

THE STATES OF DELIBERATION
of the
ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

6th September, 2023

Proposition No. P.2023/92

Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture

Herm Island School Closure

AMENDMENT

Proposed by: Deputy A C Dudley-Owen

Seconded by: Deputy S E Aldwell

To delete the Proposition and to substitute therefor:

1. To direct:-

a. the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture:

- i. to complete the current 12-month pilot during which primary school-aged children who are resident in Herm and accessing States Education are being educated at Vauvert Primary School; and
- ii. to establish a working group whose membership and Terms of Reference shall be as set out in the Appendix to the attached report entitled 'Herm: Primary-age children accessing States education'; and
- iii. following consideration of the findings and any recommendations made by the working group, to determine the provision of education necessary to ensure that primary school-aged children who are resident in Herm and accessing States Education receive an education on a basis that is equitable and appropriate, whether that education takes place in Guernsey or in Herm or a combination of both, taking into account the quality of the States-maintained primary education provision available in Guernsey; and

- b. the Policy & Resources Committee to work with the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture to agree whether any additional resources necessary to enable implementation of the determination of the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture under paragraph a.iii of this Proposition should be funded through a reduction in its savings target or by additional funding;

Or, if Proposition 1 is not approved

2. To direct:-

- a. the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture to provide education provision in Herm for years Reception, 1 and 2 (Key Stage 1 'infant' provision) to school-aged children who are resident in Herm and accessing States Education; and
- b. the Policy & Resources Committee to work with the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture to agree whether any additional resources necessary to ensure that education is provided on a basis that is equitable and appropriate, taking into account the quality of States-maintained primary education provision available in Guernsey, should be funded through a reduction in its savings target or by additional funding;

Or, if Propositions 1 or 2 are not approved

3. To direct:-

- a. the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture to provide education provision in Herm for primary school-aged children in years Reception to 6 (Key Stage 1 'infant' and Key Stage 2 'junior' provision) who are resident in Herm and accessing States Education; and
- b. the Policy & Resources Committee to work with the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture to agree whether any additional resources necessary to ensure that education is provided on a basis that is equitable and appropriate, taking into account the quality of States-maintained primary education provision available in Guernsey, should be funded through a reduction in its savings target or by additional funding.

Rule 4(1) Information

- a) The propositions contribute to the States' objectives and policy plans as they ensure the primary school-aged children who are resident in Herm and accessing States Education receive an education that meets their educational needs, supports them to make appropriate progress, and ensures appropriate safeguards are in place.

The propositions seek to ensure the States of Deliberation have options that enable an informed choice to be made over the type and location of that provision, and thus support the principles of good governance.

- b) In preparing the propositions, it has not been possible, given the short time permitted between the lodging of the Requête and the lodging of this Amendment, to undertake meaningful engagement with stakeholders. The lead Requérent and the Policy & Resources Committee have been made aware of this Amendment ahead of it being lodged.
- c) The propositions have been submitted to His Majesty's Procureur for advice on any legal or constitutional implications.
- d) The financial implications to the States of carrying the proposal into effect are :

Proposition 1: no additional funding is required to operate the 12-month pilot and convene the working group referred to in Proposition 1a as the Committee has already instructed officers to gather data, carry out periodic reviews during the life of the pilot, and report the findings to the Committee. With regard to Proposition 1b, no additional funding would be required to extend the pilot beyond the initial 12-month period; however, if the Committee takes the decision, based on evidence gathered during the pilot, to provide education in Herm, for primary school-aged children who are resident in Herm and accessing States Education, the additional funding would be as set out for Propositions 2 and 3 below, depending on the age-range of the children accessing the provision.

Proposition 2: under this option it is estimated that additional annual revenue funding of between £77.1k - £93.2k would be needed. This takes into account the need for a full-time Learning Support Assistant; a Passenger Assistant to escort children in Years 3 to 6 from Herm to Vauvert Primary School and back; transport costs, including contingency plans for any times when it might be necessary to charter a boat should the ferry not operate (for example for mechanical reasons); works to bring the Herm classroom and outdoor play area up to a suitable standard; and a small allowance for variable costs. It should be noted that there might be times when the age-range of the children living in

Herm is such that the Key Stage 1 'infant' classroom does not operate for one or more years.

