



**NO TO
CLOSURE**

SMALL SCHOOLS = PRIMARY IMPORTANCE

**RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSED PRIMARY
TRANSFORMATION IN GUERNSEY**
From St Andrew's Primary School PTA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Guernsey Education Department has set out its Vision for change in primary education in the Billet d'Etat. This it believes will provide:

...foundations for success in secondary school and critically the foundations for success in life and is pivotal to an individual's future personal achievement, health and wellbeing...The Education Department needs to identify where provision is at its best, where people are making the best use of available resources and make that commonplace.

Education summaries its findings in the Billet, concluding that in order to achieve these objectives St Andrew's Primary School and St Sampson's Infant school should be closed. The recommendations state that these will improve the educational attainments for children on the island.

This paper aims to challenge the recommendations with particular reference to the proposed closure of St. Andrew's Primary School and provide evidence that emphatically disputes these findings.

We strongly believe the Education Department's proposals present a one-sided argument that has been produced by a consultant who has been tasked by T&R to find savings relating to FTP and not an attempt to:

...develop a primary school system where every child on the island has access to a rich, stimulating curriculum that develops and challenges them to achieve their personal, social and intellectual potential. ("Questions and Answers for Parents", by Education, p4)

Our document presents the other side of the argument and therefore provides you, the voting Deputy, with all the facts upon which to make an informed decision. We strongly urge you to read our findings to arrive at your own conclusion based on a balanced argument. The key messages are:-

Financial

1. Predicted FTP savings by closing St Andrew's School will not be achieved:
 - a. the implementation costs of the closures have not been considered
 - b. the implementation costs to deliver the "Vision" to improve educational outcomes have not been considered

2. St Andrew's school is one of the least expensive schools to run.

Educational Credence

3. There is no evidence to suggest that 2/3-form entry schools deliver better educational outcomes than one-form entry schools
4. There is no clarification on how this “Vision” with better educational outcomes may be implemented: ask Education how it intends to “increase staff expertise” and what is the budget
5. Using **Education’s own pupil figures** with no growth projections, if you take out 100 places from the Catholic schools due to eligibility the figure becomes tight
6. Using **Education’s own figures** with 5% growth projections it will need to employ more teachers
7. Projected pupil figures from the 2009 Billet are more than 500 out from the projected pupil figures from the current Billet: i.e. **Education’s own projections have moved by more than 10%, not 2%, not 5 %**. Even injecting a 10% margin of error **to its own calculations** will mean needing not only extra teachers but extra classrooms.
8. Our calculations do not include the inevitable margins of error quoted by the Education Department and as such are conservative. Apply our arguments to points 1-3 above and our **projections completely discredit its figures**.

Practicalities

No consideration has been given to:

9. The economic, social and environmental impact to the proposals
10. The impact on the community
11. Planning, building & Maintenance
12. The practicalities of delivering the “Vision”

Lack of Consultation

Public consultation is an important part of the policy-making process. It provides the States of Guernsey with an opportunity to listen - and act upon - the views of taxpayers and service users, which is vital to effective policy-making. The States seeks to involve individuals, businesses, community groups, and interested parties in the development of government policies, by engaging

in various forms of public consultation. These can be workshops, drop-in sessions, or simply seeking views by post or email. We are sure that Deputies are aware of the broad range of matters of both current and past consultations the States has undertaken.

Engagement should begin early in policy development when the policy is still under consideration and views can genuinely be taken into account.

Timeframes for consultation should be proportionate and realistic to allow stakeholders sufficient time to provide a considered response.

Sufficient information should be made available to stakeholders to enable them to make informed comments. Relevant documentation should normally be posted online to enhance accessibility and opportunities for reuse.

This process is clearly lacking in the approach employed by Education.

Whilst we agree that the time between conclusion and voting should be minimal: consulting on how the process from which the conclusions are derived was wholly omitted. This has severely affected the trust that should be given to the “Vision” and borne out in the lack of details and consideration for factors over and above cost savings.

With the lack of consultation the “Vision” lacks authority and credence.



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BACKGROUND

The McKinsey and Company report 2012 is cited in the Billet on several occasions. This report looks at how schools and education systems across the world have improved their performances and compares the method of delivery. Long Beach Union School District, California managed to move its schools from fairly performing to good and then to great. When considering how to achieve this, the starting point for the District was to consider each individual school and ask the question:

...would you put your child in this school?

The parents of St. Andrew's Primary School clearly believe the answer to be "yes" and there is nothing in the Billet that would contradict the value in sending a child to this school.

There are many reasons for the retention of a small community school. The fact that the school is in essence part of the community must and should be taken into consideration prior to closure. The Education Department has not done enough in its presentation of the evidence to convince the parents/carers of 168 children that their children's education would be transformed by sending them to multi-entry schools.

RESPONSE FORMAT

This response to the Billet is divided into themes identified from within the Billet.

Each theme cites extracts of Education's proposal with counter-arguments alongside.

Core themes identified are:

- **Financial:** predicted cost savings, implementation costs, etc
- **Educational credence** to their proposal: one-form versus two or three-form entry, larger school & class sizes provide better opportunities, staff continuity & CPD, etc.
- **Practicalities:** delivering the proposal, staff continuity & CPD, spare capacity, planning, building & maintenance

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PREDICTED FTP SAVINGS WILL NOT BE ACHIEVED

REPORT SAYS: 6.27

6.27: The major part of the costs of running St Andrew's Primary school relate to staff costs.

*6.30: There is a possibility that there **might be some redundancy costs**. However, the Department is anticipating that compulsory redundancies will be avoided due to natural turnover and redeployment of staff."*

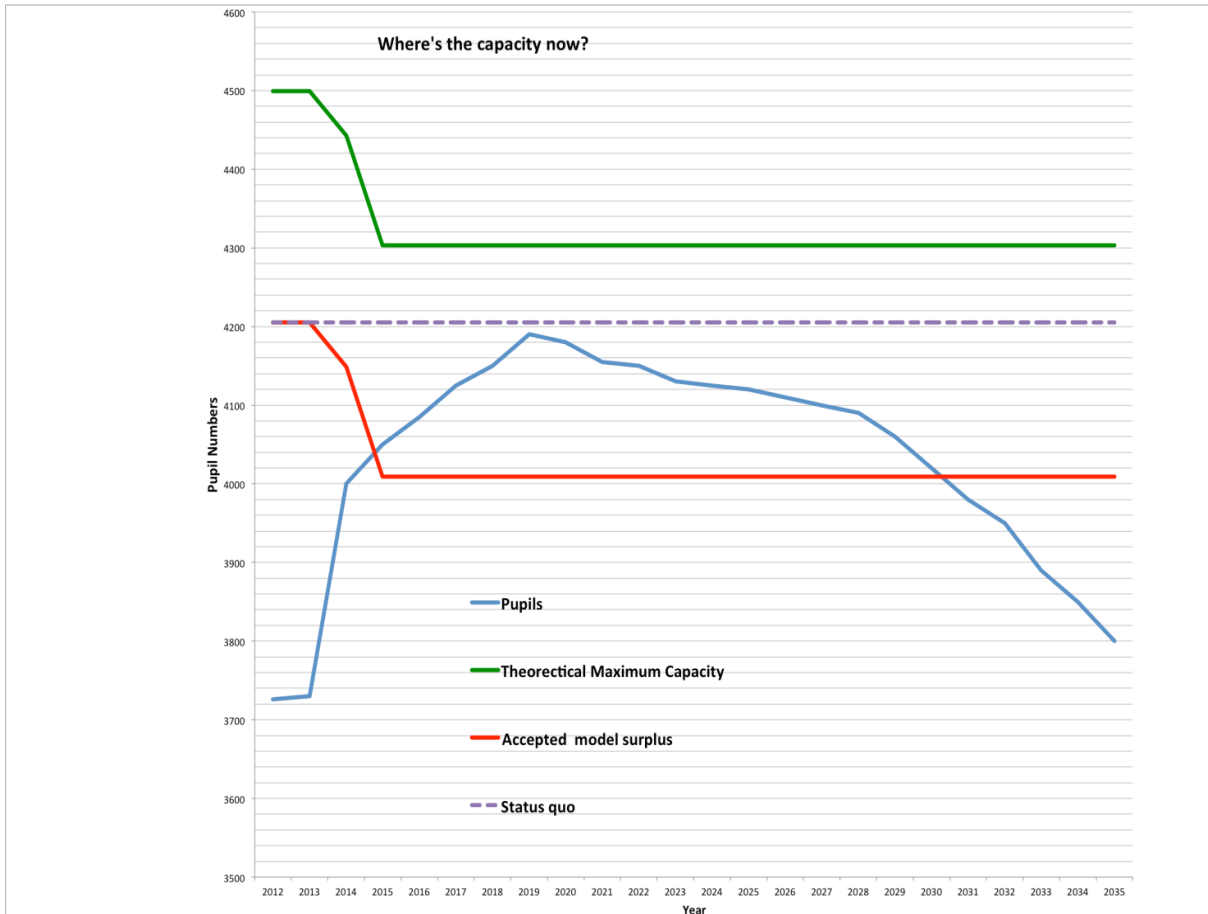
THE FACTS: From the above we are led to believe that although the staff at St Andrew's are not themselves being made redundant, (we would also question the validity of that statement) the effect is a **reduction in the overall headcount of 7 teachers** across the system resulting in a significant saving. **That is the real crux of where Education believes the savings are to be made.**

We believe, and will demonstrate below, that the predicted growth of the pupil population will result in Education having to **re-employ at least another 7 staff** within a very short period of time if it closes St Andrew's Primary School. We therefore challenge the logic of closing St Andrew's Primary school to save the cost of 7 jobs only to have to go into the market and re-employ extra staff very soon thereafter.

The closure of the school would destroy the knowledge and team spirit built up over several years by the Headteacher. This cannot be quantified but has a value that should not be overlooked. Bringing in replacement staff, albeit at other schools will incur considerable costs for interviews, trips to the Island, and relocation expenses and involve management time at the Education department.

In Annex 2 to the report we are presented with statistics and graphs comparing the surplus capacity in the schools to the pupil population predictions. We find the graphs and explanations to be confusing and expect others will too. We would like to present our case in a different way, but still using the same numbers used by Education.

Please refer to the graph below.



The GREEN LINE depicts what we have called the ‘Theoretical maximum teaching capacity’. It is equivalent to the solid grey line in Figure 1 in Annex 2 of Education’s report (page 5), which it calls ‘Primary school capacity w/o extra classrooms’. We believe the dotted line in its graph represents the additional capacity that could be made available by using extra classrooms that exist. **We have not included an equivalent line to that as the space cannot be used without employing extra teachers thereby incurring additional costs.**

Our green line represents **the capacity of the entire Primary teaching system at the current staffing levels (including St Andrew’s) without using any currently unmanned but available classrooms.** It is calculated using the proposed increased maximum class size of 28. **Obviously using a smaller number would result in less theoretical capacity.**

We start at exactly the same point as Education at **4500**. The only thing we have done differently is to show the **drop in the capacity over the next two years as St Andrew’s is phased out.** 56 go at the end of the first year (as two classes close) and the remaining 140 go at the end of the second year. This is theoretical teaching capacity lost not actual pupil numbers.

We include this line only because Education has done so and to aid readers to reconcile the two graphs but in reality, **we do not place much importance on those numbers as they represent a**

theoretical maximum that could only be fully utilized in a perfect world. For example, we know that **100 surplus spaces exist at the two Catholic schools that cannot be considered part of the pool for general use.** There are other examples but as both Education and ourselves accept that the full theoretical capacity is not actually available (i.e. the 800 or so spaces reported) there is little point in arguing the point further.

Education accepts, and for the purposes of this illustration we will concur, that the more realistic number of surplus spaces available for use within the system is around 500. This number has been used by Deputy Sillars (i.e. 300 less than the theoretical 800 shown by the green line)

We have therefore inserted the **RED LINE to depict the accepted model surplus** that enables the multi school system to operate in the real world. **The starting point is the previous figure of 4500 capacity less 300 being 4200.**

4200 represents where we are now before the proposed closure and we have included the dotted line simply to indicate what we refer to as the Status Quo. i.e. the teaching capacity we have at the present time before the proposed closure. **It is important to remember that the term ‘teaching capacity’ refers to available classrooms with teachers and does not include classrooms that although may actually exist, have no teachers at the present time.**

Education obviously believes that 500 surplus spaces is too high and hence the proposal to close St Andrew’s eliminating 196 of those surplus spaces (28x7).

We have therefore plotted that into the red line in the same way as the green line showing the effect of the closure over the two years.

The last line is the **BLUE LINE and that depicts the projected pupil population figures.** Our starting number reflects the **actual population figure** just released but otherwise the numbers are exactly the same as used by Education. We have only gone out to the year 2035 instead of their 2042. That is why the line looks a slightly different shape to the department’s but the base numbers are the same.

Education has have prepared several graphs increasing the population numbers by 2% or 5%. We have simply left the figures at the original projections, as it is clear that its model won’t work. **If you increase the projected pupil populations the capacity figures will look even worse.**

Following the blue line from the current starting point (3730 using the figures just released), by the time you get to 2015, you have already crossed the **RED LINE** which represents the then **teaching capacity after closing the school.** The Island will need to employ more teaching staff. **The situation continues to deteriorate as the population peaks in 2019 and remains above the RED LINE right up to 2031.**

If the **BLUE LINE** is above the **RED LINE** there is insufficient teaching staff available. **By 2019 the number of pupils in the system is predicted to be 4190 (see page 2 of Annex 2 of Education's report). The teaching capacity at that time will only be about 4000 if St Andrew's School has been closed. 190 or so pupils will require at least 7 additional teachers.**

Please now look at the dotted line representing the Status Quo. Although the **BLUE LINE** gets close to the **DOTTED LINE** it does not actually cross it. These are, of course just models and the real position may turn out to be quite different but **it seems illogical to start off with a model that is going to fail at such an early stage using the department's population predictions.** It makes no sense to close St Andrew's Primary School, removing 7 teachers from the system when the model shows that a number of teachers will have to be re-employed shortly thereafter. **The model shows that the predicted FTP savings envisaged by closing St Andrew's school will not be achieved.**

It should be noted that the proposed move of St Sampson's Infant school to Vale Infant School does not affect the above numbers. Their teaching staff are proposed to move from one location to another, although ***"Up to £450,000 is thought to be required for the Vale Primary modifications"***.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

REPORT SAYS: 6.29

*Savings at St Andrew's Primary are projected to be ... (£593k-£653k per year) as St Andrew's Primary pupils would be moved to vacancies within **existing** classes at other schools. Educational supplies costs for each pupil and additional transport costs would be incurred, but there would be significant savings on all type of staff costs, property and utilities costs and school-wide educational supplies and resources.*

THE FACTS: They have made the following assumptions have been made to come to this conclusion;

1. All children can be **accommodated in existing classrooms** - with teachers due to a surplus of spaces, so no additional expenditure is required now, or in the future.
2. All **staff will find another job** from existing vacancies.
3. **No additional funding** in terms of salaries, training, educational materials and equipment will need to be made to receiving schools.
4. **No additional teaching assistants** will be provided to compensate for larger class sizes.
5. **No economic costs** arising from social and environmental impacts
6. There are **no alternatives** to making these savings.

1. No Additional Classrooms

- a. The Report shows projections of pupil numbers using a school places analysis model. This assumes that net inward migration of 200 a year "in line with current trends". **We question whether this is a reliable assumption** to make given that the average over the last 6 years was a net migration figure of 289 (adjusted down to reflect 324 licences issued to Waitrose fit out staff in 2011). See below
- b. It is **inherently difficult projecting population size and demographics**. They can be affected by a number of factors. Since 2008 we have seen a downturn in the global

economy and this may explain the requirement for less people to come to the Island, as well as local inhabitants considering lifestyle choices, such as having children. Recent indications are that the economy is improving and as it does, it would be expected that there would be increased net migration to Guernsey.

Even longer term, with an ageing population, it will be essential to increase net migration if we are to reach an acceptably high dependency ratio.

THE FACTS that, given **how they got it so wrong previously** and the fact that it is impossible to estimate with any reasonable certainty future population demographics, that it is **very dangerous closing schools now, when it is quite possible, if not highly likely, that additional classrooms and very possibly new schools, will need to be built.**

2. All staff will find another job from existing vacancies

We would question whether this can be the case. Will the Head teacher be offered another Head teacher job in the primary sector? We are not aware of any vacancy likely to arise in the near future. Indeed, **we suspect that, should another vacancy arise, Education may consider creating Federations**, whereby the Head teacher role is shared across schools. This has recently been witnessed at the Forest School.

We also **question whether other staff will be redeployed to acceptable positions.** The number of teaching assistants is going to be reduced from 1 January 2014, so it is unlikely that the TA's at St Andrew's will find it easy to get a like-for-like job. **We understand that some staff have been told that it is unlikely they will be able to get a similar role and might have to take roles in administration. This is likely to prove unacceptable to some.**

Accordingly, we believe it is highly optimistic and **completely misleading to ignore redundancy costs** in the Education Department's report.

