

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
Concluding Observations report:
Government of Jersey response

R.128/2025

Government of Jersey response to the Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the sixth and seventh periodic reports of the UK State Party

Ministerial Foreword

I would firstly like to express my thanks to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child for their Concluding Observations report; this is the first time that Jersey has been directly involved in the periodic reporting cycle as part of the UK State party, and we welcome the opportunity to respond.



The Government of Jersey remains committed to respect, protect and fulfil children's rights, which began with the extension of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to Jersey in 2014. Since that time, we have:

- created the Office of the Children's Commissioner in law;
- incorporated the UNCRC into Jersey law, including mandatory children's rights impact assessments in certain circumstances;
- banned the physical punishment of children;
- introduced participation standards for children; and
- recently published our second Children, Young People and Families' plan (2024-27), an overarching framework behind which all government programmes and strategies will align to promote children's wellbeing and safeguard their welfare.

The 5 'big picture outcomes' of the Children, Young People and Families' plan are important, because they are what we should all aspire to: that all children in Jersey are healthy and happy; can learn and achieve; enjoy a decent standard of living; are safe and loved; and are included, respected and valued.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank UNICEF UK and the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey, whose help and support to date has been invaluable. We will continue to work together to progress rights-based thinking in all areas of government's work, drawing on both the UNCRC and other United Nations treaties.

By its nature, this report is a snapshot of where we are today. Giving full effect to the UNCRC and embedding it within our legislation is an ongoing process, requiring continual improvements in our legislation and practice. As well as detailing actions to date, the report illustrates where current Ministerial priorities and ongoing programmes will ensure that progress continues to be made. We will not stand still, and the UN Committee's Concluding Observations provide a helpful steer as we work towards progressively realising the rights of all children in Jersey.

Connétable Richard Vibert
Minister for Children and Families

Contents

Ministerial Foreword.....	3
Introduction	6
Format of this report.....	8
1. General Measures of Implementation (articles 4, 42 and 44(6))	9
Incorporating the Convention into domestic law	9
Review of alignment with legislation and identifying inconsistencies	9
Implementing the Convention	9
Ministerial lead for implementing the Convention.....	12
Statutory Guidance	12
Data collection	12
Independent Monitoring	13
Awareness-raising and training.....	14
Access to justice and remedies.....	14
2. General Principles (articles 2, 3, 6 and 12)	16
Non discrimination	16
Best interests principle	17
Respect for the views of the child.....	18
3. Civil Rights and Freedoms (articles 7, 8 and 13–17).....	20
Access to information	20
4. Violence against children (articles 19, 24(3), 28(2), 34, 37(a) & 39)	21
Corporal punishment.....	21
Abuse, neglect and sexual exploitation / abuse	21
Harmful practices.....	23
5. Family Environment and Alternative Care (articles 5, 9–11, 18(1-2), 20, 21, 25 and 27 (4)).....	24
Family Environment	24
Children deprived of a family environment	24
Children placed in care outside of Jersey	25
Leaving Care.....	26
6. Children with disabilities (article 23).....	27
7. Basic Health and Welfare (articles 6, 18(3), 24, 26, 27(1)– (3) and 33).....	28
Health and health services	28
Mental Health	29
Environmental health	30
Standard of living.....	31
Sport and Physical Activity.....	32
8. Education, leisure and cultural activities (articles 28-31).....	33
Inclusive Education	33

Further and Higher Education.....	34
Rest, leisure and cultural activities	34
9. Special protection measures (articles 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37(b)–(d) and 38–40)	36
Administration of child justice	36
Adoption of a youth justice strategy for Jersey	36
Appendix A – table of legislation adopted following completion of the Legislative Gap Analysis.....	38
Appendix B – Glossary of Terms	39

Introduction

This report provides an update on how the Government of Jersey is responding to the Concluding Observations¹ of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, issued following the Committee's sixth and seventh periodic reviews of the UK State Party.

Jersey is a member of the UK State Party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child² (UNCRC), along with the devolved governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, the Crown Dependencies of Guernsey and the Isle of Man and the 11 Overseas territories. As part of the State Party, Jersey is subject to cycle of periodic reporting to the UN Committee. We contributed to the UK's Periodic Report³ to the UN Committee in 2022 and took part in the Constructive Dialogue with the UK State Party held in Geneva in May 2023.

The Government of Jersey is committed to embedding the UNCRC into our laws and practice. In its Concluding Observations, the UN Committee welcomed Jersey's progress in prohibiting the physical punishment of children and for creating the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey.

Jersey reached a significant milestone in January 2024, when the Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022 came into effect. This legislation indirectly incorporates the UNCRC into domestic law and makes it compulsory, in certain circumstances, for those making decisions to publish an assessment of the impact of proposed laws, policy and decisions on the rights of Jersey children.

The Concluding Observations report contains around 200 separate recommendations, some of which are directed to individual members of the UK State Party and some of which apply equally to all. This report does not attempt to respond in detail to each of the concluding observations but instead takes a prioritised approach.

In its report, the UN Committee highlighted the following matters as being of greatest overall concern:

- non-discrimination
- abuse, neglect and sexual exploitation and abuse
- children deprived of a family environment
- mental health
- asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children
- child justice

This report will address the above matters, which the UN Committee has identified as priority areas for action by the State Party.

It will also respond to the concluding observations directed specifically towards Jersey:

- I. Observation 31(b): Monitor the implementation and impact of legislation prohibiting corporal punishment, including in Scotland, Wales and Jersey, with a view to informing measures aimed at promoting attitudinal change concerning corporal punishment in all settings.

¹ <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g23/112/77/pdf/g2311277.pdf>

² [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)

³ <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g22/583/40/pdf/g2258340.pdf>

- II. Observation 38(d): Develop a legislative framework for ensuring a child rights-based approach to the support of children placed in alternative care far from their place of residence, including children from Jersey placed in alternative care off-island, and ensure that such placements take place only as a measure of last resort.
- III. Observation 54(k): Adopt a child justice strategy for Jersey.

This report will explain how the Government of Jersey is either already addressing, or proposes to respond to, these and other priority areas.

Format of this report

The intention of this report is to show how the Government of Jersey is responding to the UN Committee's Concluding Observations, as well as continuing to give effect to children's rights more generally. This will include outlining progress to date in respect of individual observations as they apply to Jersey, and highlighting future actions that have already been agreed.

The report follows the same structure as the Concluding Observations, which are grouped into chapters reflecting connected Articles of the UNCRC. These are:

1. **General measures of implementation (articles 4, 42 and 44(6)):**
Articles related to the implementation, monitoring, and reporting of children's rights, including national policies, coordination, and data collection.
2. **General principles (articles 2, 3, 6 and 12):**
The four principles that guide the interpretation and application of children's rights:
 - the right to life, survival and development
 - non-discrimination
 - best interests of the child, and
 - respect for children's views
3. **Civil rights and freedoms (articles 7, 8 and 13-17):**
Children's civil rights, including freedom of expression, access to information and privacy.
4. **Violence against children (articles 19, 24(3), 28(2), 34, 37(a) and 39)**
Protection from all forms of violence, abuse, and neglect and the right not to be subjected to inhumane treatment and detention.
5. **Family environment and alternative care (articles 5, 9-11, 18(1-2), 20, 21, 25 and 27(4)):**
Family-related rights, such as parental responsibilities, adoption, and protection for children without parental care.
6. **Children with disabilities (article 23)**
The rights of children with disabilities to live a full and decent life and as far as possible to participate in their community.
7. **Basic health and welfare (articles 6, 18(3), 24, 26, 27(1-3) and 33):**
Children's right to health, nutrition, and social services. This includes healthcare, immunisation, and access to clean water and adequate nutrition.
8. **Education, leisure, and cultural activities (articles 28-31):**
The rights to education, recreation, play and cultural expression.
9. **Special protection measures (articles 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37(b-d) and 38-40):**
Children in situations of emergency, such as refugee children, those in contact with the criminal justice system, victims of crime, exploitation or abuse and minority or indigenous groups.

1. General Measures of Implementation (articles 4, 42 and 44(6))

Incorporating the Convention into domestic law

The Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022⁴ indirectly incorporates the UNCRC into Jersey legislation. The first part of this law came into effect in January 2024 and means that Government Ministers, Elected States Members and States Assembly Bodies now have a duty to have **due regard** for children's rights, as set out in the UNCRC, when making decisions and carrying out their functions. This includes a legal requirement to prepare and publish a Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) to demonstrate compliance with their due regard duty.

The remaining articles of the Convention Rights Law will come into force in early 2026 and will extend the due regard duty to Public Authorities. These are the arms-length bodies of the States of Jersey, certain charities which provide services to children and the 12 Parishes.

