



**A' Frithealadh Fheuman Taice a Bharrachd  
ann am Foghlam tron Ghàidhlig:  
Aithneachadh, Measadh agus Ro-innleachdan Taice**

**Meeting Additional Support Needs  
in Gaelic Medium Education:  
Identification, Assessment and Support Strategies**

**Updated August 2018**

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### **Introduction**

Every learner is entitled to support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities which Curriculum for Excellence can provide, wherever they learn. Support should be appropriate, proportionate and timely. Early and staged intervention provides a framework for additional support where difficulties are experienced in learning or development.

This document provides information, support and best practice regarding the mechanisms in place to meet Additional Support Needs (ASN) across The Highland Council's Gaelic Medium Education (GME) provision. Guidance should be used in conjunction with the following Highland Council policy documents: [Highland Practice Model Guidance](#); [The Highland Practice Model – delivering Additional Support for Learning](#); [Guidelines on Bilingual Working](#) and [Gaelic Education: The Highland Council Approach](#). The contents of this policy will be amended and updated as required, in response to changes in legislation and taking feedback from pupils, parents/carers, school staff and multi-agency professionals into consideration. Therefore, for the most recent version, reference should be made to the Support for Learners, Policies and Guidance section on The Highland Council website, found [here](#):

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/34/policies\\_and\\_guidance-support\\_for\\_learners](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/34/policies_and_guidance-support_for_learners)

### **Guiding Principles**

The policy sets out expectations regarding ASN provision in GME. This approach, based on [Getting it right for every child](#) is founded on 10 core components, which are applicable to all of Highland's school settings:

- 1. A focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and their families based on a shared understanding of well-being.***
- 2. A common approach to gaining consent and to sharing information where appropriate.***
- 3. An integral role for children, young people and families in assessment, planning and intervention.***
- 4. A co-ordinated and unified approach to identifying concerns, assessing needs and agreeing actions and outcomes, based on the Well-being Indicators.***
- 5. Streamlined planning, assessment and decision-making processes that lead to the right help at the right time.***
- 6. Consistent high standards of co-operation, joint working and communication when more than one agency needs to be involved, locally and across Scotland.***
- 7. A Lead Professional to co-ordinate and monitor such planned support for a child.***
- 8. Maximise the skilled workforce within universal services to address needs and risks at the earliest possible time.***
- 9. A confident and competent workforce across all services for children, young people and their families.***
- 10. The capacity to securely share demographic, assessment and planning information within and across service and agency boundaries, using electronic systems when possible.***

[Highland Practice Model Guidance](#) is underpinned by common values and principles which apply across all aspects of working with children and young people. Developed from knowledge, research and experience, they reflect the rights of children expressed in the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (1989) and build on the [Scottish Children's Charter](#) (2004). They are reflected in legislation, standards, procedures and professional activity.

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## 1 HIGHLAND COUNCIL GAELIC EDUCATION: A BRIEF SUMMARY

The Highland Council commits to giving equal respect for Gaelic and English on the basis that both languages are essential components of Highland life. We recognise the educational, artistic, cultural, social and economic importance of Gaelic in underpinning our place in the modern world and its value to our future, in addition to the significant and positive contribution it has had on our past.

Highland Council's requirement to identify, assess and provide for a child or young person's ASN applies equally to pupils in Gaelic Education, just as it does to all children and young people in Scotland. [The Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education](#) (Bòrd na Gàidhlig, 2017), [Additional Support Needs: A Collective Resource for GME](#) (Stòrlann, 2017) and [Audit on Additional Support Needs In Gaelic-Medium Education & Staff Training Needs Analysis](#) (Bòrd na Gàidhlig, 2017) address the specific challenge of ASN in GME, recommending that steps should be taken to improve provision for children and young people who require additional support in their learning. Highland Council and its partners are committed to supporting developments in this area, actively engaging in local and national projects on an ongoing basis.

For a full and comprehensive overview of how the Highland Council supports the delivery of Gaelic education, including information regarding Legislation, Inclusion and Entitlements, please refer to the policy documents [Gaelic Education: The Highland Council Approach](#) and [The Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan](#).

