



POILEASaidh Gàidhlig Sgoil Ùige

GAELIC POLICY

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1. Rodh-radh/ Introduction

1.1 Feallsanachd/Rationale

Gaelic Education, consisting of Gaelic Medium Education (GME), Gaelic Learner Education (GLE) and learning about Gaelic language and culture, is now an established sector in Scottish education. The aim is for young people to be able to operate confidently and fluently in two languages as they progress from early years, through primary education and into secondary education. (Statutory Guidance in Gaelic Education, 2005).

At Sgoil Ùige, Gaelic is at the heart of all we do and it drives our curriculum. The main aim of Gaelic Education at Sgoil Ùige is to strive to develop bilingual children who can take forward their culture and heritage with pride. We follow rigorously the Comhairle's Gaelic First policy which ensures we can prioritise its place in our school (Appendix 1). This policy will guide our school's Gaelic curriculum and support our Gaelic ethos as an indigenous language for all our children (UNCRC Article 30).

Research has shown that bilingualism is beneficial for children's development and their future. Children who are exposed to different languages become more aware of different cultures and societies. Bilingual children are more likely to be better at multi-tasking and focusing; they are more likely to become fluent readers at an earlier age and generally find it easier to learn other languages (bilingualism-matters.org). Being bilingual can also lead to increased job opportunities and a stronger sense of identity. It is important that bilingual children are encouraged to continue to use and develop their home language at the same time as learning Gaelic. ([Benefits of Being Bilingual | FoghlamGaidhlig](#))

Children's earliest language is acquired in the home and in pre-school groups. First language development will be varied but it will mirror the diversity of the community the school serves. The school will build on the linguistic skills the child has already acquired in their first language to develop Gaelic either as their first or second language. These skills will be handled with sensitivity by teachers in order to meet individual needs, encourage confidence and make learning a pleasurable experience.

1.2 Amasan/ Aims:

- To develop all pupils' Gaelic language skills and knowledge so that they can understand Gaelic and communicate effectively and proficiently in Gaelic in both social and academic situations.
- To support all pupils' personal development through Gaelic culture and literature, including intellectual, creative, emotional, and moral development enabling them to become confident individuals.
- To develop positive attitudes towards Gaelic language, culture, heritage and community with a collective responsibility towards the maintenance of the language.

2. Ionnsachadh is Teagaisg: Foghlam Tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig/Learning and Teaching: Gaelic Medium Education

2.1 Làn Bhogadh/Total Immersion: Sgoil Àraich - Primary 3

From Sgoil-Àraich until the end of Primary 3, children in GME will experience Total Gaelic Immersion, where the language of the classroom is Gaelic. Children are consistently exposed and immersed in Gaelic to develop fluency with a strong focus on literacy, numeracy and the development of Health and Wellbeing. All other curricular areas are also taught in Gaelic. An emphasis needs to be placed on listening and talking at all stages to allow learners to practise, use and enrich their Gaelic language skills. To achieve fluency, learning will firstly have a very strong focus on listening and talking in Gaelic through a play-based immersion curriculum. This is widely evidenced to be the most appropriate approach for the development of young children's early learning (Advice on Gaelic Education, 2022). Reading and writing will be introduced as the child's knowledge and understanding progresses.

Teachers' knowledge of the stages of oral language acquisition will help to ensure a clear understanding of when and why Gaelic language and grammar is taught in a structured way (Principles and Practice, Gaelic and Literacy. Education Scotland, 2017). The development of Gaelic grammatical structures, syntax and phonology are the responsibility of early years and primary practitioners. (Principles and Practice, Gaelic and Literacy. Education Scotland, 2017) Adults in the Sgoil Àraich and infant classroom have a key responsibility to use and model high quality Gaelic to each other and to the children, both within play and learning and beyond. Staff will model high-quality Gaelic to children and play alongside the children as an effective approach to learning. Gaelic oral language development must be intentionally and carefully planned through interactions, experiences and spaces using the Gaelic Language Framework.

Strategies for developing language learning are promoted such as body language, facial gesture, head movement, songs, rhymes, stories, pictures and active learning. Collaborative learning approaches should be used consistently to encourage our learners to use their Gaelic with their peers. Routines and repetition are very important in language acquisition and there should be systems in place in both the playroom and classrooms for language to be built upon. Staff need to build children's confidence in the use of Gaelic by, for example, encouraging them in making requests and the use of social language at snack time. The development of social language helps develop language that can be used in the home. This is done alongside the development of academic language so that they are also accessing learning across the curriculum.

Children who already have a high level of Gaelic or are fluent must be challenged and their Gaelic extended during the Total Immersion phase. The Gaelic Language Framework should be used to help guide teachers in planning for next steps in learning for individual learners.

