



VOISIN LAW

On Friday 24 April 2020 Jersey becomes the first jurisdiction in the British Isles to ban the smacking of children.

This important legal change is being introduced with the coming into force of the Children and Education (Amendment) Jersey Law 2020 which abolishes the customary law defence of “reasonable corporal punishment”, which was previously available to the parent or carer of a minor child who disciplined their child in this way. As a result, children now have the same legal protection from assault as adults, and smacking, slapping or hitting children is not permitted under any circumstances.

This change in the law was approved by the States Assembly in December 2019 and is consistent with Jersey’s pledge to put children first. Jersey now joins over 50 other countries in Europe, South America and Asia in banning corporal punishment of children, which is in accordance with the principles set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Scottish parliament also passed legislation last year banning smacking but that law is not yet in force.

Jersey’s Government is also launching an awareness campaign called “Stop Smacking Seek Support” to ensure that parents and carers can find any support they may need to deal with children’s behaviour without resorting to smacking. Agencies available to provide such support include Parenting Support Services, the NSPCC and Family Nursing and Home Care.

For further information on this subject please contact our Dispute Resolution team.