Review of alignment with legislation and identifying inconsistencies

In October 2020 the Children's Commissioner for Jersey published a Legislative Gap Analysis⁵, prepared by Swansea University. In publishing the Gap Analysis, the Children's Commissioner commented "*what we now have in these pages is a comprehensive, independent analysis of the extent to which Jersey legislation complies with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.*"

The report studied Jersey laws relating to adoption, children, discrimination, education, employment, health insurance, housing, human rights, income support, marriage, mental health, prison rules, regulation of care, sexual offences, social security and young offenders for their alignment with the UNCRC Articles, under the headings:

- disability, basic health and welfare;
- education, leisure and cultural activities;
- family environment and alternative care; and
- special protection measures.

Since its publication in 2020, the Legislative Gap analysis, along with active consideration of the Island's obligations under the UNCRC, has helped inform the prioritisation and development of primary laws and subordinate legislation, summarised in Appendix A.

Implementing the Convention

Legislation

Two key pieces of legislation were approved by the States Assembly in 2022:

- Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022 indirectly incorporated the UNCRC into Jersey legislation, introducing a duty for Ministers, Elected Members and Assembly Bodies to have due regard for children's rights, as set out in the Convention, when making decisions and carrying out their functions; and
- Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2022, which represents a significant update to the existing legislative framework to support children and young people and sets out a legal

⁴ [Children \(Convention Rights\) \(Jersey\) Law 2022 \(jerseylaw.je\)](https://www.jerseylaw.gov.je/children-convention-rights-law-2022)

⁵ [Legislative Gap Analysis 2020 \(childcomjersey.org.je\)](https://childcomjersey.org.je/legislative-gap-analysis-2020)

framework and series of new arrangements to promote the wellbeing and safeguard the welfare of children. The Children and Young People's Law identifies the 'Responsible Ministers',⁶ who are required to produce and publish a strategic plan for all children every four years.

Children's Outcomes Executive Committee (COEC)

The Responsible Ministers, supported by senior officers from relevant government departments, form the COEC, whose principal function is to provide a clear, strategic organising framework for the Government of Jersey's responsibility to children, young people and families. COEC oversaw the development of the revised Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2024-27⁷. Published in May 2024, this is the second 4-year strategic plan for children, the first having been published in 2019 in response to a recommendation of the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry⁸.

COEC will continue to monitor the current Children, Young People and Families' Plan, with particular emphasis on children's voices, the collection and use of data to inform government priorities, commissioning activity and the role of the voluntary sector.

Children, Young People and Families' Plan

The Children, Young People and Families' Plan is the overarching framework behind which government programmes and strategies align to promote and support the wellbeing and safeguard the welfare of children and young people. It is the Government's commitment to work together with the private and voluntary sectors to provide children and families in Jersey with the best possible outcomes.

The vision of the Children, Young People and Families' Plan, which reflects feedback from children and young people on what matters most to them, is for all children to have an equal opportunity to be safe, flourish and fulfil their potential. This vision will be achieved by targeting five 'Big Picture Outcomes,' namely that all children and young people in Jersey:

1. are healthy and happy,
2. can learn and achieve,
3. enjoy a decent standard of living,
4. are safe and loved, and
5. are included, respected and valued.

The Plan details 'what must go well' for each of these outcomes to be achieved and sets out the programmes and actors involved in making this happen, as well as how we will measure success.

Jersey's Children First

Jersey's Children First has been adopted as a standard framework across agencies, services and settings in the public, community and voluntary sectors. It is designed for all those working with children and young people from pre-birth to 19 with known or emerging additional or complex

⁶ Minister for Children and Families, Minister for Health and Social Services, Minister for Housing and Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

⁷ [Children Young People and Families' plan 2024 to 2027 \(gov.je\)](https://gov.je/children-young-people-and-families-plan-2024-to-2027)

⁸ [Independent Jersey Care Inquiry](https://www.independent-jersey-care-inquiry.gov.je/)

needs/disabilities, including Looked-After Children and those in need of protection. Additional responsibilities apply in respect of young people who have been in care and those transitioning to adult services. Aligning the eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of the Jersey's Children First framework (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included) to the outcomes of the Children, Young People and Families' Plan ensures consistent language and practice from policy through to delivery.

Services and agencies working with children, young people and families are committed to improving outcomes for them, in particular those who are most vulnerable. This shared approach will enable agencies to work together effectively to ensure children, young people and families can access the right help at the right time and from the right service.

Measuring progress: sustainable wellbeing

The Island Outcome Indicators⁹ are a set of metrics on which the government gathers data to monitor the sustainable wellbeing of Islanders over successive generations, as required by the Public Finances Law.

Sustainable wellbeing is about improving the community, economic and environmental wellbeing of Jersey over the long-term. We measure our progress towards sustainable wellbeing using the Island Outcome Indicators and the Future Jersey¹⁰ vision for our Island.

The Island Outcome Indicators help us measure our progress in 10 areas, showing where we are doing well and where we need to improve.



⁹ [Island Outcome Indicators](#)

¹⁰ [Future Jersey 2017-2037.pdf](#)

Further reference to the Children, Young People and Families' plan will be made throughout this report, as it is a key enabling document in our drive to implement the UNCRC and improve the lives of all children in Jersey.

Ministerial lead for implementing the Convention

In 2024, the role of Minister for Children and Education was divided into two separate ministries: Minister for Children and Families and Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning. Responsibility for implementation of the Convention now rests with the Minister for Children and Families.

As part of this responsibility, the Minister gained unanimous States Assembly approval for enactment of the Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022 as explained above. This Law now requires the Convention to be considered by those making decisions which may affect children in Jersey (called 'duty-bearers' in the Law) to determine the extent to which their UNCRC rights will be impacted. Duty bearers who are either Ministers or Assembly Bodies must also publish an annual report detailing how they have complied with their due regard duty in the previous year.

Statutory Guidance

The Minister has published a Children's Rights Scheme¹¹, the statutory guidance required under the Law. The Children's Rights Scheme will ensure duty-bearers (as defined in the Law) are able to comply with their statutory duty to have due regard for children's rights as set out in the UNCRC. It also acts as a reference guide to explain how due regard may be given to the rights of children in Jersey across all aspects of public policy, legislation and decision-making.

Data collection

The Island Outcome Indicators,¹² referenced above, were reviewed and updated in 2024. These are the long-term measures that show how the wellbeing of Islanders is changing over time, by describing progress towards the Island Outcomes (Jersey's sustainable wellbeing goals). The Government is obliged under Jersey's Public Finances Law to consider the sustainable well-being, including the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being, of the inhabitants of Jersey over successive generations.

Statistics Jersey publishes the Children and Young People's Survey¹³ every two years, seeking feedback from students in school years 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 on a wide range of social issues. The survey is mostly completed during school time and gathers data from a large cohort of students, to provide benchmark data or to measure change, to inform policy development and to gauge public opinion. The language of the survey questions is carefully considered to maximise understanding and schools make provisions for students with additional learning needs.

The survey feeds into the data dashboards used by various oversight bodies including the Corporate Parenting Board, Youth Justice Board and the Children's Outcomes Executive Committee.

¹¹ [R.46-2024 Children's Rights Scheme \(statesassembly.gov.je\)](https://statesassembly.gov.je/R.46-2024-Children's-Rights-Scheme)

¹² [Island outcome indicators | Statistics Jersey](#)

¹³ [Jersey children and young people survey | Statistics Jersey](#)

In accordance with the recommendations of report of the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Taskforce¹⁴, data analysts in the Justice and Home Affairs Department are currently working on a centralised VAWG dataset, which is planned for publication in before the end of 2025.

As part of the Building a Safer Community (BASC¹⁵) delivery framework, a BASC Data Partnership has been created. This will use a range of published data and management information alongside the youth justice data review to measure the impacts or policies developed under the Youth Justice Roadmap 2025-30 to ensure that it meets emerging community safety needs.

Qualitative, disaggregated data is also collected and used by the Corporate Parenting Board.

Independent Monitoring

The Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey¹⁶ is the Island's only National Human Rights Institution (NHRI). The office operates in accordance with internationally recognised standards for NHRIs such as the Paris Principles¹⁷ and the requirements of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children¹⁸.

The status, role, functions and obligations of the Children's Commissioner are set out in the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2019¹⁹. The office is publicly funded but operates independently from the Government of Jersey in all respects, save for a connection to the department for Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance which provides human resources support.

The office operates under a Framework Agreement²⁰ with the Government of Jersey which sets out governance and accountability arrangements covering the relationship.

As set out in the Law, the Children's Commissioner has appointed:

- an advisory panel, representing a broad range of interests relevant to the Commissioner's functions, to provide the Commissioner with advice and assistance,
- an audit and risk advisory panel, to provide advice and assistance on governance matters, risk management and the use of resources, and
- a youth advisory panel, made up of children and young people with a broad range of interests, who advise the Commissioner on the discharge of their functions generally.

In common with other Arms-Length Organisations of the Government of Jersey, the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey completes an annual assessment of its operational capability²¹ to ensure sufficiency of human, technical and financial resources.