Children who are learning Gaelic as their second language will initially listen a lot to Gaelic to build their understanding and may respond in their mother tongue. Therefore it is important

to model high quality Gaelic, by translating what they are saying in their mother tongue into Gaelic in a sensitive way (Advice on Gaelic Education, 2022). When a child wants to talk about an experience but can only express it in English they should be permitted to do so but the teacher can sensitively retell the story in Gaelic. Children should be encouraged to use Gaelic as much as possible. Children will begin to use Gaelic words in first language sentences progressing to Gaelic sentences with a mix of first language words as they progress from language one to language two.

The exceptions to the total use of Gaelic include comforting a child who is distressed, for an emergency situation or for explaining issues connected to health, safety and well-being. (Advice on Gaelic Education, 2022)

Sgoil Uige will encourage and promote the use of Gaelic for all children aged 0-5 within the community through events and partnerships such as ‘Thig a Chluich’ Gaelic toddler group, ‘Splaid’ Gaelic Play Bus, Bookbug sessions and activities at our Gaelic Community Cafe targeted for the 0-5 age range.

2.1.1 ‘Cluich: An Dòigh Ghàidhlig’, ‘Play: The Gaelic Way’

Play is extremely important in Gaelic immersion. The regular updating of contexts for play, both indoors and outdoors, ensures that children’s language and vocabulary is continuously being extended. The environment in the Sgoil Àraich and infant classroom should be planned with target language identified from the Gaelic Language Framework for each learning station.

When children are engaging in free play, adults need to be available to interact and extend language, building on vocabulary and phrases whilst also playing and developing lines of imagination. Staff talk constantly, providing commentaries in as much Gaelic as possible. For this, they ask questions, explain what they are doing during everyday routines and whilst engaging in activities with children such as arts and crafts. They intentionally enable children to hear language all of the time to help them absorb Gaelic.

2.1.2 Litearrachd/Literacy

Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. Being literate increases opportunities for the individual in all aspects of life, lays the foundations for lifelong learning and work, and contributes strongly to the development of all four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence (Principles and Practice, Gaelic and Literacy. Education Scotland, 2017).

2.1.3 Èisteachd is Labhairt/Listening and Talking

Over and above the immersion approach, Teachers should intentionally plan for progression in both Gaelic vocabulary and phraseology and appropriate grammar. To plan vocabulary,

teachers will use the Highland Literacy Pre-Teaching Vocabulary Planners. To plan for Gaelic phraseology and grammar, teachers will use the Gaelic Language framework to ensure progression. To assess Gaelic language acquisition, teachers will use the Gaelic Oral language trackers and Measaidhean Gaelic.

2.1.4 Leughadh/ Reading

Children will be introduced to the features of text through daily opportunities to listen and discuss stories and books. Reading skills will initially be acquired through a combination of systematic synthetic phonics and Gaelic common words. Phonics are built on using a multi-sensory approach from term 1. Children will begin Gaelic reading books once they have a good understanding of initial phonics. Children will read every day and it is advisable that children practise their set phonics, key sight vocabulary and reading books every night at home.

2.1.5 Sgrìobhadh/ Writing

Writing is intrinsically linked with talking and listening. Opportunities will arise to develop sentence structure through play and active learning and in conveying and carrying out instructions. Writing is about communication and an early form of writing is mark making and drawing. It is important children have the opportunity to draw as part of their writing development, not only as it develops their fine motor skills and pencil control but also as it helps to develop their language and ability to tell stories. Value should therefore be given to the development of fine motor and drawing as the first written form that children create. In some cases, drawing may be no more than making lines yet it is important that children are given opportunities to read what their 'writing' means so they begin to see themselves as writers (Foundations of Writing, Bill & Maureen Michael, 1986).

The development of writing through oral story telling is of utmost importance, until their oral competence, reading skills and phonics development are secure enough to enable them to write independently. Writing will then be taught and assessed following the guidelines and criteria from the Curriculum for Excellence Experiences & Outcomes and National Benchmarks with the class's own success criteria for writing.

2.1.6 Litreachadh/Spelling

Gaelic spelling should be taught weekly and should consist of a mix of spelling patterns and common words, formally taught and consolidated through active learning opportunities throughout the week.

2.2 Ìre Bogaidh/The Immersion phase

English literacy will be introduced from the end of P3/ beginning of primary 4 onwards. This is known as the immersion phase. The curriculum is still continually taught through the

medium of Gaelic across all four contexts of learning (Discrete subjects, Interdisciplinary learning, Life and Work of the School and Opportunities for Personal Achievement). As such, the approaches detailed above continue to apply to the immersion phase, articulated to children's improving fluency and being age- and stage-appropriate. Teachers' monitoring and tracking of progress and achievement should confirm that children have a secure base in Gaelic language prior to the introduction of English literacy learning.

2.2.1 Èisteachd is Labhairt/Listening and Talking

Gaelic oral language development is still intentionally and carefully planned using the Gaelic Language Framework and vocabulary planning. Children's vocabulary is built upon through each individual topic so that their subject specific vocabulary is developed. There must be discrete grammar lessons taught weekly as well as incidental grammar built on throughout the day.

