community.

2100 When you go back to St Andrew’s and talk about community – and we have had some very stirring speeches and some very good speeches about it – we talk about it as a special thing, but this is not parochial politics. This Assembly is not the Douzaine. This Assembly is Government and we have to think about the children in the Bouet as much as the children who go to St Andrew’s and the St Sampson’s School. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.)

2110 I believe that if we continue to spend money... and it is about money. It is not just about the quality of teaching. It is also about money. If we continue to keep St Andrew’s and St Sampson’s open then we must consider the cost of those children that live in other communities around this Island, less fortunate. Those children who attend social priority schools, and I do not like that term, but it is one that we use. We must think of them. We cannot allow ourselves just to think about the children who attend St Andrew’s School, because that is not what this Chamber is about. We have to consider the Island’s needs from top to bottom.

2120 Some of what I have heard has both amused and distressed me on occasions. I was interested to hear that the £7.2 million is only a guideline from Deputy Brouard, and I have already mentioned that fact to Deputy St Pier. We will use it, I can assure you. We will use it as a guideline and we will need to use it because, as Deputy Jones said, this money is going. The £7.2 million is this year and every year... not necessarily this year, but in years to come it will be *every* year and if we do not find these savings, then it will be from the children of those lesser areas of this Island, the less wealthy areas of the Island that are going to pay the ultimate price.

2125 We heard about a lack of consultation: Education has not consulted. Ironically, we heard that from the Deputy Minister of Housing, the last person in this Assembly, I would say at this particular time, who should make such a claim because the next Item on the Agenda is Social Security and Housing’s Policy letter and that has been conducted without one iota of consultation and will affect over 2,000 States’ tenants. So please do not tell me about a lack of consultation.

2130 We have also heard about the grey elephant or the elephant that lives in the Grange. (*Laughter*) Yes, it does all sorts of things, the elephant, but it crops up all the time. In a previous Assembly, Deputy Jones referred to – and I say this because I was a civil servant, so I can use the term ‘bean counter’ – the bean counters at Health, and the same sort of thing is cropping up with regard to Education. I appreciate at one stage it probably was a little bit top heavy maybe, but the numbers, when you look at them, are indeed impressive... the numbers of people who work there is impressive. Years ago, as a civil servant, every now and again we had to fill in the numbers of whole time equivalents for whichever committee I was working on at the time. We had to just put them in with the accounts and it was mind blowing job.

2140 In the accounts for 2012 you will see that there were 192.08 civil servants or established staff across the whole of the Education service and that figure bears some examination. In actual fact, I am told from this notelet from Education that actually on a named list there are 211 staff. Of course, that includes part-time, term-time and fixed staff, but undeniably it is a large number, as it says here, but when you break it down, it is no longer a large number.

2145 I should give you just some snippets of information. Thirty two of those people work at Les Voies School. It is a special school for young people with social, emotional and behaviour difficulties and that has just been set up, as you all know. Forty three of the staff work with the inclusion of Support Services, working with teachers and young people in the Communication and Autism Support Service, Literacy Intervention and the Sensory Support teams. Twenty six are employed as minibus drivers and escorts, providing an essential service in transporting children to



Le Murier and Le Rondin. Those three elements alone add up to 101 staff. One hundred and one staff paid for by Education, established staff, part of the centre, to deal and to assist and support those young members of our community who might have a special need. In addition, we have 16 people who work with the School's Music Service – 16. Now, there was a mention that that could probably get the chop, but they actually –

**Deputy Le Pelley:** Sir, I did not say the chop. I said a different model –

**Deputy Le Lièvre:** Yes, you did.

**Deputy Le Pelley:** – which included the possibility of people being charged to actually use the service. I did not say 'the chop', sir.

**Deputy Le Lièvre:** Yes, I think that you might have mentioned or made a statement to the effect that we possibly could make £800,000 or £900,000 savings there. Well, as that is the cost of the whole service, (*Laughter*) there would only be one single flute left over. (*Laughter*)

In any event, we are charging the parents of children who use that service and it is not easy because many of them... we want to encourage children into that service, as opposed to be putting barriers in their way.

Six staff are outsourced and funded by grants to provide the Schools Library Service and three staff are based at Les Ozouets Campus as part of the Sexual Health and Adult Relationship, and so the figures go on. I am not going to bore you with all of them, but once you have stripped out all of those, there are 60 whole-time equivalents left. What do they do? Well, they are the army of pen pushers, that is what is written here, and they deal with the standards and learning effectiveness for school improvement. These are the men and women who go out into the schools and actually encourage and improve, by the use of statistical methods and demonstration, the learning and capability of our children. We have got strategy and policy. We have got higher education grants, finance, human resources, business and education systems, technologies, ICT, estates and facilities management, procurement, admissions and the 11+ process – maybe not for much longer – transport officers, Career Service, reception and general administration support, risk management, and I could go on and on and on. We have cut already £600,000 out of the centre and hopefully we will increase this further by the end of the year to almost £¾ million. So, please, believe me when Education says it is doing all that it can to make savings that it is in actual fact doing so. This is not just an idle claim; it is the real thing.

But the important issue... and I want to say it again, the important issue is that this Assembly has to realise that if we keep St Andrew's and St Sampson's open, there is not some special pot of money that we can go and retrieve that £700,000 or £800,000 from. It is going to have to come from the other services we provide for our other children, and who they are, I will leave it to your imagination, but they will pay the price. *Somebody* is going to pay the price. Where do we want that to fall or do we want every child in Guernsey to have the same educational opportunity? I think there is only one answer to that, no matter whether you live in St Andrew's or on the south coast or south west coast or whether you live in the Vale, like I do. There is only one answer: we all want the same for our children... and our grandchildren, in my case.

I do not think I am going to go on, sir, because it has been a very tiring and sometimes distressing debate, I think, for Education. I look forward to my colleague, Deputy Richard Conder's speech, but I hope that everybody here today votes with their head and not their heart.

Thank you very much.

**Deputy Hadley:** I just rise to correct something, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Hadley.

**Deputy Hadley:** St Andrew's is not a middle class school that is running at the expense of social priority schools; it is itself near classification as a social priority school.

**The Bailiff:** The Chief Minister wishes to speak, Deputy Harwood.

**The Chief Minister (Deputy Harwood):** Thank you, sir, fellow Members.

Can I first of all pay tribute to the Minister of the Education Department and his colleagues for having the courage to present this particular paper to us today? I realise the personal issues that they have had to face. Indeed, we have heard from Deputy Sillars on the personal issues he has

faced – I know they have all faced. I also praise them for their perseverance in presenting this paper, because they have all been under the severe personal pressures.

2215 I also acknowledge and congratulate the political Board on the individual and collective commitment that they have made to ensure that they would do nothing and they would present nothing to this Assembly if they considered that it would have a detrimental impact upon educational outcomes for our children, and that, sir, I believe is vital the consideration of this debate. There is nothing in this Report proposed by the Education Department that will cause detrimental impact upon the educational outcomes for our children.

2220 Sir, when I stood for election for a States Deputy last year, in my manifesto I committed myself to be part of a States Assembly that would take difficult decisions. By definition, many or indeed perhaps most of those difficult decisions we will be taking will be unpopular. Today we are faced with just such a decision. Sir, the difficult decision, contrary to the siren call of Deputy Soulsby, is to support the Education Department in this paper. The alternative, which many describe as the easy choice, perhaps the most comfortable choice would be to opt to preserve the status quo to avoid taking a decision and that, sir, I would submit would be the ultimate cop out. No. No. No. We must not emulate our predecessors by taking the comfortable way out. We must stand by the commitments that we made to our electorate to stand up to difficult decisions and to accept the unpopularity that we will face by taking the correct decision. On this occasion, by supporting our beleaguered political colleagues on the Education Department and to vote in favour of all the Propositions, all six of them set out on page 1821 of the Billet.

2225 Decisions must be driven by reason and not emotion. I acknowledge we are assisted in this approach by the very helpful work that has been undertaken by or on behalf of the Parent-Teacher Associations of each of the schools involved in putting forward reasoned arguments to favour the retention of each of those schools and by challenging the figures that have been produced by the Education Department.

2240 The arguments put forward by the Parent-Teacher Association primarily focus on two key areas: first of all, the educational case; secondly, the economic case. Sir, on the educational case the arguments against the Propositions relate to the benefits of a single-form small-school environment. In an ideal world, I am sure that few of us would argue against those benefits, but even if we were to accept those arguments, where does that place our existing two and three-form entry schools? Here, sir, I speak as a Deputy for St Peter Port where we have two such schools with two and three-form entries. Are those schools, by the same criteria, to be written off as failing our children? I suggest, sir, that that is a suggestion that is manifestly absurd. Are we therefore, sir, to concede to a minority of our primary school children the privilege of a single-form entry that is denied to the majority... a privilege that derives by virtue of a catchment area? The answer there, sir, must be no.

2250 The evidence put forward by St Andrew's Parent Teacher Association, for example, on pages 40 and 41 of their report seeks to counter suggestion that pupils in small schools are disadvantaged. Their report does not, however, put forward any evidence to suggest that the educational outcomes of primary school children in two or three-form entry schools would be in any way prejudiced or rendered less effective. Sir, what the report of the St Andrew's PTA does, however, focus upon is the matter of class size. For example, on page 41, the report states:

2255 'There is little evidence of large schools being able to provide better educational outcomes. The arguments put forward by leading academics all discuss the impact of class size and not school size.'

2260 The report includes a number of references to learned papers on the subject of class sizes. Again, in an ideal world, I am sure that no-one would disagree with the argument if they were for smaller class sizes. However, this merely serves to confuse the issues that we face today. A small school is not necessarily synonymous with small class sizes. Indeed, the small schools in Guernsey, i.e. those with single-form entry, frequently have the largest class sizes.

2265 In 2008, the Report of the then Education Board recorded that the Education Board had established a maximum primary class size of 30 and that schools were expected to maintain an upper limit of 28, where possible. That same policy is repeated in the current Report before this Assembly.

2270 The Report of the Education Department does, however, go on to state that the average primary class size in Guernsey, as at November 2012, has 22.5 pupils, excluding Alderney, and that recently there had been class sizes as low as 13 and as high as 30 pupils. Perhaps, such a wide variation in class sizes cannot surely represent an effective or indeed an efficient use of resources or an appropriate basis on which to plan the educational needs of our primary school children.

2275 Sir, the retention of St Andrew's Primary School would certainly not assist; it is more likely to compound that particular problem. I would also suggest, sir, that it would be wrong to use the argument for the retention of St Andrew's School as a means of achieving a reduction in average class sizes. The St Andrew's School Parent Teacher Association also disputes the numbers of spare spaces for primary sector quoted by the Education Department. Predictably, they produce a lower number of spare spaces. One can trade figures *ad nauseam*, but I would make one observation: many of the figures used by the PTA in their report rely upon an assumption of a target class of 24, which is not the present policy of the Education Board.

2280 Sir, turning to the economic case for closure, St Andrew's School PTA has challenged a number of the assumptions used by the Board of the Education Department and challenged the ability, in particular, of the programme to produce the level of savings predicted. The challenges, if they are correct...

2285 I will give way.

**The Bailiff:** Give way to Deputy Hadley.

2290 **Deputy Hadley:** Sir, the Parents and Teachers' Association did not choose the number of 500; it was the number that was given by Deputy Sillars, Deputy Sherbourne and the slide of the Director of Education.

Also, sir, to correct him on a matter of fact, he says, 'Undoubtedly no children will be harmed on this Island by the changes'; and Denis Mulkerrin, the non-States member of the Board says 'Quite *definitely*. It will *undoubtedly* harm the children and local community by closing a school'. So that is not a fair factual statement to make.

2295 **The Chief Minister:** Sir, the statement I made related to the attempt by the Parent-Teacher Association to justify having single-form entries on the grounds that... and the impression would be therefore that two to three-form entries might be less beneficial to education.

2300 Sir, I refer to the fact that the Parent-Teacher Association has sought to challenge the ability of the programme to produce the level of savings predicted. The challenge is if they are correct, it would principally impact, in my submission, sir, the timings of the savings, as stated on page 1778 of the Education Department's Report, for example, any redundancy costs, and the St Andrew's PTA questioned whether it will be possible to effect the closure without redundancy costs. Any redundancy costs would reduce the financial benefits of 2014-15 and 2015-16, but would still, in my submission, sir, deliver full savings beyond those dates.

2305 The St Andrew's PTA report also questioned the projection of pupil numbers used by the Education Department, in particular the assumption of population growth attributable to net inward migration of 200 per year, when according to the PTA report, the average over the last six years was a net migration figure of 289. Even allowing for that higher net immigration figure, it is interesting to know that over the same six-year period, the numbers of primary school pupils in Guernsey, as stated on page 1807 of the Education Department's Report showed a marginal decline. I believe that everyone acknowledges the inherent difficulty in projecting population size; but, nonetheless the Education Department has showed in its projections the growth of at least 480 or approximately 13% in the numbers of primary school children between the end of 2012 and 2020.

2315 **Deputy Soulsby:** Sir, can I make a point of correction, then?

2320 **The Bailiff:** If it is a point of correction.

2325 **Deputy Soulsby:** Yes. It is not the numbers from the PTA. The net migration figure of 300 over six years is taken from the Independent Analysis of Population bulletin that is produced from the States Economist, and that is even taking account of about 300 staff that were employed by Waitrose to fit out that store two years ago. Those numbers were taken out.

**The Chief Minister:** Sir, I accept the correction, but what I said was the PTA report did state that figure, but I acknowledge that it was derived from other sources.

2330 Sir, I believe that the projections used by the Education Department demonstrate that there will still be sufficient capacity, even allowing for future increase in numbers, of primary school children within the primary school sector.

Sir, we cannot preserve our education system in aspic. We must accept the inevitability of change. Would anyone seriously suggest that we should reinstate single-form entry parish schools

of Torteval, in St Peter's or St Saviour's, or even in St Peter Port? It must be right to seek consistency in the delivery of primary school education and also to achieve equality of opportunity for our primary school children across the whole of the Island. I therefore urge that we support the Propositions of the Education Board.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Wilkie.

**Deputy Wilkie:** Thank you, sir.

This has been a testing time for the Education Board and I have sympathy with the pressure they have been under. I believe they have conducted themselves in an exemplary fashion throughout the last six weeks. It is absolutely correct that they bring this proposal to close St Andrew's and St Sampson's Schools to this Assembly to be debated. It is also absolutely correct that I can disagree with parts of their report and still be a supporter of the FTP programme. I have heard phrases banded around, like, 'This will sort out the men from the boys. This is where the Assembly will have to make difficult decisions if it to be seen to be serious about FTP.' Well, I fail to see how this issue will prove my manhood or my ability to make difficult decisions.

