

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE & SPORT COMMITTEE

13th November 2008

Agenda Item	
Report No	

CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A STAND ALONE GAELIC PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR PORTTREE AND COMMUNITIES CURRENTLY SERVED BY THE GAELIC MEDIUM PROVISION IN PORTTREE PRIMARY SCHOOL, ISLE OF SKYE

Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service

SUMMARY

This report outlines to members the result of the statutory consultation undertaken by the Education, Culture & Sport Service regarding the proposal to develop a stand alone Gaelic primary school for Portree and communities currently served by the Gaelic medium provision in Portree Primary School, Isle of Skye.

**1.0 STRENGTHENING THE HIGHLANDS
THE PROGRAMME OF THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL 2009-2011**

1.1 This proposal contributes to the delivery of programme outcome:

1.9 We will continue to develop Gaelic medium education in pre-school and primary school as well as expanding Gaelic medium education in the secondary sector.

We will also represent the interests of the Highlands by working with partners, including the UK and Scottish Governments, to promote services for children and families:

1. We will work with the Scottish Government and Higher Education institutions to address the issue of supply of Gaelic medium teachers and seek funding for 2 new Gaelic Medium Primary Schools

1.2 The proposal also contributes towards Highland Council Gaelic Plan.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Highland Council Education, Culture & Sport Committee of 22nd May 2008 agreed that a statutory consultation be undertaken on the proposal to develop a stand alone Gaelic primary school for Portree, as above, and in order that locally based consultation should commence, consultative papers be drawn up for the consideration of the Education, Culture & Sport Committee.

2.2 The Education, Culture & Sport Committee of 7th August 2008 approved the terms of the consultative paper and the duration of the consultation period.

3.0 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 The Council's agreed procedure with regard to statutory consultation on changes to education provision were followed. The consultative paper (**Appendix 1**) along with a letter inviting the submission of written comments to the Area Education, Culture & Sport Manager - Ross, Skye & Lochaber by Friday 10th October, was made available to:

- a) Parents of pupils and pre-school pupils in Portree Primary School
- b) Gaelic Toddler group parents
- c) Relevant Parent Councils
- d) Relevant Community Councils
- e) The local member of parliament and the Scottish parliament
- f) Chair & Vice-chair of ECS Committee and Gaelic Committee
- g) Local councillors

The consultative paper was also made available to the head teacher and staff of Portree Primary School.

3.2 By way of advertisements the availability of the consultative paper was also brought to the attention of other individuals and community groups.

3.3 A copy of the statutory consultative paper is appended to this report (**Appendix 1**). This paper has been prepared in terms of the Education Authority's agreed procedure.

3.4 A public meeting was held in Portree High School on 24th September 2008. 84 members of the public were in attendance. Minutes of the meeting are appended to this report (**Appendix 2**). Those present were further invited to submit written comments to the Education, Culture & Sport Manager by Friday 10th October 2008. Almost all of those who contributed at the meeting were in favour of Option B (To develop a stand alone Gaelic primary school). A few voiced concerns regarding the impact the development would have on the community and the impact the development would have on Gaelic Medium pupils in other schools.

3.5 Submissions were received from parents and carers of pupils in the Portree area and members of the wider community. The submissions received are detailed as **Appendix 3** to this report (**Booklet B**).

4.0 OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION

4.1 There were 44 written representations from parents and pre-school parents [submissions 1-44]. Of the parental representation 16 parents were for Option A (The Status Quo) and 28 parents were for Option B (To develop a stand alone Gaelic primary school). Of the 16 parents supporting the status quo, 7 submissions were received from English Medium parents and 9 from Gaelic Medium parents. Of the 28 parents supporting Option B, all 28 were from Gaelic Medium parents.

4.2 One written submission was received from a Gaelic Medium pupil at Portree Primary School indicating a preference for Option A (The Status Quo) [submission 45].

4.3 The 16 parents and pre-school parents who were in favour of Option A (The Status Quo) argued that the proposal was divisive, splitting the current school community

into two. They further felt that the development of a separate stand alone primary school would create an 'us and them' culture. They also intimated the view that currently Portree Primary School was highly regarded and enthusiastically supported by the whole community. There were concerns expressed regarding the impact the proposal would have on young people who had friends, or in some instances siblings, in the Gaelic Medium part of the school which would become the new school and similarly expressed concern regarding the transfer of staff to the new school. Several of the representations commented on the difficulty of recruiting teaching staff, and more specifically, ancillary staff to the new school to create a wholly Gaelic ethos. Concern was expressed that by splitting the school the enriching dimension of Gaelic language, culture and music would be taken away from the pupils left in Portree Primary School. One respondent suggested that whilst it may be the intention that a new school would increase the Gaelic fluency of 40% of children in the community, the net effect will be to take the language and culture away from 60% of the community. Further comments from these parents are summarised in **Appendix 3A**.

- 4.4 Option B was favoured by 28 parents and pre-school parents. They viewed the establishment of a dedicated school as a natural development from the existing Gaelic Medium provision. They argued that a designated Gaelic school would lead to much greater fluency in Gaelic for the pupils and create a truly Gaelic environment at the new school. These parents also referred to the commitment given by the Council in *Strengthening the Highlands: The Programme of the Highland Council 2009-2011* and within the Council's Gaelic Plan to work with the Scottish Government and Higher Education institutions to address the issue of supply of Gaelic medium teachers and seek funding for 2 new Gaelic Medium Primary Schools. They wholeheartedly supported the development of a stand alone primary school for Portree and a number of the respondents wished this to take place as a stand alone school on a green-field site. They also commented that the total immersion in the Gaelic language which the children would experience in a dedicated Gaelic school would be invaluable to their children's general education and depth of language. Some respondents noted that it was essential that Highland Council included a 0-5 nursery facility in the Gaelic school offering wrap-around care. They felt this was of paramount importance in increasing the number of Gaelic speaking children in Portree. The respondents also argued that moving towards an entirely Gaelic environment is an important next step if the language is to be kept alive. Further comments from these parents are summarised in **Appendix 3B**.
- 4.5 48 written submissions were received from the local community of Skye. Of this local representation 12 were for Option A (The Status Quo) and 36 were for Option B (To develop a stand alone Gaelic primary school). These submissions mirrored many of the views expressed by the parents and pre-school parents [submissions 46-93].
- 4.6 14 written submissions were received from individuals outwith the community. Of these representations 2 were for Option A and 12 were for Option B [submissions 94-107].
- 4.7 Letters were also received from the following organisations[submissions 108-115]:
- ✚ Portree Primary Pupil Council
 - ✚ Portree Primary Parent Council
 - ✚ Portree Community Council
 - ✚ Commun na Gàidhlig

- ✚ Comann nam Pàrant (Nàiseanta)
- ✚ Comann nam Pàrant (Inbhir Nis)
- ✚ Comann nam Pàrant (Port Rìgh)
- ✚ Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Of these submissions, one was received from Portree Primary Pupil Council, and two were from local parent groups - Portree Primary Parent Council and Comann nam Pàrant (Port Rìgh).

- 4.8 Portree Primary Pupil Council's submission includes the results of a pupil survey carried out by the Pupil Council to establish the views of pupils regarding the establishment of a stand alone Gaelic school. This has been submitted as part of the consultation process for Members' information [submission 108].
- 4.9 Portree Primary Parent Council [submission 109] included the results of a parent survey carried out by the Parent Council to establish the views of parents regarding the establishment of a stand alone Gaelic school. Although this survey was conducted prior to the formal statutory consultation, it has been submitted as part of the consultation process for Members' information.
- 4.10 Comann nam Pàrant (Port Rìgh) [submission 114] wrote in support of Option B and included a discussion paper regarding the development of a Gaelic Hub alongside a Gaelic School for Portree, for Members' information.
- 4.11 A number of staff submitted views [submissions 116-119].

5.0 FURTHER ACTION SHOULD OPTION B BE APPROVED

- 5.1 Further consultation would be required regarding the site of a new or refurbished stand along Gaelic school. An option paper would be required to be prepared for consideration by Members.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 In light of the above consultation and Highland Council's commitment to develop stand along Gaelic schools, Members are asked:
- (i) to agree the principle of a stand alone Gaelic school for Portree and communities currently served by the Gaelic Medium Provision in Portree Primary School, Isle of Skye, (Option B)
 - (ii) that Officers of the Council prepare an Option Paper on preferred sites for consideration by Members
 - (iii) that Members and officers discuss with The Scottish Government and Bòrd na Gàidhlig capital funding for the project.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service

Date:

Author/Ref: Laurence Young, Senior Education Officer

Background Papers: ECS Committee Paper 7/8/08

Enclosures: Appendix 1 – Consultative Paper
 Appendix 2 – Minute of Public Meeting
 Appendix 3 – Written submissions
 Appendix 3A – Summarised comments from submissions - Option A
 Appendix 3B – Summarised comments from submissions - Option B

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION CULTURE AND SPORTS COMMITTEE

**PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A STAND ALONE GAELIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL FOR PORTREE AND COMMUNITIES CURRENTLY
SERVED BY THE GAELIC MEDIUM PROVISION IN PORTREE
PRIMARY SCHOOL, ISLE OF SKYE**

**THIS IS A CONSULTATIVE PAPER PREPARED IN TERMS OF THE
EDUCATION AUTHORITY'S AGREED PROCEDURE TO MEET THE
REQUIREMENTS OF THE EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 1980**

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A STAND ALONE GAELIC PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR PORTTREE AND COMMUNITIES CURRENTLY SERVED BY THE GAELIC MEDIUM PROVISION IN PORTTREE PRIMARY SCHOOL, ISLE OF SKYE

OPTION A

The Status Quo. The status quo would maintain the existing provision for Gaelic medium education.