2.2.2 Leughadh/Reading

It is crucial that there are daily opportunities to read in Gaelic using a variety of strategies such as using class readers/novels, reading for research purposes, or reading their own and others writing and unseen texts. The focus is now on comprehension and enjoyment and choice.

2.2.3 Sgrìobhadh/Writing

Although children are encouraged to write more widely, there is still an emphasis on talking and listening to ensure there is sound basis for writing. There must be daily opportunities to write in Gaelic through discrete writing opportunities or through interdisciplinary topics. Grammar lessons are crucial for building on writing skills. Grammar lessons should take place at least once a week to ensure appropriate pace and should be active and engaging. The Gaelic Language Framework should be used to plan appropriate next steps in grammar.

2.2.4 Litreachadh/Spelling

Gaelic spelling should continue to be taught weekly and should progress through a mix of more complex spelling patterns and common words, formally taught and consolidated through active learning opportunities throughout the week. English spelling will begin to be introduced alongside Gaelic from the end of P3/start of P4 onwards. A new Gaelic spelling programme is currently being developed by the Comhairle and will be adopted once complete.

2.2.5 A' toirt a-steach Beurla ann am FtmG/Introducing English Literacy in GME

Towards the end of primary 3 and at the beginning of primary 4, pupils will become familiarised with English phonics and blends, paying particular attention to letters and sounds

they did not encounter in Gaelic. They will initially begin to follow an English reading scheme and will gradually begin to write in English. Children who are already fluent readers in English should be challenged accordingly with appropriate texts, with an emphasis on skills and comprehension. Gaelic should remain the only language of communication between staff and pupils. English literacy should be taught through the medium of Gaelic, although English literacy resources can be used. Gaelic Medium pupils will not be assessed

Great care must be taken in an infant composite situation that English does not dilute the immersion experience. In cases where classes are multi-composite, or there is a language development need, the total immersion experience may be extended into the beginning of P4 which will enable younger children to develop their early fluency in the Gaelic language without possible interference from English in the classroom (Advice on Gaelic Education, 2022). As English is the dominant language in the children's lives you may notice that once English is introduced, children may revert to using English in the classroom situation. Every effort should be made to encourage and reward the development of oral Gaelic with class incentives and positive reinforcement.

The following percentages are a guide to the amount of English literacy which is appropriate at each stage. This may change in response to the needs of the class if a further, more intense input is needed in a particular area.

P3 term 4 (if appropriate) – 5% of literacy activities in English

P4- 10% of literacy activities in English

P5- 20% of literacy activities in English

P6 - 30% of literacy activities in English, rising to 40% in term 3/4

P7- 40% of Literacy activities in English, rising to 50% by term 3/4

2.2.6 Goireasan/Resources

For all literacy resources, including all Gaelic resources used for both Total Immersion and Immersion phases as well as all English resources used once English is introduced, please see Appendix 2.

2.3 Poileasaidh Frionasach Mhearachdan/ Sensitive Error Guide

It is important that errors are corrected sensitively across the school to ensure that errors do not become the norm as, if left uncorrected, they become more challenging to address later on. It is also important that when children make mistakes, they are corrected in a sensitive manner so that they do not lose confidence or motivation for learning Gaelic. The Comhairle has a sensitive error correction policy which we follow in Sgoil Ùige (Appendix 3).

2.4 Measadh, Tracadh agus Cuimseachd/ Assessment, Tracking and Moderation of Gaelic

In both Total Immersion and the Immersion phase, Gaelic language acquisition is assessed against the Gaelic Language Framework and through a series of complimentary assessments

(Measaidhean Gaelic) for Early, First and Second Level. All pupils, from Sgoil-Àraich to P7 should also be assessed using the Gaelic Oral Language Tracking tool.

The Comhairle's own Literacy Progression Framework, complemented by the National Benchmarks, will also be used to assess the children's skills in Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing. In P1 the children will undergo MCNGs (National Standardised Assessments) in literacy and numeracy. In P4 and P7 the children will undergo MCNGs in Reading, Writing and Numeracy. These assessments will be used as a diagnostic tool for the teacher to identify each child's next steps.

Teachers will engage in termly in-house moderation as well as local moderation with partner schools. Sgoil Ùige will also participate in authority-wide moderation. This will ensure a shared understanding of standards for Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing in Gaelic. Professional dialogue with regards to individual pupils' levels and progress within Gaelic literacy will occur at key points throughout the year through attainment and transition meetings.

2.5 Feumlachdan Sònraichte/ Additional Support Needs

If a child requires additional support in learning, it is their entitlement that they will receive this in their language of instruction. Children in Gaelic Medium Education will be supported through GIRFEC and through the National Staged Intervention process and supported accordingly. Gaelic support staff will be prioritised for Gaelic Medium pupils. All Sgoil Àraich and teaching staff are responsible for planning suitable programmes of learning for all children and young people regardless of individual abilities, to enable all learners to receive their entitlement to an education that meets their needs.