Proposition 3: under this option it is estimated that additional annual revenue funding of between £92.3k and £108.5k would be needed. This takes into account the need to provide a second teacher; transport costs including contingency plans for any times when it might be necessary to charter a boat should the ferry not operate (for example for mechanical reasons); works to bring the Herm classroom and outdoor play area up to a suitable standard; and a small allowance for variable costs. It should be noted that there might be times when the age-range of the children living in Herm is such that only Key Stage 1 'infant' or Key Stage 2 'junior' provision is required. As and when this situation arises, there will be one classroom teacher supported by a learning support assistant rather than two teachers.

Explanatory note

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture has appended to this Amendment a brief report setting out factors relevant to its decision to run a 12-month pilot during which primary school-aged children who are resident in Herm and accessing States Education are educated in Guernsey. The report takes into account the statutory responsibilities of the Committee under the Education Law (Guernsey) 1970 and the corporate parenting role of all States Members. The report also provides additional information relevant to the financial implications provided above in accordance with Rule 4(1)(d).

Recognising the concerns expressed by the Requéants in respect of the pilot, the Committee's first Proposition seeks to allay those concerns via the formation of a working group to oversee the pilot. The membership of the proposed working group is drawn from the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture, given its mandated and statutory responsibilities relating to the delivery and governance of education provision; the Policy & Resources Committee, given its mandated responsibilities as the employer on behalf of the States of Guernsey and as the lessor of Herm Island; a Requéant, representing the Lessee and residents of Herm Island; officers with oversight of education operations and primary education; and the ability to draw on other subject matter experts, such as for example in relation to curriculum, economics, property, population projections, safeguarding, transport, etc.

The second and third Propositions seek to provide the States with the opportunity to debate the complete range of options considered by the Committee in reaching its decision to pilot the delivery of education in Guernsey for 12 months to primary-aged children resident in Herm and accessing States-maintained education.

The Committee for Education, Sport & Culture does not support Propositions 2 or 3 at this time, because it considers it necessary to allow the pilot to proceed in order to be

able to fully assess the benefits and disbenefits of providing education in Guernsey for Herm's primary-aged children. However, the Committee reassures the Assembly that it remains open to offering an education provision in Herm in the future should the pilot, and/or additional evidence gathered during the pilot phase, demonstrate that this is an educationally robust long-term option.

It should be noted, and is explained in greater detail in the attached report, that there are financial implications not expressed in the Requête itself that ought to be taken into account when considering whether to revert to delivering a States-maintained education provision in Herm in the near future. For both educational and safeguarding reasons, the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture cannot support the delivery of education in Herm without additional resources to ensure the quality of education is improved and safeguarding is appropriate.

Herm: Primary-age children accessing States education

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Herm Island operates as a business under a lease agreement with the States, and has a resident population of approximately 65 people, increasing by up to 100 people in the summer season¹.
- 1.2. The Law Officers' Chambers have advised that the current lease agreement in place between Herm Island and The States of Guernsey does not place any obligation on The States of Guernsey under the terms of the lease to operate a school. However, there is reference to The States of Guernsey maintaining the foundations and interior of the school, the school playground and yard (for as long as the same are used for the purposes of education).
- 1.3. Although informally referred to as a 'school' the education facility in Herm is a small building comprising a single classroom, toilet facilities, and a small hardstanding outdoor play area with a low fence. The provision operates as a remote classroom of Vauvert Primary School ('Vauvert') under the leadership and management of Vauvert's Headteacher. Vauvert's current Headteacher has been in post since September 2022.
- 1.4. Primary-aged pupils who live in Herm and are on roll at Vauvert are educated at the classroom in Herm for four days a week. They travel to Guernsey one day a week to attend Vauvert or, where there are specific considerations, another primary school. When Herm's residents include secondary-aged pupils who are being educated in States-maintained schools, those learners have typically travelled to Guernsey daily by boat or have stayed in Guernsey during the week with family or friends.
- 1.5. Prior to the current pilot, which is set to run for the 2023/4 academic year (for learners this is Wednesday, 6th September 2023 to Friday, 19th July 2024), education in the Herm classroom was delivered by a long-standing teacher, and a part-time Learning Support Assistant (LSA), both of whom commuted daily from Guernsey, under the line management of the Vauvert Primary School Headteacher.
- 1.6. The Committee has considered the question of the future provision of education in Herm's classroom from the perspective of it's mandate, with particular focus on the

¹ [Recruitment - Herm Island](#)

quality of education and safeguarding, but is also mindful of the need to operate within the budget provided to it by the States of Deliberation.