OPTION B

The development of a stand alone dedicated Gaelic School for Portree and communities currently served by the Gaelic Medium provision in Portree Primary School by

- (i) the adaptation of an existing building for a dedicated Gaelic school; or
- (ii) building a free standing new school on a new site.

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 confirms Gaelic as an official language of Scotland, commanding equal respect with English. The Act established the new public body Bord na Gaidhlig to implement the provisions of the Act, including the production of the first National Plan for Gaelic. The Scottish Government through its approval of the National Plan for Gaelic (2007 - 2012) has set a target to increase the numbers of pupils in Gaelic primary education to 4,000 at the Primary 1 stage by the year 2021.

Highland Council is the first public authority in Scotland to have its Gaelic Language Plan formally approved by Bord na Gaidhlig. The Council's Plan reflects the aspirations of the National Plan.

Gaelic education has now become an accepted way by which many young people are educated in Scotland. In 2007 there were 2,601 pupils receiving Gaelic medium education. Gaelic medium primary education within Highland over the last 15 to 20 years has significantly expanded and proven to be very successful. The 2007 school census showed that, within Highland, 718 primary pupils were educated through the medium of Gaelic in primary classes.

Over the last 20 years, there has been a significant development of Gaelic related job opportunities for young people who are Gaelic bilingual, including access to University, in publishing, in translation, in education, in the caring professions, in tourism, broadcasting and in music and the arts. The economic worth of the language has developed considerably.

Gaelic Medium Education

Within Highland, apart from Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis and the dedicated Gaelic school with one English medium class at Sleat in Skye, Gaelic medium education is delivered to pupils in primary schools which also provide English medium education. In

the Gaelic medium classroom, Gaelic is the sole means of spoken communication at all stages and for all aspects of the curriculum. This is known as the ‘immersion method’ and is an effective means of teaching languages, for a number of reasons:

- the extent of pupils’ exposure to Gaelic,
- their use of it for ‘real’ purposes, and
- the all-Gaelic rule which creates a powerful motivation to acquire the language.

In the English medium classroom, most teaching takes place through the medium of English. Gaelic is usually taught as a second language, as part of the Gaelic for Learners in the Primary School programme [GLPS]. Although practice varies, most schools aim to bring English medium pupils to the 5/14 ‘Elementary’ level in Gaelic.

Within Gaelic medium schools, Gaelic and English should have broadly equal visual prominence, e.g. on signage, letterheads, prospectuses, reports and web pages. Whole school events such as assemblies and social events should be bilingual, both in content and also with regard to the languages used. All school staff, including ancillary staff, should speak Gaelic to Gaelic medium pupils wherever possible.

In practice, many Gaelic Medium Schools have difficulty in ensuring that whole school events are truly bilingual and that all school staff speak Gaelic to Gaelic Medium pupils because not all their staff and pupils are Gaelic speakers.

Research has shown (Enright & McCloskey, 1989) (Snow, Met & Geneses, 1989) that language is acquired most effectively when it is learned for communication in meaningful and significant social situations.

The Gaelic School

In a dedicated Gaelic School, Gaelic is the means by which all staff and pupils interact: the culture of the school is Gaelic and all staff and pupils communicate through the Gaelic language at all times and in all situations. In effect, the ‘immersion method’ which prevails in the Gaelic medium classroom is extended to the whole school and to the whole of the pupils’ school day. This whole Gaelic environment helps to ensure young people develop their Gaelic language outside the classroom as well as in it. It gives young people the opportunity to play and learn in an environment that is totally focussed on Gaelic. International research indicates that total immersion programmes are the most effective approach available to second language teaching in school settings (Genesee, 1994)

Gaelic Education

In both Gaelic Medium and ‘Gaelic’ schools, pupils are taught English reading and writing alongside Gaelic, from P3 onwards and are expected to reach the same level of competence, in all skills, in both languages by the end of primary school.

Pupils educated through Gaelic Medium are bilingual by the time they complete their primary education. Research commissioned by the Scottish Office, (Johnstone 1999, p.4) concluded that *‘pupils in Gaelic-medium primary education ... were not disadvantaged in comparison with children educated through English. In many, though not all, instances they outperformed English medium pupils and in addition gave the advantage of becoming proficient in two languages’*.

2.0 CURRENT SITUATION

Over the last decade there has been interest, at national and Highland level, in establishing dedicated Gaelic schools. In 1999 all-Gaelic primary provision was developed at Bunsgoil Ghaidhlig Ghlaschu (Glasgow) with significant success. In 2007 Highland Council established a Gaelic school in Inverness and a dedicated school with an English medium unit at Sleat Primary School on the Isle of Skye. The council has agreed in the Gaelic language plan 2007-2011 to progress the development of all Gaelic schools by reacting positively when opportunities arise to do so. This is a commitment within the Council's Programme for Administration. The Administration is also of the view that stand-alone Gaelic schools should form a focus for developing Gaelic in the community and raising the profile of Gaelic generally.

In Highland, during session 2007-2008, of a total of 718 pupils learning Gaelic, 566 primary pupils were educated in Gaelic classes within Gaelic medium schools (2007 school census). 103 pupils were learning through the medium of Gaelic at Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis stand-alone Gaelic primary school and 47 pupils were learning through the medium of Gaelic in Bun-sgoil Sleat.

Almost half of the 566 primary pupils live in communities in Eilean a' Cheò ward, the Caol and Mallaig ward and the Fort William and Ardnamurchan ward. These areas are rich in Gaelic language and culture. It is projected for session 2008-2009 that 267 pupils within Skye will be educated through the medium of Gaelic. Portree Primary School has by far the largest number of Gaelic medium pupils with 100 enrolled for session 2008-2009.

Recently there has been an expression of interest from the community in providing a stand-alone Gaelic primary school for Portree.

Portree Primary School

Portree Primary School provides Non-denominational Gaelic medium and English medium education for the village of Portree and surrounding townships.

The English medium provision serves this catchment whilst the Gaelic medium provision serves the catchment of Portree Primary and the townships of Kensaleyre, Suledale, Bernisdale and Skeabost. (see table 2)

The school also provides Gaelic pre-school education for both three and four-year olds.

The main school building dates from 1991. In 1996 an extension was built to cater for an increasing roll. In November 2006 Sgoil Araich, the Gaelic medium nursery also moved to the school campus from its former site at Elgin Hostel.

There are presently 11 mainstream classes in the school made up of 6 classes in the English medium department and 5 classes in the Gaelic medium department. The school also houses a special needs base called The Sunshine Room.

School Roll

TABLE 1: Portree Primary School Roll 2003-2004 to 2008-2009

Portree Primary		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	Total	Combined TOTAL	%
2003-2004	GM	14	12	15	18	18	18	18	113	258	44%
2003-2004	EM	21	17	19	15	28	22	23	145		56%
2004-2005	GM	17	14	12	16	18	18	18	113	266	42%
2004-2005	EM	12	22	20	23	19	32	25	153		58%
2005-2006	GM	8	16	13	12	16	17	18	100	239	42%
2005-2006	EM	15	12	18	21	21	20	32	139		58%
2006-2007	GM	13	10	14	14	12	16	17	96	231	42%
2006-2007	EM	16	15	14	18	22	25	25	135		58%
2007-2008	GM	17	12	9	14	14	15	17	98	235	42%
2007-2008	EM	16	17	15	17	19	28	25	137		58%
2008-2009	GM	14	17	12	10	15	15	16	99	236	42%
2008-2009	EM	16	17	18	14	16	28	28	137		58%

It is clear from Table 1 that the Gaelic medium roll as a percentage of the school roll has been stable at around 42% over the last five years and is predicted to stay at 42% of the total school roll for session 2008-2009.

TABLE 1a: Portree Primary Pre-School Roll 2003-2004 to 2008-2009

Portree Primary		3yr	4yr	TOTAL	Combined TOTAL	%
2003-2004	GM	n/a	18	18	57	32%
2003-2004	EM	18	21	39		68%
2004-2005	GM	13	8	21	62	34%
2004-2005	EM	20	21	41		66%
2005-2006	GM	14	12	26	63	41%
2005-2006	EM	20	17	37		59%
2006-2007	GM	18	14	32	71	45%
2006-2007	EM	18	21	39		55%
2007-2008	GM	16	16	32	74	43%
2007-2008	EM	26	16	42		57%
2008-2009	GM	10	16	26	62	42%
2008-2009	EM	11	25	36		58%

Table 1a displays the nursery rolls for Gaelic medium and English medium pupils for the last five years. The table shows that there has been an increase in Gaelic medium pre-school enrolments from 32% in session 2003-2004 to 43% in session 2007-2008. It is predicted that for session 2008-2009 there will be 26 Gaelic medium pre-school pupils and 36 English medium pre-school pupils.

Table 2

Gaelic medium catchment at 2007-2008

	Gaelic medium
Kensaleyre	8
Suledale, Bernisdale & Skeabost	8
Total	16

Table 2 displays the areas outwith Portree which the current Gaelic medium school population reside. In session 2007-2008, there were 8 pupils living in the township of Kensaleyre and 8 pupils living in the townships of Suledale, Bernisdale and Skeabost.

3.0 FACTORS AFFECTING FUTURE PROVISION

The roll of Portree Primary School is projected over the next five years in terms of known births and taking into account the effect of potential additional housing.

The following projections are based on the information contained in the School Roll Forecasts available on the Highland Council intranet and the August 2008-2009 roll provided by Portree Primary School..

