

STATES OF JERSEY



PROPOSED BUDGET (GOVERNMENT PLAN) 2026-2029 (P.70/2025): NINETEENTH AMENDMENT (P.70/2025 AMD.(19)) – CHILDREN’S RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**Presented to the States on 21st November 2025
by Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour**

STATES GREFFE

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT (CRIA)

PART 1: SCREENING

Name and title of Duty Bearer:	Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour
Type of Duty Bearer: (Minister, Elected Member or States Assembly Body)	Elected Member
Assessment completed by (if not completed by duty bearer):	Members' Resources
Date:	21.11.2025

1) Name and brief description of the proposed decision 'Decision' means: • an Assembly proposition • an amendment (or further amendment) to a proposition • for Ministerial duty-bearers, policy under development
The decision seeks to fund a pilot scheme to extend the free school meals programme for primary school children.
2) Which groups of children and young people are likely to be affected? Groups of children could include early years, primary or secondary education; young adults; children with additional learning needs; disabled children; children living in poverty; children from particular ethnic backgrounds; migrants; refugees; care experienced children and LGBTQ+ children
Children from low income, single parent, struggling households would be affected by the pilot scheme.
3) What is the likely impact of the proposed decision on children and on their rights? Impacts may be positive or negative, direct or indirect Include whether different groups of children will be affected differently by the decision
There will be a positive direct impact on children with the availability of further free meals.
4) Is a full Children's Rights Impact Assessment required? If you have identified impacts on children and their rights, a full CRIA should be completed. If no impacts are identified then a Full CRIA is not required, but please explain your rationale and how you reached this conclusion
Whilst this is an amendment, and therefore a full CRIA is not required, the decision has been made to prepare a full CRIA to identify the positive impacts on children of provided school lunches.

If screening determines that a full CRIA is needed, complete Part 2

Part 2: FULL CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5) What will be the impacts (positive or negative) of the proposed decision on children's rights?

For each of the UNCRC articles described below, click to identify any that may be relevant ☒

Category	UNCRC Article	Impact? YES NO	
Guiding Principles	Non-discrimination (Art 2)	☐	☐
	Best interests of the Child (Art 3) to be a top priority	X	☐
	Right to Life survival and development (Art 6)	☐	☐
	Respect for the child's views (Art 12)	☐	☐
Civil Rights & Freedoms	Right to birth registration, name and nationality (Art 7)	☐	☐
	Right to an identity (Art 8)	☐	☐
	Freedom of expression (Art 13)	☐	☐
	Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion (Art 14) Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose	☐	☐
	Freedom of association (Art 15) Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations	☐	☐
	Right to Privacy (Art 16) including family and home life	☐	☐
	Access to information from the media (Art 17) Right to access reliable information from a variety of sources, in a format that children can understand	☐	☐
	Protection against torture or other cruel, degrading or inhumane treatment or punishment (Art 37(a))	☐	☐
Family Environment and Alternative Care	Respect for the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents (or where applicable, extended family or community) to guide their child as they grow up (Art 5)	☐	☐
	Responsibilities of both parents in the upbringing and development of their child (Art 18)	☐	☐
	Children must not be separated from their parents against their will unless it is in their best interests (Art 9)	☐	☐
	Family reunification (Art 10)	☐	☐