2. Herm classroom's population

2.1. Herm classroom's learner population for the previous five years is as follows²:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of learners	10	10	7	9	6

2.2. In 2022, the six learners included a sibling group of three and a separate sibling group of two.

2.3. Herm classroom's current predicted learner population for the next five years, as provided by the tenant of Herm Island, broken down by year group, is as follows:

Year Group	Sept 2023	Sept 2024	Sept 2025	Sept 2026	Sept 2027
Reception (age 4/5)	0	0	1	1	4
Year 1 (age 5/6)	0	0	0	1	1
Year 2 (age 5/7)	0	0	0	0	1
Total Key Stage 1 (infants)	0	0	1	2	6
Year 3 (age 7/8)	0	0	0	0	0
Year 4 (age 8/9)	1	0	0	0	0
Year 5 (age 9/10)	2	1	0	0	0
Year 6 (age 10/11)	1	2	1	0	0
Total Key Stage 2 (juniors)	4	3	1	0	0
Total Herm Classroom Learners	4	3	2	2	6

2.4. The above projections might well fluctuate, either up or down, as there is some turnover within the Herm's resident population. As children join the Reception year when aged four, it is not possible to project the number of learners further into the future.

3. The Education Law (Guernsey), 1970

3.1. The Education Law (Guernsey), 1970 ('the Law'), although in need of significant modernisation, sets out the duties of the Committee with regard to primary education, and apply to the residents of Herm. Section 4 of the Law states:

4. (1) It shall be the duty of [the Committee] to secure that there shall be available sufficient schools –

² Based on 1st November eCensus data

(a) for providing primary education, that is to say, full-time education suitable to the requirements of junior pupils who have not attained the age of ten years and six months...

(b) ... and the schools available shall not be deemed to be sufficient unless they are sufficient in number, character and equipment to afford for all pupils opportunities for education offering such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of their different ages, abilities and aptitudes and of the different periods for which they may be expected to remain at school, including practical instruction and training appropriate to their respective needs.

- 3.2. Experienced senior educationalists, the Director of Education, the Head of School Improvement, the Head of Primary Leadership and Development and the teacher in Herm's classroom have all raised concerns about the ability to deliver the quality of education necessary across such a broad age range and with such low numbers. It is therefore necessary to take steps to ensure that the quality of education offered to Herm's primary-aged children meets the requirements of the Law.

4. Quality of education

- 4.1. The quality of education in Herm's classroom was criticised during the inspection of Vauvert in July 2019³. The inspection report noted that:

'The learning environment outdoors around Herm Primary provides a potentially rich context for learning. However, the classroom is cluttered and does not provide an environment which is conducive to high quality learning. There are too few rich play and activity contexts for younger children. Children in Vauvert benefit from high quality learning. The school and Education Services should work together to ensure that children on Herm receive similar high-quality learning experiences.'

A key recommendation from the Inspection was to:

'Improve the quality of educational provision in Herm'

- 4.2. Since the 2019 inspection, the Committee has introduced a new Quality Assurance Framework⁴ against which schools are judged during external inspections. The Framework assesses school performance against a series of indicators including Quality of Education, Leadership and Management, Pupil Behaviour and Attitudes, and Keeping Children Safe in Education. The Framework sets out the standards schools need to work towards and is necessarily ambitious.

³ [Vauvert-Primary-inspection-report-July-2019](#)

⁴ [Inspections - States of Guernsey \(gov.gg\)](#)

- 4.3. Alongside this Framework, the Committee has introduced an interim governance model, which it intends to replace with a long-term governance model under a new Education Law. Governance meetings are held three times a year for every States education setting and these enable robust discussions with individual Headteachers and Principals about how their school is meeting the standards set out in the Framework, to ensure that schools are meeting the needs of all learners and are ensuring that good practice is embedded.
- 4.4. Since Vauvert's 2019 inspection, efforts have been made to improve the provision of education in Herm (within an extended timeframe due to the limitations imposed by COVID). The physical environment has been improved but remains limited. The Education Improvement Team has supported the development of the education provision (including the introduction of a part-time Learning Support Assistant) but the objective to ensure that learners on Herm receive a high-quality learning experience remains unmet and challenging.

5. The Bailiwick Curriculum

- 5.1. Developed locally, the Bailiwick Curriculum is the 'national' curriculum for all States-maintained education settings in Guernsey and Alderney. It sets out the substance of what is taught, along with a specific plan of what pupils need to know in each of the subjects listed under the eight identified 'areas of learning'. The Bailiwick Curriculum has been developed to ensure children and young people are prepared for life in the 21st Century, and it is aligned with the aims of the States' Children and Young People's Plan⁵. Headteachers and Principals need to ensure that teaching and learning in their school follows the Bailiwick Curriculum so that all children and young people have an equitable educational experience.
- 5.2. To support schools in their own planning and delivery of the curriculum, a series of entitlement documents for each subject have been developed, clearly setting out in detail expectations for the knowledge and skills every learner should acquire by the end of each Key Stage of education. In all, there are 18 areas of learning, and learning is sequenced so as to build upon that which has been taught at an earlier stage. The challenges inherent in providing a rich, broad curriculum are reflected in inspection outcomes in England. England's smallest primary schools are five times more likely to be rated "inadequate" by Ofsted than the largest ones, and much less likely to be graded as outstanding⁶. These challenges are amplified in the context of the provision in Herm, which is particularly small. (England's definition of a small school is one with fewer than 145 pupils.)

⁵ [Children and Young People's Plan \(CYPP\) - States of Guernsey \(gov.gg\)](https://www.gov.gg/children-and-young-peoples-plan)

⁶ [Ofsted: Small primaries 5 times more likely to be inadequate | Tes](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/news/small-primaries-5-times-more-likely-to-be-inadequate)

6. Educational challenges in Herm's classroom

- 6.1. Learners attending the education provision in Herm are entitled to receive the same board, rich curriculum as their peers in Guernsey, and it is the Committee's responsibility to ensure this entitlement is realised; however, there are several barriers to being able to achieve this.
- 6.2. For a very small education setting, such as the classroom in Herm, there are many barriers to successful teaching and learning and these are summarised below:
- 6.3. **Barriers to ambition:** The profile of the learners with Herm's classroom varies each year but can potentially span the entire primary age range (see table at paragraph 2.3). This means that within any single lesson, the teacher has to simultaneously deliver different lessons to different age groups. So while the teacher:pupil ratio appears generous, the teacher cannot teach the class as one, since the range of attainment is far too wide. Typically, while the teacher targets a learner or pair of learners of similar prior attainment, the other learners are left to work independently rather than receive teaching input. However talented the teacher, this inevitably compromises quality. Whilst some independent work, particularly for older learners, is important, the balance of independent work to explicit teaching in Herm's classroom is necessarily disproportionate. Educational research clearly shows that explicit teaching is one of the most important factors affecting outcomes and that the lack of explicit teaching disproportionately affects children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). (It should be remembered that the term SEND is broad and, on average in the primary phase of education, one in five learners will require some degree of differentiated learning and/or intervention.)
- 6.4. Early Years children (which includes Reception – ages 4/5) need teaching focused on developing the prime areas of communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. In Herm there is extremely limited access to a high quality outdoor Early Years environment and no or very few formal opportunities to develop social skills with a group of children of the same age. This is not to underplay the benefits of the relationships across year groups that children in Herm are able to develop. However, generally, learners in the youngest classes develop socially, physically and linguistically to a large degree by playing in enabling environments with a group of children of their own age.
- 6.5. The period from birth to eight years old is one of significant development. When children are healthy, safe and learning well in their early years, they are better able to reach their full developmental potential as adults and participate effectively in economic, social, and civic life⁷.