Table 3

Portree Projected Pre-school and Primary EM and GM Roll 2009 – 2013

Year					P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	Primary Total	Total
		3 year old	4 year old	Pre-school Total									
2009-2010	GM	7	8	15	14	14	14	10	13	17	17	99	114
2009-2010	EM	14	19	33	18	19	18	14	17	23	24	133	166
2010-2011	GM	3	7	10	8	14	14	14	11	13	17	91	101
2010-2011	EM	10	16	28	19	19	19	19	14	18	24	131	159
2011-2012	GM	11	7	18	7	8	14	15	14	11	14	83	101
2011-2012	EM	16	14	30	14	20	20	20	20	15	19	127	157
2012-2013	GM	11	11	22	11	7	8	15	15	15	11	93	115
2012-2013	EM	15	15	30	16	15	20	20	21	20	16	128	158

It is predicted that the Gaelic pre-school population will show a fall in year 2010-2011 but will grow thereafter. However, the total roll for Portree Primary School is predicted to see a small decline of 7 pupils from 2009-2010 to 2012-2013. Gaelic medium primary pupil numbers will decline by 6 over this period. This is in line with the general trend in pupil numbers for Skye as a whole. Significant house building is being undertaken in Portree which has been incorporated in to the above projections.

4.0 POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTIONS

Having regard to the Council's programme for administration to progress the development of all Gaelic medium education primary schools and the wish expressed by some members of the community for such provision the authority has identified the undernoted options:

Option A

The Status Quo – maintain the existing provision for Gaelic medium education in Portree Primary School.

Option B

The development of a stand alone dedicated Gaelic School by

- (i) the adaptation of an existing building for a dedicated Gaelic school; or
- (ii) building a free standing new school on a new site.

5.0 CONSEQUENCES OF POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION

Option A Status Quo

Portree Primary will continue to deliver education to pupils through the medium of English and the medium of Gaelic.

Option B The development of a stand alone dedicated Gaelic School by

- (i) the adaptation of an existing building for a dedicated Gaelic school; or
- (ii) building a free standing new school on a new site;

All Gaelic medium provision within the current delineated area of Portree Primary School will be delivered in a new dedicated Gaelic school. Further consequences of Option B are dependent on which of the above two alternative sites is chosen. Each of which will have significant capital cost implications which have yet to be fully costed.

(i) Adaptation of an existing building

One building in Portree would need to be identified which is sufficient for the development of a stand-alone 97-121 pupil 21st century Gaelic School providing nursery and primary provision with the capacity to allow future growth. An option exists for Elgin Hostel, Portree. This would involve the sharing of sports facilities with Portree High School. This option would require a feasibility study to be undertaken to ascertain the suitability of adaptation and to quantify the costs involved. It should be noted that other opportunities also exist for the development of this building.

(ii) building a free standing new school on a new site.

A site would have to be identified with the capability of providing a 100 pupil 21st century school plus nursery and with the capacity to allow future growth and associated playing fields. This option would require a feasibility study to identify a suitable site for the construction of a new school and to quantify the costs involved.

Both of the above options have a number of similar consequences:

Transport implications

In session 2007-08 of the Gaelic medium roll of 98, 16 were provided with free school transport. This is unlikely to change. It is not envisaged that there will be a significant transport cost associated with this proposal.

From 2000 the authority has operated a policy whereby free transport has been provided within a 10 mile radius of a Gaelic medium school. However, local factors affecting access to Gaelic Medium provision are also considered on a case by case basis.

Staffing implications

It would be necessary to appoint a Head Teacher and other promoted posts for the new school. The salary for these posts would require to be job sized.

Teaching staff. The current staff within the Gaelic medium provision at Portree Primary School would be redeployed to the new school taking into account the roll of the school at that time.

Ancillary staff. Ancillary staff supporting directly the delivery of Gaelic medium education would be redeployed to the dedicated school.

Community use of Buildings

There would be no change to the continuing use of Portree Primary School Building by the community (within the Authority's Community use policies.) The new Portree High School has a wide range of community facilities and it is anticipated that these would be used by the Gaelic community in the main and any facilities in a new Gaelic school would be for primary and associated early education purposes only.

Delineated areas

There would be no change to the current delineated area for English medium pupils attending Portree Primary School. Gaelic language pupils attending the dedicated Gaelic school would continue to be drawn from Portree and those residing in the communities of Kenseleyre, Suledale, Bernisdale and Skeabost. The current delineated area of Staffin and Kilmuir Primary Schools would not be affected.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This consultation paper is issued in terms of the Authority's agreed procedures to meet the relevant statutory requirements. Following the consultation period, a report and submissions received will be presented to the ECS Committee of the Highland Council.

Representations regarding this paper should be made in writing to:

John Ritchie, Area Education Culture and Sport Manager, Ross, Skye and Lochaber, Highland Council, Area Education Office, Elgin Hostel, Dunvegan Road, Portree, Isle of Skye by 10 October 2008.

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- Snow, M.A., Met, M., & Geneses, F. (1989). A conceptual framework for the integration of language and content in second/foreign language instruction. *TESOL Quarterly*, 23, 201-207
- Swain, M and Lapkin, S. (1982). *Evaluating bilingual education: a Canadian case-study* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Highland Council School Roll Forecasts (2007) updated July 2008

COMHAIRLE NA GÀIDHEALTACHD
COMATAIDH FOGHLAM, CULTAR AGUS SPÒRS

**MOLADH GUS SGOIL GHÀIDHLIG FA-LETH A CHRUTHACHADH
DO PHORT RÌGH AGUS DHA NA COIMHEARSNACHDAN A THA
AIR AM FRITHEALADH LEIS NA CLASAICHEAN GÀIDHLIG A THA
ANN AM BUN-SGOIL PHORT RÌGH, ANNS AN EILEAN
SGITHEANACH**

**'S E PÀIPEAR CONALTRAIDH A THA SEO A THA AIR A DHEALBH
A RÈIR DÒIGHEAN OBRACH ROINN AN FHOGHLAIM GUS
DLEASTANASAN ACHD AN FHOGHLAIM (ALBA) 1980 A
CHOILEANADH**

CONALTRADH AIR A' MHOIADH GUS SGOIL GHÀIDHLIG FA-LETH A CHRUTHACHADH DO PHORT RÌGH AGUS DHA NA COIMHEARSNACHDAN A THA AIR AM FRITHEALADH LEIS NA CLASAICHEAN GÀIDHLIG A THA ANN AM BUN-SGOIL PHORT-RÌGH, ANNS AN EILEAN SGITHEANACH.

ROGHAINN A

Cùisean a chumail mar a tha iad. Bhiodh sin a' ciallachadh gun leanadh foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann am Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh.

ROGHAINN B

Sgoil Ghàidhlig fa-leth a chruthachadh do Phort Rìgh agus dha na coimhearsnachdan a tha air am frithealadh leis na clasaichean Gàidhlig a tha ann am Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh le bhith

(i) a' leasachadh togalach a tha ann a-cheana airson a chleachdadh mar sgoil Ghàidhlig; no le bhith

(ii) a' togail sgoil ùr air làrach ùr.

1.0 BARRACHD FIOSRACHAIDH

Tha Achd na Gàidhlig (Alba) 2005 a' dearbhadh gu bheil Gàidhlig na cànan oifigeil ann an Alba, le co-ionannachd ri Beurla. Stèidhich an Achd buidheann poblach ùr, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, gus na bha anns an Achd a chur an gnìomh, a' chiad Phlana Nàiseanta airson na Gàidhlig a chruthachadh nam measg sin. Tha Riaghaltas na h-Alba, le bhith a' gabhail ri Plana Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig (2007 – 2012) air amas a stèidheachadh gus àireamh sgoilearan a' faighinn foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig aig ìre Prìomh 1 àrdachadh gu 4,000 ron bhliadhna 2021.

B' e am Plana Gàidhlig aig Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd a' chiad phlana Gàidhlig le ùghdarras poblach ann an Alba a chaidh gabhail ris le Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Tha amasan na Comhairle cuideachd a' riochdachadh amasan a' Phlana Nàiseanta.

Thathar a' gabhail ri foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig a-nis mar dhòigh anns a bheil mòran òigridh a' faighinn oideachadh ann an Alba. Ann an 2007 bha 2,601 sgoilear a' faighinn foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig. Tha leudachadh mòr air tighinn air foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann an sgìre na Gàidhealtachd thairis air a' 15 gu 20 bliadhna mu dheireadh agus tha e air a bhith soirbheachail. Sheall cunntas-sluaigh 2007 gun robh, ann an sgìre na Gàidhealtachd, 718 sgoilear aig ìre bun-sgoile a' faighinn foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig.

Anns an 20 bliadhna mu dheireadh, tha adhartas mòr air a bhith anns na cothroman cosnaidh co-cheangailte ri Gàidhlig do dhaoine òga aig a bheil Gàidhlig. Nam measg sin tha cothroman ann an Oilthighean, ann am foillseachadh, ann an eadar-theangachadh, ann am foghlam, ann a bhith a' toirt cùram, ann an turasachd, craoladh agus ceòl agus na h-ealain. Tha luach eaconamach na cànan air àrdachadh gu mòr.

Foghlam Tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig

Taobh a-staigh sgìre na Gàidhealtachd, a bharrachd air Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis agus an Sgoil Ghàidhlig le clas tro mheadhan na Beurla ann an Slèite anns an Eilean Sgitheanach, tha foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig air a thabhann do sgoilearan ann an sgoiltean far a bheil foghlam tro mheadhan na Beurla air a thabhann cuideachd. Anns a' chlas tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig, 's e Gàidhlig an aon chànan a bhios air a bruidhinn aig gach ìre agus airson gach mìr dhen churraicealam. 'S e 'bogadh' a chanar ris an dòigh teagasg seo agus 's e dòigh èifeachdach a th' ann air cànanan a theagasg, air iomadh adhbhar:

- na tha na sgoilearan a' faighinn de Ghàidhlig,
- gu bheil iad ga cleachdadh ann an suidheachaidhean 'dòigheil', agus
- an riaghailt 'Gàidhlig fad na h-ùine' a tha a' cruthachadh iarrtas làidir airson an cànan a thogail.

Anns na clasaichean tro mheadhan na Beurla, bidh a' chuid as motha dhen teagasg air a dhèanamh tro mheadhan na Beurla. Mar as trice, bidh Gàidhlig air a teagasg mar dhàrna cànan, mar phàirt den phrògram Gàidhlig do Luchd-ionnsachaidh anns a' bhun-sgoil [GLPS]. Ged a tha eadar-dhealachaidhean ann, tha a' mhòr-chuid dhe na sgoiltean ag amas air sgoilearan a tha a' faighinn foghlam tro mheadhan na Beurla a thoirt gu ìre 5/14 'Bunaiteach' ann an Gàidhlig.

Ann an sgoiltean far a bheil foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig, bu chòir gum biodh co-ionannachd ann eadar Gàidhlig agus Beurla a thaobh rudan leithid shoidhnichean, cinn-litrichean, leabhran-iùil na sgoile, aithisgean agus làraichean-lìn. Bu chòir do thachartasan sgoile leithid cruinneachaidhean agus cuirmean a bhith dà-chànanach, a thaobh na thathar a' taisbeanadh agus a thaobh nan cànanan a bhios air an cleachdadh. Bu chòir dhan luchd-obrach uile, nam measg sin feadhainn nach eil nan luchd-teagasg, Gàidhlig a bhruidhinn ri sgoilearan a tha a' faighinn foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig far a bheil sin comasach.

Ach an uair a thèid feuchainn air sin a chur an gnìomh, tha duilgheadas aig mòran sgoiltean le foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann a bhith a' dèanamh nan tachartasan sgoile dà chànanach agus ann a bhith a' toirt air an luchd-obrach uile Gàidhlig a bhruidhinn ri sgoilearan a tha a' faighinn foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig bhon nach eil Gàidhlig aig an luchd-obrach agus aig na sgoilearan air fad.

Tha rannsachadh (Enright & McCloskey, 1989) (Snow, Met & Geneses, 1989) air sealltainn gu bheil cànan air a togail nas èifeachdaiche an uair a tha i air a h-ionnsachadh airson conaltradh ann an suidheachaidhean sòisealta dòigheil agus cudromach.

An Sgoil Ghàidhlig

Ann an sgoil Ghàidhlig fa-leth, 's e Gàidhlig a bhios luchd-obrach agus sgoilearan a' cleachdadh gus bruidhinn ri chèile: tha cultar Gàidhlig aig an sgoil agus bidh an luchd-obrach agus na sgoilearan a' conaltradh ann an Gàidhlig fad an t-siubhail agus anns gach suidheachadh. Gu dearbh, tha am 'bogadh' anns a' chànan a tha na sgoilearan a' faighinn anns an t-seòmar air a leudachadh chun na sgoile gu lèir agus gu latha sgoile an sgoileir air fad. Tha an àrainneachd Ghàidhlig a' cuideachadh nan sgoilearan ann a bhith a'

leasachadh an sgilean Gàidhlig taobh a-muigh a' chlas cho math ri am broinn a' chlas. Tha e a' toirt cothrom do dh'òigridh cluich agus ionnsachadh ann an suidheachadh a tha gu tur stèidhichte air Gàidhlig. Tha rannsachadh eadar-nàiseanta a' sealltainn gur e prògraman bogaidh na dòighean as èifeachdaiche air dàrna cànan a theagasg ann an suidheachadh sgoile (Genesee, 1994)

Foghlam Gàidhlig

Ann am Foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig agus ann an Sgoiltean Gàidhlig, bidh sgoilearan air an teagasg gus Beurla a leughadh agus a sgrìobhadh a bharrachd air Gàidhlig, bho P3 agus thathar an dùil gum bi na h-aon chomasan aca, anns gach sgil, anns an dà chànan aig deireadh an ùine anns a' bhun-sgoil.

Bidh sgoilearan a tha air an oideachadh tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig dà-chànanach mus cuir iad crìoch air am foghlam bun-sgoile. Cho-dhùin rannsachadh a bha air iarraidh le Oifis na h-Alba, (Johnstone 1999, d.4) nach robh '*sgoilearan ann am Foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ... a' call an taca ri sgoilearan a bha air an teagasg tro mheadhan na Beurla. Ann an iomadach suidheachadh, ged nach robh anns a h-uile suidheachadh, bha iad a' dèanamh na b' fheàrr na sgoilearan ann am foghlam tro mheadhan na Beurla agus a bharrachd air sin, bha a' bhuanachd a bhith comasach ann an dà chànan*'.

2.0 AN SUIDHEACHADH AN-DRÀSTA

Anns an deichead mu dheireadh tha ùidh mhòr air a bhith ann, aig ìre nàiseanta agus anns a' Ghàidhealtachd, gus sgoiltean Gàidhlig fa-leth a chruthachadh. Ann an 1999 chaidh sgoil Ghàidhlig fa-leth a chruthachadh ann am Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu agus bha sin air leth soirbheachail. Ann an 2007 stèidhich Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd sgoil Ghàidhlig ann an Inbhir Nis agus sgoil Ghàidhlig le clas tro mheadhan na Beurla ann am Bun-sgoil Shlèite anns an Eilean Sgitheanach. Tha a' chomhairle air aontachadh ann am plana na Gàidhlig airson 2007-2011 gus leasachadh sgoiltean Gàidhlig fa-leth adhartachadh le bhith a' gabhail nan cothroman gus sin a dhèanamh nuair a nochdas iad. 'S e dealas a tha sin an taobh a-staigh Prògram Rianachd na Comhairle. Tha an Rianachd cuideachd dhen bheachd gum biodh sgoiltean Gàidhlig fa-leth nan stèidh airson a bhith a' leasachadh Gàidhlig anns a' choimhearsnachd agus ann a bhith ag àrdachadh aithne mun Ghàidhlig anns an fharsaingeachd.

Ann an sgìre na Gàidhealtachd, rè seisean 2007-2008, bho àireamh iomlan de 718 sgoilear a bha ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig, bha 566 sgoilear bun-sgoile air an oideachadh ann an clasaichean Gàidhlig ann an sgoiltean le foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig (2007 cunntas-sluaigh sgoile 2007). Bha 103 sgoilear ag ionnsachadh tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann am Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis, an sgoil Ghàidhlig fa-leth, agus bha 47 sgoilear ag ionnsachadh tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann am Bun-sgoil Shlèite.

Tha cha mhòr an dàrna leth dhe na 566 sgoilear a' fuireach ann an coimhearsnachdan ann an roinn Eilean a' Cheò, roinn a' Chaoil agus Malaig agus roinn A' Ghearasdain agus Àird nam Murchan. Tha beartas cànanain agus cultar na Gàidhlig anns na sgìrean seo. Thathar an dùil gum bi 267 sgoilear ag ionnsachadh tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig anns an Eilean Sgitheanach ann an seisean sgoile 2008-2009. 'S ann ann am Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh a tha an àireamh as motha de sgoilearan ag ionnsachadh tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig le 100 air an clàradh airson seisean sgoile 2008-2009.

Bho chionn ghoirid, tha iarrtas air nochdadh bhon choimhearsnachd airson bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig fa-leth a chruthachadh ann am Port Rìgh.

Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh

Tha Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh a' toirt foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig, gun seòrsachadh air a dhèanamh a thaobh creideamh, agus foghlam tro mheadhan na Beurla do bhaile Phort Rìgh agus bailtean eile mun cuairt air.

Tha foghlam tro mheadhan na Beurla a' frithealadh na sgìre sin ach tha foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig cuideachd a' frithealadh bailtean Cheann Sìl Eighre, Sùladal, Beàrnasdal agus Sgeubost. (faic clàr 2)

Tha an sgoil seo cuideachd a' tabhann foghlam Gàidhlig ro-sgoile airson clann a tha trì agus ceithir bliadhna a dh'aois.

Chaidh prìomh thogalach na sgoile a thogail ann an 1991. Ann an 1996 chaidh an togalach a leudachadh leis gun robh àrdachadh ann an àireamhan nan sgoilearan. Anns an t-Samhain 2006 chaidh an Sgoil-àraich agus an cròileagan Gàidhlig a ghluasad gu làrach na sgoile agus à Òstail Eilginn far an robh e roimhe sin.

An-dràsta, tha 11 clas bliadhnail anns an sgoil le 6 clasaichean air an teagasg tro mheadhan na Beurla agus 5 air an teagasg tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig. Tha 'The Sunshine Room', àite do chloinn aig a bheil feumalachdan sònraichte, anns an sgoil cuideachd.

Àireamh Sgoilearan anns an Sgoil

CLÀR 1: Àireamhan Sgoilearan ann am Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh 2003-2004 gu 2008-2009

Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	Iomlan	IOMLAN CÒMHLA	%
2003-2004	FTMG	14	12	15	18	18	18	18	113	258	44%
2003-2004	FTMB	21	17	19	15	28	22	23	145		56%
2004-2005	FTMG	17	14	12	16	18	18	18	113	266	42%
2004-2005	FTMB	12	22	20	23	19	32	25	153		58%
2005-2006	FTMG	8	16	13	12	16	17	18	100	239	42%
2005-2006	FTMB	15	12	18	21	21	20	32	139		58%
2006-2007	FTMG	13	10	14	14	12	16	17	96	231	42%
2006-2007	FTMB	16	15	14	18	22	25	25	135		58%
2007-2008	FTMG	17	12	9	14	14	15	17	98	235	42%
2007-2008	FTMB	16	17	15	17	19	28	25	137		58%
2008-2009	FTMG	14	17	12	10	15	15	16	99	236	42%
2008-2009	FTMB	16	17	18	14	16	28	28	137		58%

Tha e follaiseach bho Chlar 1 gu bheil àireamhan às a' cheud airson na tha a' dol gu foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig an ìre mhath leantainneach aig mu 42% anns a' chòig bliadhna mu dheireadh agus thathar an dùil gum fuirich iad aig 42% de dh'àireamhan iomlan na sgoile ann an seisean 2008-2009.

