



WOMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS

**REPORT ON THE VISITS AT THE SCHOOL FOR THE
EXCEPTIONAL CHILD AND THE DEAF SCHOOL OF SEYCHELLES**

JULY 2022

MEMBERS SIGNATURES

Women's Parliamentary Caucus

Dated this 19 day of October 2022

NAME

Hon. Regina Esparon
Chairperson



.....

Hon. Audrey Vidot
Vice Chairperson



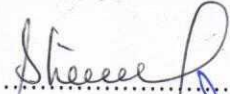
.....

Hon. Desheila Bastienne
Member



.....

Hon. Sylvanne Lemiel
Member



.....

Hon. Rosie Bistoquet
Member



.....

Hon. Kelly Samynadin
Member



.....

Hon. Doyace Porice
Member



.....

Hon. Flory Larue
Member



.....

Introduction

The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) is a Select Sessional Committee of the 7th Assembly and it is mandated to encourage and advocate in favour of children and families and maintain close working relationships with Local Government, Ministries and Departments related to children and families.

On Thursday 21st July, 2022 the Woman's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) held a visit at the School for the Exceptional Child of Seychelles followed by the Deaf School of Seychelles.

The aim of the visits was mainly to strengthen the collaborations with the 2 institutions, gain information about the facilities and also the work undertaken by the teachers, their challenges and for Members to better exercise their oversight role as provided under the Constitution.



School for the Exceptional Child

Tour of the school

Members received a guided tour of the facility by the head of the Institution and were able to interact with both teachers and students. During the tour Members of WPC could observe a lack of facilities for the children especially classes for carpentry, music, sewing etc...

The committee also noticed a lack of teachers, especially young qualified teachers to work with special needs students. Also, the number of parents accompanying their children were very limited.

But despite all that, WPC observed that the teachers were dedicated, passionate and was very patient giving their best.



Meeting with the teachers

The WPC met the teachers after touring the facility. The purpose of the meeting was to have an antretyen with the teachers where they had a chance to voice out their concerns. Points that were raised by:

Teachers/staff

- There is a lack of training/ courses for teachers specialized in special needs. Both local and international.
- The teachers feel that they are being left out on meetings/ forum held by the Ministry of Education and are not represented on any committees which contributes to a lack of information.
- Lack of consultation from the different Ministries/ Department when making decision for children with special needs.
- The teachers were very concerned about the lack of teachers joining the Exceptional School.
- The Exceptional School is not being given resources compared to other public schools.
- Surprise visit from Government officials. School is not advised prior and there is no after-visit feedback; again lack of communication.
- Despite having Autistic children at the school, the teachers admitted that that they are not privy to any programs or anything done by the Autistic Center to even cater for the needs or advancement for the Autistic children.
- No proper policies in place.



Students and infrastructure

- Teachers are concerned as some parents are not using the monetary benefit that the Government is giving the children monthly correctly and some students are still coming to school with nothing.
- The number of parents that attend school with their kids is very minimal despite them getting an allowance to do so.
- A bigger and more disable friendly bus is needed cater for all children even those with wheelchair.
- Workplaces are reluctant to take on children with disability for work attachment.
- In view that the VTS at North East Point is being renovated, the 16-year-old have nowhere to go after their last year of school, and the Exceptional School had to continue hosting them. Teachers and parents are very concerned about this.



Deaf School of Seychelles

Tour and findings

The Deaf School of Seychelles is located at the EX MTC, Mont Fleuri and its a Private school which falls under the Deaf Association, currently being managed by Mrs Gardner.

All teachers are registered and are being paid by the Ministry of Education. The school do not get any additional support from the Government apart from the teacher's salary. Even the curriculum is drafted by Mrs Gardner as the founder, which is more or less similar to the normal Government school. A lot of concerns were raised during the visit noted below:-

- Parents are not obligated to send their kids to Deaf School despite them having a hearing problem, as there is nothing written in the Law about that.
- Deaf children get monetary benefit from the Government only when they reach 14 years, compared to other kids with disability.
- Children from Praslin and La Digue do not benefit from the program as the deaf association do not have the proper support, resources and budget to cater for school on Praslin/ La Digue despite the high number of kids with hearing problem on these islands.
- A lack of teachers qualified in sign language.



Recommendations

School for the Exceptional Child:

It was recommended that the WPC meets with Ministry of Education to voice out concerns raised especially about encouraging and train teachers to join the school, especially young ones.



Deaf School of Seychelles: -

It was recommended by the school that they get more support with Government and wish that the school gets the proper recognition as other schools. With them being recognized by the Government will help with all the current challenges that they are facing.



Conclusion

Women's Parliamentary Caucus will meet with the Minister for Education to further discuss the case of the 2 schools.

Follow up and monitoring will be done to make sure things are moving in the right direction.

Women's Parliamentary Caucus Members present for the Visit:

Hon. Regina Esparon- Chairman

Hon. Audrey Vidot- Vice Chairman

Hon. Desheila Bastienne- Member

Hon. Flory Larue- Member

Hon. Rosie Bistoquet- Member

Hon. Doyace Porice- Member

Hon. Sylvanne Lemiel- Member

Women's Parliamentary Caucus Members absent:

Hon. Kelly Samynadin- Member

Support staff present:

Mrs. Florette Monaie- Secretary

Ms. Samia Lebon- Secretary

Ms. Denise Johnny- Assistant Secretary