⁷ <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/why-early-childhood-care-and-education-matters>

- 6.6. There is no formal preschool provision in Herm, and there are currently no Herm-based children registered with Guernsey pre-school providers (though previously one or two children have accessed the 15 hours entitlement to free preschool education). While it might be that there is an informal Parent / Toddler group, the absence of formal Early Years provision means that the Reception Year for Herm-based children is perhaps more vital than for their Guernsey-based peers, the overwhelming majority of whom regularly attend registered Early Years provision.
- 6.7. Children in Reception and Year 1 also need the undivided attention of the teacher to learn phonics – the essential foundation of reading. While the teacher is teaching phonics, older children receive no attention from the Teacher, and the Learning Support Assistant supports the Class on only a part-time basis.
- 6.8. Although the children of Herm classroom typically travel to Vauvert for one day a week, because the progress of the curriculum differs from that in other classrooms of Vauvert, despite the best efforts of staff, it is not easy for the Herm-based learners to integrate into lessons with their Vauvert-based peers, and they do not find it as easy to integrate and socialise well during play times as relationships with their Vauvert-based peers develop at a much slower pace than between those who attend Vauvert daily.
- 6.9. Children in Guernsey schools who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) that can be met in a mainstream setting are supported by an on-site SEND Coordinator (SENDCO) who can give the class teacher advice. While the Vauvert SENDCO includes Herm learners in their remit, they are not easily available to drop into class to observe or support in the same way as if they were always in the same building. Neither can a Herm learner with SEND easily access groups set up to support language, physical or social development. This means that learners with SEND are less likely to receive the additional targeted help they might need if they attend the provision in Herm.
- 6.10. Primary schools in Guernsey have access to a variety of pupil leadership opportunities, for example via school councils and implementing Rights Respecting School practice (the UNICEF award for a school's achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into practice within the school and beyond). This type of experience is much more limited for Herm-based learners.
- 6.11. **Barriers to breadth:** The Bailiwick Curriculum spans 18 areas of learning and has detailed curriculum documents outlining the content each learner is entitled to receive. It is challenging for one teacher to have the subject knowledge to teach all 18 areas of learning well. For this reason, in Guernsey schools teachers have day-to-day access to subject leaders/specialists to support them and professional peers with whom they can share planning and access regular advice and guidance. While the staff at Vauvert can and do support Herm's classroom teacher, this is not the same as

working in the same building. Furthermore, the opportunities for shared planning are limited given Herm's mixed age context. This in turn puts additional workload pressures upon a single teaching working in Herm.

- 6.12. With the teacher having to split their attention between different learners of different age groups, it is extremely challenging for them to teach all of the content that children in other schools receive. For example, in history, a Guernsey primary school might teach Year 3 learners about the Stone Age and then the Ancient Greeks; Year 4 about the Romans and then Islamic civilisation; Year 5 about Henry VIII and then the Victorians; and Year 6 about World War II and the study of an historical theme over time. As a result of this rich, broad diet, learners leave primary school with a developing knowledge of historical concepts such as monarchy, invasion, empire, liberation, migration, politics, civilisation, government, trade, economy and industry, setting them up for success in secondary school. The same is true for all other areas of the curriculum.
- 6.13. Learners in Herm cannot, as part of their daily educational experience, learn to play team games such as 5-a-side-football. They cannot routinely compete against their peers in team sports as they have so few peers, if any, of the same age. They do not have access to pitches, courts or athletics tracks. While they have an entitlement to learn French, realising this is challenging to deliver in a way that builds knowledge over time in a progressive way when the class potentially includes children who are not yet reading and writing in English. Having only one classroom means the design and technology curriculum offer is limited.
- 6.14. Children in a typical Guernsey school would study high quality children's literature together, with the class teacher reading sections to the class and then the class engaging collaboratively in discussion about themes, vocabulary and stylistic choices. Collaborative discussion is not possible when the learner has so few, or no, peers. The reading aloud of age-appropriate texts is not possible when such texts might contain content that is not appropriate for younger children to hear. For example, in Key Stage 2 many schools study stories set during World War II that include themes of bereavement and oppression.
- 6.15. Similarly, the PHSE curriculum teaches older primary learners about puberty and offers drug and alcohol education. This is not suitable subject matter for the younger children, yet with only one classroom and since it is not straightforward to remove the younger children, the older children receive more limited access to these vital areas of the curriculum.
- 6.16. **Barriers to diversity:** Herm learners have the same teacher for the majority of their primary education. They also largely interact with the same small group of children. While there are positives to this, there are also downsides. Learners have more limited school-based opportunities to become skilled at working with a wide range of

children from different backgrounds to themselves, and their opportunity to develop relationships with a range of different adults in an educational context is limited. By comparison, learners in Guernsey primary schools experience different teachers and different children through their primary education, because class teachers change, and children are mixed up, at least every two years. This provides children with the opportunity to experience learning with different peers and adapt to different teaching styles. This is valuable experience to ready learners for the transition to secondary school and beyond.