¹⁴ [Violence against women and girls Taskforce and reports](#)

¹⁵ [Building a Safer Community \(BASC\) Delivery Framework](#)

¹⁶ [Children's Commissioner for Jersey \(childcomjersey.org.je\)](#)

¹⁷ [Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions \(The Paris Principles\) | OHCHR](#)

¹⁸ [European Network of Ombudspersons for Children - ENOC](#)

¹⁹ [Commissioner for Children and Young People \(Jersey\) Law 2019 \(jerseylaw.je\)](#)

²⁰ [Framework Agreement OCCJ SPPP 2024](#)

²¹ [Operational Capability Assessment 2022 OCCJ](#)

Awareness-raising and training

The Office of the Children's Commissioner introduced the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools programme in Jersey; this is now delivered by the Government. All primary and secondary schools participate; so far 23 schools have reached silver status and 3 have attained the gold award.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner also provides training to groups of people working with children and young people:

"The training delivers the core principles of our child rights framework to parents, carers and groups of professionals who work with children and their families in various settings across the Island. These include healthcare professionals, teachers and educators, youth workers, employees of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, representatives of Children's Social Care and the third sector. In 2023, the training was delivered to a further 145 professionals working across several sectors in the Island, bringing the overall total of attendees to 325."²²

Before the Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022 came into effect, online and face to face training sessions on children's rights were delivered to States Assembly Members and approximately 170 Government of Jersey employees by the Government's Children's Policy Team.

A Children's Rights Awareness eLearning module forms part of the Government of Jersey induction training package and is available to all staff.

The Safeguarding Partnership Board²³ delivered training in child safeguarding and related subjects to 1,416 professionals who work with children during 2024.

Access to justice and remedies

Complaints mechanisms

Concerns regarding schools can be raised by children, or by somebody else on their behalf and the Government website details the procedure, as well as how concerns will be dealt with.²⁴

The department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills publishes its policy on dealing with complaints raised concerning staff.

Children can submit feedback, including complaints, to the Government of Jersey using the child-friendly feedback mechanism²⁵. The Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2022²⁶ requires the Minister for Children and Families to set out a procedure for considering and resolving complaints and representations made to the Minister in respect of children and care leavers, support for children and families, care and supervision, child protection and adoption matters.

Children's Social Care services encourage the use of Mind of My Own,²⁷ an inclusive app that enables young people to communicate their views to a trusted adult.

²² [Children's Commissioner Jersey R.108-2024](#)

²³ [Jersey Safeguarding Partnership Board](#)

²⁴ [Raising a concern about a school](#)

²⁵ [Submit feedback to the Government of Jersey](#)

²⁶ [Children and Young People \(Jersey\) Law 2022](#)

²⁷ [One app - Mind of My Own](#)

Legal Aid

A Statutory Legal Aid system²⁸ was approved by the States and came into effect in April 2022. This is publicly funded and although a financial eligibility test is made in certain circumstances this does not apply to Youth Court proceedings or Children Law cases.

Children in the justice system

The States of Jersey Police (SOJP) Policing Plan 2025-28²⁹ commits SOJP to delivering its Corporate Parenting Action Plan, including:

- early identification of the signs of harm and abuse and responding in a child-centred, trauma-informed way.
- establishing regular dialogue with care-experienced young people to ensure their voices shape policies and programmes.
- ensuring care-experienced children and young people can access the SOJP complaints system by providing accessible and age-appropriate information.
- ensuring we respect the rights of care-experienced children and young people in our custody suite by providing them with age-appropriate information and access to advocacy.

The Jersey Family Justice Council was established in 2024 with the aim of overseeing the performance, operation and reform of the Family Justice system in Jersey, working towards a system focused on the best possible outcomes for children and the most positive experience for families engaged in court proceedings. The JFJC brings together the most senior leaders working in the family justice system, government and other stakeholders (including the Children's Commissioner) to improve the experience of children involved in or impacted by the administration of family justice.

The Jersey Family Court Advisory Service³⁰ (JFCAS) helps protect the interests of children involved in family court cases, working with children and families and providing advice to the Court on the best interest of the child in each case. JFCAS staff are registered social workers who are independent from other organisations and highly experienced in working with families. JFCAS operates as part of the Probation and After-Care Service. Its operating framework reflects the right of children, as set out in the UNCRC, to be heard and represented in judicial proceedings which affect them.

Mandatory training is in place for all professionals working within the Family Court system to ensure they are better able to identify and respond to cases where there is suspected domestic abuse.

²⁸ [R.191-2021.pdf](#)

²⁹ [Policing Plan 2025- 2028](#)

³⁰ [Jersey Family Court Advisory Service Overview - Courts.je](#)

2. General Principles (articles 2, 3, 6 and 12)

Non discrimination

The Discrimination (Jersey) Law 2013³¹ provides a framework of characteristics which are protected from discrimination, including race, age, gender, sexual orientation and disability. The Law was amended in 2021, adding protection for discrimination against those with parental responsibility for a child under 18 seeking to occupy a residential property (effectively meaning landlords cannot enforce a 'no children' rule).

Online training in diversity, equity and inclusion is mandatory for all Government employees and additional face to face training to reinforce understanding of the Discrimination (Jersey) Law 2013 is also available.

Jersey's Youth Justice Roadmap 'Reimagining Youth Justice: A Child First Vision for Jersey (2025-2030)³² sets out a multi-agency approach to youth justice, focusing on the rights and needs of children. The guiding principles set out the aims of the strategy, including that the best interests of children are prioritised, their rights are respected and their views, along with those of their families and caregivers, will be sought and respected.

This partnership approach to youth justice, supported by the Building a Safer Community (BASC) delivery framework,³³ seeks to understand the overrepresentation of certain groups of children in the justice system, with a commitment to work collaboratively with partners to address the underlying causes.

The Draft Children and Young People (Independent Advocates) (Jersey) Regulations 2025³⁴ were adopted by the States Assembly in February 2025 and will come into effect later this year. These Regulations require the Minister for Children and Families to appoint independent advocates to provide advocacy services for children with a health or development need, children looked after by the Minister, care leavers and children who are subject to safeguarding arrangements. The Regulations set out the functions of independent advocates and require the Minister to issue a Code of Practice in relation to the qualifications and experience required to be an independent advocate and the services they will provide to vulnerable children.

The Jersey Premium³⁵ scheme provides targeted funding for pupils who are or have ever been children looked after or who live in a household entitled to income support³⁶ to ensure they can get the very best from their education.

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women was ratified and extended to Jersey³⁷ in early 2021.

The Jersey Youth Service offers targeted clubs for individuals who are LGBTQ+ young people, anyone over the age of 11 with additional needs and young carers.

³¹ [Discrimination \(Jersey\) Law 2013](#)

³² [States Assembly | R.105/2025](#)

³³ [Building a Safer Community \(BASC\) Delivery Framework](#)

³⁴ [Draft Children and Young People \(Independent Advocates\) \(Jersey\) Regulations 2025](#)

³⁵ [Jersey Premium](#)

³⁶ Children living in a 'registered' household, which does not currently meet the 5-year residency test but would have otherwise qualified for income support, are also entitled to Jersey Premium

³⁷ [Event to mark Island's commitment to gender equality](#)

Best interests principle

Children, Young People and Families' plan 2024 - 27

As one of the guiding principles of the UNCRC, the best interests principle runs throughout key government strategies, aligned behind the Children, Young People and Families' plan and measured by Island Outcome indicators. A non-exhaustive list of key programmes and strategies, grouped by the 5 'Big Picture' outcomes of the Children, Young People and Families' plan, appears below:

Big Picture Outcome: <i>"All children and young people in Jersey..."</i>	Key strategies and programmes
1) are healthy and happy	Healthy Child Programme, Baby Steps and Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting Programme (delivered by FNHC ³⁸) Special Needs Inclusion Programme and Best Start Plus Nursery Funding Programme (delivered by JCCT ³⁹) UNICEF Baby friendly breastfeeding initiative Family Food and Fitness Programme 'Inspiring an Active Jersey' strategy (delivered by Jersey Sport ⁴⁰) Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy 2022-25 Population Health Prevention Strategy 2023-27 Substance use strategy 2023-33
2) can learn and achieve	Education Reform Programme Actionable Agenda for Further Education and Skills Play Strategy
3) enjoy a decent standard of living	Future Economy Programme Primary School Meals Programme Healthy Start Fruit and Vegetable Voucher Programme Best Start Nursery Plus Programme (targeted childcare support) Jersey Homelessness Strategy Roadmap for Access to Social Housing Living Wage Accreditations Scheme
4) are safe and loved	Children's Social Care Improvement Programme BASC - Building a Safer Community Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022-24 Multi-agency Child Neglect Strategy Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Strategy 2022-24 Child Accident Prevention (delivered by FNHC) Growing Together Programme (delivered by Brighter Futures ⁴¹)
5) are included, respected and valued	Rights Respecting Schools Programme School Council network Children in Care Council Jersey Youth Assembly

³⁸ [Family Nursing and Home Care](#)

³⁹ [Jersey Child Care Trust | JCCT | Putting Families First](#)

⁴⁰ [Jersey Sport - Inspiring an active Jersey](#)

⁴¹ [Home - Brighter Futures](#)

Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022

In January 2024, the first part of the Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022 was enacted. The principal aim of the Law is to embed consideration of children's rights into the decision-making of Government Ministers, Elected Members and States Assembly Bodies. This will ensure that children's best interests are given priority, both in the development of policy or bringing forward new laws. The second phase of the Law, planned for early 2026, will see its extension to Public Authorities; these are the arms-length bodies of the government, certain charities and the 12 Parishes.