Across all stages, schools should not assume that children and young people who need support in their learning are not able to learn through the medium of Gaelic (Advice on Gaelic Education, 2022).

If a referral to an outside agency is required, then the school should work with the agency to ensure that the support is maintained in Gaelic as far as possible. Sometimes support may be required in first language development in order to develop Gaelic as a second language. If this is necessary, this must be planned carefully and coordinated between home, school and outside agencies to ensure there is no impact on the Total Immersion/Immersion methodology.

2.6 A' Fàgail Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig/Leaving Gaelic Medium Education

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from Gaelic Medium, a meeting should take place between the class teacher, senior management and the parents, in order to identify concerns and reasons for parents wanting to remove their child. The school should ensure that all is done to reassure the parents and to put solutions in place to address concerns. If the parent is certain that withdrawal is their decision this needs to be referred to the Executive Head for further consultation.

2.7 Obair-Dachaigh/Homework

Homework will all be in Gaelic in the Total Immersion phase. Support at for home will be made available through digital audio/video files, phonetics and translations.

In the Immersion phase the majority of homework will be in Gaelic. There will be some English literacy in line with the appropriate percentage for the class. Parents can ask for homework support from the school at appropriate times through Seesaw, or through the homework diary. Further homework support is available at [Gaelic4parents.com](https://www.parant.org.uk/homework) and <https://www.parant.org.uk/homework>

3. Ionnsachadh is Teagaisg: Luchd Ionnsachaidh/ Learning and Teaching: Gaelic Learners

Gaelic is for everyone and Gaelic Learner classes in Sgoil Ùige celebrate the language as their own. Children learn the Curriculum through the medium of English with subsidiary Gaelic. The teachers in Gaelic Learners will use everyday Gaelic phrases in a L1 +2 approach. This means that common phrases are used daily in the classroom in a progressive and repetitive way to build up the children's knowledge of the language. Weekly discrete lessons will take place which focus on Gaelic grammar and vocabulary at an appropriate level. Gaelic Learner homework may also be issued as part of the curriculum or on request.

Children in Gaelic Learner classes also have an opportunity to develop their understanding and knowledge of Gaelic language and culture as part of their Scottish identity. Such an approach to the learning of Gaelic by all children means that the Gaelic language can be used and integrated across the school by staff and children. This gives relevance to the learning of Gaelic and assists in creating an ethos that is *centered* on Gaelic (Advice on Gaelic Education, 2022). Children in Gaelic Learner classes participate in whole school activities and events through the medium of Gaelic, with support to facilitate understanding and use of the language. Children in Gaelic Learner classes will be included and encouraged to take part in Gaelic wider achievement activities such as The Mòd, Sradagan, and other Gaelic events as appropriate, with support to understand and use the language appropriately. Teachers should aim to give the children the language tools they need in order to participate in whole school Gaelic events.

4 Eadar-Gluasad/ Transitions

4.1 Sgoil Àraich gu Bun sgoil/Nursery to Primary Transitions

In Sgoil Uige, our Gaelic infant class, works in tandem with the Sgoil Àraich, with daily opportunities for staff and children to interact and work together. The GM 1 teacher will work closely with the Sgoil Àraich staff to plan for the language development of each pupil from the start of their Gaelic learning journey. Through daily interaction between the Sgoil

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Àraich and the Gaelic infant class, strong relationships are developed from the outset between the Sgoil Àraich and the Primary School.

The Sgoil Àraich are very much part of the school. They share the playground and can be together during playtimes; eat lunch with the primary school, as well as participating in *Rionnag na Mìos* (Star of the Month) assemblies and school events and concerts.

During the final term before moving into primary school, pre-school pupils will spend two full days with their new teacher within the infant Gaelic class.

4.2. Clas 7 chun Àrd Sgoil/ P7 to S1 Transitions

During the course of primary 7, pupils have the opportunity to attend their chosen secondary for an induction period; pupils from Sgoil Ùige usually transfer to the Nicolson Institute. Gaelic Medium pupils and their parents will be offered the opportunity to attend a Gaelic information evening prior to starting secondary school.

5. Feallsanachd, Cultair agus Dualchas /Ethos, Culture and Heritage

5.1 Feallsanachd Gaelic/Gaelic Ethos

It is paramount that all children in Sgoil Ùige and Sgoil Àraich Ùige have an experience that is conducive to effective Gaelic learning. This means that all stakeholders and members of the school community need to display positive and inclusive attitudes to the Gaelic Language. It is important that all children in Sgoil Ùige, whether they be in Gaelic Medium or Gaelic Learners, have the opportunity to learn the language at an appropriate level as well as learning about Gaelic culture and heritage as part of their Scottish, Island and Uig identity.