- 6.17. Schools have a duty to promote the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of their learners. This is extremely challenging in a context where learners work with the same very small peer group throughout their formative years, especially when a high percentage are sibling groups.
- 6.18. Because the curriculum taught in Herm is, of necessity, narrower than that described in the Bailiwick Curriculum entitlement documents, children have less opportunity to learn about the wider world in geography, RE and through literature. This does not prepare them well for life in a modern, increasingly diverse, democratic society nor for the secondary phase of their formal education.
- 6.19. Herm learners do not have the same opportunities to attend school assemblies as their Guernsey peers. Not only do such assemblies teach children to be part of a large group, they also teach children about values, rights and responsibilities, both locally and globally.
- 6.20. **Barriers to creativity:** Learners in Guernsey receive specialist music teaching from the music service in Year 2 and Year 4 and can access after-school music groups and choirs. Herm learners do not readily have access to these rich opportunities. Participating in the Eisteddfod or seeing performances at secondary schools or theatres is more challenging and, where travel is possible, requires the Herm-based learners to miss out on a larger proportion of their school day, and thus teaching time, than their Guernsey-based peers. There is no space in Herm's classroom to properly learn gymnastics, dance, or drama. The Bailiwick curriculum for art entitles children to learn about and engage in making sculpture. This is hard when there is little storage space and it is challenging for Herm's learners to access public art, galleries or workshops. Herm's learners are less able to be inspired by seeing a wide range of artwork from their peers.
- 6.21. **Barriers to enrichment:** The cultural enrichment programme is delivered in States-maintained primary schools and is intended to ensure that all children have access to experience beyond those typically taking place in schools. Funding is apportioned on a 'per-pupil' basis, but is often pooled to provide 'whole island' experiences for each year group. Given its location, this cannot be provided to learners in Herm, and it is not always possible to coincide programmes with the weekly visit of Herm learners to

Guernsey. Example activities include: the Arts for Impact Programme with children participating in six art lessons focussing on Renoir to link with the forthcoming Renoir exhibition, and the Explorer Dome science workshops showcasing science experiments and tricks.

- 6.22. Opportunities are provided for trips for the Herm classroom learners, but because of the age-ranges involved, the experiences are likely to be less impactful than if they were specifically tailored by year group.

7. Safeguarding

- 7.1. Modern safeguarding standards expected in educational settings are not currently met for Herm classroom and the previous custom and practice in respect of the operation of Herm's classroom cannot continue. The States must meet the expectations established through the statutory provision they have enabled, not least because they have successfully secured the extension of the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child for the jurisdiction.
- 7.2. All members of the States of Deliberation have corporate parent responsibilities. The duty of care to, and day-to-day safety of, learners in all States-maintained education settings rests with the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture; and the States also have responsibilities as an employer and a duty of care to its employees, with the operational aspects of the employer/employee relationship resting with the Policy & Resources Committee.
- 7.3. In order to meet the States' various safeguarding obligations, it will no longer be permissible for there to be a member of staff working alone in Herm's classroom.
- 7.4. To support the breadth of curriculum being taught and to overcome some of the challenges described earlier in this report: at any time when Herm classroom has both Key Stage 1 (Years Reception to 2) and Key Stage 2 (Years 3 – 6) learners, it will be necessary for there to be two full-time teachers; and at any time when the learners are all within the same Key Stage, it will be necessary for there to be a full-time teacher and a full-time Learning Support Assistant.

8. Transport, logistics and teaching environment

- 8.1. Prior to the pilot, Herm classroom's teacher had been commuting to Herm on a daily basis, as was the part-time Learning Support Assistant. Although it might be possible to secure accommodation for two full-time classroom staff in Herm, the challenges associated with this make it a highly undesirable option. Not only would it mean that the staff are isolated from their Guernsey-based peers, but in such a small community as Herm it is not possible to create a clear separation between work and home life. Being resident in Herm would also restrict staff from being able to own and occupy their home, and limit their ability to choose, decorate and furnish their 'home' to their own preferences. It would be entirely inappropriate for the teaching staff to have

their own child(ren) attending Herm classroom. All of this exacerbates the recruitment and retention difficulties associated with attracting staff to work in Herm's classroom.