Under the Law, decision-makers (called duty-bearers) must prepare and publish a Children's Rights Impact Assessment, demonstrating that they have carefully considered the possible impact of their decision on children and young people.

Jersey leads the way in this respect, being the first part of the UK State Party to legally require completion of CRIA and providing clear evidence of our intention to respect, protect and fulfil children's rights.

Face to face training has been delivered to duty-bearers and officers who support them on the requirements of the Law and how to complete CRIA. Bespoke online training modules have also been developed.

Respect for the views of the child

In February 2025 the States Assembly agreed to adopt the Draft Children and Young People (Independent Advocates) (Jersey) Regulations 2025⁴². These regulations update the Children and Young People Law to introduce a statutory entitlement to free independent advocacy services for children with a health or development need, looked after children, care leavers and children subject to arrangements to safeguard their welfare. A Code of Practice will be issued by the Minister when the changes take effect later this year, setting out best practice standards for both independent advocates and those who commission and run the service. This is a significant step to ensuring the voices of our most vulnerable children are heard when decisions are being made that will affect their lives.

The Government has published Participation Standards for Children and Young People.⁴³ These Standards aim to do more than just give children a voice. Following the process involves children and young people being actively listened to and supported to express their views. These views should have a genuine influence on policy development and children should receive feedback after they take the time to share their views.

An Early Childhood version of the Participation Toolkit has also been developed in collaboration with the Best Start Partnership⁴⁴ to ensure the voices of the youngest children can be heard.

Jersey has a thriving School Council Network which meets four times each year and brings together representatives from primary and secondary school councils to share ideas. Ministers are often in attendance and children's views are fed back to the department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills and the Children's Outcomes Executive Committee.

⁴² [Draft Children and Young People \(Independent Advocates\) \(Jersey\) Regulations 2025](#)

⁴³ [Participation Standards for children and young people](#)

⁴⁴ [Early Childhood Participation Toolkit - Best Start Jersey](#)

Jersey's Youth Assembly⁴⁵ provides a forum for young people aged 12 to 18 to engage meaningfully in issues which are important to them. Over an 18-month period, members receive training, consult with young people, conduct research and compile a report on three campaign areas. At the conclusion of each campaign, they take part in a debate in the States Chamber, where they engage directly with Ministers to share their findings and answer questions. This level of political engagement ensures that young people's views and recommendations are fed into the government decision-making processes at the highest level.

The Jersey Family Justice Council was established in 2024 with the aim of increasing awareness and cooperation between the courts and agencies involved with children and families and so improving outcomes for children within the court system. Encouraging feedback and participation from children and adults involved in family proceedings will be a key focus of the Council in 2025.

⁴⁵ [States Assembly | Jersey Youth Assembly](#)

3. Civil Rights and Freedoms (articles 7, 8 and 13–17)

Access to information

Jersey has taken the decision not to adopt the UK Government's Online Safety Bill but instead to amend existing legislation to effectively combat the worst forms of online harm.

It is envisaged that Law drafting will commence in 2025. The Department for Justice and Home Affairs will work on necessary updates to Jersey penal law, enabling perpetrators to be prosecuted. Simultaneously, the Department for the Economy will progress changes to platform regulation and content moderation, providing relief to victims by enabling intimidating online content and pictures to be quickly and effectively removed. This will be achieved by enhancing existing legislation for telecommunications and introducing a new cyber-security law.

The current policy approach aims to empower internet users by law to directly address platforms and other internet service providers if they wish to get certain content removed from platforms. Additionally, we are planning to give authorities the power to ban content and investigate platforms in case of non-compliance. This approach will provide a basis for internet users to request the removal of online material based on its harmful content, without knowing the person that uploaded the material or having to rely on the cooperation of the perpetrator.

This is considered a proportionate and appropriate response for Jersey and represents a legislative solution to online harms which capitalises upon existing laws and enforcement bodies.

In 2022, the Children and the Digital World⁴⁶ project sought to provide an insight into how children's lives were impacted as a result of their changing use of technology during the pandemic. Its findings reflected the significance of the digital world in all elements of children and young people's lives and reinforced that this was not going to change as the impact of the pandemic declined. Following publication of the report, a new Digital Education Strategy⁴⁷ was launched in 2023, focusing on developing digital skills for young people and teachers from early years through to post-16 education.

A review of online safety policy and digital harm is being undertaken as part of the Digital Education Strategy to include new and emerging technologies and risks. The digital harm guidance includes information and guidance for families on topics such as screen time, the impact of device use on sleep, recognising signs of addiction and anxiety linked to device use, and identifying cyberbullying.

The Jersey Office of the Information Commissioner publishes information to help keep children safe online and during 2024 engaged with 26% of the total population of Jersey's under 18-year-olds across 18 different schools through assemblies, classroom sessions, privacy debates and 'courtroom challenges.' 86% of the young people who took part said that their '*knowledge of JOIC, protection of their personal information and understanding their personal information rights improved as a result*' of participating in the sessions⁴⁸.

⁴⁶ [Children and the Digital World, www.gov.je](https://www.gov.je/Children-and-the-Digital-World)

⁴⁷ [Digital Education Strategy report.pdf](#)

⁴⁸ [Jersey Office of the Information Commissioner - Young People](#)

4. Violence against children (articles 19, 24(3), 28(2), 34, 37(a) & 39)

Corporal punishment

The Government of Jersey thanks the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child for recognising the Island's progress in outlawing the physical punishment of children in 2020.

The number of relevant reported assaults in Jersey between 2019 and 2024, where a parent was recorded as the offender and their child was recorded as the victim, is shown in the table below:

Offence	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
Common assault (common law)	6	10	20	34	24	65
Children (Jersey) Law 2022: any person who has responsibility for a child under 16 intentionally or recklessly causes harm to that child	26	22	15	7	15	10
Grave and criminal assault (common law)	3	2	1	2		6
TOTAL	35	34	36	43	39	81

**crime reporting practices changed in 2024, leading to a higher number of recorded assaults*

We will continue to monitor relevant statistics and promote attitudinal change to corporal punishment. This includes a wide range of parenting support services provided directly by government, to promote positive and non-violent parenting. The Children and Families Hub⁴⁹ provides advice and support to families and a range of evidence-based courses for parents. Courses include building positive relationships, positive behaviour management, setting rules and routines and confident decision-making for parents. The range of courses on offer has recently been extended to 14 different programmes; delivery can be both face-to-face or online and includes bespoke courses for parents of children with ADHD and autism. The number of parents accessing parenting courses offered by the Children and Families Hub increased from 60 in 2019 to 438 in 2024.

The Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills also commissions services which provide programmes of support to families, including Brighter Futures and Family Nursing and Home Care, as well as a free online wellbeing courses.⁵⁰

Abuse, neglect and sexual exploitation / abuse

In 2022, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs established an independent Taskforce to report on violence against women and girls (VAWG) in Jersey. Membership of the Taskforce included a range of key stakeholders, spanning public services, specialist services, education and community support.

The Taskforce undertook research with victim-survivors, children and young people, professional services, and the general public in Jersey, aiming to gain a better understanding of the problem on the Island. Research took the form of a public call for evidence and targeted qualitative research with key groups of individuals (including children and young people) ensuring that the voices of participants, including victim-survivors, could be captured in a safe and meaningful way.

The Taskforce published its findings in a report⁵¹ in November 2023. A total of 77 recommendations were made on courses of action to address violence against women and girls in Jersey. Some were clear and specific recommendations for change; other parts of the report recommended that further

⁴⁹ [Children and Families Hub](#)

⁵⁰ [Free wellbeing online courses in Jersey and Guernsey – InOurPlace](#)

⁵¹ [gov.je/Caring and support VAWG Taskforce Report](#)

in-depth and targeted research is undertaken to better understand the issues that have been surfaced by the work of the Taskforce.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs accepted⁵² the recommendations of the VAWG Taskforce, 58 of which were directed towards the Government of Jersey. This position was endorsed in the Common Strategic Policy for 2024-26, which confirmed that it was a government priority to implement the recommendations of the Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce.