Sgoil Ùige follows the Comhairle's Gaelic First policy (Appendix 1). This means that it is the predominant language of the school and Sgoil Àraich. Gaelic will be used at whole school events, assemblies, classrooms and playrooms, the dining room and office and when answering the telephone. Gaelic will be used in letters for addresses, greetings, dates, signatures. All social media posts will take a Gaelic First approach. All signage around the school will be in Gaelic with an English translation where necessary. Gaelic will always be used as the first language of communication to embed the language and send a message of a clear Gaelic ethos. Staff should endeavour to speak Gaelic with each other and with children and young people in all areas of the school and playground. Staff who are not fluent in Gaelic, must demonstrate commitment to learning and using the language as far as possible. They will be supported by fluent staff.

It is important that there are opportunities for pupil voice and responsibilities in the nurture and development of the Gaelic Language and culture. Sgoil Ùige has a Gaelic Pupil Steering Committee who are responsible for leading on school improvement initiatives linked to Gaelic language and ethos. This committee is made up of pupils from both Gaelic Medium and Gaelic Learner classes. The committee have introduced a 'Cupan & Ceilidh' community Gaelic café initiative which aims to run one to two times per term to bring young and old in our

community together to provide an informal context in which to use our Gaelic language and showcase our Gaelic culture and heritage.

5.2 Ceol Gàidhlig/ Gaelic Music

Gaelic music is of paramount importance to Gaelic language and culture. In Sgoil Uige, we strive to provide Gaelic music lessons on a weekly basis for all pupils. Until the Comhairle's vacant post is filled, this is currently provided in-house by teaching staff where possible.

The school promotes participation in the Local and National Mod and will support all pupils who participate. Both Gaelic Medium and Gaelic Learner classes will have the opportunity to learn bàrdachd (recitations) and traditional songs as a solo and/or as part of the choir. Traditional music is also promoted and there is chanter tuition offered by the school as well as a ceilidh-band lunch time club. Pupils regularly showcase their learning in Gaelic singing and music during our Cupan & Cèilidh community café events.

5.3 Guth na Cloinne/ Pupil Voice

The Gaelic Pupil Steering Committee also lead an 'Abairt na Ceala-Deug' (Phrase of the Fortnight) initiative where two new Gaelic phrases are announced in assembly each fortnight as a 'chilli challenge'. The 'Green Chilli' phrase is one that we would challenge those at the earlier stages of their Gaelic language development and the 'Red Chilli' phrase is one for those at a more advanced stage of their language development although all pupils are encouraged and supported to try and use both phrases. These are displayed on our Gaelic display board with phonetics and audio 'talking tins' to support pupil access.

5.4 A' Brosnachadh na Gàidhlig/Positive Reinforcement

It is extremely important to positively reinforce pupils use of Gaelic across the four contexts of learning. Pupils in Sgoil-Araich, Gaelic Medium and Gaelic Learner classes will be encouraged to use Gaelic as much as possible. Each month, their efforts will be recognised and rewarded through 'Rionnag Gàidhlig na Mios' (Gaelic Star of the Month) where they will receive a certificate and their picture will be put on the 'Obair agus Beatha na Sgoile' (Life and Work of the School) Display.

Pupils who participate in any wider achievement activities relating to Gaelic language and culture such as The Mod, Cuach na Cloinne, FilmG, working with the BBC etc. will also be recognised through our social media channels and through our Wider Achievements display. All Gaelic speakers (fluent and learners) in the school are encouraged and supported to take part in Gaelic events.

The school operates a 'Puingean Taighe' (House Point) system with all pupils working together to earn points for their house with the winning house receiving a treat at the end of each

term. Pupils who demonstrate use of Gaelic across the school will be rewarded through the House Point system.

6. Pàrantan agus Com-Pàirteachais/ Parents and Partners

Parents are our most important partners in education. Support for parents of pupils learning Gaelic is important and we encourage parents who require support with their child's Gaelic development to engage with the school.

Our local partnerships support Gaelic development and also cultural and historical knowledge which is important to the Uig identity. Their input should be planned strategically to enrich and enhance Gaelic learning in both Gaelic Medium and Gaelic Learner settings.

Partnerships include:

CNAG

Càirdeas

UCCA

Comunn Eachdraidh Ùige

Café Ùige

Bùth Timsgearraidh

Uig Church of Scotland

Uig News

Local Storytellers, Artists, Crofters, Gaelic speakers and Historians

7. Ionnsachadh Proifeiseanta/Continued Professional Development

Staff should keep up to date with current thinking and practices in relation to Gaelic immersion and bilingualism as well as familiarising themselves with new Gaelic resources as these emerge. Time is given within the school's collegiate calendar to engage in continuous professional development. Gaelic CPD is, and should continue to be, prioritised by all staff. Gaelic CPD is provided by Education Scotland, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Early Years Exchange sessions and Giglets as well as others.