	Abduction and non-return of children abroad (Art 11)	☐	☐
	Right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet the child's physical and social needs and support their development (Art 27)	☐	☐
	Special protection for children unable to live with their family (Art 20)	☐	☐
	Best interests of the child in the context of Adoption (Art 21)	☐	☐
	Review of treatment whilst in care (Art 25) If a child has been placed away from home for the purpose of care or protection (for example, with a foster family or in hospital), they have the right to a regular review of their treatment, the way they are cared for and their wider circumstances.	☐	☐
	Protection from violence, abuse or neglect (Art 19)	☐	☐
	Recovery from trauma and reintegration (Art 39) Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life.	☐	☐
Basic Health and Welfare	Rights of disabled children (Art 23)	☐	☐
	Right to health and health services (Art 24)	X	☐
	Right to social security (Art 26)	☐	☐
	Right to adequate standard of living (Art 27)	X	☐
Education, Leisure and Cultural Activities	Right to education (Art 28)	x	☐
	Goals of education (Art 29) Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full	X	☐
	Leisure, play and culture (Art 31) Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in cultural and artistic activities	X	☐
Special Protection Measures	Special protection for refugee children (Art 22)	☐	☐
	Children and armed conflict (Art 38 and Optional Protocol #1) Governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children affected by war and armed conflict.	☐	☐
	Children and juvenile justice (Art 40) Right to be treated with dignity and respect, right to legal assistance and a fair trial that takes account of age.	☐	☐

	Inhumane treatment and detention (Art 37 (b)-(d)) Children should be arrested, detained or imprisoned only as a last resort and for the shortest time possible.	☐	☐
	Recovery from trauma and reintegration (Art 39) Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life	☐	☐
	Child labour and right to be protected from economic exploitation (Art 32)	☐	☐
	Drug abuse (Art 33)	☐	☐
	Sexual exploitation (Art 34)	☐	☐
	Abduction, sale and trafficking of children (Art 35)	☐	☐
	Protection from other forms of exploitation including for political activities, by the media or for medical research (Art 36)	☐	☐
	Children belonging to a minority or an indigenous group (Art 30)	☐	☐
	Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	☐	☐
	Optional protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict	☐	☐

6) Information and research What evidence has been used to inform your assessment?		
Evidence collected (include links to relevant publications)	What did the evidence tell you?	What are the data gaps, if any?
Jersey Children and Young People's Survey Report 2024 Statistics Jersey	47% of young people from financially struggling households ate salad or vegetables on four or more days in the previous week, compared to 84% from very well-off households For young people who consumed crisps on at least four days the previous week, just under two-thirds (60%) of them also consumed sweets or chocolate on four or more days the previous week	Greater granular detail.

Nutritious and delicious: A Jersey food and nutrition framework Public Health Jersey	Our vision is for Jersey to become an Island where everyone can easily find, afford and enjoy nutritious, delicious and sustainable food, helping all Islanders flourish. This vision is rooted in many discussions with Islanders and food system partners. Supporting the free school lunches and wherever possible support government efforts on programmes and initiatives that ensure a good basic standard of living and address the building blocks of health	Analysis on how this can be extended and progress made.
Universal Free School meals reduce child obesity and help with the cost of living University of Essex ESRC Research Centre of Micro-social change	Research shows that universal free school meals (UFSM) reduce obesity prevalence among children. • Receiving universal free school meals reduces prevalence of obesity by 9.3% among Reception children and 5.6% among Year 6 children on average • This corresponds to a 1.3 and 1.4 percentage points reduction in obesity. These impacts are substantial, given how hard it is to influence obesity through other interventions involving exercise or healthy eating education • Effects are largest among Year 6 children who received UFSM the longest: the reduction in obesity was 8.4%	Data specific to outcomes for Jersey.
Evaluating the impact of the universal infant free school meal policy on	This study builds on previous evidence suggesting that UIFSM	Data specific to outcomes for Jersey.

the ultra-processed food content of children's lunches in England and Scotland: a natural experiment International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity	had a positive impact on dietary patterns, showing that it reduced consumption of UPFs at school lunchtime, with the greatest impact for children from the lowest-income households. Universal free school meals could be an important policy for long term equitable improvements in children's diet. Longest running schemes (7+ years) showed positive effects on reading and maths.	Additional research in more areas over longer periods of time is needed to better understand the mechanisms, how the schemes impact on the school environments, and how they may be improved.
Expanding free school meals: a cost benefit analysis Impact on Urban Health Executive Summary	See Executive summary for comprehensive financial analysis on the cost benefit analysis of free meals and the returns in health and welfare. The findings, explored in depth in the main report, paint a clear picture. The data and supporting evidence indicate that expansion of free school meals in England would not only multiply the existing benefits to individuals and society but could prove to be a prudent and timely investment in children's health, education and future working life opportunities now and for the future. At a time when families are increasingly struggling to access and afford healthy food, the provision of free, nutritious meals in schools is a powerful tool in the Government's armoury to provide targeted support and accrue long term social and economic benefits.	Data specific to outcomes for Jersey.

