

Deputy G.P. Southern of the Minister for Education regarding the proposed increase in revenue spend on nursery, primary, secondary and higher education: [9565]

Will the Minister inform Members what elements of the proposed increase in revenue spend, in proportionate and real terms, on each of nursery, primary, secondary and higher education, are due to increased student numbers, and provide details of the additional £2 million spend on the higher education grants scheme?

Deputy R.G. Bryans (The Minister for Education):

Thank you to the Deputy. The growth bids for education for the period 2016 to 2019 are detailed on page 64 and 65 of the M.T.F.P. Addition for 2017 to 2019. Funding for increased students numbers is £56,000 in 2019 for nursery, £1.6 million for primary education, £332,000 for secondary education. The extra £2 million for higher education is not related to demographics. It involves an increase in the household income threshold for receiving States finances. It is a catch-up we believe. The lower level will go from £26,750 to £34,500, meaning an extra 94 students will get the full maintenance grant, which will rise to £6,000 and tuition fees paid. The upper limits are also moving, so about 500 students in the middle bands will receive more help. The maximum rises from £91,000 to £99,000, which means about 30 students who currently receive no help will in future get something from the States.

3.4.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

I assume the Minister for Education will circulate the detail of those answers later in the day. But could I ask him: to what extent there has been a recycling of money rather than fresh money coming into the Education budget, how much of that has been pinched from other areas of his budget and how much is fresh money?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

This is not recycling, if we are referring to the £2 million. This is absolutely fresh money. We continue to work on the higher education problem that has been exhibited quite considerably through this Assembly. In fact just yesterday we had a meeting with Deputy Lewis, who is hopefully wanting to bring an in-committee debate sometime later in the year related to this particular matter. But the £2 million is fresh money.

3.4.2 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The Minister describes it as “fresh money”. Has none of it come from the fact that he is also slashing grants to students who are studying on-Island?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

No, it has not.

3.4.3 Deputy M.R. Higgins:

The Minister did not refer to increased numbers in schools. I have been looking at 2 of the written answers that I have received today. That is question 16 and question 17. We were told that of the intake of plus 1,500 people who came to the Island in 2015 100 were of school age and preschool age children. I know the answer says that some children left the Island so therefore the net effect was not as large as that, but there is also a reference in the second question, which mentions that ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

Deputy, I appreciate you are trying to reference a document that you may just have got and just been reading now, but really this is for oral questions and you need to put your question succinctly.

Deputy M.R. Higgins:

I will put the question then in this sense. How much provision has he made for increased numbers in the schools when they were classed as 100 school age and preschool children who came in 2015?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

We have been working on this for some time and I think Members are aware that we have ... just yesterday I was with Deputy Noel when we were looking at the increased classes that we put into Bel Royal. We have done the same with d'Auvergne and we have done the same in Springfield. We are continually working on the actual figures and the demographics. We are aware of the situation we have accommodated for them.

3.4.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:

As to future plans, what population figure or migration figures is he basing his future plans for educational provision on the Island?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

I do not have those figure to hand but I am happy to produce figures for the Deputy should he wish them.