

# First Minister comes to Clovenstone



Gordon Macdonald MSP has welcomed the extension of the Scottish Government's Attainment Fund to three primary schools in his Edinburgh Pentlands Constituency.

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, speaking at the Wester Hailes Education Centre, announced yesterday that the fund will be extended to help Sighthill Primary, Clovenstone Primary and Canal View Primary Schools. She also said that 54 more schools in another 14 local authority areas will also benefit taking the number of schools benefiting from the fund to more than 300.

The fund – launched in February this year – focuses on improving literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing in primary schools in these areas, with the clear objective being to give all primary-school age pupils – regardless of background – the best start in life.

The First Minister also announced the creation of the Aspirations Package for schools, which will be delivered with organisations like Speakers for Schools and Children's University as well as local employers and entrepreneurs to ensure young people can access the experience, knowledge and networks they need to help them succeed.

SNP MSP Gordon Macdonald, who sits on the Education Committee, said:

“The extension of the Attainment Fund to benefit 57 more schools in another 14 local authority areas is very welcome indeed. Scotland's children must be given everything they need to fulfil their full potential in life and the Attainment Fund

is an important step in the right direction.

“Since coming to office in 2007 the SNP has worked tirelessly to improve education – pre-school age children now benefit from 600 hours of free childcare, compared to only 412 in 2007 – and we have rebuilt or refurbished 520 schools in the last eight years.

“Our primary one children are in smaller classes, more student teachers find permanent employment and more of our young people than ever now leave school and go into work, training or continue with their education.

“However, there is no room for complacency – and the extension of the Attainment Fund along with yesterday’s launch of the Read, Write, Count plan underlines the unwavering ambition of this SNP government to raise standards further.

“If re-elected in 2016, the SNP will continue to build on our strong record on education and will deliver in the face of harsh Westminster cuts.

“The SNP is committed to making Scotland the best place in the world to grow up – and today’s announcement will help make this a reality.”