CLÀR 1a: Àireamh Ro-sgoile Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh 2003-2004 gu 2008-2009

Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh		3bl	4bl	IOMLAN	IOMLAN CÒMHLA	%
2003-2004	FTMG	n/a	18	18	57	32%
2003-2004	FTMB	18	21	39		68%
2004-2005	FTMG	13	8	21	62	34%
2004-2005	FTMB	20	21	41		66%
2005-2006	FTMG	14	12	26	63	41%
2005-2006	FTMB	20	17	37		59%
2006-2007	FTMG	18	14	32	71	45%
2006-2007	FTMB	18	21	39		55%
2007-2008	FTMG	16	16	32	74	43%
2007-2008	FTMB	26	16	42		57%
2008-2009	FTMG	10	16	26	62	42%
2008-2009	FTMB	11	25	36		58%

Tha Clàr 1a a' sealltainn àireamhan nan sgoilearan anns a' chròileagan tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig agus tro mheadhan na Beurla thairis air na còig bliadhna mu dheireadh. Tha an clàr a' sealltainn gu bheil àrdachadh air a bhith anns na h-àireamhan chloinne a tha air a bhith air clàradh ro-sgoile bho 32% ann an seisean 2003-2004 gu 43% ann an seisean 2007-2008. Ann an seisean 2008-2009, thathar an dùil gum bi 26 duine cloinne ro-sgoile ann am foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig agus gum bi 36 duine cloinne ro-sgoile a' faighinn foghlam tro mheadhan na Beurla.

Clàr 2

Sgìre foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann an 2007-2008

	Tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig
Ceann Sàil Eighre	8
Sùladal, Beàrnasdal & Sgeubost	8
Iomlan	16

Tha Clàr 2 a' sealltainn nan sgìrean taobh a-muigh Phort Rìgh anns a bheil sgoilearan a tha ann am foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig a' fuireach an-dràsta. Ann an seisean 2007-2008, bha 8 sgoilearan a' fuireach ann an Ceann Sàil Eighre agus bha 8 sgoilearan eile a' fuireach ann an Sùladal, Bàrnasdal agus Sgeubost.

3.0 RUDAN A BHEIR BU Aidh AIR AN T-SEIRBHEIS ANNS AN ÀM RI TEACHD

Tha ro-mheasadh air a dhèanamh air àireamh sgoilearan Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh anns na còig bliadhna a tha ri teachd a rèir àireamhan breith anns an sgìre agus cuideachd le bhith

a' coimhead air buaidh a bheir an leudachadh air na tha de thaighean anns a' bhaile.

Tha an ro-mheasadh a leanas air a stèidheachadh air an fhiosrachadh a tha ann an Tuairmse Àireamhan Sgoile a tha ri fhaighinn air làrach Chomhairle na Gàidhealtachd agus bhon fhiosrachadh air àireamhan sgoile Lùnastal 2008-2009 a chaidh a thoirt seachad le Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh.

Clàr 3

Ro-mheasadh Àireamhan Ro-sgoile agus Bun-sgoile Phort Rìgh 2009 -2013

Bliadhna		3 bliadhna	4 bliadhna	Ro-sgoile lomlan	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	lomlan Bun-sgoile	lomlan
2009-2010	FTMG	7	8	15	14	14	14	10	13	17	17	99	114
2009-2010	FTMB	14	19	33	18	19	18	14	17	23	24	133	166
2010-2011	FTMG	3	7	10	8	14	14	14	11	13	17	91	101
2010-2011	FTMB	10	16	28	19	19	19	19	14	18	24	131	159
2011-2012	FTMG	11	7	18	7	8	14	15	14	11	14	83	101
2011-2012	FTMB	16	14	30	14	20	20	20	20	15	19	127	157
2012-2013	FTMG	11	11	22	11	7	8	15	15	15	11	93	115
2012-2013	FTMB	15	15	30	16	15	20	20	21	20	16	128	158

Thathar an dùil gun tuit àireamhan ro-sgoile tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann an 2010-2011 ach gun àrdaich iad an dèidh sin. Ach, thathar an dùil gun tuit àireamh nan sgoilearan ann am Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh 's gum bi 7 sgoilearan nas lugha anns an sgoil eadar 2009-2010 agus 2012-2013. Bidh 6 sgoilearan nas lugha a' faighinn foghlam bun-sgoile tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig anns an ùine sin. Tha seo a' dol a rèir pàtrain àireamhan chloinne anns an Eilean Sgitheanach anns an fharsaingeachd. Thathar a' togail mòran thaighean ann am Port Rìgh an-dràsta agus chaidh beachdachadh air an sin nuair a bhathar a' dèanamh an tuairmse.

4.0 RUDAN A DH'FHAODAR DÈANAMH

A' dol a rèir prògram rianachd na Comhairle gus leasachadh sgoiltean Gàidhlig fa-leth adhartachadh agus a rèir an iarrtais bho chuid bhon choimhearsnachd airson leithid sin, tha an t-ùghdarras air na roghainnean a leanas a chomharrachadh:

Roghainn A

Cùisean a chumail mar a tha iad. Bhiodh sin a' ciallachadh gun leanadh foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann am Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh.

Roghainn B

Sgoil Ghàidhlig fa-leth a chruthachadh do Phort Rìgh agus dha na coimhearsnachdan a tha air am frithealadh leis na clasaichean Gàidhlig a tha ann am Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh le bhith

(i) a' leasachadh togalach a tha ann a-cheana airson a bhith air a chleachdadh mar sgoil Ghàidhlig; no le bhith

(ii) a' togail sgoil ùr air làrach ùr

5.0 BUAIDH A BHITH A' CUR NAN ROGHAINNEAN AN GNÌOMH

Roghainn A Cùisean a chumail mar a tha iad.

Leanaidh Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh air sgoilearan a theagasg tro mheadhan na Beurla agus tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig.

Roghainn B Sgoil Ghàidhlig fa-leth a a chruthachadh le bhith

(i) a' leasachadh togalach a tha ann a-cheana airson a bhith air a chleachdadh mar sgoil Ghàidhlig; no le bhith

(ii) a' togail sgoil ùr air làrach ùr

Bidh foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig airson sgìre Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh air a lìbhrigeadh ann an sgoil Ghàidhlig ùr fa-leth. Tha buaidh aig cò an tè de na Roghainnean ann am B a bhios air a taghadh. Bidh cosgaisean calpa mòr mu chois gach roghainn agus cha deach an tuairmse cosgais a dhèanamh orra fhathast.

(i) a' leasachadh togalach a tha ann a-cheana

Dh'fheumadh aon togalach a bhiodh mòr gu leòr airson sgoil Ghàidhlig le foghlam cròileagan agus bun-sgoile airson 97-121 sgoilear agus le àite gu leòr airson leudachadh anns na h-àireamhan a bhith air a chomharrachadh am Port Rìgh. Tha roghainn ann Ostail Eilginn ann am Port Rìgh a chleachdadh. Dh'fheumadh sgrùdadh comasachd a bhith air a dhèanamh air an roghainn seo gus dearbhadh am biodh atharrachadh air an togalach freagarrach agus gus na cosgaisean an cois sin a thomhas. Bu chòir a thoirt am follais cuideachd gu bheil cothroman leasachaidh eile ann airson an togalach seo cuideachd.

(ii) a' togail sgoil ùr air làrach ùr

Dh'fheumadh làrach a bhith air a chomharrachadh a bhiodh freagarrach airson sgoil a ghabhadh 100 sgoilear agus anns am biodh cròileagan agus le àite gu leòr airson leudachadh anns na h-àireamhan agus le àite airson raointean-cluiche. Dh'fheumadh an roghainn seo sgrùdadh comasachd gus làrach freagarrach airson sgoil ùr a thogail air a chomharrachadh agus gus na cosgaisean an cois sin a thomhas.

Tha iomadh buaidh le toraidhean gu math coltach ri chèile aig gach roghainn a tha gu h-àrd:

Buaidh air còmhhdhail

Ann an seisean 2007-08, dhen 98 sgoilear a bha a' faighinn foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig, bha 16 a' faighinn còmhhdhail an asgaidh dhan sgoil. Chan eil dùil gun atharraich sin. Chan eilear an dùil gum bi cosgaisean còmhhdhail mòra an cois a' mholaidh seo.

Bhon bhliadhna 2000 tha an t-ùghdarras air poileasaidh a chur an gnìomh far a bheil còmhhdhail an asgaidh air a thabhann an taobh a-staigh 10 mìle bho bhun-sgoil le foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig. Ach, bidh feartan ionadail a' toirt buaidh air ruigsinneachd

do dh'fhoghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig agus thèid beachdachadh air gach suidheachadh fa-leth.

Buaidh a thaobh luchd-obrach

Dh'fheumadh Ceannard Sgoile agus dreuchdan àrdaichte eile a bhith air an taghadh airson obair anns an sgoil. Dh'fheumadh na tuarastail airson nan dreuchdan seo a bhith air an cur aig ìre a rèir na h-obrach.