Staff also network with other schools and engage in regular moderation with Gaelic colleagues across the authority in order to ensure a shared understanding of standards for Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing in Gaelic.

8. Abairtean Co-dhùnaidh/ Concluding remarks

This policy has been written in January 2025 and will be updated annually and when new National advice dictates.

Poileasaidh na Gàidhlig
Sgoil Ùige
Appendices



Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Poileasaidh Gàidhlig mar Chiad Chanan/Gaelic First Policy

1. Introduction

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is the lead Local Authority in Scotland in relation to the use and development of the Gaelic language. There are sound socio, cultural, economic and educational reasons why the Comhairle should strive to ensure that it not only maintains this position, but maximises the potential that this role presents. In the current economic climate, it is essential that investment of time, effort and resources is properly targeted and produces demonstrable results. This policy sets out key aims and objectives which the Comhairle has identified and intends to implement in order to achieve this.

1.1 National Key Objectives

This Policy supports the implementation of key objectives contained within Bòrd na Gàelic's National Gaelic Language Plan which aim to arrest the decline, and to plan for the growth, in the number of Gaelic speakers in Scotland. The Policy also feeds into the Scottish Government's Faster Rate of Progress initiative which brings together a variety of public authorities that are working across Scotland to support the increased use and learning of Gaelic, and which underpins the objectives of the National Gaelic Language Plan. It also supports the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework (NPF), with its headline purpose to create a more successful country, and informs Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's Gaelic Language Plan, prepared in terms of Section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005, which aims to ensure that Gaelic has a sustainable future as a cultural, economic, educational and social asset for the Western Isles.

1.2 The Commitment

In order to best serve our bilingual communities, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar will make every effort to create and promote a Gaelic ethos in all areas of operation and to highlight the social, cultural, economic and educational asset and unique selling point that Gaelic is to these Islands. It will do so by leading by example, through increasing the number of staff who use Gaelic on an inclusive and everyday basis, and by implementing the actions set out in the Gaelic First Policy Statement and associated Action Plan.

1.3 Mission Statement

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar will strive towards achieving equity of opportunity for those who speak Gaelic, and those who do not, within our bilingual communities, by creating a Gaelic ethos in all areas of operations and promoting the social, cultural, economic and educational asset that Gaelic is to the Islands.

1.4 Definition of "Gaelic First"

"Gaelic First" reflects the Comhairle's commitment, as agreed at a meeting of the Education, Skills and Children's Services Committee in December 2019, to work towards creating a Gaelic ethos within its operations in which use of Gaelic is the default position of Council services. People will be actively encouraged and supported in progressing towards greater fluency and confidence in the use of the language and all Comhairle developments, projects and policies will be scoped to take account

of impact on Gaelic and for the potential to promote the language. Therefore, usage of Gaelic at every practical opportunity is expected to increase, and Comhairle staff will lead on this by example.

2. Policy Principles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Aims of the Gaelic First Policy

The Gaelic First Policy's primary aim is to ensure equity of opportunities for those who have Gaelic and those who do not within our bilingual communities. This can only be achieved through buy-in from all stakeholders, by setting clear aims and objectives and supporting all involved in fulfilling these. This policy explains the reasons behind this aim, sets out the main objectives, allocates responsibilities and describes a review process to ensure targets are both appropriate and are met

2.2 The Role of the Còmhairle

It is the Comhairle's duty to lead by example by focusing on encouraging the use of natural Gaelic in both formal and community settings. This means increasing the use of Gaelic in all areas of Comhairle operation, especially in the Comhairle Chamber, and ensuring that all front-line services are available bilingually. The focus will be on the use of natural Gaelic, and Gaelic as a means of communication.

As a major player in local development, the Comhairle and its employees will promote the use of Gaelic as a socio, cultural and economic asset and the Islands' unique selling point, not only within its own services, but also to highlight the benefits of Gaelic usage to partner agencies, encouraging them to commit to a similar bilingual approach. The aim is to work strategically with partner agencies and communities to ensure support services are available in Gaelic and, by providing truly immersive experiences for Gaelic speakers and learners, to ensure that Gaelic remains a living, developing language. Suitable support will be made available to ensure those wishing to improve their Gaelic skills are able to do so and cognisance given to progress made. Given the importance of the Education sector to Gaelic development and the Comhairle's responsibility within this, work will continue with Government and stakeholders, such as Education Scotland, to ensure that the Gaelic Medium Education curriculum is appropriate for, and relevant to, the local context

2.3 The Role of Councillors

As the public face of the Comhairle, Councillors, and in particular those chairing committees, will lead by example by increasing the use of Gaelic in the Comhairle Chamber and ensuring that cognisance is taken of Gaelic in relation to all areas of operation and communication. Every effort will be made to promote the use of Gaelic as a socio, cultural and economic asset for the Islands, and policies assessed for their impact on Gaelic. The aim is to create a Gaelic ethos within Comhairle policy which Comhairle officers will be tasked with implementing. Councillors are asked to attend Gaelic Awareness Training as part of their induction. Councillors, and in particular Comataidh na Gaelic, are also responsible for reviewing this policy and the associated strategy and action plan regularly to ensure that the aims and objectives remain relevant and appropriate, and are being met.