We have spent a lot of time over the last year discussing strategies and plans and I have one of my own, which I am going to share with you now.

Your average Islander wants four things achieved in this term of Government: they want the economy to get moving; they want us to balance the books; and two areas they believe we have always been better than in the UK is education and health, and they wish that these services be once again be performing better than the UK standard. If we achieve this task, we might attain that highest of accolades, 'Not the worst States ever'. *(Laughter)* So I am looking for a solution, but I do not believe closing St Andrew's School will be that solution.

Deputy Fallaize made an excellent speech yesterday. However, I find Deputy Fallaize's logic flawed. He cannot compare 4,198 real children in real classrooms with real teachers in 1998 with the 2019 prediction of 4,190 real children, some of whom will have to be taught in currently unused classrooms or other spaces that have no teachers. He does not state how many children he excluded when excluding St Andrew's and St Sampson's from his 1998 figures. These numbers are not included in the Billet and are not publicly available, so cannot be challenged. He seems to be saying that 4,303 spaces, that is a 4,499 maximum capacity, less 196 for St Andrew's capacity, is enough for 4,190 children in 2019; that is only a surplus of 113 and quite unworkable by Education's own standards. He refers to 4,198 pupils in 1998, but how many spaces were there in 1998 he does not say.

I do not, of course, have the luxury of the 1998 teaching capacity model and so we will have to work backwards from the 2009 data in the 2009 Billet, alongside the statement that in 2000, both La Mare de Carteret and Castel were three-form. We will exclude St Andrew's and St Sampson's Infants' to make the comparison valid. I count 182.5 classes, and using 28 and 25 pupils per class, as per the current models, I calculate the capacity of 4,942 spaces. No wonder there was room for 4,198 pupils with a surplus of 744 spaces – not far from where we are today.

He also says there is a misconception that the Board has fixed class sizes at 24 and this has never been the case. This sounds like a quote from paragraph 3.14 of the 2009 Billet as alluded to by Deputy Gillson. If he had quoted that paragraph in full, he would have said:

'Schools are advised to aim for classes of approximately 24 pupils, and lower if possible in the social priority schools if staffing resources permit. There is a misconception that the Board has fixed class sizes at 24. This has never been the case. All families are likely to have been aware that at times their children have been in classes of above 24.'

I did not hear that the schools are advised to aim at classes of approximately 24 pupils and lower, if possible, in social priority schools repeated at all during the debate so far. This seems like a change of policy on numbers to me.

Deputy Fallaize stated that primary school population would peak in 2019 and then drop off. How can anyone make that prediction when those children have not been born yet? I would just surmise that to be pure fantasy.

Deputy Duquemin made references to the speeches from Jenny Tasker and Geoff Mahy in the 2009 debate. Excellent speeches though they were, the States at that time voted to keep the schools open.

Deputy Sherbourne stated in his speech that he did not know what was wrong with our education system and maybe Education should know before closing the schools.

I am not convinced by the main thrust of Education's argument. The first argument I wish to question: is a two/three-form giving a better educational outcome? Now, maybe this is because I have looked at the Guernsey stats and not the UK results, but I can see no evidence of that in the

2395 Guernsey figures and in fact the top performing schools are single-form entry. How are we to provide a better educational outcome with a model that simply is not delivering?

The next argument I have difficulty with is the amount of spare capacity claimed in the Report. The charts in the Report claim there are 800 spare spaces and yet Education agreed that this is a theoretical figure and a figure of 500 extra spaces is actually practical. If you transfer those lower figures onto Education's chart and close both schools, then by the year 2019 we will not have enough primary school places. Education figures are simply wrong. You do not need to be an economist to work this out. It is really a Janet and John... no, I am not giving way. No Member of Education has given way and so I do not feel the need that I have to. (*Laughter and interjections*) There is evidence of school intakes increasing up to 2019. We will then have to spend money on building new primary schools. How is that good Government?

2400 The next argument is that multi-form schools will educate children for less money; again this is not proved in the figures. St Andrew's School, as has been said before, is one of the most efficient schools in the Island. It is more efficient, per pupil, than some of the two and three-form entry schools. If we are to move these children to less efficient schools, how can we make savings?

2410 There is a Proposition in this policy letter to enter into discussions with the Catholic schools about amalgamation. These are the top performing schools in Guernsey. They are so good and it is hard to see how they could improve their Key Stage 2 results. So, again, the argument that amalgamation will improve the education for the children is fundamentally flawed. The Catholic schools were only notified of this Proposition a couple of days before it was published to the media.

2415 This Report also claims that class sizes in no way affects the quality of a child's education and yet Education states in the Billet that they will limit class sizes in some of our social priority schools to 25 or 24, if you read the 2009 Billet. If class sizes do not affect a child's education, then why do we have a limit?

2420 I do believe the case to closing St Sampson's Infant School has been proved and the cost per pupil are very high and I believe the children will have a better educational outcome, not having to move halfway through their primary education. However, if this multi-form policy is pursued to its logical conclusion, as we have heard, Forest School, Notre Dame, St Mary & St Michael, in fact, all single entry form schools will be closed by Education. Just be aware what you are voting for.

2425 This decision is not about bravery. It is not about showing your metal. It is about the Education Department's arguments being proved or not proved. In relation to St Andrew's, I do not find the evidence provided by the Education Board justifies their conclusion to close the school. I have reached my position on this matter using a cool head of analysis of the facts and not emotion or a desire to take the easiest route. I ask the Assembly to find Education's arguments not proven and vote against the closure St Andrew's School.

2430 Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The Bailiff:** Does anyone else wish to speak or has everything been said that could be said?  
Deputy O'Hara.

2435 **Deputy O'Hara:** Thank you, sir.

The speeches have been a bit like cat and mouse. Sir, one thing about speaking last is you cannot help but be repetitive, and I may well be that. Speaking at the end is always very difficult and, as people have already said here today, this debate is one of the most difficult ones this Assembly has ever had to face. There is no one in this room today who has not got some difficulties in one way or another.

2440 Can I first of all compliment the Minister on his speech this morning? I thought he was excellent and also many good speeches from both sides of the argument. We are here today, having both PTAs and Education, both with strong views on a subject, both feeling that they are right and both wanting the best for their children, which as we all know must be paramount in our deliberations. Can I say, at the outset of my speech to the Minister and the Board, that the PTA of both St Sampson's and St Andrew's wish to offer their public apologies for any needless enthusiasm on behalf of some anxious parents and supporters in the lead up to this debate. I am sure that Education will realise that both PTAs are totally against that and condemn any behaviour, no matter how well meaning that could have been deemed, possibly, as threatening; but it is an emotional issue.

2450 I disagree with some Deputies here to say that we perhaps have to make strong feelings, that we should make these decisions. Well, I am an emotional chap and sometimes I do not think we have to make strong decisions for the sake of it. I cannot help being the way I am and I know that some of my colleagues might think I am a bit soft and a bit weak, but that is how I am and that is

how I got my place. That is how I became a Member of the States and I am not going to change. Members will recall my attempts to delay this debate until November. However, the Minister gave his reasons as being they needed to go out for tender for the Vale School extensions and the effect that it had on their admissions programme and also the effect on the children and parents by extending the period. I was hopeful that the Minister of Education would have granted that delay, which I think would have been beneficial to all of us here and the concerned parents and teachers at the schools; however, this was not the case and although I disagreed, I totally respected his explanation as I do respect him.

2460  
2465 Of course, in the back of my mind, I knew from experience that States Members over the years dislike the use of *sursis* and I thought would I, should I put it... but I thought that the chances of one being voted through was very slim indeed. I therefore did not venture down this path, but left it to the two schools' PTAs to focus on the issues and develop their arguments, and focussed they certainly have been. I feel I could not continue without congratulating both St Sampson's and St Andrew's for their efforts and professional approach over this contracted period caused of the lack of consultation time to prepare.

2470 I must also thank and congratulate the many people from all across the Island, who have contributed with points from both sides of the debate; however, I have to say that the 'No to School Closures' letters and e-mails far outnumber the letters received in support of the proposals that we are debating today. And, yes, Deputy Duquemin, I also had that mail and he said he did not speak to anyone. However, we have a petition of 4,500 people and I have to say that I wondered who he was speaking to.

2475 As Members, we have been bombarded with so many statistics from both Education and PTAs that at times it has been difficult to take everything in. Many meetings have been arranged by Education, plus other meetings arranged by PTAs, and not to mention the media responses, live radio and TV interviews etc.

2480 Education's initial presentation to the States' Members was strongly directed towards the educational aspects of the proposals, which is well understood: it is their mandate. However, the Report clearly also emphasises, and I realise, the importance of the financial savings that they wish to make. Indeed, to confirm this, I would wish to bring to Members' attention that Education's non-States member stated to me that the importance of this Report was very, very crucial because if it did not go through then the whole of FTP could fail. I do not think that is the case.

2485 As I said before, we are expected to make strong decisions, especially when it comes down to savings; however, we should not make decisions just for the sake of looking strong. We know that FTP is a flexible animal and can be achieved in many other areas in the departmental budget or the States as a whole. We do not have to accept any FTP savings unless we absolutely think it is fair. Do not go down that road. If something is not fair and you do not like it, speak your mind. Do not be trapped. Do not be worried about it. We will find a way some other way. I will mention more about FTP in my speech.

2490 I have got a record to say that I am very concerned about the governance aspect of this Report and how unfortunate it has been that there has been virtually no consultation to the level that this subject and this Report demands, due to the huge effect it will have on the present situation and generations to come. Whilst I respected the points made by the Minister in not wishing to move the debate into November, I am bound to say that this is no excuse, with the greatest respect, Minister, for only allowing the schools five and a half weeks to discuss these far-reaching proposals, the last week of which was half term, and to add salt to the wounds, the States meeting was brought forward for a day.

2495 I know Deputy Le Lièvre's recent comments in connection with the Deputy Minister of Housing, talking about consultation etc. Okay, I accept that, but you *must*, you must realise... Members, you must realise that only five weeks is nothing, absolutely nothing, for people to try to protect what they think is their heritage and their school. It was nothing.

2500 I cannot help feeling it would have been a great help to all Members if all Deputies could have attended a combined presentation from both Education and the PTAs. Unfortunately, due to lack of time, allowed to both schools, this was not possible. Indeed, as Members know, reports from both schools were only presented during the last few days, and in the case of St Andrew's, the day before the States meeting – not good governance and lack of consultation, as I have already mentioned.

2505 Members have aired their views and I do not wish to repeat them verbatim; however, there have been many. Whilst I understand the individual and difficult feelings that the Education Minister and this Board have gone through – and I do understand them and their difficulties experienced in reaching decisions – I am bound to say that they drift totally and absolutely into

insignificance when you think about the concerns of the parents and the teachers and the children and St Andrew's as whole.

2520 You have heard about the superb teaching at St Andrew's and I am pleased that this is shared by the Education Board, and indeed they have praised the dedication of the head and their excellent teaching staff. However, during the parents' meetings, I was disappointed to hear from Mr Mulkerrin that larger schools develop a better teacher with better leadership skills. Sadly, to me that seemed to reflect on the standard of teachers at St Andrew's. I know in his wind-up speech, the Minister hopefully will, I am sure, apologise for that slight slip of the tongue maybe. Nevertheless, the teachers felt that very much to heart. Excuse me while I have some water.

2525 Members will have seen and noticed the immense amount of professional efforts that both PTAs, and in particular St Andrew's have made in this very short period of time given to them prior to this debate, all of it substantiated by various reports by eminent people. As I said, it was a pity that we could not have had a joint presentation for Education and PTA so that all these points could have been challenged and so that you, as Members, could have developed possibly a better understanding than what you have at the moment.

2530 Some Deputies: Deputy Perrot and Deputy Jones have still not completely made up their minds because there is some doubt there. What a shame we could not have done that. I tried to get that organised for the meeting on Monday, but sadly – and this is no criticism of Education because I know they are busy – they were unable to attend and that would have been the perfect opportunity that the St Andrew's PTA were looking to do. You know these figures could be wrong. These figures *could* be wrong and I felt it would have been a great opportunity to get *both* parties together so that you, as well as I, would have known – I will not use the word 'truth' – what the facts really were, properly.

2540 The Guernsey education system, despite what the Board may describe, is still excellent and reflects one of the reasons that we are envied by the UK and other European countries. It is one of the reasons that skilled people who come to the Island to work and live take into consideration when they are offered posts here. In my opinion, that situation has not changed. We still have a good standard, far better than most places, far better than the UK for sure, and this was confirmed a relatively short time ago in the Mulkerrin Report; but suddenly it has all changed. What has happened? We have still got a good education. What has happened? Why do we need to change it?

2545 I was pleased to hear the various views of the Deputies who attended the presentation from St Andrew's School. It displayed the other side of the Education Report. Twenty three Deputies who were present at the meeting had the real opportunity to listen to the constructive and professional viewpoints of the reasons why and where the Report was flawed.

2550 Some 18 Members gave their apologies for not being able to attend, and I hope that those – I am sure that you have, and listening to debate today – you have had the opportunity to look at the Report, even though there is quite a lot of pages there and you have not had much time to look at it – again, sorry, not our fault. I hope you have had the time to understand the problems and where the PTAs feel that the flawed parts are.

2555 As I stated previously, the Education's initial presentation to the Deputies, only five and a half weeks ago, their Report came over as very compelling. However, as time has passed and, in particularly, after the St Andrew's report, it became plain to some Members present that not all the Education Report was as true as it could be and was certainly flawed in most areas. All I will say to you Deputies, if you have got any doubts at all, *any doubts whatsoever*, then please do not support the Report.

2560 Of course, Education have issued counterclaims, but there is no doubt that the points mentioned in the PTA report are revealing and simply cannot be ignored. Education's counterclaims do not display anything that is not known from the report and still are questionable.

2565 Sir, we are told throughout the Report that the details in the Education Report are based on extensive international investigation. However, the majority of the Report findings are based on UK statistics, all of which have been challenged by the professional approach of the PTA.

2570 Actually, sorry Deputy Sillars, it reminds me of my initial discussion with the Minister when I asked him why we could not have a minimum of a 12-week consultation figure – like they do in the UK, 12 weeks in the UK. His answer to me was, 'Well, we are not in the UK.' And yet, their Report is based on UK statistics. That is very strange.