In addition, **as the concept of surplus spaces is fundamentally flawed, we believe that existing staff may be redeployed, but to support new classrooms in receiving schools.** Hence, there will be **no, or minimal recurring staff savings.** Staff savings are stated as being £630k with the remaining £30k-£65k non-pay savings eaten up by the £42-£67k transportation costs.

3. No additional funding in terms of salaries, training, educational materials and equipment will need to be made to receiving schools.

Whilst the Report mentions that there will be on-going non-pay costs of between £6k-£41k, (a huge range) it is evident that either there will be **cuts in training materials, books and equipment to be given to pupils, or the expenditure is going to be maintained but has been omitted in the report on on-going expenses** (see schedule re non-pay costs).

In addition, there is no extra funding included for on-going teacher training costs, which has been under-resourced in the larger schools, compared to smaller ones. However, at the Education presentation to St Andrew's parents and carers on 7th October, **the Director of Education stated that additional training resources would be given.**

Mr Mulkerrin also mentioned at the presentation and in the phone-in that the larger schools would expect to result in increased salaries. Presumably as the receiving schools increase in pupil numbers, it would therefore be assumed that the teachers would expect, and certainly from the comments he has now made, demand, salary increases. Again, these increases haven't been factored into recurring costs.

Also, at the presentation given to parents and carers on 7th October, the Director of Education stated that the progress of those children moving from St Andrew's would be monitored to see whether this was affecting their educational outcomes. Education has also promised that each and every parent of a child at St Andrew's will be offered a private consultation with the department to discuss the placement of their child. **These obligations will clearly have an additional cost that has not been factored in.**

4. No additional teaching assistants will be provided to compensate for larger class sizes.

It would be assumed that, with larger class sizes, **additional teaching assistants** should be required. If this is not the case, then we would expect that this would be a further reason for **teachers to expect increased salaries**. Mr Mulkerrin seemed very keen to point out at presentations to both St Andrew's, and St Sampson's that the staff can expect increased salaries as a result of these changes, in order to help with the recruitment of excellent staff. Whether his comments have a marked effect on retention of our current excellent teachers remains to be seen.

5. Economic costs arising from social and environmental impacts

The Education Department only shows short term direct savings from closing the schools. We argue that these so-called savings will actually cause greater economic costs through the impact on health and the environment, which other Departments will need to pick up.

Effects on environment - fuel usage, pollution, road maintenance

Currently 67 pupils walk to St Andrews every day, from as far afield as 1.4 miles, using that child as an example (further from St Andrew’s surely means closer to other schools) we can calculate the following:

	Castel / Vauvert	Forest / St Martins	La Houquette
Distance miles	1.85	3	3.9
annual fuel	200	340	432
annual CO2 kg	590	10100	1266
Annual man hours lost	111.6	190	240

Distance to potential receiving school, CO2 expended if school is above recommended walking distance, fuel costs if parent driven, man hours wasted on transportation, with potential revenue loss for the exchequer.

Effects on health – obesity

The **cost of obesity**: The States’ own Obesity Strategy states that, "costs to society and businesses are forecast to rise to £45.5 billion annually – equivalent to £45.5 million in the Guernsey context." The NICE Report of November 2012 cites walking and cycling to school as a key measure in the battle against the “silent epidemic of inactivity”, which is responsible for a huge range of health problems such as coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, obesity and type 2 diabetes. That report also states categorically that, “Using cost per quality-adjusted life years (QALY) gained, [walking and cycling] interventions were highly cost effective.” Also, HSSD currently funds a service called the School Nursing Weight Management Service – proof in itself that we need to address the issue of inactive kids, rather than exacerbate it.

6. There are no alternatives to making these savings

a. Education Service

The Financial Transformation Programme was not intended as a means to cut frontline services. It was meant to be a means of **doing this better and more efficiently to ensure value for money.** St Andrew’s is proven to provide just that – it is **one of the cheapest schools to run** (see graph evidence below), produces successful outcomes and is probably the most sustainable school on the Island.

We believe that the Education Department should be looking at its administration before seeking to cut frontline services and impacting frontline services. **The Education Office cost £4,837,000 in 2012. This was £370,000 more than the previous year.** We believe savings should be found here. In particular, the **Office includes those responsible for Estate Management.** It is clear from the 2012 Accounts that the Department is **not investing in routine capital expenditure** with an underspend of £909,000 in 2012, with £565,000 taken as a non-FTP saving. We would question the numbers employed in Estate management if the amount of works have been drastically reduced. We also understand there are project directors and managers employed by the Department and would question whether this is necessary when such work could be provided within States Property Services.

Education has stated publicly that there is nowhere else that it can make these savings and that **if St Andrew's remains open all schools will have to suffer. We suggest that if St Andrew's does close then all schools will suffer** due to higher class sizes and increased pupil numbers with no increase in budget to assist.

b. General spending history

From the 2014 Budget it appears that £100,000 has already been spent by the Department on consultants for the rebuilding of La Mare de Carteret Schools. We would question how a Department could spend this money before the Gateway Review Process has begun?

We would question any report produced by a Department that recommended the build of yet another swimming pool, at Les Beaucamps High School, which will cost a significant amount to run, when cuts have already been made to other school swimming pools to save money.

Conclusion

It is clear that the economic impact to Guernsey as a whole is significant and **the financial savings are limited at best.** Moreover Education's "Vision" comes with a high price tag.

- The expectations laid out in the Billet are not achievable without additional investment which is not accounted for, not budgeted for and not planned for
- The social and environmental impact of these changes also has a price tag. In the receiving schools alone gridlock is a daily occurrence and this "Vision" will only exasperate that: the cost of those extra 20 minutes sitting in traffic and being late for work has to be paid for by someone

PLANNING, BUILDING, MAINTENANCE ETC.

REPORT SAYS:

St Andrew's Primary School is not suitable for conversion to a two-form entry school and that as the building is old it requires more maintenance.

The principle of further family housing near rural centres in the south and west of the Island would be welcomed by the Education Department

It is easier from transport and convenience perspective if the locality of available school places and the distribution of family housing in the Island match

4.4 Larger schools are also more cost effective

THE FACTS: We contest this opinion and have engaged a number of professional consultants to provide preliminary advice. These consultants include, amongst others, an independent, professionally qualified Chartered Architect RIBA and a Chartered Structural Engineer MStructE MICE.

St Andrew's Primary occupies a **central position in both the parish and island** and as such its **location is strategically very important**. Rather than closing the school we feel that the Education Board should be looking to support the school by investing in it.

The proposal also contradicts the Strategic Land Use Plan, specifically the agreed policies of:

1. Policy LP2 – “Reducing the need to travel”
 - a. Closing St Andrew's will increase the need to travel for all current pupils (and, typically, their parents)
2. Policy LP8 – “Minimising the effect of the car”
 - a. Closing St Andrew's will act in direct contradiction of this. It will increase car usage, congestion and pollution
3. Policy SLP10

Provision should be made in the Development Plans to enable the provision of an adequate range of community, social and leisure facilities to be developed according to need and demand whilst maximising the use of existing sites.

Existing facilities should therefore be permitted to develop and expand to meet the needs of the Island population.

If it is, as stated, the intention to move to 2/3-form entry schools then surely the **Education Department should take advantage of the strategic position of St Andrew’s and develop it into a 2 form entry school if it deems such entry sizes so important.** It was emphatically agreed by all the professionals that with **some rationalisation of existing facilities there is sufficient land available on the current site to allow for an additional classroom / class bases for each of the year groups across KS1 & KS2 without compromising hard or soft play areas.**

The school is located within an area considered by many as the main parish centre with a number of services and facilities (sustainability indicators) within the immediate locality (Church, Douzaine, Supermarket, recycling facilities, public house and play area all within 500m)

Moreover the provision of adequate community, social and leisure facilities is fundamental to supporting sustainable local centres. **The States’ Education and Health and Social Services Departments both have on-going development programmes to improve current social and community infrastructure.**

The nearby Naftiaux estate, for example, consists of mainly 3 bedroom houses which provide accommodation for families.

House Size	Quantity
4 bed semi-detached house	6
3 bed semi-detached house	8
1 bed ground floor flats	7
3 bed maisonettes	7

As of October 2013 there are 27 dependants living on the Naftiaux estate of primary school age or under.

The **Housing Department would not wish to move any of these families** from St Andrew’s because it would either have to put other families with children there or accommodate childless couples and the houses would then be under occupied.

With reference to running costs using Education’s own figures from their report confirms that **St Andrew’s Primary has one of the lowest annual costs per pupil.**

The existing **fabric of the buildings is considered to be robust and generally in good order.** There is evidence that maintenance standards are not as good as they should be which is backed up by

reference to the last three States budgets where the **Education Department failed to spend all of its authorised budget on school repairs** to the tune of £325K.

Contrary to Education's Report the majority of areas requiring attention relate to the newer (1970's) building and not to the old school. In fact some of the more pressing areas relate to inherent **building defects in the 1970's building which is typical of buildings of this age such as Mare de Carteret and La Houquette.**

The **original part of the school dating back to 1898 is in far better condition dispelling the claim that St Andrew's requires more maintenance because it is an older building.** It was commented that the KS2 classrooms were of a larger size than some others on the island and that they offered a good teaching environment being well lit, well ventilated etc.

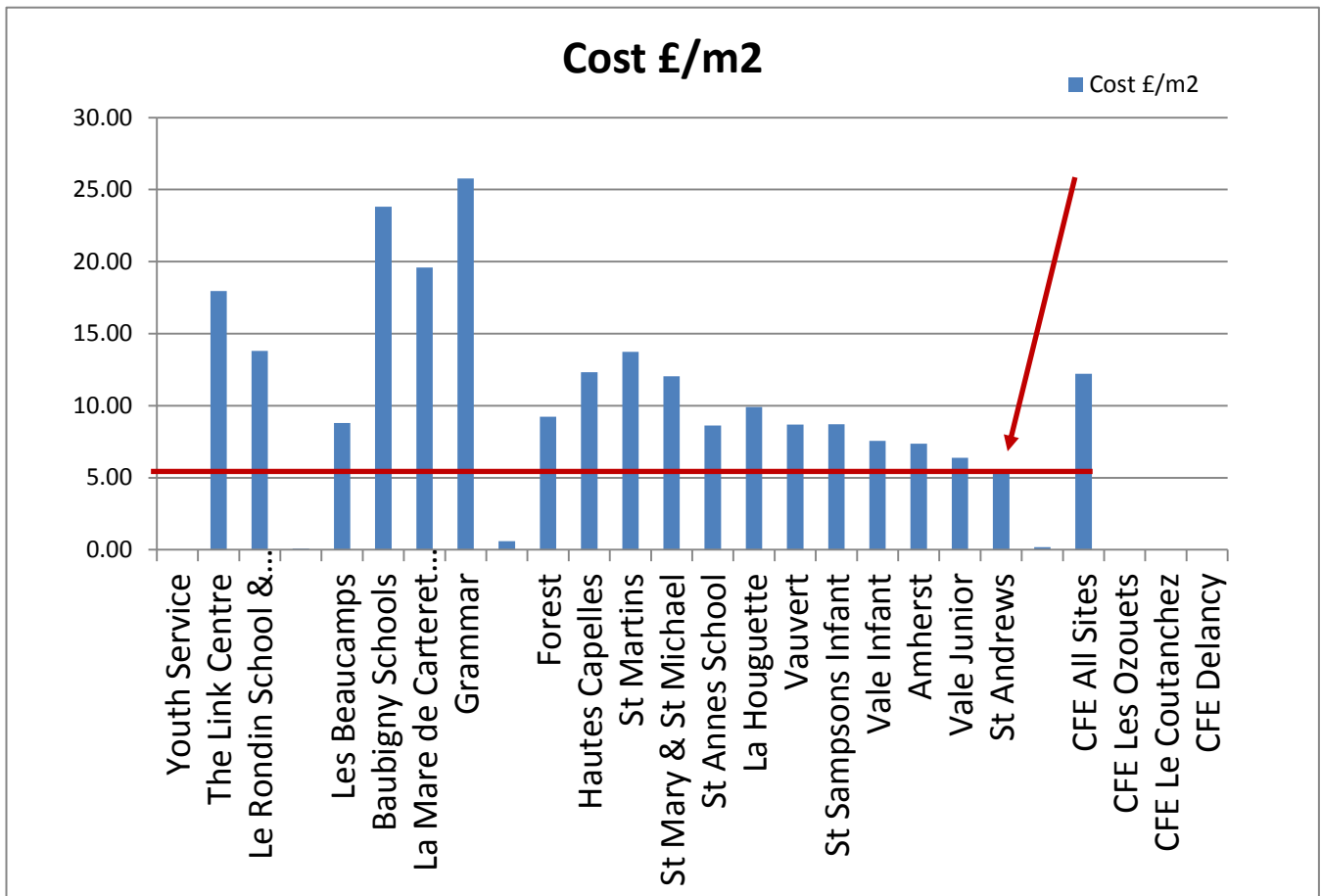
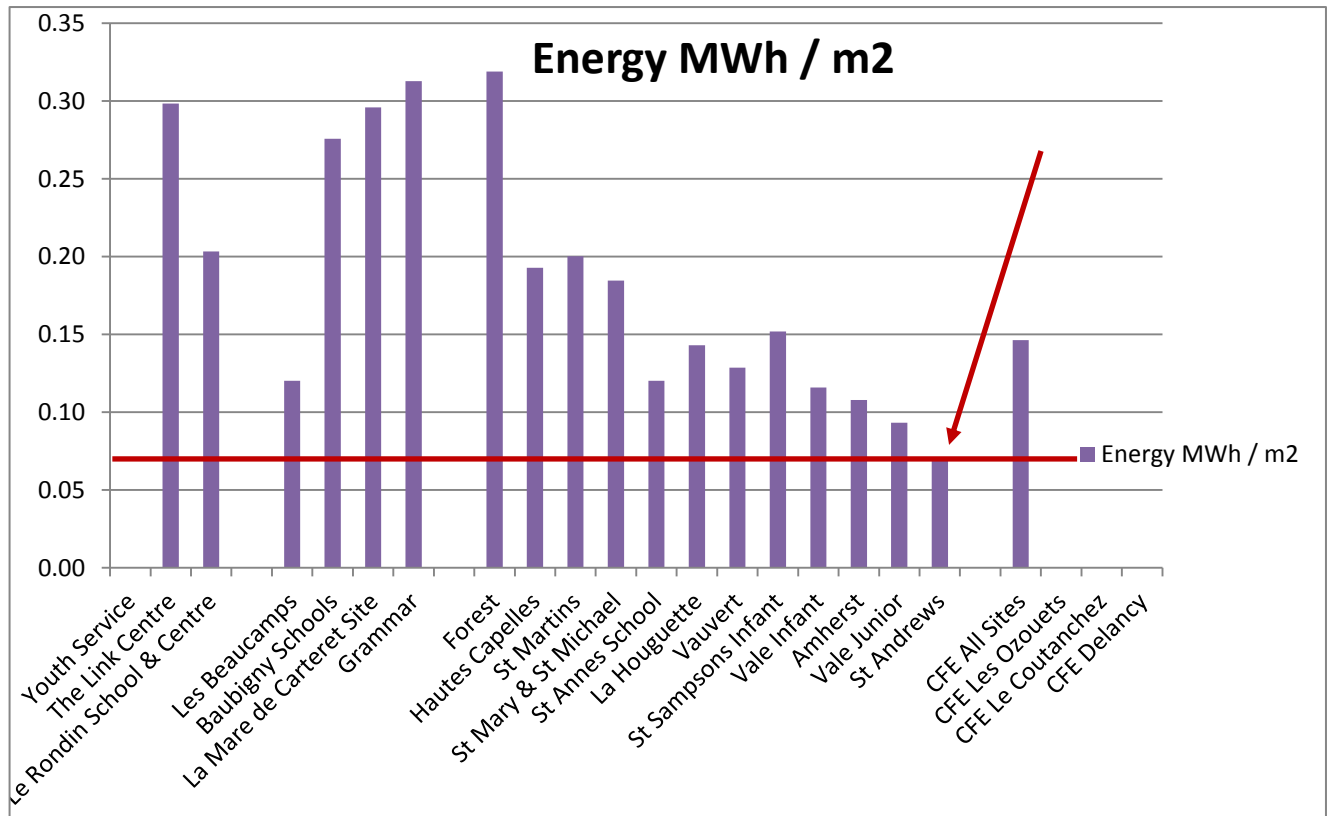
Schools are significant consumers of energy and price volatility remains a significant concern in terms of controlling expenditure.