- 8.2. There have been occasions when, as a result of foul weather preventing travel or due to the teacher's sickness absence and the inability to provide appropriate cover at short notice, Herm classroom's learners have had to undertake learning at home using pre-prepared material. It is likely that, regardless of whether the teaching staff are commuting to Herm to teach, or Herm's learners are commuting to Guernsey to learn, there will be some days when the commute is not possible due to foul weather. However, if the learners were commuting to Guernsey, time would not be lost to learning due to staff sickness absence, as supply cover, including for the passenger assistant, would always be provided.
- 8.3. Resources will be made available so that parents/carers are able to support their child(ren) to learn at home when travel is not possible.
- 8.4. It should be noted that there are occasions when whole days are lost to learning when a Herm-based learner has a medical appointment in Guernsey; the time lost is likely to be less if the learning takes place in Guernsey.
- 8.5. It has been possible, via discussions with Herm Trident's operators, to ensure travel for Herm's primary-aged learners that aligns with the school day, and enables a passenger assistant to accompany the learners to and from Guernsey each weekday during term time. Contingency plans are also in place should there be unforeseen disruption to the usual ferry.
- 8.6. There are, understandable parental concerns over the travel arrangements, but it should be remembered that all Herm classroom's learners already travel to Guernsey one day a week to attend Vauvert. Furthermore, the risk assessments that are carried out before any school trip takes place suggest that Herm-based children are very used to taking the ferry to Guernsey beyond the trips required for schooling.
- 8.7. Personalised contingency plans, worked up in conjunction with their parents/carers will be in place for every learner should there be an occasion when the weather changes unpredictably to such an extent that they are unable to return to Herm. Such occasions are expected to be very rare, as arrangements will be made for the learners to leave school early when the weather conditions and the travel provided dictate.
- 8.8. It should be noted, that in the recent past, one Herm-based family opted to have their children commute to Vauvert rather than access the Herm classroom provision. This family is no longer resident in Herm, but demonstrates that commuting from Herm to school in Guernsey is a realistic option.
- 8.9. The teaching facilities in Herm require improvement. Work is needed to ensure the building and the outdoor space complies with modern safeguarding and health and

safety requirements. Should learners in the classroom span more than one Key Stage of education, it will be necessary to ensure the teaching space can be divided so that two lessons can take place simultaneously.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1. Regardless of the preferred solution, there are significant costs associated with the provision of education to Herm's primary-aged children accessing States education; however, it should be noted that the driver for change is the quality of the education provided to Herm's primary-aged learners, and not the cost of delivering that education.
- 9.2. For the reasons set out in this report, should primary education take place in Herm's classroom, changes will be needed to the staffing structure and to the building to ensure modern safeguarding and health and safety requirements are met. This means an increase in costs when compared with the provision during the last academic year, which was approximately £109k. However, it should be noted that the transport costs during the last year were lower than they will be in the future, as Herm Island ran its own ferry service which is now no longer in operation. The alternative provider operates larger vessels, with higher overheads.
- 9.3. Should the Herm-based learners travel to Guernsey (Proposition 1 of the Amendment), the associated costs, which take into account: ferry costs; taxis; and a passenger assistant to accompany the children each morning and afternoon, will be in the region of £80k - £85k per year. There will also be a one-off cost of c£3k to ensure suitable home-based learning could take place when travel to Guernsey is not possible due to foul weather.
- 9.4. Should Herm classroom provide only Key Stage 1 ('infants') provision with Key Stage 2 learning taking place in Guernsey (Proposition 2 of the Amendment), the associated costs which take into account: a full-time teacher and Learning Support Assistant; a passenger assistant for Key Stage two learners travelling to Guernsey; ferry costs (including periodic visits from quality assurance staff); taxis; and Herm classroom costs (electricity, cleaning, maintenance), will be in the region of £186.1k to £202.2k per year. There will also be a one-off cost of c£3k to ensure suitable home-based learning can take place when travel to Guernsey for the Key Stage 2 learners or travel to Herm for the teacher is not possible due to foul weather, and a further one-off cost of c£24k to ensure the building meets modern safeguarding and health and safety requirements.
- 9.5. Should Herm classroom provide both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 provision (Proposition 3 of the Amendment), the associated costs which take into account: two full-time teachers; ferry costs (including periodic visits from quality assurance staff); and Herm classroom costs (electricity, cleaning, maintenance), will be in the region of £201.3k to £217.5k per year. There will also be a one-off cost of c£3k to ensure

suitable home-based learning can take place when travel to Herm for the teacher is not possible due to foul weather, and a further one-off cost of c£35k to ensure the building meets modern safeguarding and health and safety requirements, including the ability to partition the classroom into two separate learning spaces.