Indeed, expanding this point, do we *honestly* need a UK-styled education system? I have previously mentioned that we already have an education system which is envied by many, so why change it? Evidence, that is what it is about. Evidence – whose evidence? Where has it come from?

2575 I believe the evidence, we should be using evidence of our local teachers, here – what they say; what they feel; what they think should be for our schools; not necessarily going to the UK. That is

what I believe, and I know that is shared by a lot of teachers, because I, too, have spoken to a lot of teachers, not just in St Sampson's, not just in St Andrew's, round the school, and they all have told me that think small schools are good, all of them. Nothing wrong with them at all.

2580 Well, there have been many letters of support from people to keep St Andrew's School open. These are from all over the Island, which illustrates that this Report has repercussions throughout Guernsey. These include present and retired teachers. I wish I could mention them all. However, there is one that stands out which you may have read in the local *Press*. The report appeared in the *Press* on 23rd October and was submitted by Mrs Mary Sebire, the previous head of St Andrew's.

2585 I put it to you that there would be no-one better to put the case forward of keeping St Andrew's open. She has a unique and personal experience of the school where she was head for a considerable time. If anyone knows the evidence, she does.

It was headed, 'False Reasoning' and she wrote:

2590 'We are told by the Education Department that research shows educational outcomes in two to three-form entry schools are better than small schools. The problem is that we know very little into this research and what is resulting from it all. Well, Guernsey primary schools are to be affected by change and two schools are to be recommended for closure. There are two key questions to which we need answers: (1) which educational outcomes were considered? (2) What was the actual range in size of the small schools included in the research?'

2595

Mrs Sebire goes on to say:

2600 'I believe that UK Key Stage 2 SATs results for Maths and English were the educational outcomes provided by the research. If this is the only outcome on which to base the reorganisation of all Guernsey's primary schools, well there is no need to change, as our one-form entry schools are top of the list with the best.

Also, in my view, there are many other educational outcomes which are equally as important and at which small schools in particular excel. These have not been considered, because measuring good citizens, confident individuals, excellent communication skills, etc, is difficult and cannot easily be turned into research statistics to be used as evidence for closing schools or keeping them open. Apparently, some small schools cannot provide a range of extra curriculum activities or broad opportunities for pupils. Please visit St Andrew's and see what it has to offer.'

2605

Now, I know you have already done that. You have taken that opportunity.

She continues:

2610 'A few years ago, the School Ground Club received national recognition as runner up in the Royal Horticultural Society's Britain in Bloom School's Award. Not bad for a small school.

I return to the subject of the research. What size constitutes a small school? As this is UK-based research, it must include anything from a full one-form entry to village schools of 10 or 25 or 50 pupils. If this is so, we are not comparing like for like. As Guernsey small schools are all complete one-form entry establishments, they cannot be compared with schools which have one, two or three classes in the whole school, resulting in mixed-age teaching and lack of special icons. In my opinion, the research is completely flawed and to use it as evidence'

2615

– that word again, 'evidence' –

2620 'to close Guernsey's successful, thriving and much loved and respected one-form entry community schools is beyond comprehension.'

She continues to say:

2625 'How very convenient for the Education Department that St Andrew's is sited at the centre of the Island. It is an ideal target. The children and staff obviously perceived as numbers on a list or pieces of a jigsaw, ready to be slotted into the schools around them to complete the puzzle.'

2630

She says, quite rightly:

2630 'They are real people with real feelings and devoted to their school in many cases. Families and staff are enduring the trauma for the second time and are being treated very unfairly. I wonder how this will affect the educational outcomes for these unfortunate children.'

2635

She continues:

2640 'Deputy Sillars assures us that finance is not the reason for closure, but nevertheless, I shall refer to it. We are told that St Andrew's is the fifth least expensive to run of all primary schools, so no problem there. The cost per pupil will remain, should the school close, as the receiving school will benefit. St Andrew's already has one of the finest outdoor learning environments on the Island, so no cost there. The building does need maintenance, but how does this compare to the millions needed to build another primary school, which is in the pipeline? Mr Mulkerrin admits that buildings do not provide good educational outcomes. It is the quality of the staff.'

2645

She finishes by saying:

2645



‘As a well know Chinese proverb states, “It takes a whole village to educate a child”. St Andrew’s village community is doing a fantastic job and long may it continue. Deputies, I urge you to support our rich Guernsey heritage and community way of life and keep St Andrew’s open.’

2650 Now, that was from Mary Sebire: a very, very well respected person in education. She has retired now, but she looked after St Andrew’s for a long, long time. Very, very well respected in the primary sector.

Members, I thank you for your patience, I know I am taking a long time. And thank you for your patience while I read this letter from the previous St Andrew’s School head and at the same time thank her, publicly, on behalf of the families for taking the time to bring her points to the attention of the Island. She does bring up some good points. She mentions finance, community and Guernsey’s heritage and way of life.

2655 With regard to finance, I have already mentioned FTP savings and I said would come back to the subject. My colleagues will not like what I am going to say.

2660 We all know that we need to look at reducing our deficit and Members will know my feelings on this matter. I have said it many times. It was in my manifesto. I support FTP, but on the proviso that I would not support any savings or cuts which affect our community, heritage, culture and our way of life. It is my opinion that FTP is destroying that and will continue to destroy it more and more. I know we have to make really hard decisions but all I am saying is, be careful. Do not press that FTP accelerator too much.

Members of the public have stated Education should be looking more seriously into reducing their own internal administration costs to meet their targets, not closing schools, not looking to reduce possibly apprentice schemes, not looking to close budgets at colleges for education. This is not the time to start cutting budgets, Members, for education. It is not the time.

2670 I feel sorry for the Minister in this respect. He is not happy about the closures, are you, sir? No. I know the steps that he and his Board are having to take to meet his FTP commitments. I believe the time has come to look again, very, very strictly at the FTP targets and particularly the last 10% to 15%, which seem to be where the controversial items affect our community. The savings could be made through tax reform or other means or, better still, through a revenue stream, which we are just not creating at the moment. We have not done any revenue-stream creation since we brought FTP. Nothing, no investment there whatsoever. Unless we seriously consider how FTP is affecting our community, then it will be too late.

Now, I know my fellow Deputies do not agree with me, but that is what I think and that is what I am going say and I am not sorry for saying it.

2680 At the Deputies’ presentation, we were told that these proposals were based on educational reasons. However, as time progressed it became increasingly obvious that FTP was the main reason. Indeed, as I said earlier, Mr Mulkerrin made this very point to me at an event, when he said that FTP would collapse if the education proposals failed. Well, I would say again, FTP will not collapse, if this proposal does not go through. It will not collapse. We will find other ways – and, of course, immediately, someone is probably going to follow me in a minute, speech, and they will say, ‘Well, where are we going to find it from?’ Well, we will have to find it somewhere. It is not impossible. I use the expression I have used before: we have all been whipped into submission by the FTP whip.

2690 I cannot believe that as an Island, we could not make up this small shortfall through other means. At the very least, we should look at this possibility. Education should tell the FTP leadership team that it is one of those controversial subjects that the public are not happy to accept – and I mean the Island-wide public, not just St Andrew’s.

Many points have been discussed by various Members. I shall not repeat them, as I said before, but there are some things that stand out.

2695 If the proposals are accepted, there will be undoubtedly traffic problems. There will be problems transporting children around the Island, in particular the very young who will need serious supervision. It is all going to cost money. Moving the children to different schools will take away the opportunity of children being able to walk to school. I think that is important.

2700 And just a few other points: the Minister, in his excellent opening speech did make the reference, ‘We have closed schools before.’ That does not mean we have to close schools now. We have closed schools before and there were lots of problems then, and even now, if you go to ask the Parishes seriously, they still miss their schools now. So, it does not mean to say, if we have closed schools before, that we have got to close this one. I think that is not right.

2705 I can remember the fight to keep the Forest School open, ably led by ex-Chief Minister, Deputy Mike Torode. This fight was won and the school went on and was extended and *thrived* to form a valuable federated link with Le Rondin. Hey, they are now thinking of closing that! It is a bit of a worry.

I look forward to the Minister's reply to Deputy Trott, as his questions are very fundamental to this debate.

2710 I will go on to community now. I have nearly finished. I am really concerned about the effect that the closure of St Andrew's school will have on the community. Community is everything and I know there are people in here today, including my good friend here, Deputy Le Tocq, who said, 'All places have community.' Well, of course, they have. That is no reason why we should shut St Andrew's community down. Community is Island based. The whole Island is a community. It just so happens that St Andrew's has got a good community. We all have. It is no excuse to say, 'Well, there are going to be communities elsewhere, so we will not lose it.' I cannot see that. St Andrew's has something really, really, really special – *really* special and here we are, going to shut it. We are all part together in this community and I just cannot see why people cannot understand it. It is the very bedrock of this Island and the very foundation of what our forebears have made over generations.

2720 The children at St Andrew's have the most wonderful affiliation with our community and many community charities such as the Blind Association for which they built their Sensory Garden and, here we are, looking to destroy...

2725 Here we are, looking to destroy a whole section of our community, right at the heart of the Island. People have said that the school could be made into a community centre. That sounds ideal, but I have to tell you that there is a covenant on the building which prevents us from doing that. It is devoted to education, nothing else. So, we will not be able to just do a community centre just like that, I am afraid.

2730 Members, once this feeling of community has gone, it will go forever. It is not going to come back. It 'ain't' going to come back. We will not see the children.

I know there are some of us who want to make strong and difficult decisions in order to make savings, but please, *please* do not do this to the disadvantage...

I am so sorry.

2735 Please do not do this to the disadvantage of our children. They are our future generations, attending a part of a very good educational system. Please do not change it for some UK model for the future. It has *got* to be the wrong decision. It will affect so many people in the Island. These proposals will have a huge repercussion not just in St Andrew's or St Sampson's, but, as I said before, throughout the Island. One speaker has already intimated that there could be other schools that are closing.

2740 St Andrew's School is a superb school. If you want this superb education to continue, then I repeat, if you have any doubts – it is *important*, Members – if you have got any doubts whatsoever, do not vote this through. If you do not feel you have got the full information and if you have any doubts, you must reject the proposals. This is a really important issue for St Andrew's, its school and its community.

2745 I apologise for being emotional. I cannot be any different.

Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Spruce.

2750 **Deputy Spruce:** Thank you, sir.

Members, when similar proposals were placed before this Assembly during the early part of the last term, I voted for the Department's proposals. In my naivety, I believed that all the information provided had been fully thought through.

2755 Now, with some years under my belt, I have come to realise that reports, in general, hardly ever include inconvenient facts. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) This time, I have to admit to taking considerably more interest in the personal impact and educational factors, rather than just the financial and theoretical benefits of this rationalisation process. What has really concerned me is the woeful lack of consultation carried out by the Department. In fact, this theory does not comply with the good governance principle regarding engagement with stakeholders. There was actually no consultation at all.

2760 As an Assembly, we have consulted at length on Waste, Population Policy, on the Transport Strategy and right now we are consulting at length on the Tax and Benefit Review. But, on this critical matter, there has been no consultation at all with those affected, prior to the Billet being issued. I ask you, how can it be reasonable not to consult on something as fundamental to families as their children's education?

2765 The education of our children is one of the most important things to all parents. Public consultation is an important part of policy making. Engagement should really begin early in policy development, when the policy is still under consideration and views can genuinely be taken into

2770 account. Timeframes for consultation should be proportionate and realistic and sufficient information should be made available to stakeholders to enable them to make informed comments.

The Board have quite obviously decided on the outcome and written a set of proposals to achieve that aim and that is a very real shame, to me. How this Board ever thought that they had the right to exclude parents from policy development is beyond me. In my observations, this Board have played lip service to consultation

2775 They have certainly held quite a number of public meetings over the past few weeks. The message to parents was that they were in listening mode, but, in fact, the Billet was written, the strategy decided and not one single change has been made. That is not consultation. The Board had decided their course of action without due consideration to all affected. This Billet is full of grand ideas and vision statements, but if you probe even slightly below the surface those statements do not stand real scrutiny.

2780 Bold statements are made on page 1747, clause 2.3 and I note:

*'Primary education provides the foundations for success in secondary school and critically the foundations for success in life. Primary education is pivotal to an individual's future personal achievement, health and wellbeing.'*

2785 I could not agree more with that statement. That same clause also states that:

*'at its best, primary education in Guernsey is well developed'*

2790 – and this is their 'but' –

*'but we need to address the consistency of its provision, and importantly its effectiveness...'*

2795 And that, for me, is the real issue: consistency of provision and, more importantly, its effectiveness is key.

Public statements have been made that larger schools are more effective and, theoretically, I can accept that view of a financial and operational perspective, but the educational outward evidence does not support that statement.

2800 I believe that consistent provision and quality results should be shown to exist across the entire education system, before the entire primary sector is thrown into turmoil. Single-form schools are performing well, whilst other larger schools are performing less well. Financially, St Andrew's is one of the lowest cost schools to run. So, where is the financial case?

2805 The Education Board have been lauded by some Members for attending various public meetings. In my view, they do not deserve credit for that. They had to attend those meetings to defend their policy letter, because they had not consulted correctly.

2810 At a recent public meeting, parents were told that it was not about saving money; it was all about improving education outputs. But, then, at another public meeting a few days later, a Board Member stated that, by choice, they would not be doing this. He said they had to cut £7 million from their budget and that T&R had imposed these cuts on them. The Board's credibility took a serious dive for me that evening. In that one sentence, I doubted whether the Board's strategy was about educational outputs or about saving money.

2815 Now, as a T&R Board Member, you will appreciate that I am committed to the FTP process and its targets. But I am not that committed at any cost and certainly would not put at risk educational outputs, just to save a relatively small amount of money.

Those of you that remember past waste debates will know that I do not bow to pressure groups and I have always based my decisions on factual evidence, and that is what has led me to the decision I have taken today.

2820 I, regrettably, am unable to support a Department that has failed to make a convincing case. The entire process has been rushed in order to meet an arbitrary FTP target. The world will not stop if Education falls short of their target. That is a fact.

2825 Having said that, I have come to the conclusion that the case is made for St Sampson's Infants' to close. It is a fantastic school, but it is the last infant school on the Island and the children all have to move to the Vale Primary at seven. Sentiment alone cannot really justify the school's continuation, especially when the Vale Primary will provide a perfectly fine education, more effectively.

I do, however, believe that the Department has failed to make a convincing argument in favour of closure of St Andrew's School, on either educational or financial grounds. The impact on all receiving schools and, of course, the St Andrew's children, will be significant.