As at June 2025, implementation of 27 recommendations is complete; these include:

- Mandatory training for all professionals working within the Family Court system to ensure they are better able to identify and respond to cases where there is suspected domestic abuse (*recommendation 30*)
- The training received by the judiciary on the relationship between allegations of domestic abuse, sexual abuse and parental alienation should be reviewed (*recommendation 32*)
- Family Court professionals should receive training on how perpetrators of domestic abuse may use the Family Court system to try and continue the abuse of their former partner (*recommendation 38.3*)
- Family Courts should keep the ongoing safety of child arrangement orders under review in every case where domestic abuse has been alleged, in order to ensure that these arrangements are working in the best interests of the children and victims-survivors involved (*recommendation 36*)
- CYPES (Children, Young People, Education & Skills Department) should work closely with Dewberry House Sexual Assault Referral Centre, Jersey Action Against Rape and Jersey Domestic Abuse Support to promote better awareness of these services within schools and other sites for young people (*recommendation 65*)
- Schools should ensure that all students are aware of the provision of school counsellors on site, and how to access this service (*recommendation 67*).

Progress has also been made towards implementing a further 43 recommendations of the VAWG Taskforce and the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs has committed to publishing an annual progress update⁵³.

The following direct quote from the VAWG Taskforce report explains the support available for children and young people who are victims of child sexual abuse or exploitation:

“The Safeguarding Partnership Board (SPB) and Children, Young People, Education and Skills (CYPES) departments are leading work to tackle VAWG issues for children and young people through the Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSAE) strategy which was published in July 2022⁵⁴. The fundamental vision of the strategy is for all children and young people in Jersey to be free from abuse and exploitation. Enabling recovery from CSAE is one of the strategic priorities of this work. This work included creating joined up services in one safe space to support children, young people and their parents/carers, widening the scope of recovery and empowerment services, and securing recurrent funding for services that support children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse or exploitation.”

⁵² [Response to the taskforce report from the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs.pdf](#)

⁵³ [First annual progress report concerning Violence Against Women and Girls published](#)

⁵⁴ [SPB-Child-Sexual-Abuse-and-Exploitation-Strategy-July-2022-Updated.pdf](#)

Specialist support, including forensic examination and crisis support for children and young people who have experienced abuse is available from the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, Dewberry House.

All teachers are trained in safeguarding procedures and the referral pathways for young people who have experienced abuse, should this be needed. Youth workers are also trained in how to respond to a young person who has experienced abuse and so young people can also ask them for help to access support and safety.

Tackling and preventing violence against children is strengthened by measures introduced in the Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2022⁵⁵ and explained for practitioners in the Statutory Guidance⁵⁶ published alongside the Law. The Law introduced 'Safeguarding Partners' – the Chief Executive of the Public Service, chief officers of government departments and chief officer of the States of Jersey Police. Safeguarding Partners now have a legal duty to work together effectively for the purposes of safeguarding the welfare of children or young people. This includes identifying and responding to children or young people whose welfare appears to need safeguarding; reviewing and improving child safeguarding arrangements; and reviewing and learning from serious child safeguarding cases.

These arrangements and the responsibilities of key individuals are set out in the Safeguarding Arrangements document,⁵⁷ published as required by the Law by the Responsible Ministers. This document sets out arrangements for:

- identifying and responding to children or young people whose welfare appears to need safeguarding
- planning, reviewing and improving safeguarding practice to protect and promote the welfare of children or young people
- procuring professional advice on safeguarding the welfare of children or young people
- the disclosure of information between Safeguarding Partners (Accountable Officers) and relevant providers and
- scrutiny by an independent person of the effectiveness of the arrangements.

Harmful practices

The Marriage and Civil Status (Amendment No. 5) (Jersey) Law 2023 was adopted unanimously and prohibits marriage if one or both partners is under the age of 18.

Following a recommendation in the report of the VAWG Taskforce, the Safeguarding Partnership Board published updated guidance on the mandatory reporting requirements relating to female genital mutilation (FGM) for health professionals. The Board also publishes online guidance on FGM and harmful practices including honour-based violence.

⁵⁵ [Children and Young People \(Jersey\) Law 2022](#)

⁵⁶ [States Assembly | R.7/2024](#)

⁵⁷ [States Assembly R.8/2024.pdf](#)

5. Family Environment and Alternative Care (articles 5, 9–11, 18(1-2), 20, 21, 25 and 27 (4))

Family Environment

Family-friendly amendments to employment legislation introduced in 2018 and 2020 and now include the following:

- an entitlement for both parents of 52 weeks of leave following the birth of their baby;
- for the second parent, an increase in paid parental leave from two to six weeks;
- entitlements for birth mothers in relation to pregnancy and breastfeeding;
- the same benefits introduced for adoptive and surrogate parents; and
- new entitlements to time off for ante-natal or pre-adoptive appointments.

The Common Strategic Policy 2024-26 includes a commitment to extend nursery and childcare provision, moving towards a universal offer for 2 to 3-year-olds. A pilot programme has been established for children aged 2 to 3 years with additional needs, using spare capacity in primary schools.

Government is working with the early years sector to improve recruitment and retention, to incentivise training and development opportunities for the workforce.

The investment is primarily in the increased capacity and quality provision of early childhood education and care, recognising the transformative, positive effects on young children. This will positively impact longer-term outcomes for children and will also benefit the economy by enabling parents to return to work should they wish.

Children deprived of a family environment

The Children and Families Hub is a central front door to coordinate services for families and seeks to ensure that appropriate interventions are put in place at an early stage to prevent escalation. They work directly with families and signpost to other public services and charities who can offer support.

Early intervention services are linked with children's social care services through the newly created Children, Young People and Families' directorate, in order to improve coordination as envisaged in the Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2022.

The Children's Services Reform programme, developed in 2024, sets out a sustainable approach to service reform and design, underpinned by a critical needs analysis. The three priorities set out in the reform programme (see table 1) are built on a coherent analysis of need, with projections to forecast future demand.

The programme prioritises **Supporting Families** and practice improvement, providing **Loving Homes** for children and ensuring better **Care and Support** as corporate parents. These priorities are summarised in the table below:

 Supporting Families • Create a more joined-up approach to children's needs at earliest point (Early intervention through to statutory) • Develop Multi-Disciplinary Service, including targeted adolescent support for families to prevent need escalating • Strengthen the quality of practice through improved system wide oversight • Redesign workforce to ensure model of delivery able to provide good care and support for children across the system. • Develop and embed practice model. • Develop joined up reporting	 Loving Homes • Increase foster homes for children. • Develop coherent needs analysis (sufficiency dataset) to inform creation of residential estate modelling with better economies of scale and sustainability. • Review residential estate workforce and redesign according to need. • Establish estate strategy and capital investment plan • Create sufficient homes for 16-19 yr olds to promote successful independence • Seek registration amendments	 Care & Support • Improve the quality of support and care to children in care and care leavers. • Redesign Corporate Parenting Board and build thematic approach to oversight of corporate parenting function. • Create subgroup structure which drives activity to improve corporate parenting. • Create Children In Care Council to ensure engagement of children in care and care leavers in system design and delivery. • Improve political and cross system accountability in corporate parenting.	
Finance Workforce	Technology Analytics	Commissioning Administration	Quality Assurance Regulation

Children's social care services are regulated and inspected by the Jersey Care Commission, which sets out practice standards that form the basis of the inspection regime.

The voices of children in care situations are heard in decisions affecting them by the provision of independent advocacy services (see Section 2). These are currently commissioned by the government from the voluntary sector and this offering will be further strengthened by Regulations adopted in February 2025 which will make access to independent advocacy services a statutory entitlement for children in care and care leavers.

Children placed in care outside of Jersey

The frequency of young people being placed off-island continues to decline. However, it is likely that there will always be a small number of vulnerable young people whose needs are best met by specialist services in the UK.

With regard to reciprocal arrangements for children placed in UK care settings, policy officers continue to liaise with their counterparts in the UK Department for Education and the scope of the necessary legal and regulatory changes required have been agreed. It is anticipated that amendments will be brought forward during 2025 alongside other legislative changes, as set out in the UK Government's statement 'keeping children safe, helping families thrive'⁵⁸ published in November 2024.

The most recent Jersey Care Commission Inspection of Children's Social Services⁵⁹ considered the Independent Reviewing Officer service and found that this had improved significantly since the previous inspection and now provided meaningful support to children in care both in Jersey and elsewhere.

⁵⁸ ['keeping children safe, helping families thrive'](#)

⁵⁹ [IR-Childrens-Social-Care-Independent-Reviewing-Officer-Service-IRO-Fostering-and-Adoption-Services-May-2024-Final.pdf](#)

Leaving Care

A range of accommodation is in place for care leavers in Jersey. This includes in-house accommodation for children aged 16+ in registered children's homes; supported accommodation for care leavers aged 18+ who require additional support, and are cared for in a registered home, with staff support on site; a small number of independent flats and hostel accommodation provided by a range of charitable and third sector providers. Care leavers are supported by dedicated personal advisors and if appropriate will be supported to access accommodation either in the private sector or via a partnership pathway with Jersey's social housing provider, Andium Homes.

Should a care leaver be facing homelessness they would automatically be given the highest level of priority for access to social housing.

