

Education

Top line: The SNP Government is committed to delivering the best education system for children in Scotland by investing almost £500m to expand Early Learning and Childcare and providing £180m for attainment, including £120m to head teachers to close the attainment gap.

Key points:

- Increased investment of almost £500 million to support the expansion of early learning and childcare entitlement to 1140 hours from August 2020.
- This budget will provide £180m for raising attainment in schools, including £120m delivered to head teachers to spend on closing the attainment gap.
- The Scottish Government will deliver over £600 million for Scotland's colleges and maintain investment at over £1 billion in Scotland's universities.

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- We know that supporting families helps to grow our economy, which is why we are committed to investing an extra £210m of resource and £175m of capital (total almost £500 million) to expand early learning and childcare.
- This will predominately be used to support the expansion in the workforce and early phasing of the expanded entitlement in communities across Scotland.
- We will also invest £175 million in local authority capital funding in 2019-20 to support the next phase of infrastructure investment.
- This will contribute towards around 750 new, extended or refurbished nurseries and family centres over the period of the expansion programme.

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- Total investment of £3.4bn in 2019-20 to create an excellent education system for Scotland's young people.
- Investment through the £750 (total) million Attainment Scotland Fund, including Pupil Equity Funding, is vital in helping schools address the poverty-related attainment gap and helping children overcome barriers, often linked to poverty, so that no child is left behind.
- This funding is to be spent at the discretion of headteachers on closing the attainment gap, enabling headteachers to secure the additional staffing or resources they need to support pupils affected by poverty and boost attainment levels

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- In 2019-20 there is an overall increase in the higher education budget of £12.1m or 1.1% over the draft 2018/19 budget.
- Through Skills Development Scotland, The Scottish Government will invest over £214 million in apprenticeships and skills, an increase of £22 million.
- We will increase net college resource budget by £18.3m to £606.5m an increase of 3.1% cash or 1.3% real-terms.
- The Scottish Budget will provide up to £22.7 million to complete the construction of Forth Valley College's new campus in Falkirk; deploy Financial Transactions to support further universities estate projects; and maintain at least 116,000 full-time equivalent college places.
- We have invested over £1 billion of public money in higher education per year since 2012-13.

- Student Loans Company statistics (June 2018) show students in Scotland continue to have the lowest debt in the UK – and the gap is growing.
- These show average student loan debt in Scotland is £13,230, compared to £34,800 in England, £21,520 in Wales and £22,440 in Northern Ireland.