2830 On another point, I am also concerned that the majority of the receiving schools are located in areas designated as local development centres in the proposed new Land Use Plan. This can only place additional pressure on those schools and we are talking here about Capelles, St Martin's,

Forest. These are the new local centres, other than the edges of St Sampson's and St Peter Port – and Cobo, of course.

2835 Two thousand homes are forecast as being needed to be built in the Housing Needs Survey in the next five years. The Land Use Plan stands for 15. So, these centres are where development will happen. So, I am not totally convinced that the capacity factors have thought these things through. I think they have thought through what they need to deal with now and not looked forward.

I am, therefore, minded to support the closure of St Sampson's Infant School, but not St Andrew's and I ask that other Members take note, especially my final comments.

2840 Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Well, I see no-one rising... Oh, Deputy Brehaut.

**Deputy Brehaut:** Thank you, sir.

2845 As people say, I did not intend speak. I have written a speech and it is not nonsense, as Deputy Quin and those people can see, it looks like a bit of a basejump of a speech, so we will see how we go.

2850 I have to come to this, having saddled up my hobbyhorse, bearing in mind some of the comments that have been made by a number of people. In a very passionate speech from Deputy O'Hara: 'Where was the consultation?' – he asked that. Deputy Spruce has just said, 'Where was the consultation? Where was the opportunity for the public to engage?' Deputy Soulsby has said that and many others.

2855 Now, my views are very clear. We have parliamentary committees, mandated to look at specific areas. Deputy Soulsby, as Chair of the PAC, has said, 'The numbers do not add up. The graphs do not work. It will fall in on itself. The numbers do not work in this example.' That is the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. If *ever* any topic should have been reviewed, it should have been this one. (**Deputy Soulsby:** Sir.) I will give way on this occasion.

**Deputy Soulsby:** Thank you.

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**The Bailiff:** Deputy Soulsby.

**Deputy Soulsby:** Well, I am glad Deputy 'Barry Roffey'... Oh, sorry, I do not know why I said that. Why Deputy Barry Brehaut –

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**Deputy Brehaut:** Sir, that is unnecessary and must be withdrawn, sir.

2870 **Deputy Soulsby:** Well, only that there is an article in the *Press* very recently which bore a very close resemblance to an e-mail sent to all Deputies by yourself, Deputy Brehaut, very recently, and I have to say that I have found the obsessive way that Deputy Brehaut has been sending, via e-mails, social media –

**The Bailiff:** Is this advancing the debate, Deputy Soulsby, because that is not a point of – ?

2875 **Deputy Soulsby:** Yes, sir, it certainly is.

Saying about what the parliamentary committee should do. He could have stood to be Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. He could have stood to be a Member of the Public Accounts Committee, but he did not. It is the opinion of the current Public Accounts Committee that it should *not* be doing that work, and the Committee is concerned that certain Deputies want to focus and tell a Scrutiny Committee what they should be looking at. It does make us wonder whether that Deputy might want to be distracting that Committee from looking at other work, and bearing in mind the report that we have just received from the PEH, perhaps that might be true in this case. (**Several Members:** Ooh!)

2885 So, I would say to Deputy Brehaut, perhaps his time might be better focused, rather than telling other Committees what to do, looking at his own Department, of which he is a member, and considering whether he might have time better spent –

**The Bailiff:** I am not sure this that is relevant to the debate.

2890 **Deputy Soulsby:** – looking at what services and the hospital.

**The Bailiff:** Will you sit!

This is not a proper point on which to request somebody to give way. It is not advancing the debate.

2895 Please continue, Deputy Brehaut.

**Deputy Brehaut:** Thank you, sir.

I expected a rational response, but I did not get my way.

2900 I will make my point, because I will not tire from making this point. The fact that my point may irritate the Chair of PAC is legitimate. We have parliamentary committees that are mandated to review and have not had any review. The mandate of the Public Accounts Committee: to examine whether public funds have been applied for the purposes intended by the States and that extravagance and waste are eradicated.

2905 Now, many of the issues raised in this imply waste. If ever a parliamentary committee was mandated to do something, it was the Public Accounts Committee. I have sent four e-mails to PAC, *four*, asking that they responded to the entire Assembly, rather than me directly. When I attended and I will close, particularly on the PTA with this. When I went to the presentation by St Andrew's PTA, which was an excellent presentation, I tapped Deputy Soulsby on the shoulder and said, 'I think that final graph is where your review could have been', her response was very clear, 2910 in five words. She may recall it: 'Shut up, just shut up.' Now, that is not the standard we have had from parliamentary committees before and it is unfortunate that we have lapsed into that.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Le Clerc. Is this a point of correction?

2915 **Deputy Le Clerc:** Sir, I just think this is not the right forum for this sort of debate (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) and I can say, as Vice-Chair of Public Accounts, that we have asked the Committee/Department to respond to your e-mail on two occasions. So, that should have been in hand.

But, I do not think this is the appropriate place for this debate.

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**The Bailiff:** Deputy Brehaut.

**Deputy Brehaut:** I think it is fair to say, sir, I was side-tracked into that alley, because I did not intend to be that specific in that area.

2925 Now, rather than lobby individual Deputies to lobby Education, there would have been merit in those people who were lobbying to be more specific in their lobbying and to direct the parliamentary committees directly.

2930 Deputy Soulsby opened her speech in this Assembly, or closed it rather, with the remarks that the Education were in the dock, they were the accused, we were about to kill a parish school and that big was bad. I do not believe that big is bad. Big in the Guernsey context, St Martin's School is, in the Guernsey context, a big school.

**Deputy Soulsby:** Point of correction.

I never said, 'big is bad'. My own children went to a big school and were very happy there.

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**The Bailiff:** Deputy Brehaut.

**Deputy Brehaut:** Respectfully, sir, through you, can I be allowed to make some headway here? I think these exchanges cannot go on like a jack-in-the-box.

2940 I think what was implied was that small was beautiful and that big was less good. That is implicit in what was said. Deputy Soulsby herself was the Chair of St Martin's PTA, so knows what that school has to offer.

2945 Now, when the 'No to the School's' campaign started, I received this as a parent, when I went to St Martin's School, or when my wife did, to pick up our children. It says, in the last sentence, it refers to 103 places at St Martin's School, when we know that there are only 44. Now, that one letter circulated to most, if not all of parents with children at St Martin's has unsettled them and generated a number of e-mails that you have all had. We know it is not 103 children. We know it is 44. And it is a rather enigmatic campaign. It refers to... It is from an organisation, 'St Martin's Needs Answers'. I do not know who 'St Martin's Need Answers' are. It is apparently not part of the PTA. It could be. As I have said, rather enigmatic. We have Education being asked 2950 perpetually, constantly, to be frank, to be open, to be honest; yet, somebody is lobbying behind the scenes. It is not exactly clear who exactly it is.

Now, St Martin's is a fantastic school. I do not want to live my life through this Assembly every time, but I had a son with emerging problems, with difficulties within education. He went to St Martin's School and how very lucky he was. St Martin's School, with the forms that they have, means that, if my child was being demanding on any one occasion, it meant he could go into another form. Now, of course, that will not always be possible in a single-form entry school and there are other occasions within single-form entries when the dynamic between the parents, the pupil and the teacher may not be good. If it is not good, it is not good for a very long time and there are times, even... well, especially because we live in small communities, when families do not get on particularly well and you find that children are in classrooms, associating with children whom their parents may not want them to be associating with. So, what the two and three-form entry enables you to do is to give you that broad support, that safety net, rather than a difficult dynamic in a school for the entirety and, other than the educational element, there is merit in having what might be children with emerging needs best supported in a three-form school, in my view, rather than in a single form.

Communities are changing and parish life is changing and this may sound a tangential way to approach this, but when I was a Douzenier, some years ago, I was elected with 240 votes. I remember the little clip in the *Press* that said, 'Douzenier Elected on Low Turn Out'. But 240 votes in a Douzaine election would be something of a landslide these days, because the role of the Douzaine, for whatever reason we do not quite understand, is diminishing. There is not the parish involvement that there once was and what people do, quite understandably, is people cling to the flotsam that is around them from their parish, the things that they value, because parish life, community life, is changing incrementally, albeit very slowly.

So I do not want to denigrate the values that the people of St Andrew's School have or the people of St Sampson's, I do not want to denigrate the values I have, but there is a change, an irresistible change, a force that is taking place that does not necessarily mean loss. I think in the educational sense, I do feel that there is an educational gain to be had.

I was called by a St Sampson's parent who rang me up. We had a long conversation and what she said was this – it stuck in my mind – she said, 'When I drop my child off to school, it does not actually feel like a school. It feels like a crèche. You could almost forget he was there to be educated.' And I think that is an important observation, because when you take your child, the thing that you love most in your life, you put it into the care of other people, it is a very precious thing. You almost forget it is there to be educated. But, Education cannot forget that it there to be educated. So, Education have to acknowledge the values, the feelings, the emotions of an entire community and parents and make it clear to them that that environment can be replicated somewhere else and it *can*.

When I had a tour of St Andrew's School, I was asked by a member of the party I was with, when I was looking in the reception area, 'Where would you see a sight like this?' And without wishing to be ironic or funny, I said, 'Well, St Martin's is where I would see a scene like this. You would see it in Castel. You would see it anywhere.'

As much as we like to think that we have something that is ours, it is something that cannot be replicated, something that is a value that we only have as our community, it is actually present all over the Island. Deputy Soulsby, again, said in her speech that when she was living in the UK, schools were closed down. It is not very nice and when schools are closed down in counties, it is a different thing. If you are bussed out of your county, if you are bussed out of your area or your village or your town, it is not very pleasant. We are talking about very small distances, children will be moving between schools to get a better education. I know it is a difficult thing to convey to people, to say, is it possible that your child could receive a modestly better education somewhere else other than the school they are in? There is an argument to be made there.

Bearing in mind, on the environment, one thing I hear constantly, perpetually, is again, 'have you looked at the environmental implications? Have you looked at every aspect of road congestion?' (*Interjection*) Thank you, Deputy De Lisle!

The reality is I wish PTAs would look at this issue – all PTAs, really, not just when we are looking to move or close schools, but throughout the year, because I walk my children to school, as I keep telling you, about 98% of the time. The biggest hazard to me, walking my children to school, is other parents driving to school; and what they will say to you is, 'I drive my children to school, because it is not safe to walk.' Now, that is not so difficult to square.

What this could represent, this decision today, if we do agree with the Education Council's proposals, is people can re-double their efforts to ensure that children walk, cycle. I appreciate that some will be bussed, but other people in other schools really do embrace the mood for change and take the options that are open to them, other than the car – or really, single-occupancy car, which is the problem.

3015 There has been a degree of fence sitting today. Sorry, just as an expression, we have all done it. Some of us sit on the fence. Deputy Gollop usually creosotes it, while he is up there. (*Laughter*) He seems to quite enjoy being on the fence from time to time, but the fence sitters, what they are saying is ‘Tell me why you want to close them, give me the facts.’ What the fence sitters are not saying today is, ‘Why is one-form entry telling us why one-form entry is the very best model? They have not made that argument. They are asking for the Education to make the other argument.

3020 Now, imagine what Education would face after today if we say, ‘No we are not going to close the schools. Impassioned speeches from Members of this Assembly: we will not close the schools.’ What does tomorrow look like for the Education Department? I would love to be a fly on the wall, if we made that decision when the members of the Education Department go to T&R with Deputy Spruce around the table, because in not doing this, not closing schools, what are the options? What are the options?

3025 And people do gladly talk about the Schools’ Music Service. Well, if you think this is an issue, have a look. You try wrestling an oboe off an eight-year-old and an angry parent. (*Laughter*) It is going to be *extremely* difficult! And the issues regarding who accesses the Music Service is an issue for some people. It is also an issue of the 11-plus and it is this cyclical argument we have all the time. Do not start with the primary schools; do the 11-plus before you do that. Do not look at the 11-plus; do the Schools’ Music Service before. You have to start somewhere. This is not the first Board that arrived here today with this. I supported the decision in 2009, when I had two children at St Martin’s School, because I thought it was educationally simply the right and the best thing to do.

3035 I was not elected to close schools. I was not elected, necessarily, to refuse health treatment to people and I was not elected to stop painting lines in the road, which Environment have had to do because of budget cuts. Now, that is because I have the misfortune to be elected to this Assembly today and I take the fiscal responsibility, the taxpayers’ pound, and to say I have been... I have not been persuaded by the FTP process; I have been dragged with a ring through my nose to concede elements of the FTP. I have done it. I would be encouraged if, perhaps, each and every member of T&R could do the same, sir.

3040 I got to my feet, sir. I did not want a spat with Deputy Soulsby and it is unfortunate that my speech started in that way. But, I will close, sir, with a quote and the quote is:

3045 ‘I want to see change in the way that Guernsey is governed, to bring it into the 21st century. The prevarications and procrastinations over the last few years have held the Island back. Delays in decision making have cost us millions.’

3050 Not, my words, sir, but the words of the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. So, please, with that in mind, can we support the Education Department?

**Deputy Soulsby:** Sir, point of correction.

3055 He has taken my manifesto. He has only taken one aspect of my manifesto and I absolutely stand by the whole of my manifesto, frankly. And, perhaps, I could say about Deputy Brehaut’s manifesto.

**The Bailiff:** No, no. That cannot be part of a point of correction, Deputy Soulsby. Deputy Conder.

**Deputy Conder:** Thank you, sir. Thank you, colleagues.

3060 Sir, I rise to speak in support of the Education Department’s proposals for the primary transformation. The education and academic case detailed in Propositions 1 to 6 are, in my opinion, irrefutable and should be supported.

3065 Sir, before I start the main part of my speech, I would just like to say that, over the last day and half, I have felt privileged to be a Member of this Assembly. I think the quality of the speeches, the engagement between opposite sides, the thrust of argument has been incredibly impressive and I feel honoured to be a Member of this Assembly.

3070 Sir, I want to recognise the counter-argument made by the opponents of the Education Department’s proposals, both within this Assembly and outside. One of the great strengths, in fact unique strengths of our form of democracy is that the electorate can engage very directly with their elected representatives and seek to change minds and affect outcomes in this Assembly. Sir, I did not find the public meetings intimidating or over-robust. For someone who has sat in the university senate on many occasions and heard self-important professors – you all know what they are like, don’t? – arguing and being refused their grants or research budgets, the public meetings were not intimidating, were not robust. Well, they were robust and that is how they should be. That is true democracy and it should be celebrated.

I have engaged with the opponents of the Education Department's proposals, both at those meetings and on the steps of this Assembly, and I would like to pay tribute to the courtesy with which I have been treated in all of my engagements with those people. I congratulate them on the way they have conducted their campaign.