Recent analysis has identified a shortfall in suitable accommodation for young people moving towards independence which is in high demand. The multi-agency 'Home and Housing' Corporate Parenting Sub-group has worked to reduce the numbers of young people waiting for accommodation from 18 to less than five young people.

Wider structural challenges with the children social care estate will be addressed as part of the children's social care reform programme which seeks to create a more sustainable delivery model and could include increasing the amount of available accommodation, as well as improved training for young people in care, to support them to develop skills for independent living.

The care leavers offer has been reviewed in 2025 and provides support and advice on health and wellbeing matters, finances, training opportunities, employment and relationships, as well as housing.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ [Guide for Young People Leaving Care Update.pdf](#)

6. Children with disabilities (article 23)

Inclusion support services are available for children with disabilities via the Child Development and Therapy⁶¹ Centre which provides support to families and to organisations which require advice and training to help meet the needs of children with complex developmental and/or health needs from birth to 18 years of age.

Children with disabilities are supported through the provision of specialist schools and settings⁶² including designated Additional Resource Provisions in schools for pupils with physical disabilities, autism and those with hearing and sight impairments.

In 2023, a new funding formula for Schools was introduced⁶³, which places a greater emphasis on the makeup of each school, rather than simply the number of pupils, and allocates funding accordingly. This means that schools receive more funding if they have more children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), a Record of Need, low prior attainment, who speak English as an additional language, or who have speech and language difficulties. Additional Resource Provisions allow children with a Record of Need to attend a mainstream school within their catchment area where possible.

The Jersey Youth Service runs an Inclusion and Short Breaks provisions, supporting young people aged 12 to 18 with additional needs and disabilities to access youth provisions, aiding their emotional and social development.

Children with a health or developmental need (as defined in the Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2022) are entitled to independent advocacy services and as mentioned in Section 2 this will become a statutory entitlement in 2025.

⁶¹ [Child Development and Therapy Centre services](#)

⁶² [Specialist schools and settings](#)

⁶³ [Jersey Funding Formula for Schools 2023](#)

7. Basic Health and Welfare (articles 6, 18(3), 24, 26, 27(1)– (3) and 33)

Health and health services

At present, Jersey's healthcare estate does not fully support modern practices and presents daily challenges to patients and staff. The Government's Common Strategic Policy for 2024-26 includes a commitment to start building a new hospital during the current term of office (ending in May 2026) and continue to develop longer-term plans for replacing other healthcare facilities. Construction will begin later in 2025 with completion by the end of 2028. Beginning work on the new hospital is an important step to providing the quality and level of care required by Islanders of all ages and will support delivery of age-appropriate care services to all children.

Islanders' health and well-being has been supported in 2024 through initiatives like the GP (General Practitioner) fees subsidy, which reduces the cost of consultations, especially for low-income households and full-time students (who now receive free GP consultations).

All government-funded primary schools now offer a hot meal to students at lunchtime; this is available free to certain students, supports healthy eating and helps to alleviate cost of living related pressures on families.

The Food and Nutrition Framework⁶⁴ aims to help Islanders improve the way they eat. It comprises carefully prioritised interventions, focused on those where the potential impact of change is greatest.

These include:

- Working with Children Young People Education and Skills (CYPES) to provide subsidised and targeted nutritious Free School Meals in primary schools
- Settings-based work with early years providers and primary schools
- Targeted Healthy Start vouchers providing free fruit and vegetables to new families. We aim to expand this programme to Reception-aged children
- Initiatives to promote and support breastfeeding
- Wherever possible support government efforts on programmes and initiatives that ensure a good basic standard of living and address the building blocks of health.

New interventions to be introduced by mid-2026 are the development of a 'Healthy Jersey' food business standard, defining what good looks like for food retailers, and a targeted diabetes prevention programme.

Childhood obesity and excess weight are significant health issues for children and their families. They can result in serious implications for a child's physical and mental health, which can continue into adulthood. The Jersey Child Measurement Programme⁶⁵ data enables the government to monitor progress and plan services to tackle childhood obesity.

⁶⁴ [Nutritious and Delicious. A Jersey Food and Nutrition Framework.pdf](#)

⁶⁵ [Public Health Jersey Child Measurement Report 2023-2024](#)

Mental Health

The Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy 2022-25⁶⁶ set out the vision for the development of Child and Adolescent Mental Health services (CAMHS) in Jersey.

The strategy included a comprehensive redesign of the CAMHS service, with the following services reporting into a lead for Health and Wellbeing:

- Early Intervention
- Crisis and Assessment
- Neurodevelopmental Service
- Specialist CAMHS
- Children in Care Service

Investment of £6 million over three years 2022-24 supported the redesign, with ongoing funding of £2.25 million per annum from 2025 onwards agreed as part of the Government Plan. This increased staffing from 17 FTE (full time equivalent) posts in 2022 to the current level of 75 FTE, considerably improving capacity for service delivery.

Compared to data from the UK⁶⁷ the number of children and young people accessing mental health services in Jersey was the equivalent of 3,234 cases per 100,000 children, compared to the NHS (National Health Service) mean of 1,989. The Jersey service delivered 45,492 contacts per 100,000 children and young people, compared to the UK mean of 32,701, indicating Jersey children and young people accessing services received a higher level of input from mental health professionals.

Within the redesign of local services a dedicated Early Intervention Service was created, with Mental Health Practitioners allocated to all schools in Jersey offering consultation, training and brief interventions in schools.

Waiting times

For the year ending June 2025, CAMHS had completed Mental Health assessments for general referrals within an average waiting time of 29 days. More urgent referrals are completed quicker. The service currently has significantly increased the numbers of psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists and other professionals as part of the mental health strategy and recent investment. Jersey currently has a better resourced community workforce of 295.3 practitioners per 100,000 children and young people, compared to a UK average of 136.6. The time between referral to first appointment, currently 4 weeks, compares favourably to services in other areas of the UK.

Provision of specialist services

CAMHS employs a number of psychologists and therapists who would be able to support children or young people to explore sexuality or gender issues, referring them to specialist UK providers if, or when, required. Given the specialist nature of support required, the formal pathway for gender referral would be from (Jersey's) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to a specialist gender service in the UK. There have been no referrals to specialist gender services in the previous three years.

We collate the ethnicity of children and young people referred and as part of CAMHS' annual inspection by the Jersey Care Commission we present annual data of numbers per ethnicity and

⁶⁶ [Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy](#)

⁶⁷ [Children and Young People's Mental Health — Workforce Benchmarking](#)

review this against local census percentages to ensure there is no under or over-representation that requires addressing.

In 2024 our Early Intervention Team spearheaded several initiatives, including sessions at the Polish educational institution, emphasising the importance of mental health awareness and services. This included delivering sessions on the importance of looking after your mental health and accessing services, followed by engaging in the whole family play session. The Early Intervention service also attended the Mt Hope SDA Jersey Group (a group of mostly African seventh day Adventists) delivering a parenting session on Children's Mental Health and resilience, followed by a session on raising resilient children and breaking barriers to accessing Services.

As part of the Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy 2022-25, a health psychologist and Learning Disability nurse post was added to support those with additional health or cognitive needs.

Overrepresentation of children belonging to certain groups in inpatient mental health care

Jersey does not have dedicated, specialist inpatient care for children and young people with mental health issues. A total of seven individuals under the age of 18 have been transferred to specialist inpatient care in the UK under Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in the last 10 years.

Measures to address underlying causes of poor mental health

The Early Intervention Team additionally support preventive initiatives on Island and in schools, to promote positive health and wellbeing. There is currently work underway to develop the next Mental Health Strategy 2026-2029. This strategy will focus on severe and enduring mental health support and also develop preventative and proactive support models. The recent Jersey Children and Young People's Survey 2024 helpfully identifies key themes that are impacting our children and young people's mental health, and this will be used alongside working groups to develop strategic areas to address.

Environmental health

The Carbon Neutral Roadmap⁶⁸ was agreed by the States Assembly in April 2022. It committed Jersey to an ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction trajectory and detailed a set of policies for the first delivery period 2022 to 2025. Spend was allocated to these policies from the established Climate Emergency Fund to an anticipated total of £23 million.

The Carbon Neutral Roadmap outlines the policies proposed to begin the journey towards achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Policies come under four main categories:

- transport
- heating, cooking and cooling
- other on and off-island emissions
- enabling policies

The Carbon Neutral Roadmap is based on ideas gathered from islanders, along with detailed technical studies and the recommendations of the Citizens Assembly on Climate Change, which randomly selected 45 people in Jersey to come together and discuss these issues. Children's voices

⁶⁸ [Carbon Neutral Roadmap 20220525](#)

were captured as part of the consultation process and a comprehensive Children's Rights Impact Assessment⁶⁹ was published.

The Enabling Policies which form part of the Carbon Neutral Roadmap include developing the on-Island skills required for a decarbonized economy and low-carbon and sustainable supply chains and delivering the COP26 education pledge through high quality climate education in Jersey.