2.4 The Role of Third Parties and Our Communities

Everybody within our communities has a role to play in ensuring equity of opportunity for those who speak Gaelic and those who do not. We all must help create an environment within all community settings where the value of Gaelic is recognised, and using Gaelic in a natural manner, regardless of an individual's relative ability, is encouraged and becomes the norm. It is important that everyone realises the opportunities that Gaelic offers as a socio, cultural and economic asset, and makes every

effort to promote and capitalise on this. The public also has an important role in holding both Comhairle and partner agencies to account with regards to implementing, reviewing and updating this policy, and ensuring its aims and objectives are appropriate, and met.

3. Engaging Staff and Third Parties

In order to implement the aims and objectives of this policy successfully, creating and implementing a Human Resource policy that demonstrates a clear commitment to employing and developing a bilingual workforce will be critical. This section sets out the main objectives regarding future engagement of staff and third parties.

3.1 Recruitment Process

For the Comhairle's recruitment policies to reflect fully a policy of Gaelic First, Gaelic proofing should constitute an essential part of the recruitment process to all posts. HR should increasingly liaise with Sgioba na Gaelic to identify linguistic requirements deemed essential to qualify for posts, and Gaelic competency, in addition to an attitudinal question, will be incorporated into all interviews. Gaelic awareness training will form part of the induction process that all members of staff must complete.

3.2 Support, Appraisal and Promotion Processes

Again, to be consistent with a policy of Gaelic First, an increased element of accountability in terms of learning and making progress in Gaelic should be built into contracts of employment and monitored in annual SDA and PRD. Responsibility for progress would lie with line managers and Heads of Service. Regular language development time and programmes for staff will be agreed in order to allow them to achieve this aim.

3.3 Rights and Responsibilities of Employees

Comhairle employees will be entitled to regular language development time and programmes will be made available for free to enable everyone to learn and progress their Gaelic skills. A suitable programme is to be agreed with line managers in the first instance. In return, all Comhairle employees are expected to support the Comhairle's "Gaelic First" ambition and strive towards fluency in Gaelic, and creating a Gaelic ethos. This will be monitored in annual appraisals and progress will be taken into account when employees apply for promoted posts.

3.4 Partners and Third Parties

Buy-in from Third Parties is essential in ensuring effective implementation of Gaelic First across public services and within supported community services. The Comhairle should strongly encourage all partners and third parties active within our Islands to adopt a similar approach regarding the recognition of Gaelic, provision of services, and the recruitment of staff.

3.5 Monitoring and Review

A bi-annual review of progress in relation to the Action Plan will be conducted by Sgioba na Gaelic. Sgioba na Gaelic will conduct a rolling programme of reviews with individual department managers and produce brief Strength and Action Points reports. These reports will feed into progress updates to Comataidh na Gaelic, the Scottish Government and Bord na Gaelic. Aims and targets will be revised as appropriate.

Sgoil Ùige

Stuthan Teagaisg/ Resources

| Gaelic Medium Resources | Gaelic Learners Resources |
|---|--|
| Phonics | |
| <p>Facal is Fuaimean approach & resources Fios air Fuaimean resources</p> <p>Assessment: Emerging Literacy POLAAR Facal is Fuaimean</p> <p><u>Introduction of English from end of P3+</u> Jolly Phonics Twinkl Phonics</p> | <p>Jolly Phonics Twinkl Phonics</p> <p>Assessment: Emerging Literacy POLAAR YARC Early</p> |
| Reading | |
| <p>Storyworlds Storyworlds Bridges Giglets Standard Novels & Literacy Circles Approach</p> <p>Assessment: Weekly assessment of sight words from Storyworlds lists to guide progression. 300 Common Words Assessment.</p> <p><u>Introduction of English from end of P3+</u> Oxford Reading Tree</p> | <p>Storyworlds Jolly Phonics Readers Storyworlds Bridges Literacy World Giglets Standard Novels & Literacy Circles Approach</p> <p>Assessment: YARC</p> |
| Talking & Listening/Grammar | |
| <p>Gaelic Language Framework Dè Thuirt Thu – Èist is Dèan Lasadh – Èist is Dèan (Cluinn is Cluich)</p> <p>Assessment: Measaidhean Gàidhlig Oral Language Tracker</p> <p><u>Introduction of English from P4</u> Jolly Grammar Grammarsaurus</p> | <p>Jolly Grammar Grammarsaurus</p> <p>Assessment: Twinkl Grammar</p> <p>Gaelic Go Gaelic Gaelic Language Framework (at earlier level)</p> |
| Spelling | |
| <p>Lasadh lists (common words)* Litreachadh na Gaelic (patterns)*</p> <p>Assessment: Weekly word list assessment, Monthly Consolidation Assessment 'Gaelic Spelling Patterns' Assessment</p> <p><u>Introduction of English from P4</u> Single Word Spelling Lists Single Word Spelling Tests</p> | <p>Single Word Spelling Lists</p> <p>Assessment: Weekly word list assessment, Monthly Consolidation Assessment Single Word Spelling Tests</p> |
| Resources for Additional Support Needs | |
| <p>Fuaimean Feumail Fuaimean Còmhla</p> | <p>Code Cracker Toe by Toe</p> |