3080 I have read all of the correspondence and the reports produced by the PTAs – well, I hope I have; as far as I know I have – of the two schools and others. Whilst I do not agree with their conclusions, we must honour them for the way in which they have conducted their campaign and the strength of the case they have made.

3085 Sir, I believe that we have the chance today to set primary education in Guernsey on a course which has the potential to improve and sustain the education of our youngest pupils for a generation. Offering opportunities for rising performance, flexibility in delivery and the exploitation of new and changing technologies, all of which require us to establish schools of a nature and structure that can offer higher degrees of specialisation, more consistency of delivery and output and the utilisation of new approaches to teaching and learning which are already being

3090 exploited by our competitors throughout the developed world.

Sir, as the Chief Minister and I believe others have said, we cannot wrap this Island or its education system in aspic. What was good 20 years ago will not see us through the next decade, let alone a generation. All parts of education are changing. All require investment in new technology. All need new teaching methodologies and new infrastructure. Without them, we will let down this

3095 and future generations of pupils and continue the delay and procrastination that was, perhaps, evident in the past.

Sir, the academic case has been well made by the Minister, my colleagues in the Education Department and other Members of this Assembly. I will not burden this Assembly with another detailed announcement of what they are, save to say that two and three-form entry schools provide a better and more sustainable education for children entering primary schools, with greater flexibility in delivering the curriculum, more opportunity for specialisation and attention to those children with specific needs and less potential for disruption of the learning process, should a key teacher be absent for any reason. Sir, perhaps more significantly, two and three-form entry schools and the greater concentration of resources inherent in such structures provide opportunities for the

3100 adoption of alternative forms of learning, including, as I have said, new, expensive technology which we have to adopt if our children are to have the same access and same opportunities as children in the rest of the developed world. The Education Department's plans cannot simply address the educational environment of today. We have to build a service which is capable of development and adaptation, as education generally and the needs of our children change.

3110 Sir, that is all I wish to say in respect of the education rationale for these proposals. For me, as I have said, they are irrefutable.

Sir, I want to focus upon the economic and cost rationale for these proposals – the almost unsayable. Occasionally, during the six weeks or more of the debate conducted outside this Chamber, cost has been that unsayable rationale for these proposals, characterised by the

3115 pejorative claim, 'This is all about costs.' While that is absolutely not true, this initiative nonetheless is significantly about cost and so it should be.

Sir, I want to face that cost issue head on, and this Assembly and this Government should also want to do that. Indeed, I venture to suggest that if it does not do so, we will demonstrate a failure of will and short-term expediency which will cost this Island very dear in the not-too-distant future. I will place the cost implications of these proposals in a macro-economic context, an Island context and in the context of the FTP.

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Sir, I believe that this Island is at the crossroads in terms of his long-term financial health and stability. The mind-set that prevailed in days past, in which there was an assumption that Government surpluses were the natural order of things, has to change. Any Member of this

3125 Assembly who attended Professor Wood's recent presentation regarding the fiscal outlook for our economy and heard him describe the risks to our financial stability and were able to listen without at least a frisson of fear, could not have been hearing the underlying message. The reality is that our tax take from the economy is no longer sufficient to cover our revenue expenditure, capital development and sustained reserves. Put simply, we are living beyond our means.

The positive parts of our economy are the absence of public debts and, very significantly, the success and the potential for the future success of the Financial Transformation Programme. These two characteristics of our economy – lack of debt and FTP – are the shields by which this Island can attempt to protect itself when the full impact of the financial tsunami which is waiting to impact on Western economies is felt. The financial consequences of the Western world's total indebtedness: \$16 trillion in the USA; £1.6 trillion in the United Kingdom; the winding down of

3130 quantitative easing; and the true consequences of fiscal imbalances in the European Union will, in

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due course, all impact upon this Island in terms of declining economic growth, further falls in tax revenues and increased demands upon States' spending. To use that horrible phrase, sir, 'That is the new normal.' That is where we are today.

3140 However, sir, I do not believe that we, as a Government, with a number of very honourable exceptions in the Treasury and Resources Department, the Social Security Department and elsewhere, really believe that or have come to terms with it. I do not believe we have come to terms with it. Nor have we attempted to convey these facts with sufficient urgency to our fellow  
3145 Islanders. Consequently, every attempt to cut or curb spending or generate efficiencies is met with howls of public protest, special interest lobbying and resistance to even the most sensible, modest and beneficial proposals.

Sir, I would now like to turn to the Financial Transformation Programme, particularly with respect to the Education Department's plans to generate between £681,000 and £810,000 worth of savings, through the closure of St Sampson's Infant School and St Andrew's School. I am not an  
3150 FTP groupie, but I am a Government groupie. I believe that when a government decides to do something and mandates itself to do something, it should do it. I also happen to believe FTP, as mandated by this Assembly, is a requirement, not a guideline.

Let me say, right away, these savings of £681,000 to £810,000 are net of all transfer costs associated with the changes to the structure of primary education in Guernsey and *will* generate the  
3155 cash savings that are part of the Education Department's FTP targets. The attempts to discredit these figures are simply *wrong* and, in every case, in the challenges to the Department's figures, they have been proved to be incorrect, and I will do it again.

Let me answer the claims that the FTP savings generated from the primary transformation programme will not be achieved and let me say, in doing so, let me point out that, to date, the  
3160 Education Department, as the second largest contributor to the FTP programme, has delivered on its FTP. In broad figures, the savings in the range of £681,000 to £810,000 will derive from reductions in the teachers in the Department's teaching establishment of 9.7 FTE savings. Now, that figure has been challenged. That is a reduction in our teaching establishment.

If you will forgive me, and allow me, instead of using 9.7, to use 10: if we have 110 teachers  
3165 now, at the end of this process, we will have 100. That will be annual establishments. Now, other colleagues have said, 'Yes, but we are going to have more pupils, you are going to have to appoint more teachers.' Yes, that might happen, so we appoint another five to deal with the bulge. It will go up to 105. Without this, it would have gone up to 115. If we had 110 and it goes down to 100 and student numbers go down, say by five, it will go down to 95, not down to 105. That 10 is a  
3170 reduction in the establishment: 9.7 and that is worth, bankable, £450,000 worth of savings. As I said, this is a permanent reduction in our teaching establishment.

Clearly, two headteachers' posts, we will save. The net saving of those will be significant, in the regions of tens of thousands. I am reluctant to put figures on all of these, simply because  
3175 somebody will add them up and then challenge them again, and I think we have had enough of figures being challenged, but we will save two teaching posts. Net maintenance costs on two schools will go. Caretaking and admin supplies will go and all the other savings as well. A range of between £681,000 and £810,000 has been given to allow for contingencies and any other additional short-term costs that derive from managing the smooth transfer of our pupils to their new schools. We have allowed for that and so we should. But the cash savings from these  
3180 proposals as part of our FTP targets will be realised and will be delivered as part of the FTP target mandated to us by this Assembly.

Sir, the Education Department has accepted the mandate placed upon it by this Assembly, recognising the need to deliver its services differently and more efficiently and we need the support of this Assembly to deliver those savings that you require of us.

3185 Sir, during the 2012 elections, many speakers have said, many candidates and most of those elected stated that one of their overriding priorities, if elected, was to remove the structural deficit in the Government's finances. As we all know, the financial Transformation Programme committed us to reducing Government expenditure by £31 million. That target was confirmed and endorsed almost unanimously by a States resolution, just a few months ago, which the vast  
3190 majority has voted for and even those one or two who did not vote for it are Members of this Government, all 47 of us and they are bound by those resolutions, the same as we all are. We all know that States resolutions are not optional, they are binding and it is binding upon those Departments which it delegates to deliver its resolutions.

The Education Department's share, we have heard *ad nauseam* is £7.2 million: 10% of our  
3195 total budget. We, the Government, all 47 of us, did not give the Education Department the option of not delivering the target. It does seem extraordinary to me to hear colleagues that I have such high regard for, personal regard, and such respect professionally can actually say, 'You should

come back and say you are not going to deliver them. So, you do not have to do it. It does not matter anymore. We do not have to accept the FTP targets.' We do and we have and we will take the painful decisions.

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I have to say, sir, I note that no Member of this Assembly has placed an amendment to reduce the Education Department's FTP target or another amendment to transfer part of the Education Department's FTP target to themselves. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.)

3205

Sir, throughout this process, the Department has stated and maintained that it would not implement any changes which would adversely impact upon the educational outcomes of our pupils and students. To date, we have made savings to Central Services, £600,000, rising to £750,000; swimming provision, the Higher Education Grants, the Apprenticeship Scheme, £50,000; the Youth Service has been transferred out into the private sector, saving £65,000 and many other parts of our education provision. This is one part of that. There is not another pot we can put into.

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And let's shoot down this nonsense right now about Central Services. Deputy Le Lièvre gave a much better exposition of it than I will now, because you do not want to hear it all again, but the Central Services include: Estates Management, Higher Education Grants, Careers, Finance, Educational Psychology, Education Welfare Officer, Educational Standards and Learning, Selection and Admissions, 11-plus, Outdoor Education. So, which one of those are we going to cut? Which one of those are pen pushers?

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Sir, in all cases and, perhaps, inevitably, when we made those cuts, there were protests from interest groups, sometimes supported by members of this Government, but this Education Department has stuck to its mandate. It has stuck to the responsibilities that you, this Government, mandated to us and we continue to strive to deliver the FTP targets, to the ultimate benefit of the stewardship of this Island's financial resources, which are the *only* means by which we can deliver *any* services to the people of this community.

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Sir, as I have said, the savings to be made from primary rationalisation are £681,000 to £810,000. If these savings are not achieved, then the Department, under the mandate it has received from this Assembly, will have to achieve savings from other parts of the educational services. At this time, none of this Board can contemplate where such savings could be made without a serious detrimental impact upon the learning outcomes of our young people.

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If this Assembly chooses to reject these proposals and thus denies the Education Committee the ability to deliver its FTP target, so recently placed upon it by this Assembly, and, indeed, on Tuesday confirmed in our Budget debate, the message will go out that this Government is not serious about placing this community's public finances on a stable footing. Instead, the burden upon the taxpayer will increase, inevitably at the expense of the weakest or most vulnerable members of this community and there will, in due course, have to be evermore swingeing cuts in essential public services, which will have to be imposed regardless of whether they can be delivered through efficiency savings. Those will be real cuts in delivery and frontline services, without the promises of benefits and delivery so evident in these proposals.

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Sir, this Government was not elected to be popular. Governments worthy of historic reference take the tough decisions for the wellbeing of those who elected them to be their representatives and equally importantly for the well-being of those who come after them. I believe this vote is a moment in the sand for this Government. Either we show that we are prepared to take the tough, unpopular decisions or, as last time, we take the easy route and leave it to someone else to address the issues of the cost of Government, the continued financial deficit and the need to restructure the delivery of public services. We need to send out the message that we will stand by the mandate that the electorate so clearly delivered in 2012. That is, we will get this Island's public finances in order.

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Sir, on the basis of all the detailed evidence the Education Board has considered and presented to the public and this Assembly, the Primary Transformation Programme offers the unique opportunity of reducing costs significantly whilst, at the same time, offering opportunities for improving outcomes within our primary sector. This Assembly owes it to all of the people of Guernsey to support these resolutions and secure the educational basis and cost savings that have so clearly been shown to derive from them.

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Thank you, sir. (*Applause*)

**Deputy Lowe:** Thank you, sir.

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I will be very quick, because I do not want to fall foul of the repetitive Rule that we have in place, sir, and I am also conscious, there are a lot of parents who would probably like us to stay a bit later tonight to get a result so they have not got to sleep on this overnight and wait until tomorrow.

3260 I stand just to declare an interest, inasmuch as that I have grandchildren at the schools that would be receiving pupils from St Andrew's.

I also wanted to stand to say why I changed my mind from last time that this came to the States in 2009, to explain my reasons. It is as simple as the FTP and I cannot put it any other way, really. All schools are good around this Island. All schools are part of the community. I find it, actually, a little bit insulting at times that it is only St Andrew's that has a small community. We have 18 schools on this Island, sir, that take children of 10 years and under, and I think they would all like to think they are part of a small community on an Island that is nine by five.

3270 I think we find ourselves in a situation which we are going to find more of, that, sadly, everyone wants us, the States that is, to have cut backs, as long as it does not affect them. That is the harsh reality that we find ourselves in and it was made very clear at election time, there are going to have to be tough decisions and this is one of them. If we had plenty of money, I have no doubt that there would still be a cry for the school to remain open, although listening to some of those educationalists and, indeed, some parents and some teachers, they have said that, in their opinion, to have a two or three-form entry is definitely the better way, especially for children who, when they move on to secondary schools or the high schools, they have got used to already, through their school years, going from one classroom to the other and having different teachers.

3275 I was heartened by T&R comment in the States Report and I will remind you what it actually states:

3280 'In accordance with its mandate, the Treasury and Resources Department has considered the resource implications of this States Report. The Department notes that the Education Department's proposals seek to improve educational outcomes as well as achieve efficiencies and significant financial benefits. Therefore, the Treasury and Resources Department commends the Education Department for bringing forward these proposals and supports this States Report.'

3285 That speaks volumes for me, sir, and it also said that:

'The Policy Council supports the Report, with one Minister dissenting.'

3290 What concerns me now is that we are hearing Members of T&R and, indeed, a Member of the Policy Council actually saying otherwise. Now, we are all entitled to change our mind. That is part of democracy. That is the system we live and work in and that is good, but both T&R and Policy Council had longer and more opportunity to look at these reports, knowing that they were attaching letters here to enable us to have some guidance and, indeed, the public at large, of how both of those have accepted the Report before them.

3295 I think, sir, as much as, yes, we all want to do what we feel is right and we feel very... We want to do our best for everybody, but we took an oath on that. We took an oath when we started here that we would do the best of the public interest, not our own and we need to remember that. We are not here to make it easier for family or for friends or for business associations or charities. It is all in your Rule Book. That is part of the Code of Conduct. We took an oath that we will act in the best public interest.

3300 It was mentioned earlier on today about Education's mandate and it is on everybody's mandate and, again, I will read this, because it is very relevant when we are talking about costs here. And, on Education's, it is actually section E on it, but it will be different sections on different mandates, but it is exactly the same wording:

3305 'To be accountable to the States for the management and safeguarding of public funds and other resources entrusted to that Department.'