Climate Action was one of the campaigns chosen by the Jersey Youth Parliament⁷⁰ for detailed research and analysis, culminating in a final report which was presented to the States in July 2022.⁷¹ The Jersey Youth Parliament ensures that the voices of children and young people are heard by those making decisions in Jersey and offers them the opportunity to make meaningful change in their community.

Standard of living

Following the Review of the first Children's Plan, completed in 2023,⁷² the second Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2024-27 included a fifth outcome 'All children in Jersey should enjoy a decent standard of living.' This is in addition to the outcomes which remained in place from the original Children's Plan 2019-23, which were that all children in Jersey are healthy and happy; can learn and achieve; are safe and loved; and are included, respected and valued. The addition of an outcome relating to economic and environmental wellbeing reflects feedback from children on what matters most to them, as well as bringing the plan into line with best practice observed in other jurisdictions.

The most recent Jersey Household Income Distribution Report 2021-22⁷³ provides data on children living in relative low-income households, defined as those with an income below 60% of median net income before housing costs. In 2022, 15% of children in Jersey were in relative low income before housing costs, below the EU average of 19% and the UK at 20%.

Whilst the government has chosen not to publish a standalone poverty strategy, policy development in several areas aims to respond to the impact of poverty and the rise in the cost of living, particularly on families:

- increased income support benefit rates and the introduction of the Community Cost Bonus and the Registered Employee Support Payment scheme
- transition to a living wage (two-thirds of the median wage) by the end of the current political term in June 2026
- subsidising the cost of GP visits
- improving access to social rented housing and affordable housing schemes
- introduction of nutritious school meals for all primary school children
- implementing a new Rented Dwellings Licensing Scheme to ensure that rental homes are maintained to a decent and safe standard
- introduction of a new Residential Tenancy Law.

⁶⁹ [Draft Carbon Neutral Roadmap Children's Rights Impact Assessment 20211216](#)

⁷⁰ [Home - Youth Parliament](#)

⁷¹ [JYP-Climate-Change-Final-Report-2022.pdf](#)

⁷² [Children and Young People's Plan 2019 to 2023 review.pdf](#)

⁷³ [Jersey Household Income Distribution Report 2021-22](#)

Sport and Physical Activity

Physical Education (PE) is part of the curriculum. The Inspiring an Active Jersey⁷⁴ review of sport and physical activity in Jersey highlighted opportunities to strengthen PE in schools and the department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills is considering how resources can be appropriately targeted to increase the physical activity and skills of the least active children and young people.

The ambition for schools will also be refined to align with the desired outcomes and better support the diverse needs of all children:

- School Swimming: at least 70% of all children will achieve the required national swimming standard by the time they leave primary school
- PE Lessons: children will receive more inclusive, engaging and high-quality education in PE which encourages them to lead healthy, active lives into adulthood.

⁷⁴ [A REVIEW OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN JERSEY](#)

8. Education, leisure and cultural activities (articles 28-31)

Inclusive Education

Jersey's recently launched Vision for Inclusive Education⁷⁵ has seven principles which will ensure quality, accessible education is available to all children. This follows the Independent Review of Inclusive Education and Early Years,⁷⁶ completed in 2021. An inclusive education Charter will be developed, detailing how the principles set out in the Vision will be achieved, alongside the Special Educational Needs Codes of Practice and School Review Framework.

Significant development and policy work has been completed to reduce attainment gaps, particularly for those children from low-income families.

The Independent School Funding Review in 2020⁷⁷ brought about a change to the way in which schools are funded. Government-provided schools were previously funded based on the number of students attending but are now given core funding plus additional resourcing based on identified needs of students in the school.

The Jersey Premium policy⁷⁸ aims to give children from all backgrounds equal opportunities to benefit from education. Funding is distributed to schools of eligible students (children who are looked after, those who live in a household which has recently claimed Income Support and others who are eligible under exceptional circumstances) and the school must account to the department for Children, Young People Education and Skills (CYPES) annually for how funding has been used to benefit these students.

The department for CYPES has adopted a suite of policies which align with the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in the following respects:

- Inclusive education in mainstream schools for students with additional needs and disabilities:
 - Inclusion Policy⁷⁹
 - Special Educational Needs Policy⁸⁰
- Use of exclusions
 - Positive Behaviour and Exclusions Policy⁸¹
- Guidance for trans and gender-questioning children⁸²
- Elimination of bullying, including cyber-bullying
 - Counter Bullying Policy⁸³
 - Online Safety Policy⁸⁴ (*note currently under review; a new policy will be published before the end of 2025*)
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education⁸⁵

⁷⁵ [Vision for Inclusive Education](#)

⁷⁶ [Independent Review of Inclusive Education and Early Years](#)

⁷⁷ [Independent School Funding Review Report 20201016.pdf](#)

⁷⁸ [Jersey Premium Policy: CYPES](#)

⁷⁹ [Inclusion Policy August 2024](#)

⁸⁰ [Special Educational Needs Policy 2021](#)

⁸¹ [Positive Behaviour and Exclusions Policy 2023](#)

⁸² [Trans Inclusion Guidance \(Non-statutory guidance for CYPES including schools and educational settings in Jersey\)](#)

⁸³ [Counter Bullying Policy 2019](#)

⁸⁴ [Online Safety Policy 2021](#)

⁸⁵ [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

The Education Law establishes a Curriculum Council, the main purpose of which is to conduct consultation on the aims, objectives, content, delivery, and assessment of the Jersey Curriculum and offer independent advice to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning in respect of the Jersey Curriculum.

Teaching students about children's rights and the principles of the UNCRC are included in the Jersey curriculum. This is illustrated by the Guidance issued in respect of the KS3 and KS4 PSHE (Personal Social, Health and Economic Education, including Citizenship) Curriculum⁸⁶, the content of which has been mapped to the Articles of the UNCRC. This fulfils the requirements of Article 42, which requires governments to actively work to ensure children and adults know about the Convention Rights.

Further and Higher Education

Strategic planning is actively underway on Lifelong Learning to safeguard and strengthen vocational training pathways. The policy intent here is to expand the choices for 16+ students by improving joint working between schools and colleges. There has also been some policy development work to explore how we can level up future funding parity for students who choose technical and vocational pathways rather than traditional academic routes.

In the shorter term, we are currently reviewing and developing approaches to ensure vocational education remains responsive to industry needs and accessible to students. Key initiatives include aligning apprenticeship provision with projected skills shortages, expanding employer engagement, and promoting alternative routes to gaining work experience. These efforts aim to ensure that vocational training remains a viable and attractive option for young people, while also meeting the evolving demands of Jersey's economy.

Rest, leisure and cultural activities

A Play Strategy is currently under development and will incorporate work completed by the Jersey Youth Parliament Right to Play Group⁸⁷. The work will include creating a map of all available indoor and outdoor play spaces and determining the ownership, who is responsible for their upkeep, the nature of the facilities and equipment available and its condition and accessibility. This will enable parents, carers and potential users to make informed choices based on location and offering, as well as identifying gaps in the current provision.

Children were recently consulted on a new play facility for the Millennium Town Park; 243 responses were received to a public consultation and a child-friendly findings report was produced. The School Council Network then reviewed the plans with planning officers at one of their quarterly meetings.⁸⁸

Policy contained in the Island Plan 2022-25⁸⁹ states that all new major development should consider how it will contribute towards helping children to be safe, active, social and imaginative, as well as helping children access and spend time in nature. Design statements issued with development proposals must explain how this has been considered in the design stages of the development, from a placemaking perspective.

A comprehensive Children's Rights Impact Assessment⁹⁰ was published as part of the Island Plan's core evidence base.

⁸⁶ [PSHE Non-Statutory Guidance KS3 and KS4](#)

⁸⁷ [Final JYP Final Report](#) (Page 5)

⁸⁸ [‘Their voices together are more powerful’ - schools join forces at Highlands - Jersey Evening Post](#)

⁸⁹ [Bridging Island Plan 2022 to 2025](#)

⁹⁰ [R Children's Rights Impact Assessment ND.pdf](#)

9. Special protection measures (articles 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37(b)–(d) and 38–40)

Administration of child justice

The minimum age of criminal responsibility in Jersey is currently 10 years. Guidance issued by the Attorney General⁹¹ means it is rare for children below the age of 14 to be prosecuted. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs is supportive of raising the age of criminal responsibility⁹² however has highlighted that there first needs to be research into the changes required to adequately support children and provide effective alternatives for those who would otherwise enter the formal criminal justice system.

The Parish Hall Enquiry (PHE) system in Jersey is a unique means by which children can be diverted away from the criminal justice system. The PHE system is operated by experienced Centeniers (senior officers of the Honorary Police force) who must follow the Attorney General's directions and guidance regarding the conduct of PHEs and the decision on whether to prosecute.