Luchd-teagaisg. Bhiodh an luchd-obrach a tha an-dràsta ag obair taobh a-staigh foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig ann am Port Rìgh air an gluasad chun na sgoile ùire, an dèidh beachd a ghabhail air an àireamh sgoilearan anns an sgoil aig an àm sin.

Luchd-obrach eile. Bhiodh luchd-obrach eile a tha ag obair ann a bhith a' coileanadh foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig air an gluasad chun na sgoile ùire.

A' choimhearsnachd a' cleachdadh an togalaich

Cha bhiodh atharrachadh sam bith anns an dòigh anns am biodh a' choimhearsnachd a' cleachdadh Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh (taobh a-staigh Poileasaidh Cleachdadh Coimhearsnachd na Comhairle.) Tha mòran ghoireasan coimhearsnachd ann an Àrd-sgoil Phort Rìgh agus thathar an dùil gum biodh an fheadhainn seo air an cleachdadh anns a' chumantas le coimhearsnachd na Gàidhlig agus bhiodh na goireasan ùra anns an sgoil Ghàidhlig ùr airson foghlam bun-sgoile agus tràth fhoghlam a-mhàin.

Sgìrean Dealbhte

Cha bhiodh atharrachadh sam bith anns na sgìrean dealbhte airson sgoilearan a tha a' dol gu foghlam tro mheadhan na Beurla ann am Bun-sgoil Phort Rìgh. Chumadh sgoilearan a bhiodh a' faighinn foghlam tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig air tighinn à Port Rìgh agus iadsan a tha a' fuireach ann an coimhearsnachdan Cheann Sàil Eighre, Sùladal, Beàrnasdal agus Sgeubost. Cha bhiodh na sgìrean dealbhte airson Bun-sgoiltean Stafain agus Cille Mhoire air an atharrachadh idir.

6.0 CO-DHÙNADH

Tha am pàipear conaltraidh seo air fhoillseachadh a rèir modhan aonaichte an Ùghdarrais gus na laghan iomchaidh a choileanadh. An dèidh a' chonaltraidh, bidh na h-aithisgean agus na beachdan a thèid fhaighinn air an toirt do Chomataidh Foghlam, Cultar agus Spòrs Chomhairle na Gàidhealtachd.

Bu chòir do bheachdan sam bith mun phàipear seo a bhith air an cur ann an sgrìobhadh gu:

Iain Ritchie, Manaidsear Sgìre Foghlam, Cultar agus Spòrs, Ros, An t-Eilean Sgitheanach agus Loch Abar, Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd, Oifis Foghlam Sgìreil, Òstail Eilginn, Rathad Dhùn Bheagain, Port Rìgh, An t-Eilean Sgitheanach ron 10mh dhen Damhair.

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Highland Council School Roll Forecasts (2007) updated July 2008

**Minute of the public meeting held on 24/09/08
at Portree High School to discuss the proposal to
develop a stand-alone Gaelic Primary**

Cllr Bill Fernie, Chair - Education, Culture & Sports Committee (Convenor)
Hugh Fraser, Director - Education, Culture & Sport Service
Donnie MacDonald, Head of Education Services
Donald MacNeil, Gaelic Development Manager
Cllr Drew Millar, Vice Chair - Education, Culture & Sports Committee
Cllr Ian Renwick
Laurence Young, Senior Education Officer - Ross, Skye & Lochaber

84 members of the public were present

The Convenor welcomed everyone to the consultation meeting and confirmed that submissions received between 4th September and 10th October would be recorded and form part of the final Committee report. The Convenor also informed those present of the structure of the meeting. Members of the audience were asked to state name and interest before asking questions.

Media present for first five minutes to take some footage.

Donald MacNeil translated the above into Gaelic.

Donnie MacDonald gave an introduction and background as to how the meeting was called and why, referring to the Gaelic Language Act of 2005 and Highland Council's Gaelic Plan, which was approved by Bord this year. Highland Council has supported and expanded Gaelic Medium education over the last 20 years or so. It started with a class at Central Primary School and has developed to the position of the new Gaelic school at Inverness. There has been a significant expansion to around 20 communities and whilst retaining that part of GM education, the local authority was responding to give two free standing Gaelic Medium schools where requests were made. These requests came from Lochaber and Portree.

Laurence Young explained the two options proposed as seen within the consultative paper - Option A - maintain the existing provision, and Option B - develop a stand alone Gaelic school at Portree within an existing building or on a new site. He referred to the fact that Gaelic Medium was now an accepted means of education, the opportunities for jobs within Gaelic and that Gaelic Medium education was a success story for Highland. Gaelic Medium education has been very successful but may even be better within a free standard Gaelic school. Gaelic would be the main language of the school, social interaction, lunch time, sports etc, social language may be much improved and this could have a positive impact on the writing produced at upper primary and into secondary education. Page 3 of the consultative paper gives the current situation. Page 5, table 3 gives projected pupil numbers to 2013. Using the best information available, certainly GM numbers are viable for the foreseeable future. Section 4 gives an outline of the possible courses of actions, with section 5 showing detail of the consequences of possible courses of actions. These proposals have not been costed and this would require to be undertaken. There are no transport implications. Staff would be required including head teacher and possibly other proposed posts. Existing GM staff would be redeployed, including auxiliary staff. There would be no change to community use. It would be hoped that the new Gaelic school would become the 'hub' of Gaelic development for the area.

The meeting was then opened to questions and discussions from the floor.

- Fay McDiarmid (grandparent and mother of pupil in first P1 class at Portree GM). Delighted that at last we may have a Gaelic school. Everyone has the right to teach their children as they wish. Glad that Highland Council will enable this to happen.

APPENDIX 2

- Iain Smith (parent). If the new school is not built, can the needs of Gaelic Medium be met in any other way?
- Donnie MacDonald (Head of Education Services). Consultative paper sets out the options. In terms of this consultation we have to keep to the paper options. On 5/6/08 the Gaelic Committee met at Sabhal Mor Ostaig and considered the request for a Gaelic school at Portree.
- Hugh Fraser (Director of ECS). Much very good work has been done in Gaelic Medium and this will continue in many communities in order to maximise Gaelic speakers. But the consultation is in relation to the Gaelic Plan. Many targets have been met through the development of Gaelic Medium but to continue to meet targets the establishment of a Gaelic school will be of greater benefit.
- Arthur Cormack (parent). Declared interest of Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Spoke about the targets set out in the national plan for Gaelic and Highland Council's plan. Looking for an increase of 18% per cent in the number of people speaking Gaelic. In order to meet this target the only way forward is a Gaelic school. Congratulations to the Council on this option.
- Fiona ?. Would like to congratulate the Highland Council on a stand alone Gaelic school.
- Fay MacNeil (parent of pre-school pupil). Welcomed the new Gaelic school, in particular the pre-school provision. Nothing available at present for wrap around care. Many parents choose EM because there is child care available.
- Donnie MacDonald (Head of Education Services). Looking at the new school to create a hub for Gaelic and opportunity for children to develop within a Gaelic environment.
- Fay MacNeil. Was frightened that there would be nothing for 0-5 year olds. Good to hear.
- Donnie MacDonald (Head of Education Services). Employment opportunities in further developing provision. There will be challenges in recruiting teaching and support staff. See Secondary Gaelic development as part of long term development of the Council. See Gaelic as helping to have economic development, create opportunities for young people, support young people to have aspirations in relation to Gaelic.
- Coll MacDonald (former pupil of GM). Thankful to go through Gaelic Medium. Recognises the many opportunities which I may not have had. Very important that children who do not have Gaelic speaking parents have the opportunity to develop Gaelic in a social environment, as some people who were on his class no longer use Gaelic and were not confident in using the language because they did not have the social opportunities.
- Maureen MacLean (parent). Very fortunate in the provision which is in place. Are you realistic in funding all of the members of staff required?
- Donnie MacDonald (Head of Education Services). Significant national campaign to recruit teachers. The local authority is looking to recruit the whole range of people required. Cannot deliver education without support staff for ASN. We should be able to have the same provision for Gaelic medium as we have for English Medium. We also require to have a recruitment drive to ensure we have enough staff.
- Hugh Fraser (Director of ECS). The local authority is very clear on recruitment issues. The local authority has the aspiration to develop secondary education but at present not able to get staff. It will be necessary that we break down the labour market in the Gaelic world. We require to concentrate on solutions and face these head on. If we can

continue to develop a system where Gaelic Medium can be the main language there is better opportunities for pupils to be fluent. You are right (Maureen MacLean) to ensure that we have a reality check regarding staffing but we need to be more focused as we have in Inverness.