3310 And that, to me, is what this is all about, for *all* of us as well. It is about trust. We have all tried – well, not all, but I do not want to go down that route. I trust what I have read in that Report and I am not going to play around with numbers in classes and everything else. If you do not trust that Department and you think those numbers are wrong, where is the vote of no confidence? Where are the amendments today? I do not see *any* of that. You either trust Departments that you elected to do that job – and, yes, by all means, challenge, that is what we are here for, to challenge – but they are doing and following their mandate to make sure that public expenditure is spent accordingly to make sure the taxpayers' money is not wasted. We all agreed to the Budget Report on Tuesday, and it was highlighted very clearly by Deputy Gillson to remind Members that this debate was coming up and for those that support the Budget on Tuesday would actually be ratifying here what we have worked before us today.

3320 So, I do not think there is anything else I wanted to say, sir. I just wanted to say that I do not wish to micromanage. I fully trust the Education Department. I would like us to hurry up and get

the vote, for the sake of the parents of both the schools and the community at large. I hope Members will stay a bit later tonight and make a decision for them.

3325 **Deputy Kuttelwascher:** Thank you, sir.

Sir, Members, the easy decision for me today would have been just to stay seated and vote. However, I think today is a decision of profound importance and, indeed, a watershed decision. The first thing I would like to mention first of all is the degree of detail and the volume of information that we, as Members get, as opposed to those of the Education Department and, in fact, previous Education Departments: it is far less.

3330 I have had all the e-mails. I have read all the reports. I have listened to, I do not know how many comments and I have listened to everything during this debate. However, at the end of the day, we cannot have the same level of understanding of the whole situation as the Members of the Education Department do. So, at the end of the day, for me, it comes down to a point of our confidence in the Department.

3335 The opposition have gone down the route of a strategy which I call ‘confuse and conquer’, and I do not say that in any derogatory manner, because I have used it myself successfully in this Assembly. *(Laughter)* I remember explaining the technique to the former Deputy Fouquet, but it was after the event. *(Laughter)* And what do I mean by that? Well, you sow seeds of confusion and that was, to me, first demonstrated yesterday by Deputy Perrot, because he stood and up and quite rightly said he had had an opinion, then he saw a presentation and something there sowed the seed of confusion. But, he is a sensible man. He said, ‘I will resolve that. I will ask the question,’ and I hope, certainly, that the confusion that was in his mind over that particular graph has been resolved.

3345 Deputy Hadley, earlier on, did the same thing and, in fact, he was challenged by Deputy Fallaize. He decided to choose a particular comparison between schools, which is fine and it would have, maybe, in some minds caused some confusion. They say, ‘Well, we will think about that’, but then an alternative comparison which was put forward by Deputy Fallaize, I think, buried that particular point. But there were others and they may have sown some seeds of confusion.

3350 The biggest seed, I think, was sown by Deputy Soulsby, yesterday, when she referred to the Report – I do not know if it was all of it or part of it – as ‘mumbo jumbo’. So, all of it is mumbo jumbo, I presume. Therefore, you think, ‘Well, here we have a professional accountant telling us that this Report is mumbo jumbo’, then you think, ‘Well, hang on...’ – no doubt sowed some seeds of confusion, but I think it was a little bit over the top to refer to the Report as such.

3355 And the proof of the pudding is Deputy O’Hara’s speech, because at the end he said, ‘If you have any or the slightest doubt about anything, do not vote for it.’ And that is what I mean by, if you like, a strategy of sowing seeds of confusion: confuse and conquer.

3360 Well, I do not think anybody is 100 per cent convinced about anything, so we have to behave like a court of law and say to ourselves, ‘Is there any reasonable doubt?’ For me, there is not. I have complete confidence in the Board. I do understand numbers. I am one of two physicists in this Assembly. There were two last time but one has gone, but we have another one. It would be really unwise at this stage to trip up Education. Before you stick your leg out and trip them up, just think of the consequences. First of all, and I will refer to Deputy Gollop’s comment, there was an attack on their Vision by him. He now tells us they had the wrong Vision, but he voted for it. Now, why, at the time did he not come up with an alternative Vision? I remember in the last Assembly, at the time of Zero-10 and I was in the Public Gallery at the time, watching, the former Deputy Charles Parkinson came up with an alternative to Zero-10, with Zero-20 and what a lot of work that was! But it showed some commitment. Just moaning about something is not enough and as  
3370 Deputy Conder said today, ‘Where are the amendments?’

**Deputy Gollop:** Point of order, sir.

I think the Vision in question so lacked specific policies, you could not actually construct an alternative.

3375 **A Member:** No, that’s a speech.

**Deputy Kuttelwascher:** Going back to the Vision, that was one of the complaints: that it had no meat. Well, here is the first bit of the meat. If this bit of the meat of this Vision, this skeletal Vision, is rejected by this Assembly, I maintain that the current Education Board cannot continue in office because they cannot deliver on what they are mandated to deliver. I do not see how they could deliver it.

So, at the end of the day, although it is not dressed up as such, this is a vote of confidence, at the end of the day, in the Education Board and I support them.

3385 And, as sometimes people do end up with a quotation, there was an interesting philosopher about two and half thousand years ago called Heraclitus.

**A Member:** Was he local?

3390 **Deputy Kuttelwascher:** He was not local, no. (*Laughter*) He could have been today, though! He had some very wise words and he said, 'The only thing that is permanent is change.' I will leave you with that.

Thank you, sir.

3395 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Adam.

**Deputy Adam:** Thank you, sir. How do you follow these comments? (*Laughter*) Slowly!

Sir, I was going to start off with Deputy Perrot's speech, which seems like a very, very long time ago! As Deputy Kuttelwascher said, he sowed some doubt. What did he say? He said that when we got this Report at the T&R Board, it seemed straightforward, obvious, sensible, well-written, factually correct, etc. But, then, he along with 25 other Deputies went along to a presentation by St Andrew's PTA and read their very well produced alternative, 'No to Closure'. And it was very well given and what I have said to some people, I wish sometimes our Departments actually gave the same quality and standard of presentation as they did, (**Several** 3400 **Members:** Hear, hear.) because they had a team and each team specialised in a slightly different area. They had slides. They did not just look at the slides and not the audience. They actually looked at the audience, they knew what they were saying and it seemed to be well thought out and, therefore, yes, they did sow some seeds into the system.

And what Deputy Perrot asked for and what I asked the Minister of Education is make sure you can provide evidence to counter the arguments, because it was so well... and the Minister remembers full well because I have said it about three times to him. I have waited patiently for approximately two days for Deputy Conder, who I *knew* was going to do a financial bit to actually speak and then you must respect Education. How have they prepared themselves for this debate? They did not speak all at once. Very well done, Minister. They all had specific areas to talk about, but it did not take into account Deputy Fallaize's excellent speech on behalf of the Education Department and he was the first one who had spoken, so well done, the Education Department.

3415 So, basically, I would like to thank Deputy Conder for an excellent speech. I think he had every right to, not quite put aside, but not dwell on the academic aspects of the Propositions – irrefutable, educational, rational. Because what is his background? He is a professor or some other thing, (*Laughter*) in education and has spent his life in education. So, one has to respect his knowledge.

Therefore he is simply saying accept we have all the balances, the ins and outs, the emotional aspects, 'this is better, that is better'. Deputy Fallaize made a sensible speech concerning these issues.

3425 We have gone back to 1998, when Deputy Dorey was on the Castel School Committee. Yes, the Castel was three-entry then and yes it two now. It is not even two sometimes and you very sensibly use the rooms for other purposes.

3430 So, I accept we have had a full hearing of that aspect and Members of this Assembly should now be able to, with the past e-mails, meetings, visitations, etc, to make a balanced view point, a judgment, as Deputy Kuttelwascher said. Because that is all it is, a judgement. As far as the FTP, I would have to say, it should be the Minister of Treasury Department who is the lead in this, who should have had such a forceful speech concerning it. I know Education sold this States Report on the benefit overall to the education of the children of Guernsey and, as people have said, this is a Guernsey issue. It should not be that school or that school or that school. It is a Guernsey issue and I think the Minister of T&R should be very grateful for the excellent way that Deputy Conder presented the financial situation in relation to this. Because, as he said, read Professor Wood's presentation – I was actually was on holiday for that, so I have only read the Report itself and there is an element of slight anxiety or slight fear, as you say. Everything is not rosy in the garden. We have to be sensible. We have to be careful. We have to look at ways of trying to save money.

3440 I have to accept, I did not like Deputy Soulsby's tit for tat with Deputy Brehaut, but she did say one thing which was maybe not very helpful, but said to Deputy Brehaut, 'Your Department has had a review suggesting possible savings of £6 million to £9 million. What are you doing about

it?' or words to that effect. And it may be fair for PAC to go and look at that and decide what should be done about it.

3445 So, sir, I think with the length of talk we have had and some excellent speeches, I think it is time, as Deputy Lowe said, to stop the debate and let the Minister of Education sum up, (*Interjections and laughter*) hopefully in five minutes.

3450 **Deputy Lowe:** I did mean after I had spoken, sir!

**The Bailiff:** Everyone wants to have their say and then suggest it is time to close, but there you go. (*Laughter*)

3455 We are getting very close to 5.30 p.m. I have a discretion to put to you a Proposition that we continue beyond 5.30 p.m., but not, save in exceptional circumstances, later than 6.30 p.m. Can I just have an indication of how many people are still intending to speak? Just one. Just Deputy Burford.

Right, in that case, I will assume, Minister, we will be able to finish before 6.30 p.m.? So I am going to put to you the Proposition that we continue this evening in order to finish this debate. Those in favour; those against.

3460

*Members voted Pour.*

**The Bailiff:** We will continue. Deputy Burford.

3465 **Deputy Burford:** Sir, in trying to come to a decision, I have endeavoured to distil what this issue is about. Is it about money? Well, of course it is, undeniably. We have to spend less and bring in more and very little is sacred in that process, and this Proposal would save some money. I believe there is a risk that not all the savings would be realised, and it is also the case that there may be non-measurable, negative financial impacts that, by definition, have not been allowed for, which I will return to later, but it is clearly about money. And if the Proposals fail, then that is the democratic consensus of the States and controversially I believe there may be a case for the States to consider finding the savings outwith of Education's budget.

3470 Is it about education? The Minister's assertion that the buildings at St Andrew's are tired seems to infer a level of inferiority. I once visited a school in the UK which comprised largely of rather ancient Portakabins, some with holes in the floor, which held around 60 primary aged children and I would have sent my own child there in a heartbeat. I am not saying that children should not have comfortable and pleasant and functional surroundings, just that we should not get too hung up on shiny schools.

3480 The Department accepts on page 1751 the importance of small schools in their community but gives a list of reasons why small schools are inferior. It does rather feel as though they were scrapping the barrel somewhat with the arguments. For example, to say that there are limited opportunities for interaction in a school of 200 children is highly questionable. Imagine going to a party where there are 200 people. Would you consider that a limited opportunity for interaction?

3485 Similarly, the Report says that staff may have to teach mixed-age classes, which it acknowledges can be educationally beneficial, but says occasionally this has to happen out of practical necessity. If it is educationally beneficial, then whether it happens out of practical necessity or by design, it does not sound like such a bad thing.

3490 Indeed, the only argument in Education's list of dis-benefits of small schools that holds up to any degree is that, on a per capita basis, they may be more expensive due to fixed costs, but even that is not always the case, and when compared with the cost of providing education elsewhere, Guernsey seems to be achieving pretty good value for money already.

3495 Having read the evidence which the Department presented in their Report, on the benefits of larger schools, I then went to see if there was any evidence on the benefit of smaller schools. Although there is no defined number of children that comprises a small school, common definitions seem to be in the order of 50 to 250 children. What I found was research that those in small schools experience a greater sense of belonging and less alienation and that there is a higher quality of interpersonal relations. Furthermore, students in small schools, on average, participated in a greater number and variety of extra-curricular activities than those in large ones and tended to hold more important positions in the activities in which they were involved because everyone was needed to populate teams, offices and clubs, thus even shy and less able students were encouraged to participate and made to feel that they belong.

3500 There was research to show that smaller schools have far fewer behaviour problems than larger schools and that rates of parental involvement are higher. Small school students tend to take more

3505 of a responsibility for their own learning, learning activities are more likely to be individualised and scheduling is more flexible.

Now, I am not for one moment saying that this true or otherwise of the schools in Guernsey, but what I am saying that research can be found to support both sides of the argument – to the extent that I do not believe that this issue can be decided on educational arguments at all.

3510 Deputy Fallaize says that there is no evidence to show that single-form entry schools are superior. Well, Deputy Fallaize, while I agree that no-one is entitled to their own facts, I am sure you would also agree with the other adage that simply saying that something is does not make it so. There is evidence to show that in some areas, single-form schools are superior, but, actually, that is rather missing the point, because the size of the school is not the principal or possibly any determinant of quality. Each time Mr Mulkerrin was publicly asked whether multi-form entry  
3515 schools were better, he simply said that, in his view, the quality of the school is entirely reliant on the quality of the headteacher and from that, everything flows. It really does not matter what the performance of St Andrew's is right now, because that is a variable that can be controlled. It is quite possible that the excellent head of St Martin's could leave and a poorer appointment be made and then the quality of that school could change, and it would be nothing to do with the fact that it  
3520 is three-form entry. St Andrew's is a good school, but that is a red herring in this debate.

I am in agreement with Deputy Bebb regarding Proposition 1 in that it is not a binary choice. The alternative to having two and three-form entry schools is not to have only one-form entry schools. We have survived centuries without a policy on the number of forms of entry schools should have. Am I really being led to believe that this is the magic key that has been missing all  
3525 this time in order to achieve excellence?

Some people believe that the closures we are voting on today are just a necessary first step in the move to larger schools, which will ultimately lead to much improved educational outcomes. I am inclined to think that there much more than a touch of wishful thinking about that. A report published by the National Foundation for Educational Research in 1996 demonstrated that  
3530 between 1948 and 1996, despite 50 years of various reform, there had been no measureable improvement in standards for literacy and numeracy in English schools. These proposed changes bring no guarantees.

Learning is a lifelong pursuit and school is just a small part of it. Much of what we are trying to pour into children in school does not find its way in. If that seem heretical, try testing a random  
3535 sample of adults on algebra, photosynthesis, 13th century British monarchs or the correct use of a semi-colon. (*Laughter*) A larger school would be different to a smaller school and the chances are it may suit some children more and some children less and the educational outcomes will, in the end, depend more on the teachers and the educational philosophy and the catchment area than any other factors, including the number of classes.

3540 And, of course, we measure the success of a school on a handful of standards that will never paint a truly holistic picture. It was a teacher who wrote of his student that:

3545 'His work has been far from satisfactory and several times he has been in trouble because he will not listen. He has ideas about becoming a scientist, but this is quite ridiculous and it would be a sheer waste of his time and of those who have to teach him'.