Centeniers are permitted to give children and their parents words of advice, agree the deferral of decisions to prosecute if the child does not engage in further adverse conduct or engages in voluntary measures, or, where appropriate, participates in restorative meetings with the victim. Centeniers also have the option of issuing a written caution or taking no further action. The determination of an offence at a PHE does not amount to a criminal conviction and does not result in a criminal record.

The detention of a child is always a measure of last resort. The Attorney General's guidance on the Overnight Detention of Children and Youths⁹³ states that, wherever possible, charged children and young people will be released on bail and that the safeguarding and wellbeing of the child or young person is paramount.

Legal Aid is available to help individuals with a legal need who cannot afford the full costs of legal representation. Legal aid is available for most criminal matters before the Courts in Jersey and in connection with family law matters and disputes where there are dependent children.

Legal Aid can also assist in respect of civil claims and disputes including eviction, contractual claims and professional negligence; legitimate human rights claims and proceedings and is available to parents and carers in care and supervision proceedings under the Children Law.

Adoption of a youth justice strategy for Jersey

The Government of Jersey is pleased to inform the Committee that 'Reimagining Youth Justice: A Child First Vision for Jersey (2025-2030)' has now been published⁹⁴.

The Roadmap is built on the findings of a Youth Justice Review⁹⁵, which recommended a multi-agency approach to youth justice, focusing on the rights and needs of children. It aligns with and will

⁹¹ [ID guidance on the prosecution of offenders under the age of 14 20161006 ALS.pdf](#)

⁹² [2024-12-10-States-edited.pdf](#) (at point 4.5.1)

⁹³ [ID AG Guidance to Custody Sergeants Centeniers on Youth Remands 26.09.19.pdf](#)

⁹⁴ [States Assembly | R.105/2025](#)

⁹⁵ [States Assembly | R-70-2019](#)

be coordinated through the Building a Safer Community (BASC) framework⁹⁶, prioritising holistic, evidence-based interventions.

The Roadmap is constructed around a set of key principles, which include the best interests principle, compliance with the UNCRC and equal access to rights for all children. The Roadmap will prioritise diversion of children away from the formal justice system and ensure children's participation and engagement.

An outcomes-based approach has been adopted to align with the Children, Young People and Families' plan 2024-2027⁹⁷ as well as the BASC delivery framework. A data partnership is in the process of determining the metrics by which our success in delivering key actions aligned to the below outcomes will be measured:

Outcome 1: The youth justice system will work in partnership to support children to engage in law-abiding and positive behaviours.

This will include reviewing existing elements of the system, addressing the over-representation of certain groups of children, education and community initiatives.

Outcome 2: Children are diverted away from the formal criminal justice system at the earliest point with appropriate support.

Key actions under this outcome include additional trauma-informed training for practitioners, restorative justice practices, peer mentoring and effective community sentencing.

Outcome 3: Children who are engaged in serious or persistent conflict with the law go on to achieve positive outcomes.

A range of actions are proposed across the youth justice system, including policing, courts and diversionary pathways. The Jersey's Children First practice model will continue to be central to this outcome, promoting child-friendly environments where possible. Legislative options include consultation on the minimum age of criminal responsibility and a review of legislation applicable to secure accommodation for youth offenders.

Outcome 4: Children, families, witnesses and community victims recover and move on beyond the impact of the harm they have experienced.

The youth justice system holds a dual responsibility; not only must it work to rehabilitate children and prevent future crime, but it also must support victims, witnesses and the community in their recovery and help them to rebuild their lives. Implementing restorative practices will be made a priority with the aim that all staff working in youth justice-related services will receive training in restorative justice and trauma-informed practices to maintain high standards and ensure that the system reflects child first best practices.

⁹⁶ [Building a Safer Community \(BASC\) Delivery Framework](#)

⁹⁷ [Children and Young People's Plan 2024 to 2027](#)

Appendix A – table of legislation adopted following completion of the Legislative Gap Analysis

Legislation title	Primary purpose of the legislation
<u>Discrimination (Amendment of Law) (Jersey) Regulations 2021</u>	To outlaw discrimination against people with children in respect of finding places to live.
<u>Children (Arrangements to Assist Children to Live Outside Jersey) (Amendment) (Jersey) Law 2022</u>	To amend the Children Law to clarify that the court may approve arrangements for a child who is in the care of the Minister to live outside Jersey whether with people with parental responsibility for that child, other suitable individuals, or in any suitable type of residential accommodation.
<u>Regulation of Care (Regulated Activities) (Amendment of Law) (Jersey) Regulations 2022</u>	Introducing a set of new regulated activities in respect of the provision of health or social care services for, or in respect of, children and young people.
<u>Marriage and Civil Status (Amendment No. 5) (Jersey) Law 2023</u>	To prevent minors from marrying in Jersey or Jersey-domiciled minors from marrying anywhere in the world.
<u>Civil Partnership (Amendment) (Jersey) Law 2023</u>	As above, to prevent minors from entering into a Civil Partnership in Jersey or elsewhere.
<u>Control of Housing and Work (Amendment) (Jersey) Law 2022</u>	Creation of a scheme requiring most adults who live and work in Jersey to have an ‘appropriate status’ (or, in the case of corporate persons carrying on business here, to have an ‘appropriate licence’) to do so.
<u>Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2022</u>	To promote and support the wellbeing, and safeguard the welfare, of children and young people including the provision of services or support to meet the assessed wellbeing or health or development needs of children in care, or young people leaving care.
<u>Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022</u>	Giving further effect in Jersey to the rights and obligations set out in the UNCRC. Persons described as ‘duty-bearers’ under this Law will be required to have due regard to the requirements of the Convention whenever certain decisions are to be taken by them which may have a direct or indirect impact on children.
<u>Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022</u>	Creating a new criminal offence of domestic abuse; allowing the courts to issue domestic abuse protection orders; and allowing the courts to require a person who has been convicted of domestic abuse or a similar offence to provide information to police.
<u>Food (Jersey) Law 2023</u>	Introduction of regulations around food for the purposes of protecting human health and consumers’ interests.
<u>Crime (Public Order) (Jersey) Law 2024</u>	Introduces a new offence of carrying an article that has “a blade or is sharply pointed” which will explicitly include school premises.
<u>Children and Civil Status (Amendments) (Jersey) Law 2024</u>	Updating existing legislation to make provision about parental orders, the acquisition of parental responsibility and the registration procedures for, and the status of, children who are conceived either as a result of fertility treatment or surrogacy arrangements

<u>Mental Health (Young Offenders) Law (Jersey) Amendment Regulations 2024</u>	Enabling the transfer of young offenders from secure accommodation to an establishment approved under the Law and enable their detention in the approved establishment for treatment for a mental disorder.
<u>Draft Children and Civil Status (Consequential Amendments) (Jersey) Amendment Regulations 202-</u>	To make equivalent provision [with other laws] for children who are conceived as a result of fertility treatment or surrogacy arrangements, including provision for the making of parental orders, the acquisition of parental responsibility, and the associated registration procedures.
<u>Draft Children and Young People (Independent Advocates) (Jersey) Regulations 202-</u>	To require the Minister to appoint independent advocates to provide advocacy services in respect of children with a health or development need, children looked after by the Minister, care leavers and children who are subject to safeguarding arrangements.
<u>Draft Children and Civil Status (Consequential Amendments) (Jersey) Amendment Regulations 202-</u>	Regulations required to make various amendments as a consequence of the coming into force of the Children and Civil Status (Amendments) (Jersey) Law 2024

Appendix B – Glossary of Terms

Articles	The 54 civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights which make up the UNCRC
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
Children’s Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA)	A documented process to predict the impacts of policy, legislation and practice on children’s rights
CYPES	Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills
Due Regard	A balanced consideration of the UNCRC together with all relevant issues
Duty-bearers	Those required to have due regard for children’s rights under the Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) aw 2022: a) the Chief Minister, Council of Ministers, Ministers, Assistant Ministers and officers exercising delegated functions; b) elected Members of the States Assembly; c) any committee or panel established by standing orders (apart from a committee of inquiry) or any other committee, panel, board or body, whether established under an enactment or otherwise, that is permitted under standing orders to lodge a proposition; and d) Public Authorities as defined in the Law
Government of Jersey	Government departments under the direction of Ministers
Honorary Police	Voluntary police service existing in each of Jersey’s 12 Parishes, which has been part of Jersey life for hundreds of years. Undertake a variety of duties including road, speed and licensing checks, policing major events, providing advice and running Parish Hall Enquiries.

Indirect incorporation	A legal requirement to consider Convention rights within decision-making or policy development, leading to cultural change (<i>as opposed to direct incorporation which would make the UNCRC legally enforceable through the courts</i>)
Ratification	The action of signing or giving formal consent to a treaty, making it officially valid
State party	A country which has ratified the UNCRC
States of Jersey	The States Assembly - Jersey's elected parliament
UN	The United Nations
UN Committee	The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child: the body which monitors and reports on State Parties' implementation of the UNCRC and publishes guiding comments on its interpretation and application
UNCRC / the 'Convention'	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the Articles and 3 Optional Protocols