



29th August 2019.

Dear Deputy Meerveld,

On the 27th of August you wrote to the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture, other States' members and the media claiming that in the 2019/20 academic year average class sizes in Year 7 at St Sampson's High School would be increased from 24 students to 28 students.

Your claim is wholly incorrect. It is unfortunate that you chose to publicise this false information before establishing whether it was accurate. In doing so you will doubtless have provoked much unfounded concern among parents of children due to start at St Sampson's High School next week and possibly also among staff at the school.

In September 2018 the average class size in Year 7 at St Sampson's High School was 23.2. In September 2019 it will be 23.9. This is in accordance with existing policies on class sizes.

Furthermore, I have stated on many occasions - and it is stated in the Committee's Policy Letter which will be debated by the States next week - the new model of secondary education agreed by the States last year requires no change to existing class size policies, including during the transition period from the current model to the new model.

You asked a series of other questions in relation to the incoming Year 7 at St Sampson's High School. I have set out below my full replies to these questions.

Question 1 - What is the St Sampson's High School Year 7 intake (number of students) in September 2019?

Answer - 167

Question 2 - What was the St Sampson's High School Year 7 intake (number of students) in September 2018?

Answer - 139

Question 3 - How many forms will there be in the 2019 Year 7 intake at St Sampson's High School?

Answer - seven

Question 4 - How many forms were there in the 2018 Year 7 intake at St Sampson's High School?

Answer - six

Question 5 - What was the total number of students in the 2019 Year 7 intake at St Sampson's High School and what was the average per form?

Answer - 167 over seven forms: 23.9 students per form.

Question 6 - What was the total number of students in the 2018 Year 7 intake at St Sampson's High School and what was the average per form?

Answer - 139 over six forms: 23.2 students per form.

Question 7 - What is the total number of students in the 2019 Year 7 intake at St Sampson's High School who have a statement of special needs?

Answer - None. Students in Guernsey do not receive statements for special educational needs and disabilities. There are two students who currently have a determination. There are 47 other students who were on the SEND register at School Action or School Action Plus at the end of Year 6.

Question 8 - What was the total number of students in the 2018 Year 7 intake at St Sampson's High School who had a statement of special needs?

Answer - None. Students in Guernsey do not receive statements for special educational needs and disabilities. There are three students who currently have a determination with a further one in progress. There are 30 other students on the SEND register at School Action or School Action Plus.

Question 9 - What additional resources or built facilities are being provided at St Sampson's High School to support any additional students in the Year 7 intake with a statement of special needs?

Answer - Students in Guernsey do not receive statements for special educational needs and disabilities. And there is no increase in the proportion of students in the incoming Year 7 at St. Sampson's High School with determination of special educational needs and disabilities.

I am able to provide the following related information about resources. All three High Schools have been allocated an additional teacher in light of the increased size of their Year 7 cohorts from September. In addition, because levels of literacy among the incoming Year 7 across the secondary schools are poorer than among their predecessors, the Committee has agreed to fund two literacy specialist posts in the secondary sector. As explained previously, concerns about declining levels of literacy generally will be addressed as part of work being led by the recently-appointed Head of Curriculum and Standards.

No additional built facilities are being constructed at St Sampson's High School for the 2019/20 academic year. However, the proposals for capital investment which are before the States next week include allocating significantly more space at the two 11-18 colleges to support students with special educational needs and disabilities and communication and autism bases.

Question 10 - What additional building space will be constructed at St Sampson's High School to accommodate any increase in the Year 7 intake?

Answer - No additional building space is necessary for the 2019/20 academic year. The proposals for capital investment which are before the States next week include providing additional space at the time it becomes necessary taking into account both projected increases in the student population and the partner primary/secondary school system which is an inherent part of the new education model.

You also requested further information which follows the analysis of different models of secondary and further education provided to you last week by officers. As I made clear at the time, that analysis was compiled by officers alone and the Committee was not involved in the content or the presentation thereof. This was done deliberately to maximise the chances of you accepting the information as objective and impartial. For the same reason, officers will in due course reply to your latest questions about their analysis of different education models and you will receive their reply separately from this reply which I am sending on behalf of the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Fallaize,
President, Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture