STATES OF JERSEY

EDUCATION REFORM PROGRAMME (R.159/2025): EXECUTIVE RESPONSE

Presented to the States on 23rd December 2025
by the Public Accounts Committee

STATES GREFFE

FOREWORD

In accordance with paragraphs 69-71 of the Code of Practice for engagement between 'Scrutiny Panels and the Public Accounts Committee' and 'the Executive', the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) presents the Executive Response to the Comptroller and Auditor General's (C&AG) Report entitled: Education Reform Programme (R.159/2025), presented to the States Assembly on 7th November 2025.

The PAC will review the response to this report and will consider publishing further comments in due course

Deputy I. Gardiner
Chair, Public Accounts Committee

Chief Executive to Education Reform Programme Report - Executive Response

Summary of response:

The Department is grateful to the Comptroller and Auditor General for this Report.

There are significant risks, issues and opportunities which the department is developing responses to including, but not limited to:

- Enduring structural change to demographics
- Increasing volume and complexity of special educational needs of children and young people
- Support to young children before, and young people after, statutory education provision
- Digital education & cyber security
- Financial efficiencies

The proposed responses to these will be set out in an education strategy and delivery of the strategy will be set out in a new programme of change.

Responses to recommendations capture these intentions and the programme scope will make clear all areas of focus. It is expected that much change can be delivered within budget, in part enabled by the reducing numbers of children and young people in education. There may be some areas in which additional short/medium term funding is required to deliver the changes and enable future efficiencies. It is, of course, important to note that specific initiatives that require additional resources would need to be prioritised by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, as well as the Council of Ministers, as a challenging financial context persists across government. In addition, it is important to acknowledge that much of the strategic and structural change would require Assembly approval as dictated by the *Education Law (Jersey) 1999, which* is a potential limiting factor.

Risk assessment and decision rationale

Recommendations	Risk of non-implementation	Risk profile *(E,H,M,L)*	Other considerations in prioritisation	Is the recommendation agreed?	Improvement theme *(If applicable)*
R1 Develop and publish an Education Strategy setting out the ambition for delivering a 'world-class' education system with clarity about targets for performance at all stages.	If not implemented, then the absence of a refreshed strategy may mean that strategic change in Education is not focussed on agreed objectives, which creates risk of putting a suboptimal education system into place which negatively impacts children and young people, workforce and costs.	*M*	As noted above, the detail of a refreshed strategy, and what is deliverable, will be subject to any additional resource requirements, which will need to be prioritised alongside other government business by Ministers.	**Agreed** The Interim Chief Officer will develop a recommended strategy for Ministers to consider, to be developed with appropriate measurement of progress and benefits. (Link R8, R9).	Strategy and change planning
R2 In the light of the falling birth rate and financial pressures, review whether the structure of the education offer along with selection is affordable for the future. In undertaking the review: **• ensure that the role of Highlands College is clear including how it integrates into the education strategy** **• consider the path to A levels for those who are not selected for Hautlieu at 14** **• consider whether the funding that has been allocated to schools is sufficient to drive the outcomes desired; and** **• consider how schools can achieve more autonomy, in areas such as the letting of contracts, the ability to set fees and the holding of reserves.**	If not implemented, then the structure of any education offer may not take into account the points raised by the C&AG, with the risk of putting into place a suboptimal education system which negatively impacts children and young people, workforce and costs.	M	Dependent on Political approval of options for 'alteration to the character of a school' as set out in *Education Law (Jersey) 1999.*	**Agreed in part** The structure of the education offer will be developed as part of the Education Strategy (R1) options for system restructure.	Strategy and change planning

R3 Enhance the delivery plan for the digital strategy to include resourcing and key performance indicators.	If not implemented, then there may be a risk of undermining access to the curriculum (children, young people and workforce) and/or increased cyber-security risk.	M	Dependent on new funding, which will need to be prioritised alongside other government business by Ministers. In addition, delivery will need to be supported by Digital Services, which is dependent on a strict project prioritisation process across government, so that digital projects can be delivered within available resources.	**Agreed** Refresh the Digital Education Strategy, including investment in infrastructure and funding for implementation.	Digital strategy
R4 Update and refine the schools funding formula to include all schools.	If not implemented, then there may be an issue of differential funding approaches and additional finance administration.	L	The addition of fee-paying schools to the formula would be subject to approval by the Assembly. Special schools require a different funding model.	**Agreed in principle** The formula is reviewed annually. The decision to add fee-paying schools would be a policy consideration for Ministers, which will be discussed as part of the development of the Education Strategy. It would not be appropriate to fund special schools via the funding formula.	Strategy and change planning
R5 Develop an early intervention system for financial monitoring of school budgets to ensure that corrective action is taken earlier to prevent the level of deficits currently in the system.	No specific risk as already in place.	L		**Agree,** however this is already in place. Multiyear budgets are published, enhanced monitoring was implemented in 2025 and continues into 2026. The financial position of schools at risk of overspend are reviewed with increased frequency and remediation plans are established and closely managed.	No specific action at this time.
R6 Publish comprehensive attainment information including a commentary on the context as a matter of routine.	No specific risk as already in place.	L		**Agree,** however this is already in place: Children and young people statistics for Jersey. Continue to review what data is published and how it is contextualised. There is no intention to publish league tables.	No specific action at this time
R7 Ensure that the remaining projects and continuing outcomes from the Education Reform Programme continue to be driven forward and, in doing	If not implemented, then there may be a risk of not delivering the outcomes intended from the Education Reform Programme. However, there is an ongoing	L	Depending on the overall scope of a refreshed Education Strategy, there may be a need to prioritise certain elements,	**Agreed** Establish a newly scoped Education Reform Programme (ERP) as the delivery mechanism, for the change	Strategy and change planning

so, capture and learn from the areas for improvement identified in this report on a systematic basis.	intention to deliver appropriate initiatives that will deliver such outcomes, therefore the risk that there may be consequent impacts on children, young people, workforce and costs is low.		particularly where additional resources are required to deliver, as these will need to be considered alongside other government business by Ministers.	required to deliver the education strategy.	
R8 Apply appropriate programme management disciplines including a focus on tracking outcomes and benefits to future education reform programmes and the investment planned in early years.	If not implemented, then there may be a risk that change programme does not deliver the intended benefits.	L		**Agreed** Ensure ERP follows organisational standards on programme management	Strategy and change planning
R9 Ensure that future education reform programmes continue to track the anticipated benefits and outcomes from the overall Education Reform Programme.	If not implemented, then there may be a risk that change programme does not deliver the intended benefits.	L		**Agreed** Ensure ERP follows organisational standards for benefit tracking.	Strategy and change planning

Prioritised improvement plan:

Action theme	**Actions**	**Linked Recs**	**Target date**	**Responsible Officer**
Strategy and change planning	The Interim Chief Officer will develop a recommended strategy for Ministers to consider, with a supporting change programme (Education Reform Programme), managed within organisational programme standards.	*1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9*	Q3 2026	Interim Chief Officer, CYPES
Digital strategy	Refresh digital strategy and develop delivery programme, subject to approval of necessary funding by Ministers and the Assembly.	3	Q3 2026	Interim Chief Officer, CYPES