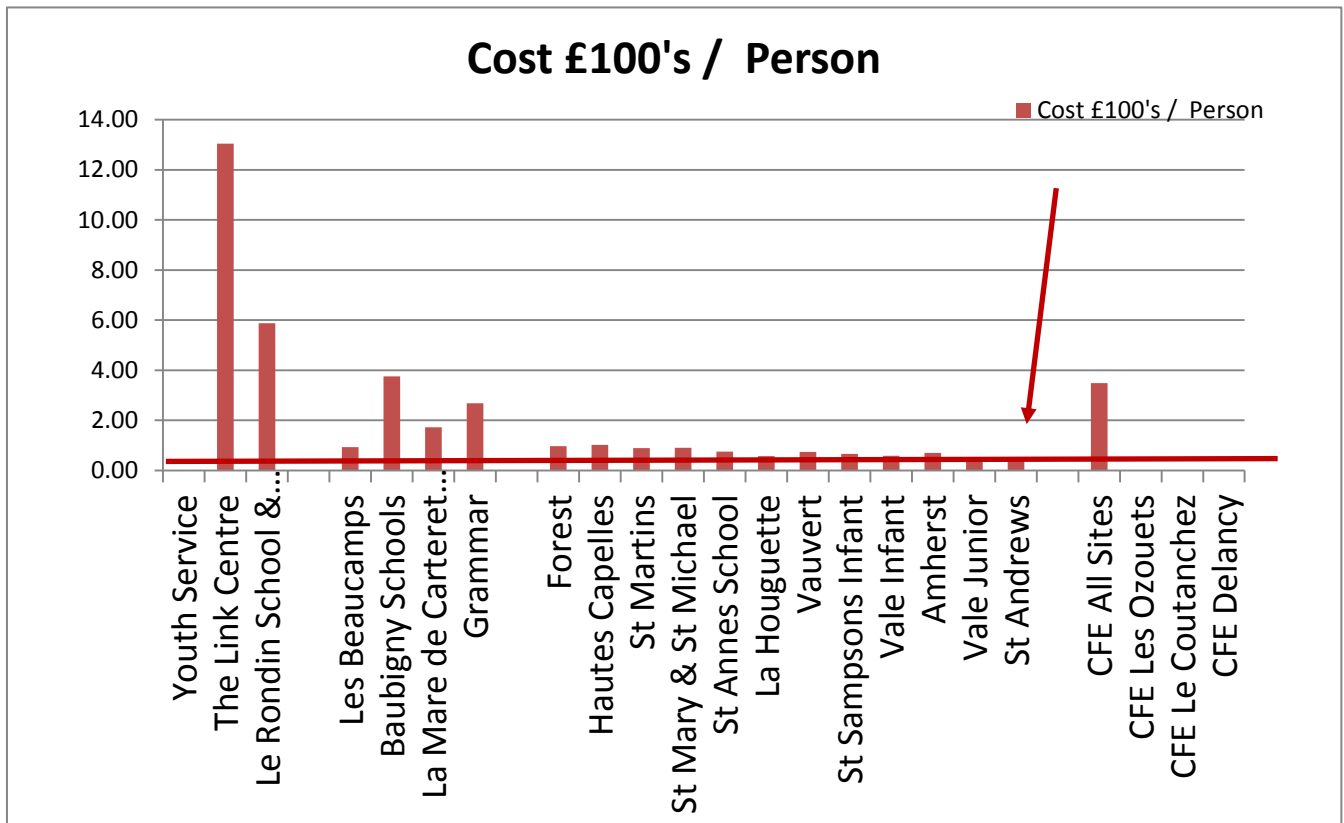
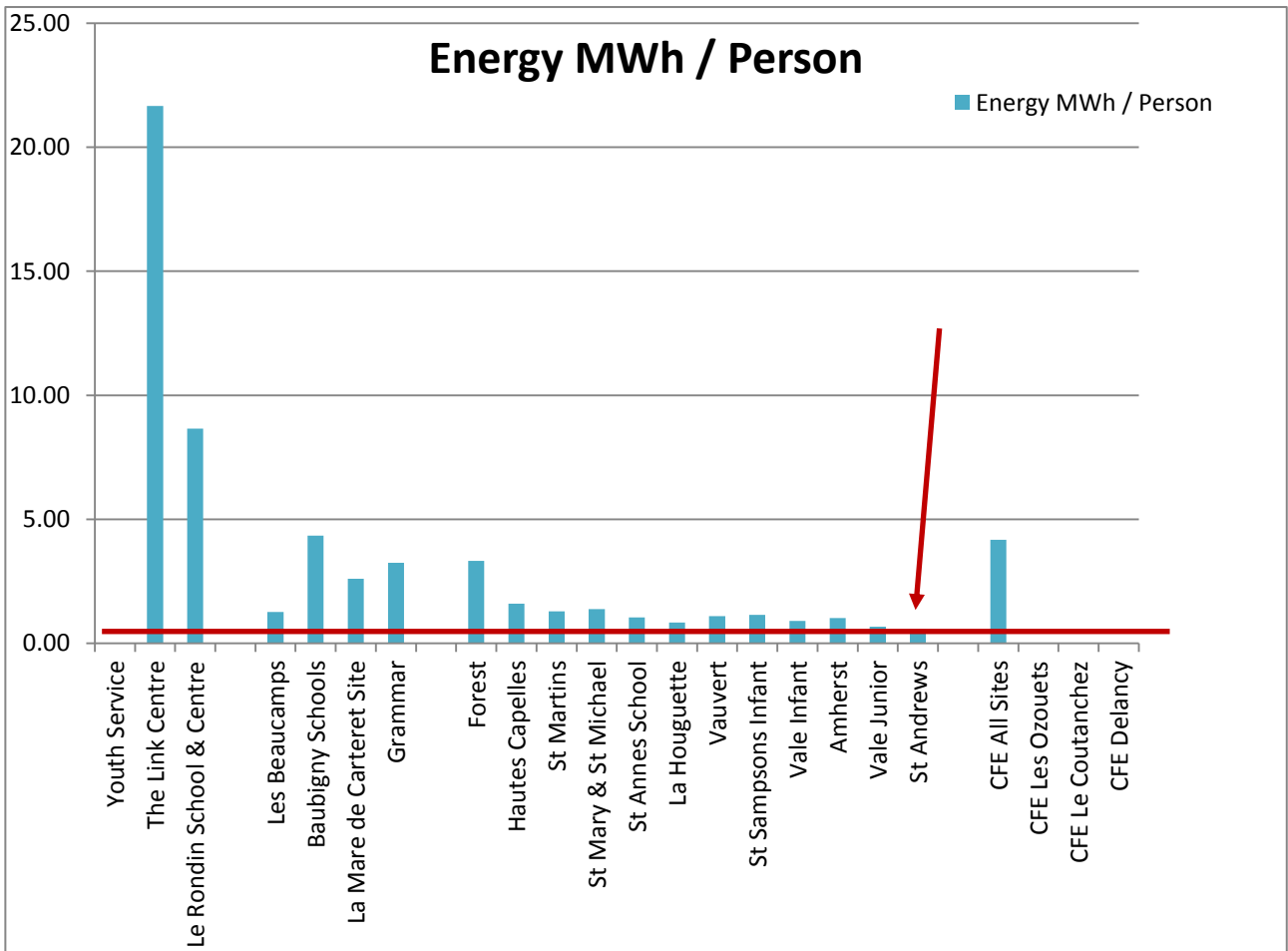
We have also been able to obtain figures that demonstrate that **St Andrew's Primary has one of the lowest running costs in terms of lighting, heating and ventilation of any school across the Bailiwick, not just in terms of pupil numbers but also as a rate per square metre making it one of the most energy efficient.**

Total annual utility costs in 2011 were:

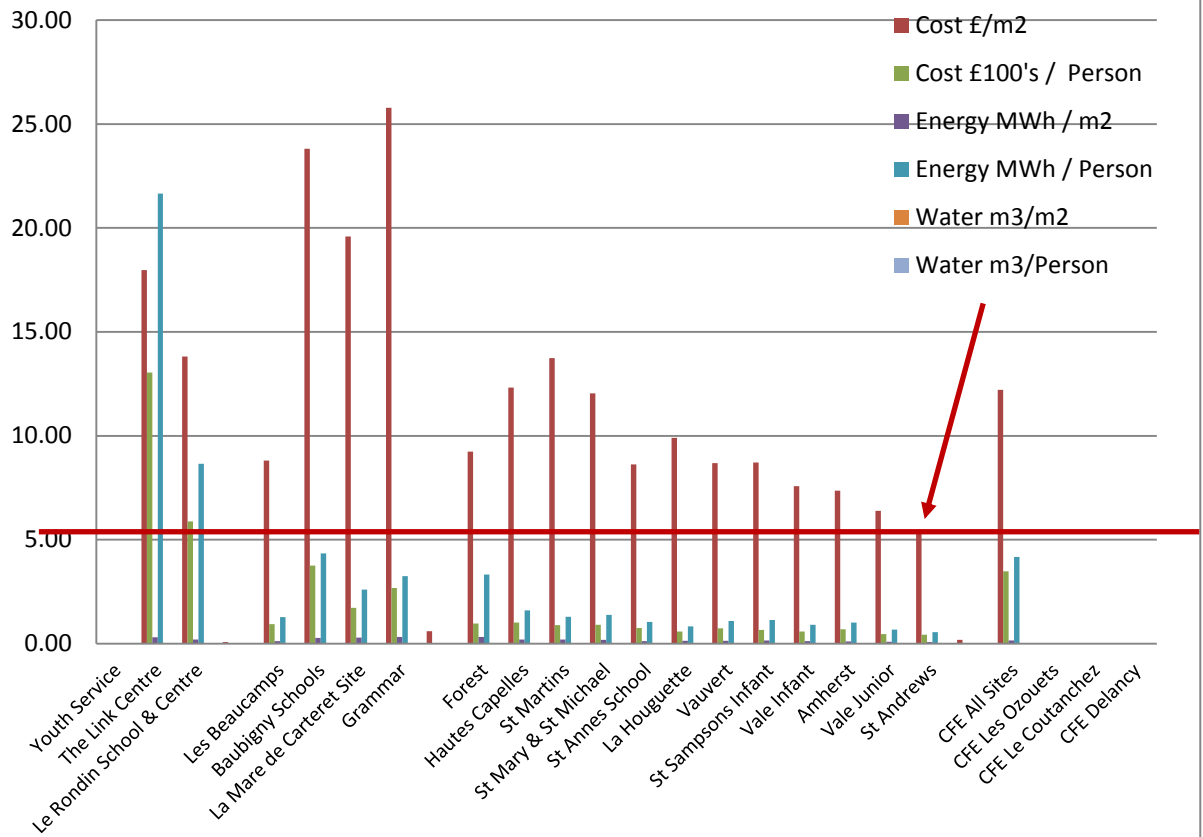
School	Running Cost	Cost Differential between St Andrew's Primary School
St Andrew's Primary School	£7,870.00	
Forest Primary School	£17,443.00	£9,473.00
La Houquette	£18,950.00	£11,080.00

The following is a series of statistics provided by Education that **clearly demonstrate the cost effectiveness – not just because it is smaller – of St Andrew' Primary School**

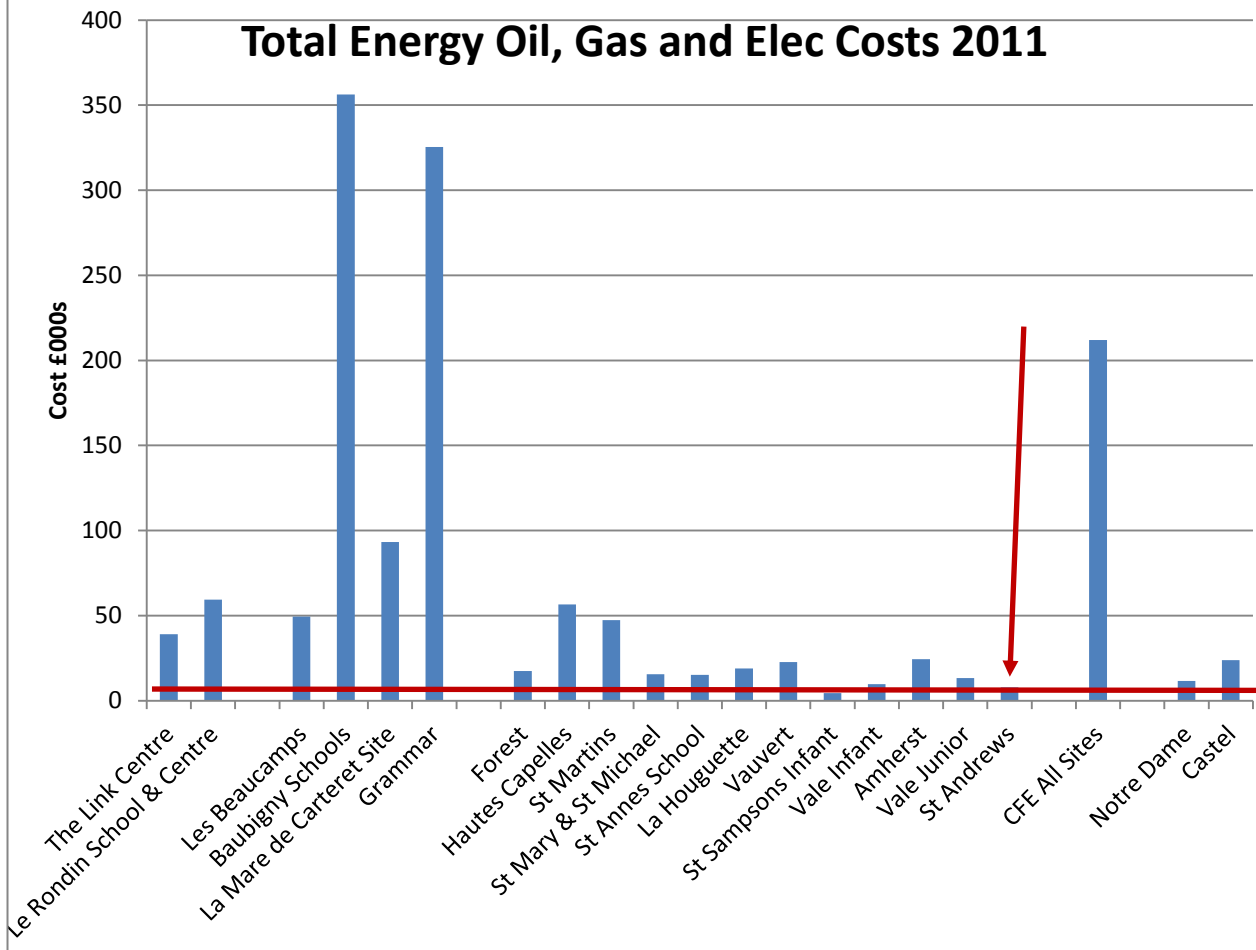


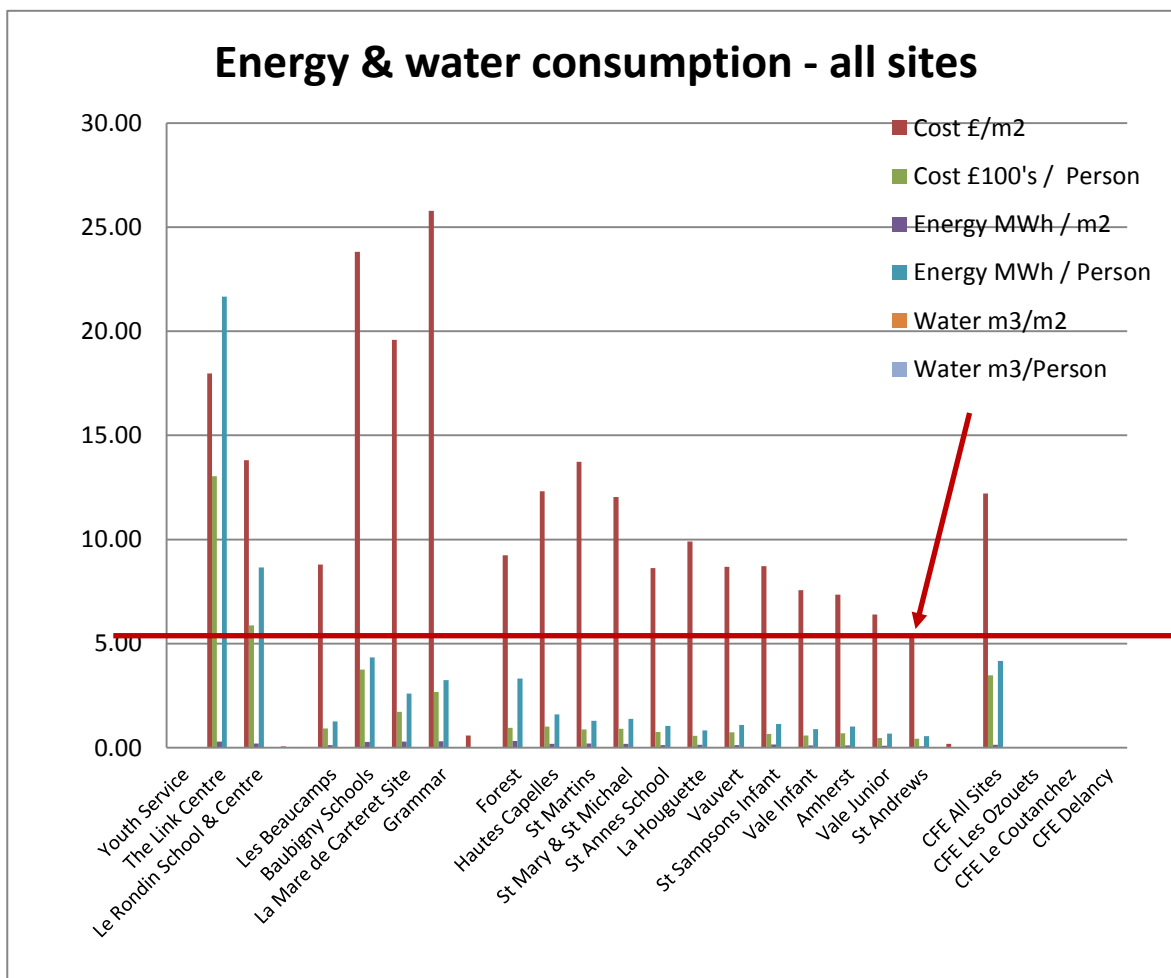


Energy & water consumption - all sites



Total Energy Oil, Gas and Elec Costs 2011





Conclusion

It is clear from the above that St Andrew's Primary School is:

- **strategically placed**
- **is cost effective**
- has the **potential to expand**

All of the above refuting Education's assessment AND clearly negates its call for closure.