- Mary Macdonald (GM secondary teacher). In privileged position of teaching for 23 years and seeing the expansion of the language. I understand that there are 700 vacancies in Gaelic posts and that is in a time of economic decline. This would suggest that regardless of Gaelic performance there would be job opportunities. Sabhal Mor is attracting other industries round about it, so the new Gaelic school would do the same. Twin with Welsh school and visited a Native American school, where there are two teachers who could teach in the native language. Most of the children I teach come from English speaking homes, but thanks to Gaelic Medium education they have real success and language is not a problem.
- Rachel MacDonald (parent). This is a great opportunity. It would be sad if we missed this and that the language would be lost. This situation is similar to the Māori language in New Zealand. It is so encouraging how that has developed. I agree that it should be spoken outwith the class - although it is very good that it is spoken in the classroom. French is taught through Gaelic at BSG1 - have seen the difference.
- Bill Fernie (Chairman of ECS Committee). Are there any downsides?
- Reply - no real issues.
- Helen Gilpin (parent). At a realistic level, is it possible to fund two schools, including out of school finance/fund raising for Portree?
- Donnie MacDonald (Head of Education Services). Two points: If the outcome is to have a free standing school, the Council has committed to this. This would be for members to look at to plan the finance. The Council has to find a way. Fair to say where these things happen elsewhere, there has been funding from national Government and other agencies. We would not have the new Portree High School without a different funding package. In terms of community - may have more than one school. Parents identify with the school their children attend. Two schools would be sustainable and would work collaboratively.
- Helen Gilpin (parent). What is the Council's view on long-term financial support for smaller schools?
- Donnie MacDonald (Head of Education Services). The Capital Programme and Revenue programme - different sources - not easy in financial times but have to work through these - but also take on board the revenue costs.
- Donald MacDonald (parent). I am a supporter of Gaelic Medium education and admit have the passion and drive even to be a flag waving supporter. What will the effect be on other schools in the outlying areas. The school has a capacity of 350 with only 150 left. Will there be pressures to close outlying smaller schools? We may find Gaelic Medium pupils coming from Staffin, Kilmuir and Dunvegan. What is the policy if parents move these pupils to Portree? How will these schools be affected? I admire Portree Primary School and how they deal with special needs in Gaelic Medium and English Medium to enable siblings to be in the same school.

I agree with Mrs McDiarmid. Parents to have the right to choose the language they want their children to be educated in. A recent survey (Portree PS) wanted the status quo. Will they be given the right to have that choice? Will there still be Gaelic Medium at Portree Primary School? My own children went / go to English Medium with 2024 the last Parent Council meeting that I could attend. I want my children to be able to speak Gaelic but a lack of availability for this to happen for English Medium pupils. What will be the provision for this?

- Hugh Fraser (Director of ECS). *When about to respond there was an objection from Arthur Cormack that outlying schools were not part of the consultation.* There is a link between the questions asked by Mr MacDonald and the consultation. There will be spare accommodation at Portree Primary. The local authority will seek to have full use of any of our premises. The proposed school does not have an implication for other schools. The local authority would look for the positive, worthwhile uses of a building which would include community use. We are looking to reduce class sizes and will require additional space. Regarding the issue of Gaelic Medium pupils coming from other schools, parents can always by law make a placing request. This is not part of the consultation to move any of these pupils to Portree. This is about the catchment of Portree Primary School only. Other provision will not be affected - but placing requests will remain and the local authority will not be able to refuse, if there is space in a school, due to legislation. With regard to Additional Support Needs, the local authority seeks to ensure that it meets statutory requirements and provides good quality education. Regarding choice of language, if we have a dedicated Gaelic school there will be no Gaelic Medium provision with the existing Portree Primary. There will be no dual provision.
- Norman Macdonald (parent of former GM pupils). With reference to parent council, how can somebody be a member to 2024?
- Parent council replaced the old school board. They meet on a regular basis and have a selection process.
- Marlene MacDonald (parent). I have two children and am very satisfied with the education at Portree GM. I see a stand alone Gaelic school as a natural progression and too good an opportunity to miss.
- Lorna McDiarmid (parent). I support the stand alone school and this is a great opportunity for the community and pupils and the only way to get to the depth of language required to sustain Gaelic to adulthood
- Eoghain Stewart (GM secondary teacher). Made reference to Western Isles bilingual policy - the effect this has had on development of Gaelic is poor. Gaelic Medium education in Highland has had a better outcome and the Gaelic school is a bold and brave decision.
- (Did not give name). Suggestion - bilingual provision within the current EM stream. Want the dedicated Gaelic school to be used to further develop the language and create better relationships.
- Donnie MacDonald (Head of Education Services). We should be aspirational to children learning languages. To be bilingual has positive effects on learning. Looking to develop GLPS for English Medium pupils. Within the Gaelic plan the Council is looking to broaden the access to Gaelic, including ACE, to think of language in the wider sense. GLPS is well established in Skye and Lochalsh and we will look to establish this in the East. The earlier you start a language the better.
- Arthur Cormack (parent). GLPS does not turn pupils into fluent speakers. I have no concerns regarding the education at Portree Primary. Donnie Macleod, if you want your children to speak Gaelic the only option is GM education.
- Bill Fernie (Chairman of ECS Committee). I am hearing only suggestions of support for the Gaelic school. Is there any other view?
- Campbell Grant (parent). I have a concern as a resident of the area and the community. I think that this meeting is not representative of the community and that this proposal will cause a division in the community. I urge caution. This is a step too far for the

community. We have a healthy community and I would hate to see this have an unintentional negative impact. Will teachers and resources be taken away from the existing school?

- Hugh Fraser (Director of ECS). This is a consultation. At the end of the evening it is important that everybody who has a view let us know in writing. These responses will be printed for Members so that all views are shared. Regarding the audience - the notice of the meeting was published in the press and was open to all. I urge you to send in your views. Regarding resources - all schools are resourced in the same way and this will be the same here. This is based on the number of pupils. Again I say that it is very important that all views are heard and that these will be sent to Committee in November.
- Fay McDiarmid (as above). I fought for Gaelic Medium education. We heard the same arguments regarding divisions then. We have 7 churches - has that divided the community? Nobody is forcing anyone. If people have objections - fine.
- Helen Gilpin (parent). Are there any plans to assess the views of pupils?
- Laurence Young (Senior Education Officer). There is nothing within the legislation on consultations to take a formal account of pupils' views. However, this will be given some consideration through discussion with the school.
- Robbie Gordon (parent). I asked by P4 child about the proposal of a new Gaelic school and the reply was "cool". I am jealous of my own children - they have the opportunity. The present education is excellent but the Gaelic school would help to bring on the children's oral Gaelic skills.
- Laurence Young (Senior Education Officer). Portree Primary will provide GLPS for pupils but there will be no Gaelic Medium. GLPS takes children to an elementary level of fluency - not an equivalent to Gaelic Medium.
- Donnie MacDonald (Head of Education Services). Evening classes could be on offer to help parents.
- Fiona Gillies (parent). I am absolutely delighted that a stand alone Gaelic school is being sought. This will be a great benefit to the pupils.
- Lorna MacDiarmid (parent). Gaelic school is fundamental to the survival and development of the language long-term. The rate of language death is one language every two weeks. If Gaelic was a rare flower or animal, people would not stand for it to die. We require a Gaelic school for fluency. A depth of language is required to cope with social situations.
- Chris Deplano (ex pupil). I was at Portree Primary 23 years ago on P1 in English Medium. I went to Gaelic Medium in P2 when the class started. IT took me some time to settle. I am now a fluent speaker and work at Sabhal Mor. There is a huge need for the further development at secondary education. We need to look at secondary education and further education also.
- Bill Fernie (Chair). What is the process from this evening forward?
- Laurence Young (Senior Education Officer). All the evidence will go to the Council's November ECS meeting. The covering report which sets out the background will be included and there will be reference to this meeting and the questions asked will be included. Members will be asked to take a view as to how the proposal can be taken forward. This will then go to the full Council and at that meeting there will be agreement on the ECS proposal and that will then become Council policy.

APPENDIX 2

- Arthur Cormack (parent). All people can have their say. The parents of those who want this to happen should carry more weight as their number is below the English Medium parent members and if it came to a straight vote then they are in the minority and this would not be fair. The survey mentioned that parents were against a new stand alone school but the majority of GM parents were for the stand alone school.
- Bill Fernie (Chair). This will not be a straight majority view - but to add to the education provision of the Portree area. Is there a demand for a stand alone school? This does not require a majority.

The meeting was closed by the Convenor who thanked the officers from ECS and the audience. He thanked everyone for attending and had found the contributions to be useful, thoughtful and stimulating and once again invited submissions by 10th October 2008 to be sent to John Ritchie, Area ECS Manager, Education Office, Portree.

Views of current parents/pre-school parents of Portree Primary School supporting Option A (the status quo)

16 submissions (9-GM 7-EM)

- ✚ Currently Portree Primary is highly regarded and enthusiastically supported by its connected community.
- ✚ Concerned that Gaelic Medium provision will no longer be a choice for parents who wish their children to attend Portree Primary School.
- ✚ The closure of the Gaelic Medium unit in Portree is discriminatory to non-Gaelic speakers as they will no longer be able to choose Gaelic Medium education for our youngsters.
- ✚ Concern that the development of a stand along Gaelic school may adversely affect outlying Gaelic Medium classes in Staffin and Kilmuir Primary.
- ✚ The development of a separate stand alone Gaelic primary school will create an unhealthy divide within the Portree community...creating an "us & them" culture.
- ✚ The village of Portree is not yet big enough to sustain two primary schools.
- ✚ What we have is an adequate means of our children learning the language and the fact that children educated in the current set up go on to work and teach in Gaelic is proof that they leave school suitably equipped.
- ✚ It is one thing to find class teachers, it is quite another to completely staff a school without compromising the vast scope of experience that is currently on offer in Portree Primary School.
- ✚ I support Gaelic Medium education but feel the idea to separate pupils to a different site is a mistake....and feel the best way to provide Gaelic education is within Portree Primary School. I believe that the majority of parents share this viewpoint but will not speak out for fear of being labelled anti-Gaelic.
- ✚ The standard of education at Portree Primary School is very high. I have concerns as to where a new school would get its teachers and staff from and how fluent they would be. I feel it unfair that a minority can influence whether a stand alone school is necessary. Some of my daughter's best friends are in English Medium at Portree Primary.
- ✚ Gaelic Medium facilities at Portree Primary at the moment are excellent and I know that my daughter's English Medium friends are always eager to learn Gaelic from my daughter.
- ✚ A stand alone school is ok in Glasgow and Inverness, with larger populations and many more primary schools. Even in Fort William it may well work as they have six primary schools, not like Portree with one.
- ✚ Instead of taking this drastic step, would it not be more sensible to improve (if that's possible) the Gaelic medium unit in the current school.
- ✚ My son's best friends are in Gaelic Medium and he has been part of teams that have had success at national level. There is a special bond in the school between the children and they take great pride in representing the school. It is vital that the status quo remains and that a split is not created.
- ✚ We also object to the way the Highland Council have dealt with the consultation. It would have been much fairer to have sent a ballot paper out to all parents. That way parents who are uncomfortable writing letters of this kind feel they can still have their say.