9.6. The table below sets out the cost per pupil for primary school-aged children who are resident in Herm and accessing States Education over the next 5 year period for each of the three Propositions based on current predicted learner numbers:

Year Group	Sep-23	Sep-24	Sep-25	Sep-26	Sep-27
Predicted number of Key Stage 1 learners	0	0	1	2	6
Predicted number of Key Stage 2 learners	4	3	1	0	0
Predicted number of learners	4	3	2	2	6
Proposition 1*cost per pupil	£20k	£26.7k	£40k	£40k	£13.3k
Proposition 2 cost per pupil	£22.8k	£30.4k	£93.1k	£81.2k	£27.1k
Proposition 3 cost per pupil	£40.6k	£54.1k	£100.7k	£81.2k	£27.1k

*If the pilot is extended beyond the trial period

Assumptions

- The one-off costs of each option are excluded.
- The lower figure of the cost ranges (shown in paragraphs 9.3-9.5) have been used except in years where Herm's classroom is operating for only a single Key Stage (e.g. infant or junior but not both) where the costs have been adjusted to reflect changes to staffing requirements.
- Costs in Propositions 2 and 3 allow for the continuation of children resident in Herm attending appropriate Primary school in Guernsey one day per week
- In years where there are no children attending Herm's classroom, provision is made for reduced operating costs.
- Estimated costs do not allow for inflation.

9.7. The most recent calculations of cost per pupil for the Primary phase in Guernsey relate to 2021, when the cost per pupil was £4.9k.

10. Summary

10.1. The quality of education delivered via Herm's classroom, and the safeguarding of both its learners and staff falls short of requirements and cannot be immediately remedied. The Committee recognises that there will be other lenses through which to consider the need for an ongoing classroom provision in Herm, but these fall beyond the purview of the Committee. However, such considerations ought not to override concerns relating to the quality of education and safeguarding.

10.2. There are three options via which education can be provided for primary-age children of Herm who are accessing States education, and these are set out in the Amendment to which this report is appended. The Committee has set out all three options so as to facilitate an informed debate on this matter.

- 10.3. The Committee can only recommend the first option at this time (which is Proposition 1, and sees the completion of the current 12-month pilot during which education is provided at Vauvert) as this is the only option that will ensure that the quality of education offered to Herm's primary-aged children meets the requirements of its [Quality Assurance Framework](#), and is equitable when compared with their Guernsey-based peers.
- 10.4. Attached to this report as Appendix 1 are the draft Terms of Reference for the Working Group envisaged in Proposition 1. In the event that this Proposition carries, the Working Group may, following its inaugural meeting, propose amendments to the draft Terms of Reference for the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture's consideration.

WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Working Group's membership shall include:

- A member of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture (who shall chair the working group)
- a member of the Policy & Resources Committee
- one of the signatories of the Requête entitled 'Herm Island School Closure'
- The Head of Education Operations
- The Head of Primary Leadership & Development
- Relevant subject matter experts who may be co-opted to the group as needed (for example on matters relating to curriculum, economics, property, population projections, safeguarding, transport, etc.)

The working group shall oversee the pilot during which primary school-aged children who are resident in Herm and accessing States Education are being educated in Guernsey.

Overseeing the pilot shall include meetings of the working group, at a frequency to be agreed by the group at its inaugural meeting. At all such meetings the group's members will review matters associated with, but not limited to: attainment cultural enrichment; personal development, safeguarding, socialisation; travel; and transition; and any relevant changes to Herm's resident population.

The working group shall report back to the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture with its findings and any recommendations arising from them at the start of the Summer term of the 2023/4 academic year.

The Committee *for* Education, Sport and Culture shall have regard to the findings of the working group and any recommendations of the group when reaching a decision on the future provision of education for primary school-aged children who are resident in Herm and accessing States Education.