SPARE CAPACITY

REPORT SAYS: 1.8

*The most informed analyses from the UK Audit Commission and Estyn, the Welsh Inspection Agency, suggest that, in the primary sector in 2011-2012, the average cost of a surplus place is between £250 and £350 and the data shows that there are currently at least 70 surplus places per year group in the primary sector (more at Foundation/Key Stage 1).....**we have around 500 surplus places....costing between £125,000 and £175,000;***

THE FACTS: We have calculated that, working on the basis of **maximum class sizes of 28** (please see page 6 regarding class sizes), **most of the receiving schools will end up reaching that maximum.** It also means that **average class sizes will be 27 in those schools, whereas they will be nearer to 20 for non-receiving schools.** We believe this can't be sustainable and that children will need to be sent to schools further afield. This will impact significantly on transportation costs – both for the States of Guernsey and the families. It also contradicts Education's aims to reach equity for all primary school children across the island.

Certainly, if the maximum class size is taken to be 24, as the Minister has stated on record that he expects them to be, then **the situation is far worse and children from St Andrew's** will need to be transported right across the Island.

This will also have impact on children at all other schools, with the St Andrew's catchment abolished families might be forced to schools they do not anticipate as the boundaries continually move.

THE “MYTH” OF HUNDREDS OF SPARE SPACES IN THE PRIMARY SECTOR

The Education department published a census of primary school class sizes and theoretical capacity on 11 October 2013.

Their analysis is reproduced in table 1 in the Billet and shows 825 spare spaces. The Education department has actually quoted a figure of 500 by acknowledging that there needs to be a buffer of spare spaces to allow for variations in class sizes due to differences in the number of pupils per year and in numbers of pupils per catchment area.

The Education board is suggesting 325 spare spaces to cover variations. Although we could follow this figure, we feel that Education have been overly conservative and so are using a buffer of 250 spare spaces to cover variation even though this will show a greater number of spare spaces than Education’s number.

Using this data, but with capacity set to Education’s target class size of 24 (as used in their unsuccessful 2009 proposal to close St Sampson’s and St Andrew’s) the number of spare spaces comes down to 261. If as we suggest is correct that you ignore any spare capacity at either of the two faith schools.

This figure would reduce even further if you exclude the two “empty” classes at la Houquette Primary School – two classrooms that aren’t being used and don’t have either pupils or teachers. We have included them but any cost savings would be offset by employing additional teaching staff.

Subtracting the 250 spare spaces necessary to cope with variations by year and catchment area leaves 11 spaces (or an under- capacity of 37 if the La Houquette Primary School empty classes are excluded).

In table 2 of the Billet, no allowance is made for lower class sizes in the three social priority schools. Setting their target class size to 22 would further exacerbate the problem

This data assume that both St Andrew’s Primary School and St Sampson’s Infant School remain open. Closing the schools would have a detrimental effect on the school capacity

Closing St Andrew’s Primary School and St Sampson’s Infant’s School would also reduce the ability to expand existing schools since the proposals include expanding Vale Infant’s to what we believe is its maximum capacity.

The Numbers

Detailed below are the figures as the currently stand. Analysis of the figures then follows.

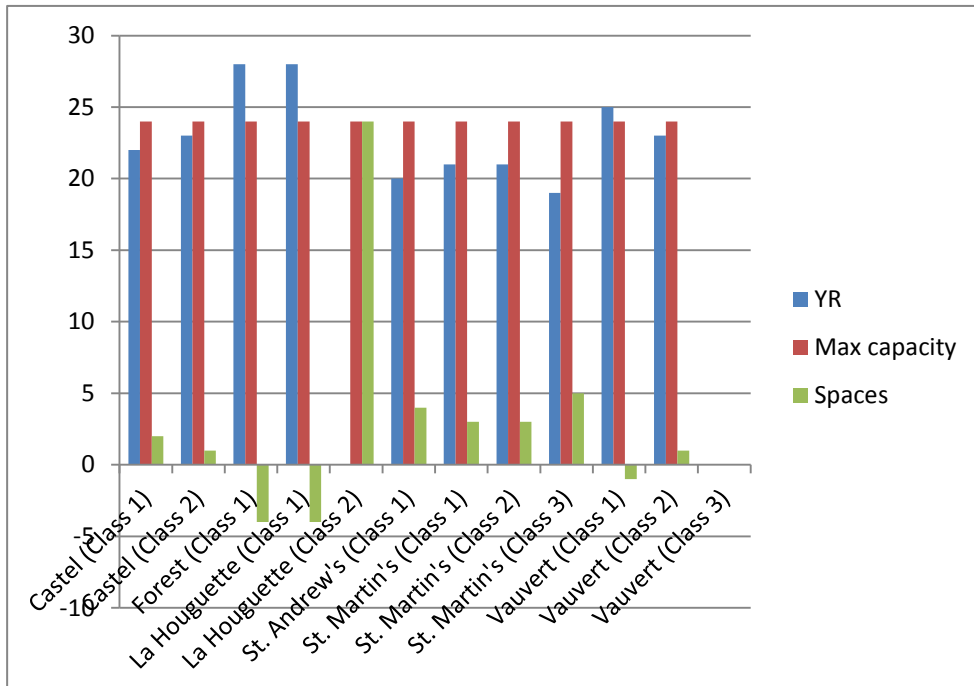
Theoretical capacity based on Education Department's target class size
Excluding faith schools

	Reception	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Max capacity	Spaces	Max capacity	Spaces	Max capacity	Spaces	Max capacity	Spaces	Total Spaces						
Amherst	20	24	4	21	24	3	21	24	3	24	4	22	24	2	23	24	1	21	24	3	40	
	21	24	3	20	24	4																
	22	24	2	23	24	1	27	24	-3	25	24	2	24	2	24	24	0	25	24	-1	1	
Castel	23	24	1	22	24	2	26	24	-2	24	24	0	24	0	23	24	1	25	24	-1		
	28	24	-4	26	24	-2	16	24	8	25	24	-1	23	24	1	29	24	-5	21	24	3	0
Forest	26	24	-2	26	24	-2	20	24	4	24	24	0	22	24	1	26	24	-2	21	24	3	
	26	24	-2	26	24	-2	20	24	4	24	24	0	22	24	2	25	24	-1	20	24	4	12
Hautes Capelles	25	24	-1	25	24	-1	20	24	4	24	24	0	24	24	0	24	24	0	21	24	3	
	28	24	-4	25	24	-1	18	24	6	22	24	2	17	24	7	19	24	5	18	24	6	93
La Houquette	0	24	24	0	24	24	21	24	3	20	24	4	16	24	8	17	24	7	22	24	2	
	18	24	6	21	24	3	23	24	1	18	24	6	24	24	0	16	24	8	17	24	7	63
La Mare de Carteret	20	24	4	21	24	3	24	24	0	17	24	7	23	24	1	16	24	8	15	24	9	
	20	24	4	26	24	-2	22	24	2	26	24	-2	24	24	0	23	24	1	27	24	-3	0
St. Andrew's	21	24	3	21	24	3	24	24	0	28	24	-4	25	24	-1	22	24	2	20	24	4	
	21	24	3	24	24	0	23	24	1	27	24	-3	24	24	0	23	24	1	21	24	3	19
St. Martin's	19	24	5	22	24	2	24	24	0	28	24	-4	24	24	0	24	24	0	20	24	4	
	25	24	-1	24	24	0	19	24	5	21	24	3	19	24	5	21	24	3	21	24	3	44
Vauvert	23	24	1	25	24	-1	20	24	4	20	24	4	18	24	6	20	24	4	21	24	3	
							19	24	5													
St. Sampson's Infant	27	24	-3	25	24	-1	23	24	1													-3
	25	24	-1	28	24	-4	26	24	-2													-17
Vale Primary (Infant phase)	26	24	-2	29	24	-5	27	24	-3													
							22	24	2	25	24	-1	24	24	0	19	24	0	19	24	5	
Vale Primary (Junior phase)							22	24	2	23	24	1	25	24	-1	24	24	0	24	24	0	9
							22	24	2	24	24	0	25	24	-1	24	24	0	24	24	0	
Total Spaces							28				17							33			58	261
							528				504							504			504	3600
Total Capacity							528				504							504			504	3600
	485						500				487							471			446	3339
Actual pupils nos							28				0							466			28	
							27				27							466			28	446

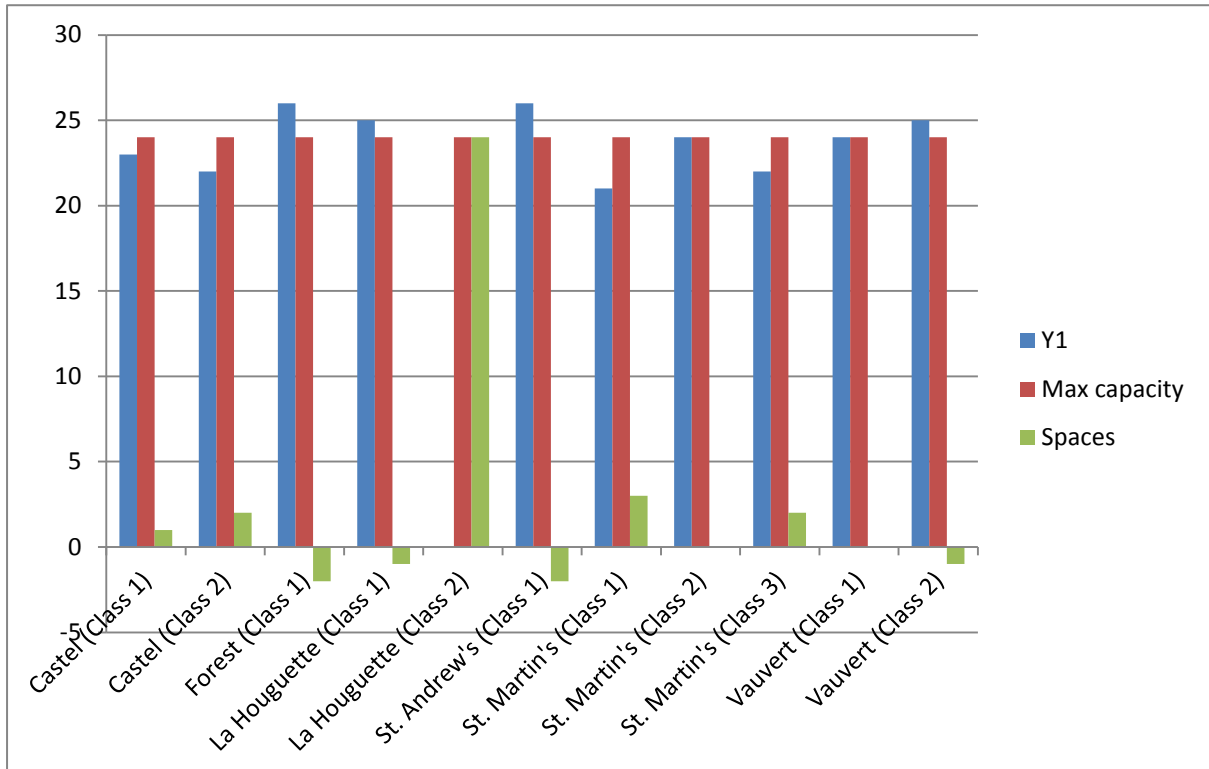
School	VR	Maxcapacity	Spaces	Y1	Maxcapacity	Spaces	Y2	Maxcapacity	Spaces	Y3	Maxcapacity	Spaces	Y4	Maxcapacity	Spaces
Castel (Class 1)	22	24	2	23	24	1	27	24	-3	25	24	-1	22	24	2
Castel (Class 2)	23	24	1	22	24	2	26	24	-2	24	24	0	24	24	0
Forest (Class 1)	28	24	-4	26	24	-2	16	24	8	25	24	-1	23	24	1
La Houquette (Class 1)	28	24	-4	25	24	-1	18	24	6	22	24	2	17	24	7
La Houquette (Class 2)	0	24	24	0	24	24	21	24	3	20	24	4	16	24	8
St. Andrew s (Class 1)	20	24	4	26	24	-2	22	24	2	26	24	-2	24	24	0
St. Martin's (Class 1)	21	24	3	21	24	3	24	24	0	28	24	-4	25	24	-1
St. Martin's (Class 2)	21	24	3	24	24	0	23	24	1	27	24	-3	24	24	0
St. Martin's (Class 3)	19	24	5	22	24	2	24	24	0	28	24	-4	24	24	0
Nauvert (Class 1)	25	24	-1	24	24	0	19	24	5	21	24	3	19	24	5
Nauvert (Class 2)	23	24	1	25	24	-1	20	24	4	20	24	4	18	24	6
Nauvert (Class 3)							19	24	5						

Focusing on the receiving schools the data illustrates the limited capacity that exists in reality once room size, etc is taken into consideration