Could that teacher have known that John Gurdon would go onto win a Nobel Prize for physiology or medicine?

3550 One of Einstein's teachers reputedly stated that, 'He will never amount to anything'; and Charlotte Brontë's teacher wrote, 'She writes indifferently and knows nothing of grammar.' But at least we can console ourselves that, as a schoolboy, Adolph Hitler was judged to have, 'Very satisfactory moral conduct.' (*Laughter*)

3555 So, while these are, of course, highly selected examples, the lesson is that the yardsticks by which we judge schools and children may not be telling us anywhere as much as we think they are.

What else might it be about? It is claimed it is about community. Ironically, the sense of community around these two schools would likely have been strengthened by these events. The sense of connectedness and the formation of social networks in small communities comprise vital social capital. Modern life attacks the notion and reality of community at many levels, yet there is a strong underlying human desire to hold onto it. It has been argued that the receiving schools have strong communities too, and that very soon, the children and parents will be integrated into  
3560 those schools and this is possibly, even probably true, so where is the loss?

The loss is in the fact that it is not just a school that makes a community. St Andrew's does not have a traditional centre with a post office and a village shop, but take away the school and maybe the critical mass that sustains this local centre will be gone. Ideas about replacing it with a

3565 community centre will never bring the frequency of contact or the numbers that a school does and as wonderful as the Scarecrow Festival might be, it is not in the same category as the school.

And that leads me to the point that, actually, if it is good enough for the parents and good enough for the teachers and good enough for the pupils, then it is more than good enough because there are many things that are simply not measurable.

3570 The next aspect is transport and it is definitely about transport. Having spent some considerable time working on the Transport Strategy, it is fairly safe to say that increasing the geographical distance between schools is not a positive move in terms of transport. There is research to show that active travel, i.e. walking or cycling to school, has a significant positive effect on educational achievement. I have heard the arguments that children can all be bussed to their new school, but one big downside is this can increase the length of the school day by up to an hour. This is really significant when you are only five or six years old, to the point of being unacceptable, and the truth is that those parents who have cars may well choose to drive instead. There are hidden costs in pollution, time, congestion, obesity, educational outcomes and health of making longer journeys. The Minister admits that the transport will be more inconvenient for some children, but no different to what other schools have to endure. That is something of a lowest common denominator argument.

3580 The final aspect is that it is about surplus places. As part of my research, I asked teachers, pupils and parents what they considered to be the maximum ideal class size. The mode result was 20, with the optimum figure coming in a little lower. It is not scientific, but it is probably what most people would expect. If you or I were given a choice of three schools for our child, identical except that the class sizes were 8, 18 or 28, the likelihood is that we would all chose the one with 18.

3590 Surplus places are expensive. Surplus places are inefficient and a waste of valuable resources and they really do have to be addressed. The current surplus of between 500 and 800 places is calculated on class sizes of 28 and in some cases 25. If it were resolved that we changed to a class size policy of 22, maybe with a maximum of 24 or 25 to allow for natural fluctuations, then we would essentially have no surplus places and this policy is one that may well deliver educational benefits.

3595 The OECD and G20 class size average at primary level is 21 children. That we could move to an impressive policy of 22 children per class by keeping the *status quo* and slightly rejigging the catchments and all for about £700,000 a year seems a bit of a bargain, to be honest.

3600 So, to summarise the five points. Education: from a personal educational philosophy, I think small schools absolutely have the edge, but accept that arguments can be made in both directions and it is probably a debate that will never be settled. However, there is simply no case for the superiority of two and three-form entry schools that justifies closing single-form entry schools on educational grounds.

3605 Money: on balance, I think we should find the money from elsewhere. The £680,000 estimate of what would be saved is the same as one third of one penny on Income Tax for earnings over £44,000. It is the same on two pence on a litre of fuel. It is one fifth of one per cent of our annual revenue.

Community: I think we need more of it, not less of it.

Transport: the effects are unquantifiable, but they are negative. They run counter to a sustainable transport model and they risk impacting some children's education.

3610 Spare places: well, that has been a numbers game, but it could be solved by moving to a class size policy of around 22.

3615 And, finally, it is a difficult decision to vote against Education's proposals and the reasons are that it is not only that this is the second attempt in four years and this time from a united Board, but also because we are under the ever present shadow of the FTP. Deputy Green warned parents at a public meeting that if the proposals failed, whatever came instead as a way of saving money would inevitably be even less palatable. If these reasons are not a pressure to vote for closure, I do not know what are.

3620 So, there is also pressure on those who feel that closure may not be right and on that point, I would like to counter the inference that all those who might vote against these proposals are being emotionally driven. It is offensive. I can assure you that the slow path I have taken to arrive at my decision has been considered and rational and I am sorry but, on balance, I believe there might be more to be lost than gained by closing both of these schools. (*Applause*)

**Several Members:** Hear, hear.

3625 **The Bailiff:** Am I right in thinking that no-body else wishes to speak in the debate? No.



In that case, it is for the Minister, Deputy Sillars, to reply to the debate.

**Deputy Sillars:** Thank you, sir.

3630 This has been, as we all knew it would be, an emotive debate and I will try to be brief in my closing speech, but there are a number of questions to answer and meet with the challenge. I am grateful to the Education Board members for addressing many of the questions that have been posed during the general debate. So, I will limit my comments to those which are still outstanding.

I would like also to thank all those Deputies who spoke so eloquently in support of our proposals. Thank you.

3635 But I would like to commend the professionalism and commitment of both PTAs, the Douzaines, especially St Andrew's and the supporters of the campaigns. So, thank you. (*Applause*)

I hope all States' Members recognise the importance of primary education for our children. It really is the foundation for the rest of their lives. The States recently approved the Board's Vision for Education: Today's Learners, Tomorrow's World, and supported the Education Board in its desire to make our education system world class.

3640 The Education Board is of a strong conviction that moving to two and three-form entry in our primary phase is fundamental to ensuring that we offer the best possible education to all our children. A number of speakers have already addressed the numbers, but I think it is important that I reiterate some of the key points.

3645 The starting point for St Andrew's PTA calculations are fundamentally flawed, as shown in the graph in their presentation. They worked on there being *only* 500 places. We have always said there are *over* 500 places – in fact, well over. The actual number of spare places as of today is 751. These spaces are existing classrooms that already have a teacher employed to teach them. If we put two extra classes back in La Houquette and run an additional class at St Sampson's, this takes us up to over 827, which we have included in our presentations and circulated to parents and published on our website.

3650 We have been challenged that St Martin's does not have spare capacity for 103 spaces. We have re-measured all the existing classrooms and additional areas at the school and this indicates there are 568 spaces, without going above the 28 per class. If all 44 of St Andrew's children have identified transferred to St Martin's, there would be 529 pupils at the school. Obviously, there would be more capacity if we put in an additional class.

3655 We have been told that the Department cannot use the surplus capacity in the voluntary schools in its calculations, as only baptised Catholics can attend Notre Dame and St Mary & St Michael Schools. Again, complete nonsense. As previous speakers have highlighted, we *can* use this capacity and have done so on occasion when we need to. We have been told that the headteacher at St Martin's has said she can only take a maximum of 25 pupils. *This is not true*. She has said that they would not notice another 25 pupils, as that is within their normal range of fluctuations in numbers, and she is comfortable with the Department's proposals. I have spoken to her.

3665 Deputy Dorey also mentioned other schools, such Hautes Capelles and Vauvert, claiming they were almost full: again, not true. We have 96 spare places at Hautes Capelles – 96 – and Vauvert has 59 spaces in existing classes and spare classrooms. Deputy Fallaize made a very valid... he made lots of valid points, about the numbers in our schools in 1998, which I would like just to reiterate. We had 4,404 in our primary schools at that time and no-one complained that schools were overcrowded or traffic congestion was unbearable. If you take St Andrew's and St Sampson's out of this number, you still have more children in those existing schools than we are predicting at the *peak* of pupil numbers in 2019, and those numbers come from Policy Council. They are not Education figures.

3670 And let's not forget, we have modelled our predications on a worst-case scenario, whether this peak, which is some 460 children more than we have in our schools now actually materialises, is by no means certain, but we are confident that we will have sufficient spaces in our remaining schools to provide the best education for all our children.

3675 Deputy's Soulsby's solution was, rather than close St Andrew's, we should look at federating our schools. I can reassure Deputy Soulsby that we are indeed looking at federation – just look at the Propositions 4 and 5 – but we need to be doing this *as well as* reducing our numbers of sites, not instead of.

3680 The financial savings have been questioned and we have been told that, having lost staff, we would have to start recruiting new staff almost immediately, at a cost of £20,000 per post was mentioned, plus their salaries. This is complete nonsense. We can recruit in the primary phase very quickly, if needed, as almost 90% – yes, 90% – of our primary teaching are locally qualified, so the figure of £20,000 recruitment cost per post is irrelevant scaremongering in an attempt to discredit the Department's proposals.

I was going on to talk about the Education Office, but I think that Deputy Le Lièvre and Deputy Conder have covered that very well. And the Music Centre, again, has been well covered.

3690 I will touch on IT costs. They have also been raised by a number of speakers. The development of ICT capacity and skills in our schools is *absolutely vital* for us to be truly world class and to allow our children to compete on a global stage. We cannot reduce expenditure in this area, as suggested, any more than we have done and we must continue to invest in ICT both the equipment and the use of ICT in teaching, as we are doing. Our infrastructure needs renewing, as any teacher or pupil will tell you, and we are in the process of doing that. We have already replaced all of the wireless environments in schools to improve the log-on times. New Local Area Networks are going into place in all our schools and by the end of 2014 the vast majority of our schools will be connected to JT's fibre network.

3695 Over the half-term break, the Education Department completed a major technological project to move its servers and storage out of the Cable & Wireless data centre and into Sir Charles Frossard House. This change was necessary because the servers and storage which were in use in the old data centre had reached the end of their life. This has been contributing to the poor performance of the existing IT systems that the schools have all been experiencing. This move will actually save us money in the long term, and also improve the ICT available to our schools and the College of Further Education.

3705 We have been accused of comparing ourselves to the UK, where standards are not as good as they should be. Well, I ask, which bit of the UK are you referring to? There are different education systems in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Did you know this? It does not sound like it from some of the speeches.

3710 I assume you are all talking about England, therefore. If you read our Vision, you will see that we are far more ambitious than England. By the way, the OECD is not just the UK, which is where a lot of research has come from. We are *not* dedicated to following England and this Board has said we will not do that and we are actively exploring successful education deliver in other jurisdictions. Look at the progress that is already being made in primary. We really need to build on this and take this to a higher level.

3715 Deputy Hadley and Deputy O'Hara spoke about the lack of consultation, others did as well. Would you want to put schools, children, parents and staff under the severe stress and uncertainty for more time than is necessary? Six weeks, and we felt that was appropriate. We could have announced it in July, over the holiday period, but I feel that would have been wrong.

3720 In 2009, the Department was seriously criticised for having too *lengthy* a period of uncertainty. I believe that was some three to four months. We learnt from that. Well...

Deputy Hadley spoke about St Andrew's potentially being a social priority school and *claimed* the Director of Education told him that it could be. Well, I can assure you that the Director of Education *categorically* did not say that St Andrew's could be a social priority school.

3725 **Deputy Hadley:** I would like to correct that.

The Director of Education told me that it was fourth or fifth as far as he could tell on this and that it was close behind and, at a reassessment, it could be classed as a social priority school. I stand by that.

3730 **Deputy Sillars:** Well, I am glad you do, but I had it from him and he has confirmed that he is happy with my statement.

3735 Deputy Hadley also went on to say that there were no spaces in Year 4 in St Martin's. Well, there are: there are 11. He spoke of community, as did others, and was keen to highlight where St Andrew's has good examples of good community initiatives. I agree, but go to any other primary school and see excellent examples of community initiatives.

3740 He mentioned comments from Denis Mulkerrin. What he did not say was that these comments were taken from his primary report a couple of years ago. I have just received an e-mail from Mr Mulkerrin that says that the comments Deputy Hadley referred to are clearly out of date with his current position and, of course, Mr Mulkerrin did attend every single one of our presentations and fully supports our proposals.

**Deputy Hadley:** That was as a result of a conversation that I had with Mr Mulkerrin immediately prior to the presentation in St Sampson's School.

3745 **Deputy Sillars:** I had best repeat, exactly word for word what he sent me as an e-mail and, sir, I think the proof is that he attended six of our presentations:

‘It is the Education’s responsibility to consider the needs of all our children and young people, not just those who live in particular parts of the Island.’

3750

Now, Deputy Soulsby and Brehaut raised the lack of maintenance at St Andrew’s. The question is, was this because the Department was planning to close it? Absolutely not. The Department has undertaken various repairs with its maintenance and upgraded activities in the St Andrew’s building in the recent years, including roofing, replacement carpets and a cloakroom refurbishment.

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Deputy Trott asked a number of questions: (1) will there be the same number of teachers in 2016 as 2013? No. We expect there to be fewer teachers because the St Andrew’s will be redeployed into existing vacancies.

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(2) Does Education accept that increased net migration needs to be factored in? We have already included an inward migration of 200 people per year, as per the Policy Council projections, which is above the States policy. This is to keep population at the same level. But, on top of that, we did a sensitivity analysis adding an extra 2% and a further 5% to the school population to take into account any further increases in net migration. If there is a change of policy, we still have capacity across our schools, which will mean we will not have to reopen schools.

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Your third question: we believe we have demonstrated that there will be determinable education benefits in our Report and our briefings to Members. The only additional investment there might be is, after listening to parents, we are considering putting an additional class into St Martin’s in 2015, for one year group, for two years. This will not need any additional investment, but may delay one teacher saving for a further two years. The number of teachers employed will still be considerably fewer than now.

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We have been informed that an independent actuary has validated the St Andrew’s PTA figures. An actuarial review takes assumptions made at the start. One of the assumptions made by the PTA was fundamentally wrongly based on the misinterpretation of one of our slides at the public presentation. They based their figures on only 500 spare places and a 24 maximum class size. As I have previously stated, we have more than 750 spare places right now, today, without additional teachers and potentially well over 800.

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**Deputy Hadley:** Mr Bailiff, I must protest at this. As we all know... Point of order, sir. Deputy Sillars and Deputy...

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**Deputy Sillars:** It is getting late.