At what cost? The Impact of the cost-of-living crisis on children and young people Bernados 2022		
Impact of school lunch type on nutritional quality of English children's diets Nutritional Epidemiology Group, University of Leeds	Compared with children having a school meal, children taking a packed lunch to school consumed a lower-quality diet over the whole day, including higher levels of sugar and Na and fewer vegetables. These findings support the introduction of policies that increase school meal uptake.	Data specific to outcomes for Jersey.
Free school meals as an opportunity to target social equality, healthy eating, and school functioning: experiences from students and teachers in Norway Food & Nutrition Research Journal	This study provides unique insights into the social benefits for students of receiving free school meals. Our findings illustrate the potential of free school meals: eating healthy foods, sharing a meal together, and interaction between students and teachers at mealtime, to promote health, learning, and equality. In order to maximize these benefits through national implementation of free school meals, more understanding is needed of possible facilitators and barriers related to the provision and uptake of free school meals.	Data specific to outcomes for Jersey.

7) Engagement with children What groups of children and young people (or those who speak on their behalf, such as social workers, teachers or youth workers) have been directly or indirectly involved in developing the decision?		
Groups consulted	How they were involved	What were the findings?

Includes data from independent surveys by the Office of the Children's Commissioner, the Children and Young People's Survey, by Statistics Jersey, and the Participation Standards feedback report	Participation and Engagement Feedback Report Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2024 - 2027	Diet and exercise ● provide healthy food for children to eat ● make sweets expensive and healthy stuff less expensive ● having a good diet and being fit ● help people get fitter and stronger ● have food and water to drink ● high-quality hot lunches ● public water dispensers ● access to cheaper healthy food in school
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8) Assessing Impact on children's rights Based on the information collected and analysed above, what likely impact will the proposed decision have on the specific children's rights identified in question 5)?		
Relevant UNCRC Articles (rights) identified in Q5	Describe the positive or negative impacts on these rights	Which group(s) of children are likely to be affected?
Best interests of the Child (Art 3) to be a top priority Right to health and health services (Art 24) Right to adequate standard of living (Art 27) Right to education (Art 28) Goals of education (Art 29) Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full Leisure, play and culture (Art 31)	The sources cited above are unanimous in the benefits of nutritious lunches to children, both in terms of health and ongoing educational attainment.	Initially, children who are from lower income banded families, but ultimately all children, to allow for the same benefits for all children.

Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in cultural and artistic activities.		
9) Weighing positive and negative impacts • If a negative impact is identified for any area of rights <u>or</u> any group of children and young people, what options are there to modify the proposed decision to mitigate the impact? • Could any positive impacts be enhanced? The positive impact of good quality nutrition on children's health has been established, and it is anticipated that in particular, this project will positively impact the number of children with a healthy BMI and the number of children eating at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day. As noted in the Food and Nutrition Strategy, building healthy routines and relationships with food can support better health in adulthood, and therefore could support wider behavioural and cultural change. By extending the provision of free school meals to additional groups of children, there is the opportunity to continue improving children's health and educational outcomes and to build on the work to date. As studies have shown, there is a greater impact for cohorts who have free school meals throughout their educational lives, so the sooner this is implemented, the better outcomes will be.		
10) Conclusions In summary, what are your key findings on the impact of the proposed decision on the rights of Jersey children? There are only positive impacts on children that arise from this amendment. The case for provision of free meals is well grounded and researched and can only be of benefit for children.		