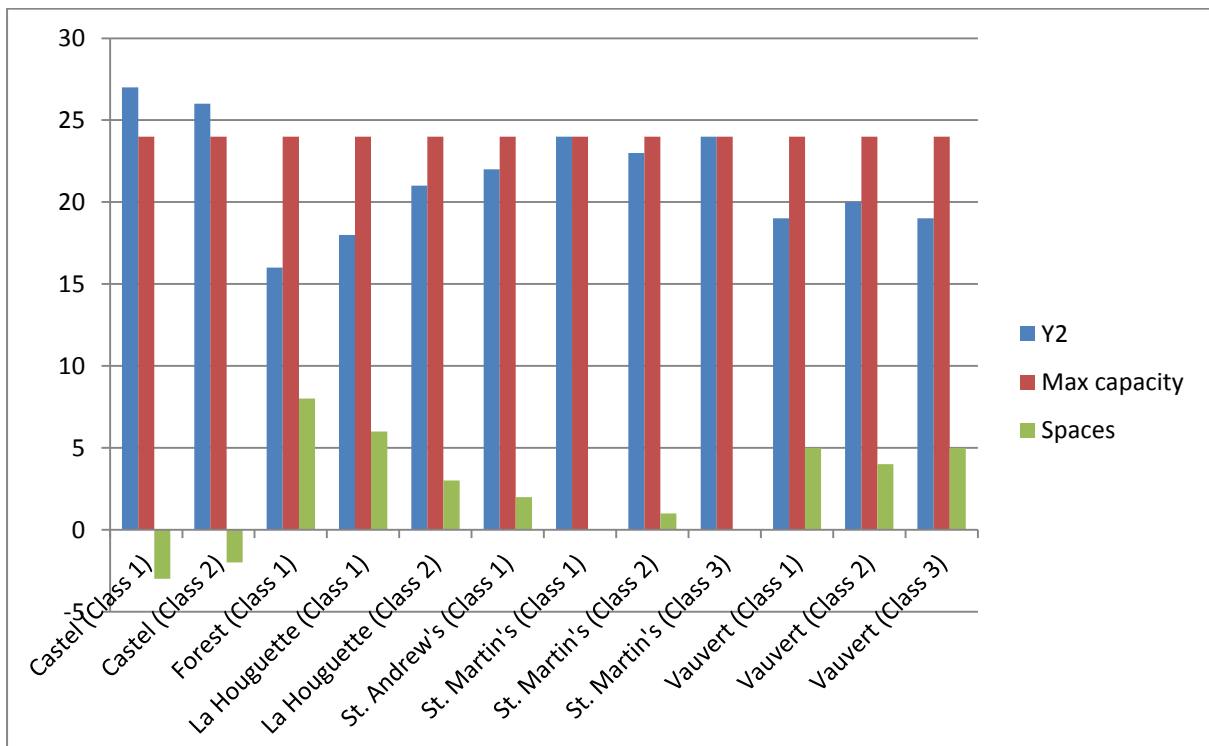
Reception Year Capacity Figures



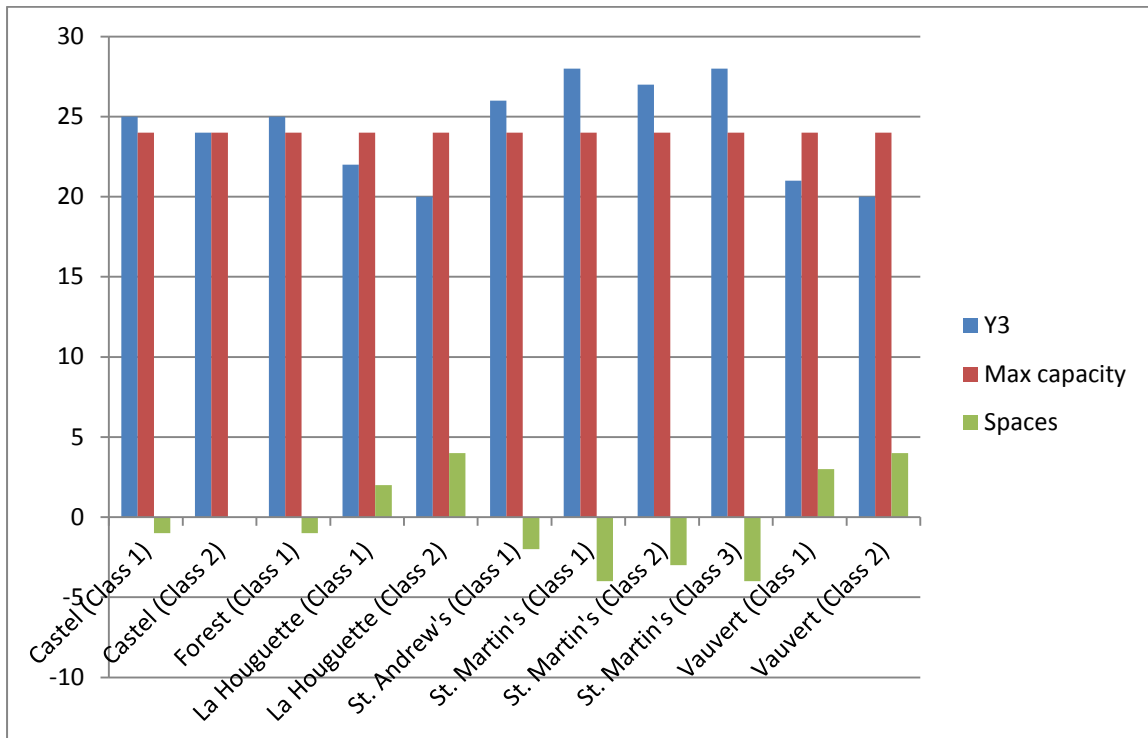
Year 1 Capacity Figures



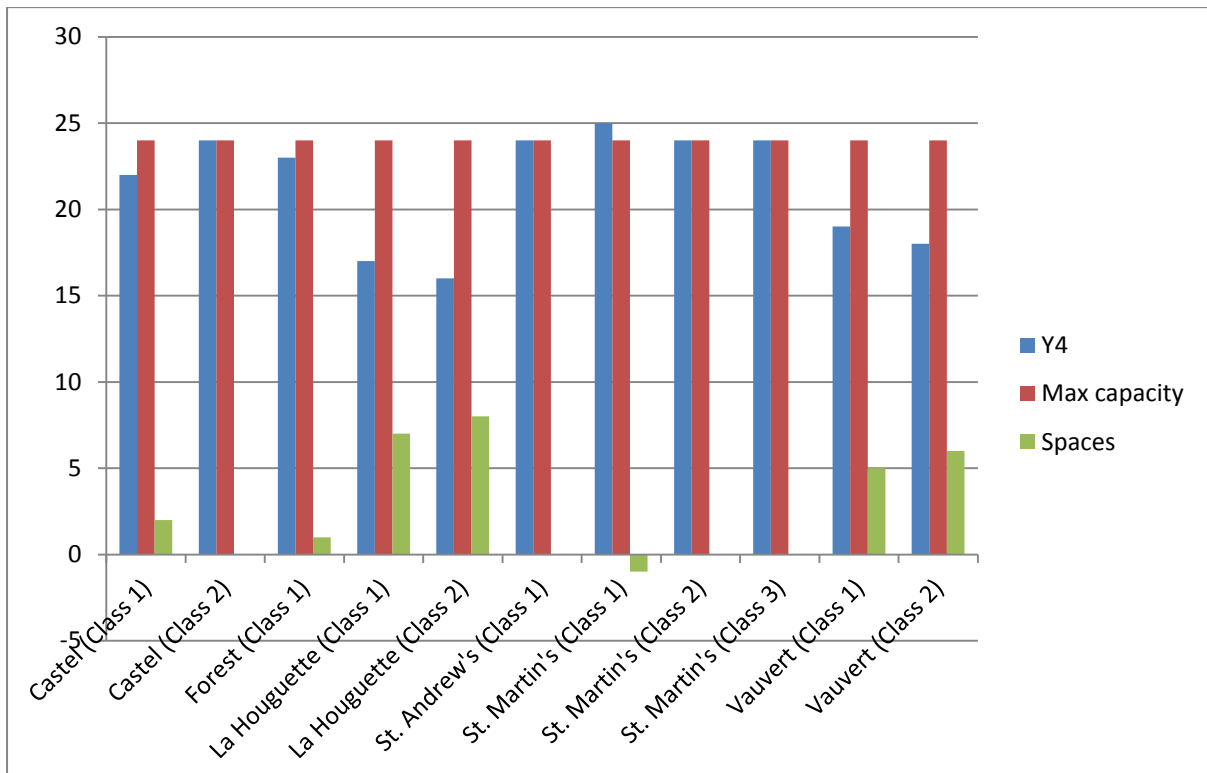
Year 2 Capacity Figures



Year 3 Capacity Figures



Year 4 Capacity Figures



Conclusion

Spare capacity is a trade-off: more pupils in a single class may mean savings. So why not have classes of 35? There are more “spare places” then and therefore, using Education’s logic, more savings to be had.

But the impact on **teaching standards will be negatively affected** in this ever increasing class size: and contracting the aims of Education’s own “Vision”.

The **physical class size of current class rooms has not been considered**: can they accommodate the extra “slot-ins”? According to St Martin’s parents and teaching staff they have reached capacity already with some children are already without spaces during non-teaching times, and drop-off/pick up often gridlocked.

With greater capacity comes **additional administrative burden** for the school and teaching staff: school trips, school events (sports day, Festive services, parents’ evening, marking, assessments, planning, etc.) all take on a different dynamic and moreover remove the teaching staff away from teaching.

There is also a financial burden to the increase in class sizes:

- The Vale Primary School needs additional funding to cope with the influx: **more cost**
- The Castel Primary School needs additional funding to cope with the influx: **more cost**
- The La Mare De Carteret Primary School needs additional funding to cope with the influx: **more cost**

This “Vision” is not a cheap option.

The table below illustrates the proposal by Education on how they envisage the relocation of St. Andrew’s Pupils.

Table 1: Where existing St Andrew’s pupils might move to

	<u>Option 1: Additional pupils by school and by year</u>						<u>Option 2</u>
	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total	Total
Castel	11	7	2	6	7	33	34
Forest	1	5	4	3	4	17	16
La Houquette	1	1	1	0	0	3	24
La Mare De Carteret	0	1	2	0	0	3	3
St. Martin’s	5	11	6	11	11	44	23
Vauvert	2	1	7	6	2	18	18
Total	20	26	22	26	24	118	118

What is frightening about the allocation of the year groups is the systematic dismemberment of the year groups. There has been no attempt to facilitate this implementation in a considerate and sensitive manner: it is a desperate attempt to achieve some short-sighted and ill-conceived goals.

One would like to presume that this has been discussed by the heads of the receiving schools. But this is unlikely as the capacity is not there:

- Castel Yr 4 – has **2** spaces – not the **7** as stated above
- Forest Yr 4 – has **1** space – not the **4** as stated above
- St Martin’s Yr 4 – has **-1** spaces – not the **11** as stated above

So what does this mean? School expansion for the receiving schools looks inevitable. This is more cost not accounted for: more expenditure not declared in their “Vision”.

Are the receiving schools able to provide these facilities¹: is Education able to afford them?

Alternatively, as historically some schools have had bigger intakes and more forms – these could be reopened: but the costs of this implementation (teaching, resourcing, modernisation to meet minimum legislation standards, administration, etc.) do not negate the cost of closing an inexpensive school.

In addition should Education wish to attempt to **replicate the facilities of St Andrew’s Primary School** (and **in accordance with FTP imperative it must**) several of the receiving schools would need to adjust at considerable cost:

¹ Please refer to Briefing Framework for Primary School Projects (Briefing Bulletin 99) that states the minimum acceptable levels for classrooms should be 36m² for example

- **St Martin's Primary School:** inability to hold whole school assemblies or even to cope with the number of children who stay at school for lunch has been highlighted on numerous occasions by parents of the school but who have not yet had a satisfactory answer from Education on how this will be addressed - **unlike St Andrew's Primary School which has this facility**
- **Castel Primary School:** currently educate students in huts which were considered not fit for purpose some time ago but are suddenly acceptable – **unlike St Andrew's Primary School that has permanent purpose built classrooms**
- **Vauvert Primary School:** has very limited outside learning areas – none of them soft – **unlike St. Andrew's Primary School**

REPORT SAYS: 4.10 iii

*School population projections are not an exact science.....**Primary population numbers across all primary year groups are projected to peak in 2019/20 before declining again (see Annex 2)***

THE FACTS: The calculation of surplus places is fundamentally flawed for a variety of reasons and illustrated above. As a consequence, reliance on them could result in increased expenditure in the medium term, not savings.

In the January 2009 Billet it stated that the primary school population would decrease by 180 between then and 2020. However the information now being supplied is that primary school population is increasing and is expected to reach its peak in 2019 at 4190. The Education Department's figures showed that the number of pupils attending States primary schools in November 2007 was 3845 therefore, taking away the proposed reduction in numbers of 180 would mean that in 2009 Education was expecting a primary population of 3665 by 2020.

However the projection contained in the Annex 2 to the current report states that the 2019 figures will be 4190; an **increased projected figure of 525 pupils**. An incredible variation and one which we feel **throws doubt on the whole of Education's projections and analysis**.

Conclusion

Population movements are difficult to anticipate predict and plan for, but failure to make adequate provision and have spare capacity will lead to significant issues – and ultimately the opening / re-opening of an additional school. This is not a cheap option.

There is no provision for immigration, for the change in the economic climate, for population density movements within the island, etc. This is all further evidence that Education have not got a clear plan on how they will take this "Vision" forward and successfully deliver it.

ONE-FORM VERSUS TWO OR THREE-FORM ENTRY

REPORT SAYS: 1.12

*In order to develop a primary school system where every child on the island has access to a rich, **stimulating curriculum** that develops and challenges them to achieve their personal, social and intellectual potential, **schools need to be two or three-forms of entry.***

THE FACTS: St Andrew's School constantly strives to create a vibrant and dynamic school community where everyone is valued, differences are celebrated and everyone is nurtured but also challenged in order to become **a successful learner, a confident individual, an effective contributor and a responsible citizen.** St Andrew's not only covers the whole curriculum but enriches it with innovative approaches. Examples of this are:-

1. **Special Event Days:** Holding special days every year to help our children's understanding of Evacuation, Occupation and Liberation. We spent an Evacuation Day in Herm and one in Vale. We also built two floats for the 60th and 65th Liberation Cavalcades. The **2011 Validation Report** stated:

"Pupils show considerable respect for others, which demonstrates their excellent progress in developing as responsible citizens. They engage in a very wide range of civic and cultural activities, based on superb links with the wider community. This is illustrated exceptionally well by the very impressive link with the Red Cross, which enables pupils to take part in the 'Liberation Cavalcade'. This makes the island's history come alive for pupils. They worked closely with many people in the community to make a stunning float which links to the community theme to 'Remember and Celebrate' experiences from the Second World War."

A research project conducted by the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services (Day et al 2010) found that building and improving the reputation of the school and **engaging with the wider community were considered to be essential** in schools where improvements in learning outcomes were brought about.

2. **Hustings:** We are one of the only schools to organise Hustings meeting with actual prospective States candidates, followed by an election for the children. Combined with visits to the Douzaine Room on Election Day, the school does its best to increase awareness and real understanding, preparing our children for their future responsibilities.

3. **Beachwatch campaign:** For the last 13 years we have supported the Beachwatch campaign, cleaning L'Eree beach. This is a great practical way in which to implement our **Citizenship programme and raise environmental awareness**.
4. **Outdoor learning Environments:** St Andrew's has created one of the best outdoor learning environments in the island, which is continually being developed by the combined efforts of our own School Grounds Club, families who volunteer on our annual School Grounds Day, St Andrew's Bloomers (our local floral group) and the wider community, such as Nigel Clark from Queux Patio Plants. We have just had a storyteller's seat installed together with seats cut from a sycamore tree that was taken down from outside the Douzaine Room - a beautiful example of how the **local community works with the school**. This year the school won a special prize at the Floral Guernsey Awards for "Outstanding Contribution to the Community". Needless to say the children understand and embrace the need to protect and conserve their environment.
5. **Extensive extra-curricular activities:** Our range of extra-curricular activities on offer is equal to, or better than, most large schools. The children have access to Guernsey French, Gardening, Drumming, Cartoon Drawing, Drama, Netball and Football Clubs. We have annual residential trips to Herm, Lihou Island/Fauxquets Valley and France (jointly with Forest School).
6. **University Week:** For the last 4 years the school has held a University Week in the summer term. This not only **raises aspirations but adds breadth and wider opportunities** to the curriculum. Over 14 different "degree courses", ranging from local history to zoology and photography to sugarcraft, are offered by using the knowledge and expertise of the staff, parents, carers and wider community.
7. **St Andrew's Church:** The school enjoys close links with St Andrew's Church where it holds its annual Harvest, Easter and Christmas services. We have always enjoyed a close relationship with each residing Rector, who has always visited the school on a regular basis, delivering assemblies and providing the pupils with meaningful spiritual messages. The Church is also invaluable in providing the best place in which to explore and understand some aspects of R.E. topics.

8. **Nursery Education:** St Andrew's is one of only two States schools who provide Nursery Education, albeit only one afternoon a week. We understand how vital this stage of education is and the whole staff is committed to providing this facility for our children. You can see the results in the Reception children each year – they already feel part of the school.
9. **Inter-island events:** participation in inter-island events is a regular element to the school calendar for all years. Examples include Smoke-Busters athletics, Eisteddfod (Guernsey French, etc.) and inter-school football tournaments demonstrating that just because we are single form entry does not mean we cannot participate and excel at larger events
10. **Federated Activities:** the learning environment is extended beyond the classroom and indeed the school grounds. St Andrews Primary runs annual activities in conjunction with Forest Primary School such as Year 4 inter-year creative curriculum and a trip to France. A recommendation mentioned previously.

The evidence to support the **premise that larger schools with multi-form intakes offer a greater range within the curriculum is uncertain**. This is clearly evidenced above. **The majority of research into the benefits of a “broad” and “varied” range to the curriculum has mainly been carried out on secondary schools – yet Education is targeting Primary Schools.**

In relation to primary schools the OFSTED report in 2000 acknowledged that it was **well within the capacity of teachers in small schools to teach the full range of the National Curriculum**. There is also the conviction that breadth of curriculum is not a justification for larger schools, breadth of curriculum does not ensure attainment, it is the opportunity for in-depth learning which allows the child to grasp core and defined concepts in the topics they are taught which is the key attainment (Donovan, S et al 2000)

An Australian study analysed the influence of school size and the breadth of the curriculum offered. This study looked at schools that ranged from 76 – 1234 students and found that **school size in fact played a relatively small role in accounting for the variation in the range of subjects on offer**.

In Cooper 1989 it was found that in actual fact that the **curriculum was in fact covered with greater breadth, depth and richness in smaller classes**.

Jamison et al (1998) had similar observations to make:

the important thing was that the range of teaching methods was not as restricted as with larger classes and they were more likely to explore ideas further and occasionally extend the curriculum beyond what was prescribed

Conclusion

The quality, depth and breadth of education can be met and can be excelled in by single-form entry schools.

It can also be delivered more effectively, be responsive to local school needs, be more adaptable to changes in educational practice and moreover be delivered more cheaply as the layer of administrative burden is not required. This cannot be said for schools of larger size.

There are no economies of scale here: these are not factories – these are schools.

REPORT SAYS: 4.4

*From an educational perspective **two or three-form entry schools are preferable**. Developing **leadership, teaching and teamwork** are key elements since these are the factors that produce the best outcomes. These are **easier to secure in larger primary schools**.*

THE FACTS: The concept of teachers working together to pool ideas and resources is one to be applauded. **There is no research that states this is best achieved within class groups**. There are numerous ways that this can be achieved and are detailed in the PISA report 2009. Typically this can be **best achieved through good communication between teaching staff sharing ideas and experiences and not through sheer size**.

The OFTED review in England in 1999 found that there was a greater ease of communication among members of staff and particularly between head teacher and the other teachers. This led to the sharing of ideas and experiences and helped to create a positive atmosphere in the school which allowed each child's progress to be monitored more closely. The most important finding from Ontario, Canada was that their rise of standards was in large part due to the bringing together of different professionals to share practices and exchange ideas (p.47 McKinsey 2012). **At no point does this argue that it has to be done within a single school**.

