



PRESS RELEASE

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The GSD Has Failed to Notice the Progress Being made in our Schools

The GSD'S Elliott Phillips must have just returned from an extended school vacation when he drafted his press release on young people's skills training. He seems to have missed all the talk about the Government's plans for Education. His attempt at suggesting that there was any conflict between Playtech COO's recent statement on the need to develop computer skills and the Government's own plans for education, was released at the very time that the Chief Minister and the Minister for Education were at a school demonstrating exactly how this is being embraced, all the way up from the youngest of our pupils.

There have been many occasions over the past year when the Government has made very clear how it will be progressing on broadening educational opportunities. These have included the Minister for Education's last Budget Speech, in answers to Parliamentary Questions, and most recently last week's Viewpoint programme on GBC.

Indeed, the Department of Education has prepared a strategy for vocational pathways that will include the offer of vocational courses to be made available to pupils at both comprehensive schools from 2019 as alternatives at the time of choosing GCSE options, to then be progressed at the new Westside and Bayside schools and the college up to T-levels, which are soon to be introduced in Gibraltar as in the UK.

While the details are currently being worked on, vocational pathways may include Digital (computer) studies, Construction, Design & planning, Maintenance of Buildings, Engineering & Manufacture, Hair & Beauty, Environment & Animal Care, Catering & Hospitality and Social Care. This approach, of integrating such options within the educational system will prepare our young people better than ever for a wide range of possible occupations and will lead, not to a "no skills generation", as Mr Phillips puts it, but to a multi-skilled generation, where our young people can follow the pathways that suit them best and not just those, mainly academic ones, that just happen to be there.



Minister for Education John Cortes commented, “It seems that the GSD doesn’t think we are serious about moving education forward in the way that we are doing. They just tend to repeat old arguments without taking account of progress being made in so many areas. When they suddenly realise that we are making the progress, they jump quickly into claiming that we are copying their policies. Future generations won’t remember their comments, but they will benefit from the transformational changes that we are bringing about.”