**Deputy Hadley:** One of his other colleagues. (*Laughter and interjection*) Thank you very much. Deputy Sherbourne, have both said 800 was a theoretical figure. We are basing our figures on 500 surplus spaces. The slide of the Education Department said: 500 surplus spaces. When the argument did not stack up, you changed the goalposts.

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**Deputy Sillars:** No, we have not. We said *at least* 500. Our starting point is correct and our figures do add up.

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And, just to cover a couple of other points, Deputy Gillson, thank you for your suggestion. I will take it back to the Board. If this Report is accepted, I have already been talking to the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the PTAs to organise a meeting with them at the soonest moment possible to ensure their involvement in the process going forward, so I have already had that conversation with two of them.

3795

Just to clarify, the Department is not proposing to close the Forest School. What we are asking the States to look at is in five to ten years’ time.

Deputy Burford: no, I did not infer inferiority with St Andrew’s buildings and the school, therefore. Absolutely not, and we have always maintained and said one-form entry schools can be good.

3800

So, in conclusion, Deputy Soulsby: not being emotive, an easier decision rather than keeping the two schools open, and claims that recommending the closure of the two schools is not correct. I know how difficult this decision is for every single Member of this Assembly to take.

In essence, the choice before this States is really simple. Do we want to continue more of the same or do we have the courage to take difficult, painful decisions in the short-term to deliver better educational outcomes for the benefit of future generations? *All* the people of Guernsey, not just the campaign groups, will be watching how we vote today. In a sense, we are where we are today because of a decision made by a previous States when it was asked to close the Forest School. Instead, due to a successful opposition campaign, the States at that time decided not to

3805

3810 close the Forest Primary School and, instead, rebuild it. Hence the surplus capacity we have in the system at the moment. I hope I am not going to be part of another States that buckles in the face of a vocal minority to preserve the *status quo* and deprive our children of a better education. (A **Member:** Hear, hear.)

3815 Deputy Luxon and others wanted a commitment from us that we would deliver. I can give him an absolute commitment from the Board and people working within the Service, teachers and all involved, that we will deliver. That is the challenge and the burden of responsibility which will fall to us if the States support this Report, which we, as a Board, welcome.

3820 Deputy Duquemin supported this commitment with his comments on how all headteachers he spoke to were confident of a successful transition for all pupils. Sir, fellow States Members, I have not hesitation in commending this States Report to the Assembly, and please can I have a recorded vote? (*Applause*)

**The Bailiff:** Well, Members, there are six Propositions –

3825 **Deputy Bebb:** Sorry, Mr Bailiff, could I ask that Proposition 1 be taken separately?

**The Bailiff:** If you had waited, I was going to say, there has been a request that there be a separate recorded vote on all six Propositions. So, we will vote, by the recorded vote, and we will take them in numerical order.

3830 **Deputy Green:** Sir, just before we go to the vote, I realise I should have declared an interest before. So, I think it would be wise just to declare the fact that my co-habiting partner is a teacher with the Schools' Music Service, bearing in mind that has been an issue raised in this debate.

3835 **The Bailiff:** Thank you, Deputy Green.

So, the recorded vote, Members, is on Proposition 1. For the benefit of those listening at home, Proposition 1 is to agree to move towards a policy of two and three-form entry States primary schools as far as possible in order to improve educational outcomes, increase efficiency and ensure greater consistency and performance.

3840 Greffier.

*There was a recorded vote.*

3845 *Carried – Pour 29, Contre 15, Abstained 1, Not Present 2*

**POUR**

Deputy Le Clerc  
Deputy Sherbourne  
Deputy Conder  
Deputy Lester Queripel  
Deputy St Pier  
Deputy Stewart  
Deputy Gillson  
Deputy Fallaize  
Deputy David Jones  
Deputy Laurie Queripel  
Deputy Lowe  
Deputy Le Lièvre  
Deputy Collins  
Deputy Duquemin  
Deputy Green  
Deputy Le Tocq  
Deputy Adam  
Deputy Perrot  
Deputy Inglis  
Deputy Sillars  
Deputy Luxon  
Alderney Rep. Jean  
Alderney Rep. Arditti  
Deputy Harwood  
Deputy Kuttelwascher  
Deputy Brehaut  
Deputy Domaille  
Deputy Langlois  
Deputy Robert Jones

**CONTRE**

Deputy Gollop  
Deputy Bebb  
Deputy Le Pelley  
Deputy Trott  
Deputy Spruce  
Deputy Dorey  
Deputy Paint  
Deputy Brouard  
Deputy Wilkie  
Deputy De Lisle  
Deputy Burford  
Deputy Soulsby  
Deputy O'Hara  
Deputy Quin  
Deputy Hadley

**ABSTAINED**

Deputy Ogier

**NOT PRESENT**

Deputy Storey  
Deputy James

**The Bailiff:** Well, Members, the result of the vote on Proposition 1 is 29 votes in favour; 15 against, with one abstention. I declare the Proposition carried.

Proposition 2 is to agree that St Sampson's Infant School should merge with Vale Primary in September 2014 and St Sampson's Infant School shall close.

3850 Greffier.

*There was a recorded vote.*

3855 *Carried – Pour 34, Contre 11, Abstained 0, Not Present 2*

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>ABSTAINED</b>	<b>NOT PRESENT</b>
Deputy Le Clerc	Deputy Gollop	None	Deputy Storey
Deputy Sherbourne	Deputy Le Pelley		Deputy James
Deputy Conder	Deputy Dorey		
Deputy Bebb	Deputy Paint		
Deputy Lester Queripel	Deputy Brouard		
Deputy St Pier	Deputy De Lisle		
Deputy Stewart	Deputy Burford		
Deputy Gillson	Deputy Soulsby		
Deputy Ogier	Deputy O'Hara		
Deputy Trott	Deputy Quin		
Deputy Fallaize	Deputy Hadley		
Deputy David Jones			
Deputy Laurie Queripel			
Deputy Lowe			
Deputy Le Lièvre			
Deputy Spruce			
Deputy Collins			
Deputy Duquemin			
Deputy Green			
Deputy Le Tocq			
Deputy Adam			
Deputy Perrot			
Deputy Wilkie			
Deputy Inglis			
Deputy Sillars			
Deputy Luxon			
Alderney Rep. Jean			
Alderney Rep. Arditti			
Deputy Harwood			
Deputy Kuttelwascher			
Deputy Brehaut			
Deputy Domaille			
Deputy Langlois			
Deputy Robert Jones			

**The Bailiff:** Can I just ask Members to switch their microphones on when they are voting. There probably are a lot of people listening who would like to know how their representatives are voting. So, if you could switch your microphones on, then people will know.

3860 Well, Members on Proposition 2, there were 30 votes in favour; 11 against. I declare the Proposition carried.

We move to Proposition 3, which is to agree that St Andrew's Primary shall close in August 2015.

3865 It was 34 votes – what did I say? (*Interjections*) Did I read out something else? There were 34 in favour; 11 against. If I read something else, that was my mistake, sorry.

*There was a recorded vote.*

3870 *Carried – Pour 31, Contre 14, Abstained 0, Not Present 2*

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>ABSTAINED</b>	<b>NOT PRESENT</b>
Deputy Le Clerc	Deputy Gollop	None	Deputy Storey
Deputy Sherbourne	Deputy Le Pelley		Deputy James
Deputy Conder	Deputy Trott		
Deputy Bebb	Deputy Spruce		
Deputy Lester Queripel	Deputy Dorey		
Deputy St Pier	Deputy Paint		
Deputy Stewart	Deputy Brouard		
Deputy Gillson	Deputy Wilkie		
Deputy Ogier	Deputy De Lisle		

Deputy Fallaize	Deputy Burford
Deputy David Jones	Deputy Soulsby
Deputy Laurie Queripel	Deputy O'Hara
Deputy Lowe	Deputy Quin
Deputy Le Lièvre	Deputy Hadley
Deputy Collins	
Deputy Duquemin	
Deputy Green	
Deputy Le Tocq	
Deputy Adam	
Deputy Perrot	
Deputy Inglis	
Deputy Sillars	
Deputy Luxon	
Alderney Rep. Jean	
Alderney Rep. Arditti	
Deputy Harwood	
Deputy Kuttelwascher	
Deputy Brehaut	
Deputy Domaille	
Deputy Langlois	
Deputy Robert Jones	

**The Bailiff:** Members of the States, on Proposition 3, to agree that St Andrew's Primary shall close in August 2015, there were 31 votes in favour; 14 against. I declare the Proposition carried.

3875 Proposition 4 is to agree that discussion shall take place with the Diocesan authorities to consider how Catholic Primary provision is provided in future, with a view to determining whether it will be possible to move towards two or three-form entry in line with the Department's other primary schools, for example through federation or merger of Notre Dame du Rosaire and St Mary & St Michael Primary Schools.

3880 Greffier.

*There was a recorded vote.*

*Carried – Pour 36, Contre 6, Abstained 3, Not Present 2*

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>ABSTAINED</b>	<b>NOT PRESENT</b>
Deputy Le Clerc	Deputy Le Pelley	Deputy Gollop	Deputy Storey
Deputy Sherbourne	Deputy Brouard	Deputy Soulsby	Deputy James
Deputy Conder	Deputy Wilkie	Deputy Hadley	
Deputy Bebb	Deputy De Lisle		
Deputy Lester Queripel	Deputy Burford		
Deputy St Pier	Deputy O'Hara		
Deputy Stewart			
Deputy Gillson			
Deputy Ogier			
Deputy Trott			
Deputy Fallaize			
Deputy David Jones			
Deputy Laurie Queripel			
Deputy Lowe			
Deputy Le Lièvre			
Deputy Spruce			
Deputy Collins			
Deputy Duquemin			
Deputy Green			
Deputy Dorey			
Deputy Paint			
Deputy Le Tocq			
Deputy Adam			
Deputy Perrot			
Deputy Inglis			
Deputy Sillars			
Deputy Luxon			
Deputy Quin			
Alderney Rep. Jean			
Alderney Rep. Arditti			
Deputy Harwood			
Deputy Kuttelwascher			
Deputy Brehaut			
Deputy Domaille			
Deputy Langlois			
Deputy Robert Jones			

3885 **The Bailiff:** Members, on Proposition 4, there were 36 votes in favour; 6 against, with 3 abstentions. I declare that Proposition carried.

Proposition 5 is to agree that over the next five to ten years, efficient and effective primary provision in the area served by Forest Primary School and La Houquette Primary School shall be revisited by future Education Department.

3890 Greffier.

*There was a recorded vote*

3895 *Carried – Pour 36, Contre 6, Abstained 3, Not Present 2*

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>ABSTAINED</b>	<b>NOT PRESENT</b>
Deputy Le Clerc	Deputy Gollop	Deputy Le Pelley	Deputy Storey
Deputy Sherbourne	Deputy Wilkie	Deputy Quin	Deputy James
Deputy Conder	Deputy De Lisle	Deputy Hadley	
Deputy Bebb	Deputy Burford		
Deputy Lester Queripel	Deputy Soulsby		
Deputy St Pier	Deputy O'Hara		
Deputy Stewart			
Deputy Gillson			
Deputy Ogier			
Deputy Trott			
Deputy Fallaize			
Deputy David Jones			
Deputy Laurie Queripel			
Deputy Lowe			
Deputy Le Lièvre			
Deputy Spruce			
Deputy Collins			
Deputy Duquemin			
Deputy Green			
Deputy Dorey			
Deputy Paint			
Deputy Le Tocq			
Deputy Adam			
Deputy Perrot			
Deputy Brouard			
Deputy Inglis			
Deputy Sillars			
Deputy Luxon			
Alderney Rep. Jean			
Alderney Rep. Arditti			
Deputy Harwood			
Deputy Kuttelwascher			
Deputy Brehaut			
Deputy Domaille			
Deputy Langlois			
Deputy Robert Jones			

**The Bailiff:** Members, on Proposition 5, there are 36 votes in favour; 6 against with 3 abstentions. The Proposition was carried.

3900 And the final Proposition is to agree to give delegated authority to the Treasury and Resources Department to agree a capital vote to fund the associated modifications at Vale Primary School from the Fundamental Spending Review Fund.

Greffier. Well, there has been a request for a recorded vote. Does anybody still wish that there be a recorded vote? It has been suggested that we go *au voix*.

3905 **A Member:** Yes.

**The Bailiff:** Yes, there is.

*There was a recorded vote*

3910 *Carried – Pour 37, Contre 3, Abstained 5, Not Present 2*

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>ABSTAINED</b>	<b>NOT PRESENT</b>
Deputy Le Clerc	Deputy Brouard	Deputy Le Pelley	Deputy Storey
Deputy Gollop	Deputy Wilkie	Deputy Fallaize	Deputy James
Deputy Sherbourne	Deputy De Lisle	Deputy Burford	

Deputy Conder  
Deputy Bebb  
Deputy Lester Queripel  
Deputy St Pier  
Deputy Stewart  
Deputy Gillson  
Deputy Ogier  
Deputy Trott  
Deputy David Jones  
Deputy Laurie Queripel  
Deputy Lowe  
Deputy Le Lièvre  
Deputy Spruce  
Deputy Collins  
Deputy Duquemin  
Deputy Green  
Deputy Dorey  
Deputy Paint  
Deputy Le Tocq  
Deputy Adam  
Deputy Perrot  
Deputy Inglis  
Deputy Sillars  
Deputy Luxon  
Deputy O'Hara  
Deputy Quin  
Alderney Rep. Jean  
Alderney Rep. Arditti  
Deputy Harwood  
Deputy Kuttelwascher  
Deputy Brehaut  
Deputy Domaille  
Deputy Langlois  
Deputy Robert Jones

Deputy Soulsby  
Deputy Hadley

3915 **The Bailiff:** Well, Members, on the sixth and last Proposition, there were 37 votes in favour; three against, with 5 abstentions. I declare that Proposition carried.

In other words, all Propositions in the Report were carried.  
Deputy Lowe.

3920 **Deputy Lowe:** Bearing in mind the heavy agenda for tomorrow, will it be worthwhile considering starting at nine o'clock tomorrow morning?

**The Bailiff:** I know that historically Members are not happy to start at 9.00 a.m., but I will put that to people.

3925 **Deputy Lowe:** Well, I am happy to come at 8.00 a.m., sir. If they will come earlier –

**The Bailiff:** I will put the Proposition to people, but I suspect they will prefer 9.30 a.m. The Proposition is to start tomorrow at 9 a.m. Those in favour; those against.

3930 *Members voted Contre.*

**The Bailiff:** The *Contre* noise was louder. We are not having a recorded vote. We will start at 9.30 a.m.

3935 *The Assembly adjourned at 6.22 p.m.*