There are numerous other examples from Canada, Singapore and America that imply that the ideas that people bring together from outside the immediacy of the teachers' school, actually improves teaching standards. McKinsey (2012) states that a way to improve schools is to open up channels between schools to share learning and support each other. This was particularly true of Singapore who in 1997 established its school clusters as a forum for principals to share experiences and best practices and do some local level resource allocation which removed the centralisation of resourcing. There was no mention at this time of school closures to enhance resourcing or multiple intake schools being more desirable.

Conclusion

Quality of life is something that Guernsey prides itself on delivering. Not all teachers, people even, are money driven: offering a larger salary will attract a different person to the job – and this may not always be desired especially in an educational environment where pastoral care and holistic educational outcomes need to be considered (that is not just Key Stage markers but all the other aspects of the curriculum – responsible citizen, effective contributors and confident individuals).

Rather, what is required is passion and commitment and the desire to contribute to the fabric of the school. With this come the leadership, teaching and framework that Education refers to. Moreover this is not exclusive to multiform intake schools. It can happen in any school – and it can be achieved just as easily.

REPORT SAYS: 4.4

There are opportunities for learners to have a 'broader' friendship group and move between classes.

THE FACTS: In smaller schools not only are friendships **forged within their class but it is easier to make friends within other age groups too**. All classes play together during breaks and lunchtimes quite naturally rather than keeping to their age groups. This is not necessarily possible within larger schools especially if they are "reasonably full" (the preferred state as outlined in Education's Vision), as there may not be the necessary physical space in the school or Key Stages to interact as a social unit. Where capacity is being reached the more probable outcome is that the years are segregated or worse the year group is segregated itself into smaller units during play time, assemblies, school events (Christmas plays, etc).

Small schools also teach tolerance and understanding of different personalities as children cannot be moved out of class. The issues are dealt with rather than avoided. A research project carried out in 2000 by Wasley et al concluded small schools are places where students "build relationships and the skills to cooperate, disagree and negotiate with other students and teachers".

There is also the matter of safety in small schools with less bullying. Students learn more in safe settings and an environment that is free from bullying is a prerequisite for effective learning in school. (Klonsky 2002 Jimerson L , 2006). In addition small schools by their very nature provide a high level of social interaction between year groups helping to foster a strong sense of community and personal responsibility. With this strong sense of community clearly evident it enables a better transition to secondary schools as the pupils will not only know those within their year, but also in years above.

Conclusion

Single-form entry does not preclude friendship bonds from being formed. In fact the very nature of single-form entry makes these bonds mandatory not just within their own year but across year grounds. Moreover these bonds are more important as there is no anonymity that larger intakes offer. Best behaviour at all times is the norm.

Review of Primary Education in Guernsey (2012) by Denis Mulkerrin

Mr Mulkerrin assisted in the preparation of the report by two former primary school teachers, Trevor Grayland and Tim Tatham. At the time of his report, Mr Mulkerrin was not a member of the Education Board; he was appointed as a non-voting member of the Board in September 2012.

Surprisingly the move to a **policy of 2/3-form entry primary schools was not a recommendation** of the report. In fact Mr Mulkerrin does not even mention it anywhere in his 35 page report. Consequently, Education's current mantra that children will receive a better primary education in a multi-entry school is **neither supported nor mentioned in the report**. The only mention of single-form entry is in relation to Forest Primary School (para 5.5):

Since then the school has been upgraded and remains a flourishing one-form entry school

The current Education Department's proposal is based on its own multi-criteria analysis subject to external scrutiny by a UK education expert, Mr Christopher Edwards. It is based very much on what is current thinking in England and Wales based on:

the most informed analysis from the UK Audit Commission and Estyn, the Welsh Inspection Agency.

However, Mr Mulkerrin, in the report states when comparing other jurisdictions:

There is a tendency for Guernsey to compare itself with either Jersey or England. In education, the reality is that England has been slipping down the international league tables for a number of years. The leading country for education in Europe is Finland.

Conclusion:

1. There is **no recommendation in the Report to adopt a 2/3-form entry policy** across the whole island.
2. The **report does not find that a 2/3-form entry school will provide a better educational outcome** for its pupils.
3. English education policies have seen the **standard of English primary education fall – and therefore is not a model that should be adopted**

SCHOOL AND CLASS SIZES

REPORT SAYS: 1.7

1.7: *The Education Department currently has a policy that class sizes in the primary sector should **not exceed 28 pupils in general and should not exceed 25 pupils in the three social priority schools** (Amherst, La Mare de Carteret and Vauvert)*

1.11: *The research conclusively demonstrates that the **challenges facing Guernsey Primary are easier to address in larger primary schools**, with greater resources.....*

Larger primary schools:

- *Have greater flexibility in their provision of the curriculum*
- *Are able to teach different ability groups separately;*
- *Classes can be grouped and set across the year group to meet the needs of different ability groups*
- *There are opportunities for learners to have broader friendship group and move between classes*
- *Are less dependent on outside agencies to deliver curriculum enhancement*
- *Extra-curricular opportunities and opportunities for greater diversity in larger schools*

THE FACTS: Education is choosing to use the maximum **class size figure of 28 to suit its argument but fail to mention the optimum class size.** In Education's Report of Nov 2008 it stated that:

Schools are advised to aim for classes of approximately 24 pupils, and lower if possible in the social priority schools if staffing resources permit.

How is it that the goalposts have moved between the two reports?

There is considerable discussion about school and class sizes and the research is still variable and ambiguous as has been highlighted by the proposal in the Billet. **There has not been a conclusive agreement on the notion that larger schools more easily address the difficulties in attaining excellent standards of education.**

Craig's (2001) research is quoted in the proposal by the States:

...research shows that a review suggests an optimum school size is somewhere between 200 and 500

St. Andrew's Primary School is described as being a small school.

The definition of a small school and a large school at primary school level needs consideration. **A small school by general definition is one of less than 50** (Speilhofer, O'Donnell, Benton, Schagen and Schagen 2002). There is much debate about the impact of school size on primary education and a number of factors need to be considered including the impact of education on social and personal development as well as academic achievement. **This is part of Maslow's hierarchy of learning which is purported to be an important consideration in the Guernsey curriculum** and the my world triangle as put forward by the Scottish Government taken from the SHINAARI from the World Health Organisation (see addendum). It is also a key consideration in current teacher training.

Most of the literature seems to agree that a **class size of 21 is about average** in the OECD and G20 countries. McKinsey and Company (2012) and PISA (2009) give the average class sizes. These are all average class sizes with no reference to whether the schools with these class sizes are single or multiple intake schools. This is the main crux of the arguments put forward by the current Education Department in Guernsey. The top consistently performing schools in Europe are in Finland and Denmark. These two countries have average class sizes in primary school education of less than 20. (St Andrew's class sizes are currently within the average range of 20-26). Finland is consistently shown as a model of good practice with a good size school being 190 and a large class size considered to be 26. These schools have a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, diversity of pupils with children from a wide ethnic mix.

There is one constant in all the literature which is that **the standard of teachers is the primary indication of a successful school system**. There is also another constant that if the class size increases the methodology of teaching has to change with it (Blatchford 2011; Blatchford et al 2003; Blatchford et al 2002). **Teachers cannot teach a class of 22 in the same way that they teach a class of 31, which is what a number of class teachers will be asked to do in Guernsey should these proposals go through.**

The OFSTED report in 1999 found no evidence to support the premise that children in small schools (51-100 pupils) were disadvantaged because their teachers lacked sufficient subject knowledge to teach the required broad curriculum. The review in actual fact found that the teaching in small schools was slightly better than in other schools.

There is a suggestion that smaller schools tend to be sited in relatively affluent areas which mean that the expectations of success are higher than in more urban and socio-economically deprived areas (OFSTED 1999). There is also a suggestion that areas which have socio-economic deprivation should be merged with more affluent areas to increase the diversity of the population within the

school. This is balanced however with the need to then maintain smaller class sizes of approximately 26 with excellent standards of teaching and increased teachers' salaries.

As stated above the Education department have highlighted Amherst, La Mare de Carteret and Vauvert as social priority schools and as such the class sizes in these schools should not exceed 25.

One-third of St Andrew's pupils are also from social priority housing and yet we are perceived somehow to be an "affluent" school.

OFSTED 2000 found that in terms of overall quality of education, inspections show that pupils in small schools are not disadvantaged in comparison with those in larger schools because of the size of the school. **Small schools are equally capable of providing an effective education and many are the most cost effective** in the country (England). Small schools often achieve higher scores than larger schools.

The studies showed that **small schools size is unambiguously good for students from low socio-economic backgrounds** (Cobbold 2006; Leithwood and Jantzi 2009). Leithwood and Jantzi (2009) found that whilst small schools were clearly advantageous to those students who come from lower economic backgrounds, **it was not a disadvantage to students who were more advantaged and/or higher achieving students**. St. Andrew's Primary School currently has 34% of its pupils drawn from social housing. The Education Department has used social housing as a definition of social economic need and a priority in terms of investment.

What actually constitutes a small class? In some literature the definition is a class of 13-17 pupils with a regular class size being 22-25 and a large class size of being over 30. Current literature seems to agree that a class size of 21 is about average in the OECD and G20 countries. McKinsey and Company (2012) and PISA (2009) give the average class sizes. These are all average class sizes with no reference to whether the schools with these class sizes are single or multiple intake schools.

The top consistently performing schools in Europe are in Finland and Denmark. These two countries average class sizes in primary school education of less than 20. (St. Andrew's Primary School class sizes are currently within the average range of 20-26). Finland is consistently shown as a model of good practice with a good size school being 190 and a large class size considered to be 26. These schools have a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, diversity of pupils with children from a wide ethnic mix.

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**. There are some ambiguous results from the number of studies that have taken place over this issue of class size if all that is taken into consideration is the narrow band for achievement and success

being in literacy and numeracy measures. Whilst the outcomes for schools are clearly to produce literate and numeric pupils there are a number of other measures which should be taken into consideration.

The U.S Department of Education commissioned research into small schools and it noted the value of small schools in increasing achievement, graduation rates, satisfaction, and improving behaviour has been “confirmed with a clarity and a level of confidence rare in the annals of education research” (Nathan & Thao, 2007). In support of this, meta-analyses by Hedges (2000) concluded that small classes have positive and sometimes enduring effects on student achievement (Lytton, 2000). Wang and Finn (2000) state that there is something special about a small class as it could encourage more shared responsibility and less distraction which makes it different in kind, and not reducible to a simple ratio of children to teachers.

Class sizes and within class ratio groupings are connected and have implications for children’s learning experiences. Blatchford et al 2001 found that group sizes varied with the size of the class and age of the child. The number of groups within a class increased with increasing size of the class. **In classes of more than 25 the pupils were more likely to be in a large group of 7-10. The teachers who took part in the study reported that groups of this size had a negative educational effect in terms of quality of teaching, pupil concentration and their contribution to group work.** Yet Education’s proposals state that the multi-entry schools will have **maximum sizes of 28** (or 25 in the social priority schools).

Research into “Within Class Groups” was continued by Blatchford and reported on in 2003 stating the more children in a class, the more children in the groups within the class, which then become too large. This, in turn, reduces effectiveness in an educational environment with a teacher having to choose between larger groups or more groups and with larger groups there could be an adverse effect on quality of teaching and the quality of pupils’ work and concentration.

The OFSTED report in 1999 found no evidence to support the premise that children in small schools (51-100) pupils were disadvantaged because their teachers lacked sufficient subject knowledge to teach the required broad curriculum. The review in actual fact found that the teaching in small schools was slightly better than in other schools.

One of the main ways of understanding the effect of class size is in terms of the classroom processes which may be involved (Anderson, 2000). Several studies indicate that **smaller classes allow teachers to interact with students more frequently and in an individualised way** (Lytton, 2000). In smaller classes, **pupils are more likely to be on task and have the teacher's attention, allowing students to be more engaged socially and academically, resulting in greater learning** (Oen, 2009).

Studies suggest that **students become more active as class size decreases** (Blatchford et al., 2008) which implies that students in small classes pay more attention to the teacher, respond more frequently, or initiate more interactions than students in larger classes (Lytton, 2000). With smaller classes, **teachers get to know each pupil in more depth** (Finn et al, 2003), and show higher sensitivity to individual needs (Blatchford et al, 2003) as well as “more emotional and instructional support has been observed in smaller classes, together with a major sense of closeness of teachers toward each child” (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2004). Pedder (2006) stated:

*“if students are asked about the issue of class size, they report clearly that **class size makes a difference** to them, such as increased use of whole-class teaching, fewer student questions seeking help or clarification, more frequent teacher probing, and the availability for longer waiting for pupil responses lead to higher attainments in smaller classes (Arico, 2011).*

This is supported by Blatchford, Russel, Bassett, Brown, and Martin (2007) who found teachers did not have sufficient time to pose follow-up questions or answer all questions thoroughly in larger classes, having an **increasing administrative burden on teachers and decreasing the time they can spend on instruction and addressing students' individual needs** (Arico, 2011).

Blatchford et al (2008) found that in smaller classes, students were the focus of teachers' attention more frequently, across different attainment levels and is the same for students with different cognitive and behavioural characteristics (Lytton, 2000) with **more one-to-one teaching taking place** due to the teacher's main attention being on the children (Arico, 2011). In smaller classes there is more teaching related directly to the subject knowledge than in larger classes (Blatchford et al, 2007) and teachers were better able to recognise difficulties and adapt methods to meet the individual needs.

Folmer-Annevelink et al (2009) also discovered the relationship between interaction and class size was negative where more student-teacher interactions of all types occurred in smaller classes (Lytton, 2000). Some of the most significant findings concerned the effect of class size and giving support to children as they read, showing that in larger classes, children read to their teachers less often and for less time (Blatchford, 2003).

Larger classes present more challenges for classroom management and assessment because teachers are put under more strain (Blatchford, 2011) whereas smaller classes can create “facilitating conditions for teachers to teach and students to learn” (Wang & Finn, 2000).

Pupils in larger classes are twice as likely to be off task, less likely to attend to their teacher and were more off task (Blatchford et al, 2003). There are significant relationships between class size and distractibility with the larger the class, the more distracted the pupils are and teachers even

reported that when in larger groups or classes, it was harder for pupils to concentrate (Blatchford, 2003). (Blatchford et al, 2003).

Overall, there is support for **more teacher support for learning in smaller classes**, allowing them to be more effective and having a significant effect on the number of student-teacher interactions as well as those with peers (Blatchford, 2003). Better discipline and enhanced classroom environment as purported by many researchers to be a fundamental aspect to improve the learning environment and this belief in the link between class size and discipline is borne out in numerous parent/teacher questionnaires (PISA 2009, McKinsey 2012, OFSTED 1999, Scottish Government review 2006)

Smaller classes enable teachers to tailor their teaching to the needs of individual students, consider inclusivity, and have more time and opportunity to give individual students the attention they need (Blatchford et al., 2001) so students who need more attention are especially likely to receive more attention from the teacher (Houtveen & Reezigt, 2000). It has been found, that students in smaller classes are more likely to be engaged in learning behaviours and display less disruptive behaviour than those in larger classes (Blatchford et al, 2008) as well as teachers being able to devote more of their time to educational content (Lytton, 2000). The link between the discipline and small schools is further enhanced by the statistics as published in *Education Matters* 2010-2012 which identifies the number of exclusions:

School	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Amherst	3	1	1
St. Martins	0	3	2
St. Andrews	0	0	0
Forest	0	0	0

When looking into class sizes and the interactions which take place between children, you need to take **children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or those which require extra support into consideration** (Arico, 2011). Research has shown a statistically significant difference between the size of a class on Special Needs Inclusion Students where when placed in smaller classes, they scored higher than those in larger classes (Arico, 2011). This is because **students with disabilities benefit from individual attention and smaller class size, as do a lot of children**. Pupils who have ADHD thrive when given individual attention.

Resilience is a key marker for what makes for a successful child. This is the key to enhancing a child's wellbeing as it their ability to overcome social and environmental disadvantages. Researchers have

identified five critical themes in fostering resilience: feeling needed; feeling successful, feeling empowered, and feeling encouraged and hopeful (Pikes, Burrell & Holliday 1998, Scottish Government GIRFEC 2013). Small schools are more likely to maintain these characteristics because of the close relationships students have with teachers and other students.

There is evidence that a **higher percentage of students in smaller schools participate in extra-curricular activities than do so in larger schools**. (Cotton 1996; Coladarci & Cobb 1996; Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder 2004). Extra-curricular participation is associated with positive attitudes about their school experience and learning and higher self-esteem (Jimerson, L 2006). There is no doubt that St. Andrew's Primary School offer a wide range of these activities, Guernsey French, football, drama club etc. There is a suggestion that children from small schools uptake these opportunities for a variety of reasons, one of the most obvious being convenience. Larger schools are often situated further from the homes of the children therefore increasing the inconvenience in picking the children up. For a large number of children in St. Andrew's Primary School there is the added convenience of being able to walk home.

Conclusion

In this proposal, classroom sizes in reality far exceed the "average" provided by Education. Evidence does not support larger classrooms and multi-intake forms improving educational outcomes – but rather changes the dynamic of teaching and what can be offered in a negative way. Streaming of abilities can and is provided in single intake forms: it is not exclusive to multi-forms. Moreover benefits from shared learning experiences (tolerance, team work with different abilities) more accurately reflect the workplace and therefore provide better provisioning for the pupils in the future.

These larger class sizes also have more of an impact on social priority groups – which constitute over one third of St Andrew's Primary School pupils. Special consideration must be made to accommodate the needs of such groups. The cracks in which such pupils can fall widen in the larger environment and the social cost to this can be colossal (policing, social services, health services, etc.).

The sheer size of the school and class also has a negative impact on the flexibility of the school to deliver improved educational offerings. Multi-form intake schools are less flexible and do not offer better provision for assisting pupils with individuals needs than smaller ones. Consequently they do not offer better "Value for money".

RESOURCES

REPORT SAYS: 1:6

*The challenge therefore facing primary schools requires **the powerful and systemic use of available resources to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to improve outcomes generally but particularly for those with additional needs and the more able.***

Annex 1 Resources matter

THE FACTS: There are a number of statements made about the resourcing of the schools and how best we can meet the needs of the children by pooling resources. **Mulkerrin himself states that the type of building has little to do with the effectiveness** of the education system and this is supported in the research as reported in PISA 2009. **Yet this very issue is raised on numerous occasions.**

The current proposal by the Education Department and Deputy Sillars reports that the issues surrounding the closure of St. Andrew's Primary School are not about money but the documentation highlights that "the current structure has good schools but does not deliver value for money". The Mulkerrin review 2012, states "the Guernsey Education Department has to find savings of £1.6 million" and that "it is to be expected that the Department will consider the closure of some primary schools to make financial efficiencies."

This "poor value for money" **should not be the main argument when judging the effectiveness of a school.**

OFSTED takes into account the characteristics of the school, the background of its pupils together with the quality of teaching and leadership that contribute to the educational standards.

The McKinsey report also finds this as an important factor in the development of educational systems (McKinsey 2012). The closure of a school can appear to be like a "politically driven movement," a "violation of the pact between citizens and school boards". (Lytton 2000)

Research shows that there is a **weak relationship between educational resources and student performance with more variation explained by the quality of human resources** (i.e. teachers + school principles) than by material and financial resources. (PISA 2009)

The Hay Group (2006) has also found that for successful school mergers and closures there needs to be significant additional resourcing given to the receiving schools.

This increase in resourcing needs to **take into account the current size of the classrooms in the receiving schools.** Will there be resources available to ensure that **all** the children being moved will actually fit into their new schools?

The Department has already highlighted that there **may be a need to enlarge existing schools in order to absorb the children** but what do the children do whilst all this is being arranged. Are the classrooms designed to take 25, 28 or 31 children?

The Scottish Government in its review of class sizes in Scotland highlighted the consequence of increasing class and school size as the pressure on the physical space, and therefore resources within the physical space of classroom, are increased (Day et al 1996). **For the 'receiving' schools which end up with larger class sizes and become overcrowded this can lead to many problems in the short and long term, and is therefore detrimental to all learners** (Tran, 2011). There are concerns raised about the lack of space in large classes and increasing noise levels which is felt to adversely affect the child's education and confidence.

Conclusion

Criticism of St. Andrew's Primary School as a resource not being cost effective is a spurious point. Educational costs will not be absorbed or negated by any school closure. The effectiveness of resources and its quality rely on being targeted.

Consistency of delivery across the island through consolidation of resources, a core argument of the "Vision", seems to be more about diluting education into a "new standard of normal" – this invariably is downwards and contradicts both the purpose of the FTP and Education's own "Vision".

THE LINK BETWEEN COMMUNITY AND SCHOOLS

REPORT SAYS:

Within section 4 several references are made to the **important part a school plays within its community** when related to the rebuilding of La Mare de Carteret Primary School. However there is **little reference to the impact of the changes that the closure will make to St. Andrew's community.**

4:11 i – A local primary school is an excellent location to co-locate community facilities.

*4:11iv - From an education welfare perspective, **it is easier for children to attend school in their local area**, especially if they are from lower income households, who may have fewer transport options available to them.*

*4:11 iv–there is a **need for enhanced community facilities in this area**, which are open to all*

*4:11 v –From a traffic perspective it is sensible to locate schools in areas of higher population density so more pupils have an opportunity to walk to school....The more pupils **who are able to walk to the school the less the Department needs to spend on transport cost**, and this proximity is consistent with the intentions of the infrastructure plans within the States Strategic Plan.*

THE FACTS: What makes a successful community? Rosie Niven quoted Geraldine Blake, Chief Executive of Community Links, on the 3rd May 2013. She defines her community as "a group of people that share values, activities, hopes and dreams". This could be said of the St. Andrew's community as displayed at some of our parish events including parish walks and Apple days organised by our Floral volunteer group and our annual Liberation Day event.

There is little stated on the size of the population or the population density in the definition of what makes a community. All are valued within their own right.

It has been made clear through the media that the impact of the closure of St Andrew's School on the community was not a primary consideration. Yet **small schools are often the glue that binds together small communities serving as their economic and social hub**. Closing this small school is indeed **more than closing a building it is about closing the collective and civic hub of the community** (Jimerson, L 2006)

There is evidence that notes closing a school and moving students from where they have a sense of belonging and community to a new environment has varying effects on the lives of students and their families.

Students are likely to experience loss, displacement and various degrees of difficulty settling into a new school environment (Churchill & Carrington 2001).

Whilst in itself this is **not a reason to negate change it is a consideration** on the long term impact on the lives of 168 children and their families.

A key factor in the closure of St. Andrew's Primary School is the method in which children are to be settled into their new schools. Unlike St. Sampson's Infant School where all the children will be moved together, which in itself brings challenges (Hay Group 2006), **St. Andrew's Primary School children will face the additional challenge of being dispersed between several receiving schools**, thus disintegrating friendship groups which have marked their lives so far. It is well documented that the closing of schools have **implications for student achievement in their new school, in terms of the lowering of attainments**, with some schools showing a decline in **performance of 55% over a 3 year period** being demonstrated (Hay Group 2006, Kuziemko 2006). A research study in the USA also demonstrated a decline in student achievement as a result of school closures and questions the marginal fiscal savings to sustain small schools against the future economic costs in the decline of standards (cited by Trevor Cobbold 2011).

In order to be Responsible citizens the Well Being Wheel also states that children should be involved in the decision making that will affect them directly. The question must arise therefore as to whether the children have in any way been consulted by those that are said to represent their interests. The National Association for Small Schools states

*it is common ground that, whether or not consultation of interested parties and the public is a legal requirement, if it is embarked upon it must be carried out properly. **To be proper, consultation must be undertaken** at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage; it must include **sufficient reasons for particular proposals** to allow those consulted to give intelligent consideration and an intelligent response; adequate time must be given for this purpose; and **the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account** when the ultimate decision is taken.*

The Guernsey Education Department has signed up and adopted the ideas and commitments as identified by the Scottish Government (Well Being Wheel) and **has incorporated this into its own Curriculum Statement**. The Well Being Wheel clearly states that to be an effective contributor the child should play an active part in their community (see appendix A):

The curriculum is designed to enable all students to learn and achieve whilst promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It aims to prepare young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

This is what St. Andrew's Primary School does with many links to the community (see P.2/3)

The Hay group (2006) point out that schools underpin local prosperity and cohesion and that school closures are not simply a matter of logistics and infrastructures. They are a blend of divergent cultures, ambitions and communities.

Conclusion

Locality, proximity and community are reasons proffered to focus efforts and monies on one school over another. But these reasons are discounted when considering St Andrew's Primary School, demonstrating the inequality of models, assessment and rationale behind the "Vision".

By dismantling a school the community goes with it as focus naturally redirects to activities that are dispersed throughout the island: they are not re-directed necessarily to the receiving school/community. Therefore both environments are negatively impacted: the closed school community is dispersed and the receiving school community is diluted.

Moreover the very educational principles that Education subscribe to:

- Responsible Citizen
- Effective contributors

are eroded by Education's "Vision"

Evidence

This section provides two sample extracts discussing the vitality and inter-connectedness between community and local schooling.

Small Schools: The Myths, Reality, and Potential of Small Schools

By STUART GRAUER and CHRISTINA RYAN -

*Research consistently reveals that in small schools, students of all “types” feel they can connect with one another much more readily and openly, and also with caring adults whom they know quite personally. If well led, a school develops its own, unique culture of belonging and achievement. **The true small school offers a greater sense of relationship connectedness and opportunity among virtually all stakeholders, such as are implicit in small organizations and communities** (Cotton, 2006).*

Among complex organizations, developing a unique, shared culture is more likely where the organization is small. Wasley et al. (2001), Nathan and Thao (2001), and many other researchers over the past generation have found that small schools create communities where students are “known, encouraged, and supported” and have increased teacher-student connection.

*A literature review of the sense of connectivity and safety at school lead us to probably the most profound findings in all our research: Learning is more equitably distributed in smaller schools (Lee & Smith, 1997 as cited in Husbands and Beese, 2004; Cotton, 1996). **Small schools create more opportunities for participation per capita**; a larger percentage of students participate and they participate in more kinds of activities (Black, 2002). Because small schools need a large percentage of students to fill each activity, they engage a broader cross-section of students, helping reduce social and racial isolation (Clotfelter, 2002). These are striking findings, given longstanding and almost universal large school claims to offer more diverse learning and socialization opportunities.*

The sense of connectedness in small schools is not only felt and shared among students, it is shared by virtually all stakeholders and, in particular, with teachers. Here are four examples. First, research shows that in small schools, relationships between students and adults are strong, trusting, and on-going. There is much more advising going on, either formally or informally. Almost any small school student or alumni can tell you that, although this is not always easy to measure. This leads to a clearer, safer, more enriched path to graduation and

postgraduate plans, which are easier to measure--and the bonds continue on longer after graduation. Secondly, relationships with parents are strong and on-going. Likewise, small school parents are closer to teachers and administration and have higher levels of parental involvement, and parental involvement is a critical factor in student success (Thorkildsen & Stein, 1998).

The power of close relationships

By L Jimerson, 2006:

*Out of the three categories we believe that the area of **relationships is most critical for positive student outcomes, most uniquely characteristic of small schools, and most difficult to foster through policy**. It is relatively easy to institute an instructional reform and/or change structural elements. However, nurturing close relationships through mandates is certainly tricky.*

Schools usually are reflections of the communities in which they are located. And smaller communities are typically places that naturally result in close interpersonal connections, where individuals know, share with, and care for each other. Smaller schools mirror these qualities and reduce student alienation, teacher isolation, and rigid boundaries between the administration and the rest of the staff. We believe the resultant culture of small schools is qualitatively and intrinsically different from that of larger schools and that this closeness permeates all areas of schooling and makes a huge difference for children.

***Small schools have lower rates of negative social behaviour**, including classroom disruptions, vandalism, fights and theft. (Cotton, 1996) The social behaviour of students from low income families is even more positively impacted by small schools than that of other students. (Cotton, 1996)*

STAFF CONTINUITY AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There are a number of statements made by the Education Department about staff continuity and continuing professional development being more easily attained in bigger schools with multi-intake forms. This has to be called into question on several levels.

REPORT SAYS:

1.11 Larger primary schools provide more peer support and mentoring for teachers in each year group, can have a strong place in their communities and should have greater staff continuity and be less vulnerable to the influences of weak teaching.

*4:4 Greater staff continuity means that the **class is less vulnerable** to the influence of weak teaching.*

***Staff work as teams** when planning for parallel classes – teachers pool ideas and support each other, and year group colleagues can advise and support on a day by day, hour by hour basis.*

***Larger schools are less dependent on outside agencies** to deliver curriculum enhancement*

*4:19 **Enhanced curriculum development aligned to school development plans***

Continued curriculum development such as improving teacher subject knowledge, focusing specifically on core subject areas and sustaining the profile and on-going skills development of subject leaders

THE FACTS: The emphasis on staff continuity should be considered when engaging in the transformation of the Primary sector. Teacher attitude and morale is a significant factor in the success of an education system. There are a number of pieces of research (Lee & Loeb 2000, Wasley et al 2000, Blatchford et al 2006, Cobbold 2011) which **highlight that teachers in small schools tend to be more satisfied with their positions, have less absenteeism, collaborate more with colleagues, and take greater responsibility for student learning.** Small schools are places where teachers have a stronger sense of professional community and more opportunities to work as a team (Mohr, 2000, Alberta Education project 2001).

Professional development in small schools is often perceived as more valuable and effective (Klonsky, M. 2002). It tends to be **more focused on school priorities**, on-going and peer-led. Staff development should be designed to develop a professional community in which teachers share what works for different students. This does not have to be limited to single years but should be cross

school. The success of this type of teaching community was highlighted in the paper by Snart et al 2001.

Research has found that in many small schools there is a good or very good ethos where staff work with a clear sense of purpose (Estyn, 2006). An OFSTED report stated that

Head Teachers see many dimensions to their teaching role but all see it as an excellent opportunity to develop effective relationships with pupils and their parents, and as a means of improving their schools from the classroom outwards...'

and it has been proposed that "Head Teachers, particularly in the smallest schools, demonstrated a high level of technical skill" (Smith & Hudson,).

This **link with parents is also a key element highlighted by Mulkerrin** in his review of schools 2012,

the Education Department is pleased that the report recognised the very real value that volunteers can bring to schools by helping with reading with our children. Volunteers also help schools in many other ways. The relationship between parents and their school is relevant to St Andrew's. It is the partnership between parents and small schools where the extent of parents' contribution to school life is best in the smallest schools. Often a special closeness develops between the smallest schools and parents, which contributes positively to school life.

Further details of the links between parents (as volunteers) and the school life can be found in the end of year presentation from the Head teacher to the AGM on the 27th September 2013.

The countries and regions that have managed to move their schools from poor to fair, fair to good, good to great have some aspects in common that allowed these transformations to take place (McKinsey 2012). The emphasis was not **necessarily on the continuity of teaching staff within the schools but the continuity of the team driving through change**. How is Guernsey to guarantee this when a senior member of the team has already intimated in a meeting held at St. Andrew's Primary School that he is considering his position as an on-going Deputy in the Guernsey Bailiwick (Guernsey Press 8th October 2013)?

There is also a great emphasis on the salary offered to the best teachers to attract them to the post and to encourage them to stay.

In offering higher salaries, will the savings made on the closure of St. Andrew's Primary School actually free up the resources to promise this?

Conclusion

Larger schools do not necessarily provide better value for money when it comes to staffing. Attributes such as:

- better staff motivation
- personal staff achievements and engaging in the direction of the school
- focus on school priorities
- better parent-teacher relationships vital in the support the teaching objectives

All are equally if not more characteristic of single-form schools. Moreover there is less financial waste as CPD is more focused to relevant areas/goals for the school and not generic and/or irrelevant, typical of larger environments.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

TRANSPORT

REPORT SAYS:

4.10 viii Due to St Andrew's central location it's **easier to relocate pupils** to nearby schools.

4.11 iv From an education welfare perspective, **it is easier for children to attend school in their local area**, especially if they are from lower income households, who may have fewer transport options available to them

4.11 v From a traffic perspective it is **sensible to locate schools in areas of higher population density** so more pupils have the opportunity to walk to school.

5.2 **Some children will have to travel further to school and use other means of transport when at the moment they are able to walk to school.** From an education perspective, the educational and economic advantages of having two and three-form entry schools outweigh this disadvantage.

THE FACTS: St Andrew's School children will be disadvantaged if they are moved to the receiving schools for the following reasons:-

1. Official figures show that on-island transport accounted for the greatest percentage of Guernsey's **carbon emissions** last year, more even than on-island power generation.² More children being sent out-of-catchment will increase this even further.
2. **Increased difficulties for those families who do not drive** (mainly from social housing). Total reliance on buses, taxis, family/friends for all trips including on-going appointments for e.g. medical, dental, speech therapy. Will they get help with additional costs and has this been costed?
3. They will be put on buses that regularly drop off children late in the morning. **Will there be additional adults to keep the youngest children safe on longer journeys?**
4. **Close proximity to school is major factor in some pupils' attendance**, including the ability to go home for lunch, especially for those children with specific needs.
5. There will be a **greater possibility of breakdown of communication between school and home** as daily contact with parents/carers will not be so easy.
6. **A large proportion of our pupils choose to walk to school.** They will be denied this option.

³Facts & Figures 2013: <http://www.gov.gg/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=84325&p=0>

The effects of the proposed school closures on transport and the subsequent social and economic impacts

Shutting local parish schools such as St. Andrew's Primary and St. Sampson's Infants would force the majority of those children to travel further each school day, increasing catchment areas so that more children are beyond walking distance. Also, in the case of St. Andrew's Primary School, Deputy Sillars has expressed his hope that "most" children will go to either St. Martin's or Castel. This suggests that in many cases the department would actively **encourage children to attend a school outside of their catchment area**. Whatever the reasons for this, **there is no evidence that the Education board has thought through the resulting long-term social and economic impacts**.