APPENDIX 3A

- ✚ The inclusion of both Gaelic and English Medium within one school helps all pupils to appreciate the broad culture from which they come.
- ✚ It may be the case that a family have a child with additional needs who cannot be supported within a Gaelic only school. If their siblings are educated in Gaelic the family may be split between two schools making life more difficult than it could already be.
- ✚ My children have said they would not like to be separated from their friends in English classes.
- ✚ The costs will no doubt be very high to adapt or build a new school. I'm sure there must be other ways to enhance the current provision for ALL Gaelic learners in Skye & Lochalsh (EM and GM).
- ✚ A separate school in a small village like Portree will cause unnecessary social division in the community.
- ✚ The real problem for Gaelic is at the secondary level, not primary level.
- ✚ The Gaelic school would become like a 'Grammar School' for the elite.
- ✚ It would take away the enriching dimension of Gaelic language, culture and music from the pupils left in Portree Primary School.
- ✚ Currently in Portree, religious assembly is given by the ministers from Free Church, Church of Scotland and the priest from the RC church. Father MacNeil is the only one of the three with Gaelic.
- ✚ Unless Gaelic speaking personnel can be absolutely guaranteed a new school will be a very expensive disappointment.
- ✚ If Portree Primary School is dismantled we seriously risk losing something that has a powerful effect in keeping an increasingly diverse community together.
- ✚ It may be the intention that a new school would increase the Gaelic fluency of 40% of children in the community but the net effect will be to take the language and the culture away from 60% of the community. I feel this would be a massive backward step.
- ✚ If a child attended the dedicated Gaelic school many parents would not be able to support their children with their education.

Views of current parents/pre-school parents of Portree Primary School supporting Option A (the status quo)

16 submissions (9-GM 7-EM)

- ✚ Currently Portree Primary is highly regarded and enthusiastically supported by its connected community.
- ✚ Concerned that Gaelic Medium provision will no longer be a choice for parents who wish their children to attend Portree Primary School.
- ✚ The closure of the Gaelic Medium unit in Portree is discriminatory to non-Gaelic speakers as they will no longer be able to choose Gaelic Medium education for our youngsters.
- ✚ Concern that the development of a stand along Gaelic school may adversely affect outlying Gaelic Medium classes in Staffin and Kilmuir Primary.
- ✚ The development of a separate stand alone Gaelic primary school will create an unhealthy divide within the Portree community...creating an "us & them" culture.
- ✚ The village of Portree is not yet big enough to sustain two primary schools.
- ✚ What we have is an adequate means of our children learning the language and the fact that children educated in the current set up go on to work and teach in Gaelic is proof that they leave school suitably equipped.
- ✚ It is one thing to find class teachers, it is quite another to completely staff a school without compromising the vast scope of experience that is currently on offer in Portree Primary School.
- ✚ I support Gaelic Medium education but feel the idea to separate pupils to a different site is a mistake....and feel the best way to provide Gaelic education is within Portree Primary School. I believe that the majority of parents share this viewpoint but will not speak out for fear of being labelled anti-Gaelic.
- ✚ The standard of education at Portree Primary School is very high. I have concerns as to where a new school would get its teachers and staff from and how fluent they would be. I feel it unfair that a minority can influence whether a stand alone school is necessary. Some of my daughter's best friends are in English Medium at Portree Primary.
- ✚ Gaelic Medium facilities at Portree Primary at the moment are excellent and I know that my daughter's English Medium friends are always eager to learn Gaelic from my daughter.
- ✚ A stand alone school is ok in Glasgow and Inverness, with larger populations and many more primary schools. Even in Fort William it may well work as they have six primary schools, not like Portree with one.
- ✚ Instead of taking this drastic step, would it not be more sensible to improve (if that's possible) the Gaelic medium unit in the current school.
- ✚ My son's best friends are in Gaelic Medium and he has been part of teams that have had success at national level. There is a special bond in the school between the children and they take great pride in representing the school. It is vital that the status quo remains and that a split is not created.
- ✚ We also object to the way the Highland Council have dealt with the consultation. It would have been much fairer to have sent a ballot paper out to all parents. That way parents who are uncomfortable writing letters of this kind feel they can still have their say.

- ✚ The inclusion of both Gaelic and English Medium within one school helps all pupils to appreciate the broad culture from which they come.
- ✚ It may be the case that a family have a child with additional needs who cannot be supported within a Gaelic only school. If their siblings are educated in Gaelic the family may be split between two schools making life more difficult than it could already be.
- ✚ My children have said they would not like to be separated from their friends in English classes.
- ✚ The costs will no doubt be very high to adapt or build a new school. I'm sure there must be other ways to enhance the current provision for ALL Gaelic learners in Skye & Lochalsh (EM and GM).
- ✚ A separate school in a small village like Portree will cause unnecessary social division in the community.
- ✚ The real problem for Gaelic is at the secondary level, not primary level.
- ✚ The Gaelic school would become like a 'Grammar School' for the elite.
- ✚ It would take away the enriching dimension of Gaelic language, culture and music from the pupils left in Portree Primary School.
- ✚ Currently in Portree, religious assembly is given by the ministers from Free Church, Church of Scotland and the priest from the RC church. Father MacNeil is the only one of the three with Gaelic.
- ✚ Unless Gaelic speaking personnel can be absolutely guaranteed a new school will be a very expensive disappointment.
- ✚ If Portree Primary School is dismantled we seriously risk losing something that has a powerful effect in keeping an increasingly diverse community together.
- ✚ It may be the intention that a new school would increase the Gaelic fluency of 40% of children in the community but the net effect will be to take the language and the culture away from 60% of the community. I feel this would be a massive backward step.
- ✚ If a child attended the dedicated Gaelic school many parents would not be able to support their children with their education.

Summary of views of current parents/pre-school parents of Portree Primary School supporting Option B (proposal to develop a stand alone Gaelic primary school for Portree

27 submissions (27-GM)

- ✚ A new Gaelic primary school is the logical step forward for our community.
- ✚ A Gaelic-speaking only school would benefit my children and others to keep up with and “ingrain” the language in their future everyday lives.
- ✚ What we are seeking is clearly in line with Council policy and is part of what the authority needs to do to deliver its Gaelic Language Plan to the fullest extent possible.
- ✚ We also believe that total immersion in the language, as would be in a fully Gaelic Medium school, would be invaluable to our children’s general education and depth of language as well as to their knowledge and understand of their culture and heritage.
- ✚ I have visited many schools in which the only language spoken is not English, in Wales and Ireland. The pupils in these schools spoke with amazing fluency and didn’t have to dip into English as their fluency was so strong.
- ✚ In a Gaelic only school the social language would strengthen and extend their vocabulary.
- ✚ These young Gaelic speakers are the future of the language and every opportunity should be given to them to equip them for using Gaelic in their everyday lives when they leave school.
- ✚ It has become increasingly clear in recent years that, good as Gaelic Medium provision is in many ways, our children can reap the full benefits of Gaelic education only in an all Gaelic school.
- ✚ I am fully supportive of the proposal for a Gaelic school - option B, a new build on a green-field site - and would urge the Education, Culture & Sport Committee to approve the proposal in November.
- ✚ I wholeheartedly support the development of a stand along Gaelic Primary School for Portree by building a free standing new school on a new site.
- ✚ I feel that it is essential that Highland Council include a 0-5 nursery facility in the Gaelic School offering wraparound care in addition to the Sgoil Araich provision if there is any hope of increasing the number of Gaelic speaking children in Portree.
- ✚ A Gaelic School is essential to give these children the best opportunity to reach full fluency by experiencing Gaelic as the language of the playground and workplace as they would be a Gaelic School.
- ✚ I would like to see further development of a stand alone Gaelic Primary School in the future into a campus with a Gaelic hub which would form the focus for all Gaelic activities in the Portree area.
- ✚ I believe that a child can only become fluent if they are immersed in the language. I believe that a dedicated Gaelic school would improve the children’s oral Gaelic and would strengthen Gaelic within the community.
- ✚ We are delighted that Portree and its surrounding areas might finally benefit from the advantages of having an all Gaelic school in particular with the benefits which it would bring for the future survival and strengthening of the Gaelic language.

APPENDIX 3B

- ✚ I feel it is vital to the fluency of Gaelic in Portree. Gaelic Medium education is good, but children are not confident to converse in Gaelic outwith the classroom.
- ✚ It would strengthen the children's grasp of the language both orally and linguistically. In addition it would also enhance confidence levels, improve academic attainment.
- ✚ We think that it would make a huge difference to the fluency of our children.
- ✚ I have two children in Gaelic medium education and I feel that total immersion through a stand-alone Gaelic Primary School is definitely the way forward.
- ✚ We feel that moving forward with Gaelic Medium to an entirely Gaelic environment is an important next step if the language is to be kept alive. We also feel that in this day and age it is crucial to build a sustainable school with low carbon footprint.
- ✚ On current progress our children will achieve at a good level, gaining from the all round impact of Gaelic Medium learning. They will be proud of their culture. They will own the ability to communicate in Gaelic but may not attain the breadth of expression and quality of construction which comes from a genuine immersion experience in their formative years and leads to active use of the language out with the class environment.