**Comhairle nan Eilean Siar****Poileasaidh Ceartachaidh Mearachdan Gàidhlig****Gaelic Language Error Correction Policy Introduction**

This policy has been created using guidance in Education Scotland Advice on Gaelic Education (Education Scotland, March 2022), to ensure that the teaching of Gaelic language skills at all levels of the Curriculum and stage is accurate and to ensure that the children become confident speakers of Gaelic.

Feallsanachd/ Rationale

Education Scotland Advice on Gaelic Education highlights the following in section 10 Gaelic Medium Education: improving fluency with a planned programme for language, grammar and vocabulary

Prìomh teachdairean/ Key messages:

During the total immersion phase, the development of grammar and specialist vocabulary is embedded within learning and play through the use of high-quality Gaelic all of the time.

Later and at the immersion stages, children will become more aware of the development of particular language areas. Particular points of grammar and specialist vocabulary are planned in programmes and courses across the curricular areas and contexts of the curriculum.

It is important that schools continue the practice of having a policy on how to correct children's and young people's language errors so that these errors do not become the norm.

Adhbhar/ Purpose:

The purpose of the Gaelic Language Error Correction Policy is to ensure that all staff involved in promoting and teaching Gaelic language at all stages are aware of the steps to be followed and of how the correction of errors is to be carried out. It details the structure which should be followed when correcting oral and written errors, complementing the School Gaelic Medium Teaching Approach Policies. Left uncorrected, language errors become increasingly challenging to address. It is important that there is a consistent approach to the correction of oral and written errors. Across all stages, there should be clear plans for developing fluency in a progressive and coherent way.

Amasan/ Aims:

- To ensure that children are being equipped with Gaelic language which is natural and grammatically correct
- To ensure that learners become confident users of Gaelic language
- To ensure that learners know that mistakes are part of effective learning
- To ensure that staff are aware of their role in the sensitive correction of Gaelic language errors

Cuimsean/ Objectives

- Learners will use Gaelic language with confidence
- Learners will use Gaelic language which is grammatically correct
- Learners will celebrate and ‘learn from mistakes,’ understanding that mistakes are an essential part of learning
- Staff will effectively correct errors without impacting on learners’ confidence in using the language

Staff Practice at Curriculum for Excellence Levels An Tràth Ìre | Early Level

At the Early level staff correct children’s errors orally, through modelling high-quality language with accuracy in grammar. The development of grammar and specialist vocabulary will be embedded within learning and play. Errors will not be highlighted but children will be praised for their use of Gaelic, and the correct form will be modelled by staff directly afterwards. Observations of learning will highlight the children’s language needs, and planned activities and tasks will support the next steps in developing these skills.

A’ Chiad Ìre agus An Dàrna Ìre | First and Second Level

Later and at the immersion stages, children will continue to be encouraged to use as much Gaelic as possible without fear of being incorrect. Staff will model correct usage orally and model correct language use in jotters. At this stage, teachers will display errors and challenge the children to apply what they have been learning in structured grammar lessons, following the school’s Oral Language Programme. Points of grammar and specialist vocabulary will be planned and specifically taught across the curricular areas and contexts of the curriculum. Planning for grammar will include opportunities to use and apply what is learnt across a variety of active and written activities.

Promoting a culture of ‘learning by making mistakes’ will ensure that the children’s confidence in using Gaelic is not affected through the correction of errors. Left uncorrected, these errors become increasingly challenging to address. Teachers need to have clear plans for developing fluency in a progressive and coherent way to ensure that the language being taught and promoted is grammatically and idiomatically correct.

Sgoilearan le Feumalachdan Taic a Bharrachd | Pupils with Additional Support Needs

When teaching and reinforcing the Gaelic language use of pupils with additional support needs teachers should ensure that the level of challenge is appropriate for the child’s stage through appropriate differentiation and ensure that the correction of errors is appropriate for the child’s needs. When correcting errors - particularly in a written piece - teachers should focus on no more than 6-10 errors and their correct modelling, to ensure that the child’s confidence is not diminished.