Additional costs are therefore likely to be incurred in order to accommodate these shifts in commuting patterns: signals, diversions, and general review all have a financial implication

Why should children walk or cycle to school?

Well, there are many good reasons. Here are some of them:

- **Educational outcomes:**
 - Recent research shows that children that walk or cycle to school can **concentrate better and for far longer** than their peers who arrive by motorized transport – an effect much greater than that of having eaten breakfast. Educationally, they were deemed to be six months ahead of children who were driven or bussed in.³
- **Economic outcomes:**
 - The **cost of congestion** to the local economy is well known. Currently, St. Andrew is not heavily congested at peak school hours. **St. Martin and Castel are, however,** already heavily congested at peak school hours. More out-of-catchment children (especially those too young to catch the bus on their own) from St. Andrew's Primary School would make this existing problem significantly worse, with a detrimental effect on the local economy.
 - The **cost of obesity:** The States' own Obesity Strategy states that, "costs to society and businesses are forecast to rise to £45.5 billion annually – equivalent to £45.5 million in the Guernsey context." See above for more details. .
- **Social outcomes:**

³ <http://sciencenordic.com/children-who-walk-school-concentrate-better>

- walking and cycling to school gives children an important measure of independence that they simply don't get when being driven. Closing St. Andrew's Primary School would mean depriving many of these children of that opportunity, as their new school would be out of range, and it would force many parents into the unwilling role of taxi driver.

Conclusion

The environmental impact of Education's proposal is far reaching and is not considered in any depth in the proposal. Moreover this lack of consideration demonstrates the inherent contradiction and confusion within the proposal raising doubts as to the feasibility of the implementation of the "Vision".

Evidence

Documented below is further support for the environmental impact created by the “Vision”.

Living Streets

Our findings are backed up by Pat Wisher of Living Streets.

Living Streets Guernsey LBG (formerly STEPS) was launched at St. Andrew’s Primary School in 2002 and we have had a close relationship with the school ever since. St. Andrew’s Primary School has always encouraged its children to walk to school and has taken part in Car Free Days and Walk to School initiatives throughout the years. In 2001 the school took part in a walking audit organised by the Vulnerable Road Users Working Party of the Traffic Committee (of which I was chair). The report recommended many road safety improvements. Since that time traffic calming around the school has provided a safer environment for parents and children walking to school.

Living Streets is the charity that stands up for pedestrians. **It is totally opposed to policies that withdraw neighbourhood facilities meaning that locals are forced to drive rather than walk.** The Living Streets slogan on this issue is: KEEP THEM CLOSE, DON’T WATCH THEM CLOSE.

The Living Streets UK Walk to School campaign has been flying the flag for walking to school since 1995. It now reaches more than 1.9 million children each year. The Walk to School campaign’s aim is simple: to encourage all parents, children and young people to make walking to school part of their daily routine. 90% of parents who walk to school tell Living Streets how important this time is for spending quality time with their children. Over a third tell us that the journey to school is where they find out the most about their child’s life.

Parents walking their children to school in their early years help them develop life skills such as road safety and route finding, which helps children gain independence at an earlier age than children who only travel to school by car. A Living Streets UK survey showed that walking to school can save the average family £400 per year in motoring costs.

There is much research that highlights the health benefits of children walking to school. For example Australian research **found ‘overwhelming’ evidence that when children walk or cycle to school, they are better off physically, and in terms of their social and emotional wellbeing. Teachers report that children who walk to school are frequently more alert, relaxed and ready to start the school day compared to those arriving by car.**

A recent survey carried out by Intelligent Health, showed that walking to school helps children concentrate and could even reduce the need for drugs to control conditions such as ADHD. The

report said that the link between exercise and academic performance was “too strong to ignore”. (The NHS spends about £32 million each year on the three drugs most commonly used to treat ADHD, including Ritalin. (How much does HSSD spend?).

Very few children attending the current St. Andrew’s Primary School would be able to continue to walk to school if their school closed down.

States Departments are still not working together and considering the impact of decisions like the closing of local schools. The closure will have an effect on the policies of HSSD (20/20 Vision and the Obesity Strategy), and Environment (encouraging islanders to walk and cycle for short journeys).

The implications of bussing children to their new schools will not only be the **cost of the school buses** but also it will impact on the scheduled bus services. We already have a depleted morning commuter service owing to the number of buses required for the school service.

Contribution from Richard Lord of Sustainable Guernsey

I visited the St Andrew's Primary School grounds in June 2013 and was impressed with the rich natural habitat that is a part of the school grounds.

St Andrew's Primary School children have in their school grounds a wonderful, varied and biodiverse area to explore and learn about nature. This is an area that has **received considerable investment in time and money** with a woodland path, a pond with reeds and a platform to observe dragonflies and damselflies and other aquatic creatures, a willow walkway, vegetable growing beds, and educational interpretation boards in amongst the various habitats.

I have not seen habitat of this scale or diversity or had the sense of wildlife and wilderness at any other Guernsey primary school that I have visited including Forest School and St Martin's Primary school, although St Martin's has developed a small woodland and sensory garden, but it doesn't yet match the landscape value found at St Andrew's Primary School.

As our society increasingly moves away from its understanding of the Natural World **it is imperative that primary school children have the opportunity to explore nature and gain an appreciation for it.** Many of our society's current ills stem from our growing cultural belief that nature is 'nice to have' but not essential to our survival. Our modern world is making our civilisation's survival on Earth less likely as we do not adequately value Nature's role in sustaining us. Our society pollutes with abandon and this activity has severe consequences, which our present society is building up for future generations. The wildlife areas of St Andrew's Primary School have immense value to the children.

Besides St Andrew's Primary School being an integral part of St Andrew's parish community, and the school has been an important part of the parish's Floral competition entry, many pupils from the neighbourhood are able to walk with their parents to its location. This is such an important activity for reinforcing the parent - child relationship, for gaining road safety awareness, and for the physical exercise walking to school provides. By relocating St Andrew's primary school pupils to other schools, parents will be less able to walk their children to school because of the time constraints imposed by our society.

Our society makes many mistakes moving away from a healthy and sustainable society. Closing St Andrew's Primary School while purporting to be a cost saving, will have many costs that do not appear to have been adequately taken into account, which is why I believe that closing St Andrew's Primary School is a false economy.

SOCIAL IMPACT

The social impact of the “Vision” must also be considered in context of the contribution made by St. Andrew’s Primary School to the community and surrounding areas:

1. **Guernsey has always had a strong parochial identity. Dismantling of parish schools erodes this** to such a degree that this identity becomes irreplaceable.
2. The school has a **strong parental input** into activities such as the School Grounds club, sporting activities and other volunteer roles within the classroom. **This is unique to St. Andrew’s Primary School** given its location and rural amenities.
3. The **Guernsey Blind Association has a strong affiliation with the school** which affords the children the opportunity to empathise with less fortunate members of the community during their formative years. Comments from St. Andrew’s Primary School children have underlined the effect this has had on them and has led to subsequent understanding behaviour being demonstrated regularly.
4. **More than one third of children are from families that reside in social housing.** These children walk to the local school, some of whom require close attention from the teaching staff in meeting their educational requirements. This will be lost and may require additional support from various state funded groups at additional cost.
5. The break-up of the parochial environment, of which St. Andrew’s Primary School is very much the heart, **will lead to a destruction of community** and all that it brings to a neighbourhood.
6. There are families that have had generations of children attending the school and moved to St Andrew’s to continue this tradition. This has given them an identity and sense of belonging. These are local St. Andrew’s people that identify with the community and all it has to offer.

The closure of the school situated in the middle of Guernsey makes little sense. Modern families generally require both parents to work full-time, usually in St. Peter Port. The impact of having children relocated to a school further away from their homes, in some cases **even further away from their place of work will lead to huge disruption on already very busy and stressful daily lives.** Some members of the community do not possess their own mechanised transport (a car!) which makes the need to have a local school even stronger.

Community values cannot be underestimated. The comment from Mr Sillars during the BBC Radio phone-in that Guernsey is a small community is a convenient throw- way statement. There is clear evidence within St. Andrew's that involvement in a parochial style family community has directly resulted in alleviating some of the social problems found in other parts of the island.

CLOSING ARGUMENTS

1. The FTP is not supposed to cut frontline services. The evidence and research to prove that closing the school would lead to **detrimental outcomes for students** is compelling. Education's report clearly selected only research supporting its aims to save money. There is other, more recent and relevant research contradicting these claims.
2. Education's projected **saving figures are fundamentally flawed**. There is no consideration of the cost of bringing out-of-action classrooms into use, no extra money is being allocated to cope with increased student numbers in receiving schools and there has been no investigation of the social or environmental impacts which could have associated long term costs.
3. The calculation of **surplus places is fundamentally flawed** for a variety of reasons. For example, the calculation of available spaces at St. Martin's has had to be reduced by more than half due to the actual physical space available. As a consequence, reliance on them could result in increased expenditure in the medium term, not savings.
4. Social priority schools are being given special treatment by Education. However, more than **one-third of St. Andrew's pupils live in social priority housing**. The St Andrew's Primary School has a diverse and varied population. Numerous studies show that a small school size is unambiguously good for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds.
5. Population estimates indicate a surge in student numbers in 2019. Even at our **current capacity without closing school there will not be enough space**. Jersey is planning to extend schools now ready for this. Education's own calculations of student numbers varied by more than 500 in two reports published just 2 years apart. **What guarantee is there that the figures are right now?** The figures were wrong for Le Murier School which is reportedly already full just 5 years after being built at a multi-million pound cost. Population figures may appear to be falling but other States reports have identified the need for an increased

net migration to the island to support the ageing population with more taxpayers. Many of these will probably bring dependents.

6. The Director of Education admitted that research has shown a **detrimental effect on students that are moved school en-masse and also the students in the receiving schools.** This can be a drop in attainment of more than half and the repercussions can still be felt for **3 years after the move.** A research study in the USA questioned that validity of short-term savings when factoring the long-term cost of an overall fall in achievement. How much will it cost to get the displaced students back on track academically? Again, this has not been considered.
7. The **curriculum offer at St. Andrew's Primary School is as strong or stronger than many other island schools.** Research on curriculum offer in small schools at primary level is limited, but it has been found that the size of school does not impact on curriculum offer. Smaller classes often cover the curriculum "with greater breadth, depth and richness". A higher percentage of children in smaller schools participate in extra-curricular activities than do so in larger schools. There is an abundance of research showing there is a greater and more varied participation by children in extra-curricular activities in smaller schools.
8. **St. Andrew's Primary School buildings are robust and fit for purpose.** Qualified experts assessing the school and grounds recently concluded that there is ample space for expansion into a multiple form entry school without negative impact on hard or soft play areas. The school's central position within the community and the island should make it an **ideal candidate for expansion rather than closure** – how many parents pass by the school on their journey to work? Furthermore the St Andrew's Primary School is one of the cheapest to run.
9. There are **no projected costs for increasing training opportunities for teachers** in the larger schools that will apparently absorb the St. Andrew's teachers who have previously enjoyed greater CPD training opportunities. At the St. Andrew's Primary School meeting the **Director of Education stated that more money will be made available for training. If so, this is another cost that has not been included or mentioned in Education's report.**

10. **Multiple form entry is not necessarily better.** Research suggests that **collaboration between schools produces better results** rather than keeping all pooling of resources within the same establishment. To quote education “developing leadership, teaching and teamwork are key elements since these are the factors that produce the best [educational] outcomes”. However, this can be **carried out just as easily, and often more successfully, between schools** as has been proven in other jurisdictions.

11. **Small schools provide just as many opportunities to form varied friendship groups that often cross year groups.** Research has also found better development of negotiation skills and learning how to disagree but get along within students in smaller schools. Issues are dealt with rather than hidden.

12. The best performing country in Europe for primary education is **Finland where class sizes are small** and an acceptable school size is similar to that of St. Andrew’s Primary School. **The UK’s record in primary education is not strong and we should not be modelling Guernsey schools on a failing system.**

13. Quality of teaching is largely dependent on the quality of the teacher. It is proven that **teaching methods must change as class size increases.** When good quality teachers choose where to teach what proof is there that they as individuals with their own opinions prefer bigger schools?

14. Education’s planned increase in class size will lead to larger groups being formed within the class to enable some streaming within teaching. Research shows that as these groups get larger educational attainment falls. **Bigger class sizes do not raise educational outcomes.**

15. If we take the student-centred approach (as advised in teaching) and listen to the learner voice – small sized classes matter to students. Research proves that in smaller classes **“teachers were better able to recognise difficulties and adapt methods to meet the individual needs”.**

16. **Financial costs for monitoring the integration and wellbeing of St. Andrew's Primary School students have not been factored in.** Either teachers will be expected to carry out additional tasks on top of their teaching duties for no extra pay or there will be a cost to someone.
17. Environmental impact. **Currently 67 children walk to school.** The increased CO₂ emission for 1 student can be estimated to range from **300 to 600 kgs per year.** Clearly this is also a lot of fuel and a lot of time spent on just 1 child's journey.
18. The **impact of closing the school on the local community has not been considered.** However, it is **cited as a key reason for rebuilding La Mare de Carteret School.** Either the community is important or it isn't.
19. **Smaller schools offer better opportunities for teachers** and contrary to Education's claims a number of studies found that teachers in small schools tend to be more satisfied with their positions, have less absenteeism, collaborate more with colleagues, and take greater responsibility for student learning.
20. Children will be unable to walk to school and buses are not an ideal choice. There is currently no supervision on school buses, **how can this be safe for young children?** Multiple pick-ups and drop offs will mean increased travel times for students. They will be sitting in traffic on buses when they could be eating breakfast and preparing for learning. **No consideration has been given to the financial cost or the educational cost of children starting their day earlier** than necessary and spending time travelling rather than learning. **No consideration has also been given to the loss of quality time with the parent or carer** – all identified by Living Streets charity and one of multiple factors that prove the value of walking to school including increased attention and attainment at school.
21. With no consultation given to this critical educational service the report lacks authority and credence. This is supported by the failure to provide, at any point, detail supporting how Education would deliver this service: the methodology employed by Education throughout

has been untrustworthy and unreliable. There is no confidence therefore that Education can deliver their "Vision". That fact this proposal will take several terms of office to implement further undermines any credence or faith that this "Vision" is deliverable.

CONCLUSIONS

The Education Department quote McKinsey and Company on numerous occasions in their appendix to the Billet d'Etat.

For example:

Class size reduction facilitated by lower student-teacher ratios has probably been the most widely supported and most extensively funded policy aimed at improving schools

is used to argue against the benefits of smaller class sizes (Appendix 1 Paragraph 2).

This would indeed be a damning statement on the quality of small schools if not taken in context and challenged on many levels by many other researchers who have had the courage to look beyond the narrow confines of literacy and numeracy scores being the two single markers for positive educational attainments. It is hoped that some of these accusations made by the Guernsey Education department have been called into question by this paper.

Paragraph 2 Appendix 1 goes on to claim that in each study teacher quality issues dominate any effect of reduced class sizes. It would be best to suggest then that the current Education Department would like to look further into the McKinsey and company report 2012 which upheld the statement about teachers being the best factor in the enhancement of educational attainment. This report held Finland as a country with exceptional schools where the size of the school and the class does matter. It would be useful to draw attention to an article in the Guardian newspaper Sunday 5th 2010 (Vasagar, J) "Finland's schools flourish in freedom and flexibility". Perhaps Guernsey should look at the resourcing of successful schools one of which has been acknowledged to be St. Andrew's Primary School and allow the current teaching staff to have more flexibility to actually function as a small school rather than trying to mould it into acting like a big school which then reduces flexibility and the freedoms to teach subjects as they see fit.

The teaching staff of St. Andrew's Primary School have had to hear their level of commitment and the quality of their teaching being called into question on numerous occasions which could have reduced morale in the school. This is a time when the community spirit of this small school has shone through and should be used as an example to other schools. The determination and commitment shown is consistently used to demonstrate good standards of education and the benefits that a small school can bring to the community and to the children so why then is the Education Department trying to convince parents that closure is "the right thing"?

To quote Mulkerrin's Report on the issue of closure that the fundamental issues are:

The interests of the children must be the first consideration.

If there is a compelling reason to close a school it has to override the undoubted harm this could do to children and the local community.

Mulkerrin's Report does not recommend the closure of any primary school and the Report makes no suggestion that adopting a two or three form entry system provides a better educational outcome for the children than a single form entry.

There are few financial benefits to the "Vision" and those that may be conceded are lost in the costs of implementing the closure and delivery of the "Vision": a "Vision" fundamentally flawed:

- that lacks practical detail and reliable local data: and therefore the confidence that this is a viable proposition
- is contradictory at best
- lacks credence because of the lack of consultation
- is expensive if they are to deliver their "Vision"
- has no determinable educational benefits over what is already in place at St Andrew's Primary
- fails to comply with the objectives of the FTP: improving services through efficiencies
- is protracted and therefore subject to failure to deliver the aims as people, deputies, political drive change over time
- will not deliver the consistency and equality they are aiming for across the island – especially if decentralisation of resources is approved

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