

Scottish Budget reaches Stage 3 today



Deputy First Minister John Swinney visited Heriot Hill Nursery in Broughton ahead of the Scottish Budget Bill reaching Stage 3 later today and The Edinburgh Reporter spoke to the Minister about the plans for increased spending on children. This was one of the backbones of the SNP plans put forward during the Scottish Independence Referendum campaign last year.

[The Edinburgh Reporter NEWS](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).

The budget sets out increased support for early learning and childcare helping to tackle inequalities, boost the economy to ensure that all children have the best start in life.

Mr Swinney met staff, children and parents of the nursery and talked about the positive impacts of the additional funding for childcare.

The Scottish Government says its track record since 2007 has been one of delivering opportunities for all to flourish through sustainable economic growth. The 2015/16 Budget will include provisions for free school meals, £4.5 billion for health and education infrastructure and, for the first time, more than £12 billion total for the health budget.

Ahead of the bill coming back to Holyrood this afternoon the Deputy First Minister John Swinney said:

“This budget is focused on tackling inequality, investing in our economy and protecting and reforming our public services.

“It is well understood that a strong economy is essential to building a fair and wealthy society. However, the reverse is

also true. A society that is fair and equitable underpins a strong economy.

“The challenge we face is not simply returning to pre-recession levels of growth, but tackling the underlying challenges in our economy and labour market, boosting competitiveness and reducing inequality.

“The Scottish Government’s approach will continue to be based on the principle that delivering sustainable economic growth and addressing long-standing inequalities are reinforcing – and not competing – objectives. Promoting a fairer, more balanced model of growth and creating economic opportunity across society as a whole are key objectives of this government.

“We want to create a stable economy that promotes growth across all regions of Scotland – one that is outward looking, confident and based on the core strengths of our people, is innovative and supported by investment.

“This approach is at the core of the Scottish Budget and I look forward to setting out to parliament today further steps the Scottish Government will take to tackle inequality and boost the economy.”