## 2 THE HIGHLAND PRACTICE MODEL

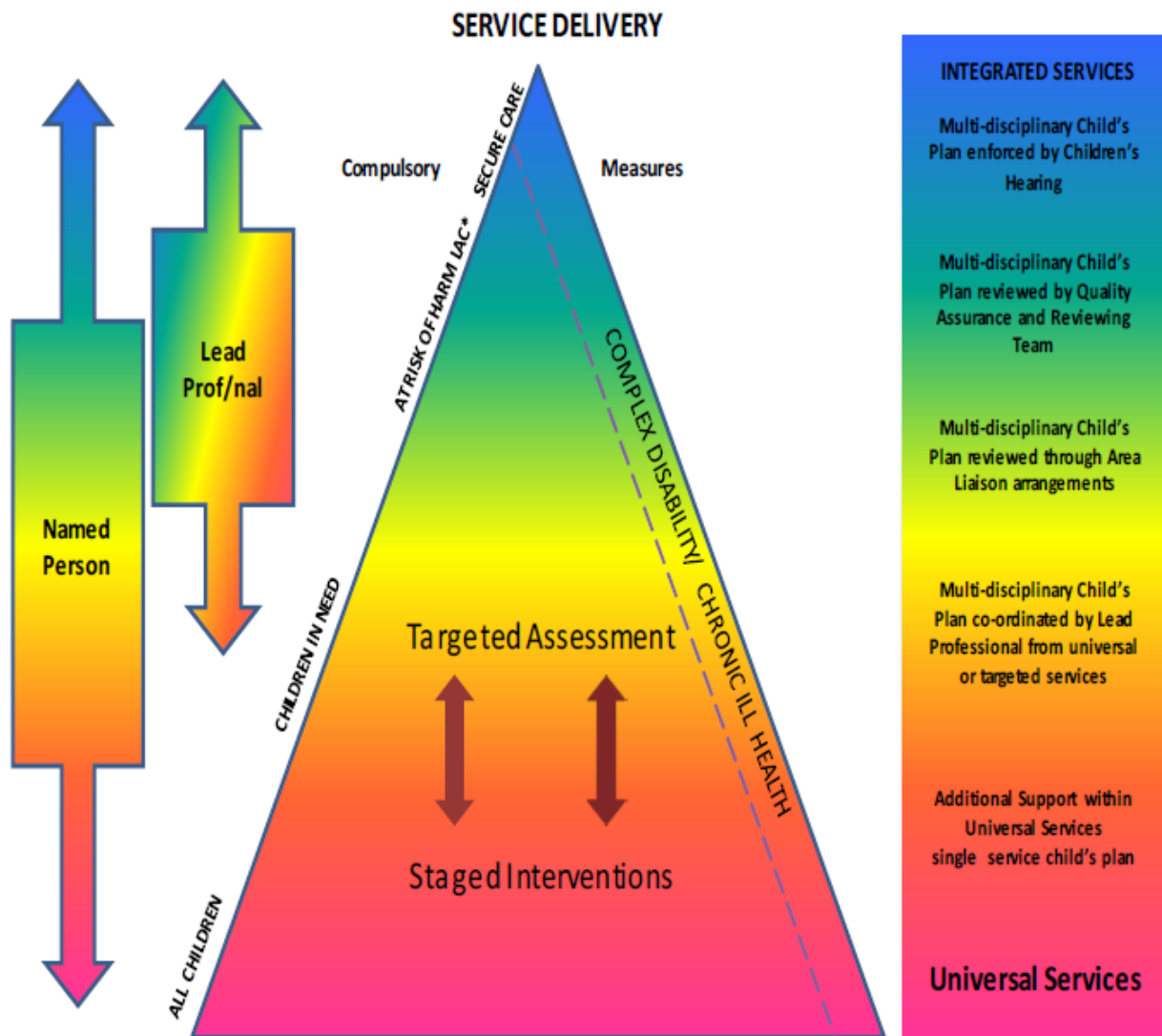
Universal health and education services support the development of all children across The Highland Council region, which includes identifying and responding to children's additional needs. All aspects of the service delivery model (Fig.1) and associated Staged Interventions are detailed in [The Highland Practice Model – delivering Additional Support for Learning](#), which can be found on the Support for Learners, Policies and Guidance section on The Highland Council website, found [here](#):

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/34/policies\\_and\\_guidance-support\\_for\\_learners](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/34/policies_and_guidance-support_for_learners)

The Highland practice model builds on knowledge, theory and good practice. It provides a framework for practitioners in all services to gather, structure and analyse information in a consistent way. The framework helps to identify and understand the strengths and pressures for the child and their carers, the child or young person's needs and any risks. The Highland Practice Model facilitates consideration of what support is required to improve outcomes for children. It promotes the participation of children, young people and families as central to assessing, planning and taking action. The components of the practice model have been designed to ensure that assessment information about children and young people is recorded in a consistent way by all professionals. This should help to provide a shared understanding of a child or young person's needs and clarify how best to address concerns. The model and the tools which support it can be used by workers in adult and children's services and in single or multi service/agency contexts. The main components in the Highland Practice Model are:

- The integrated service delivery structure
- The Well-being Indicators
- The Five Questions
- The My World Triangle (Appendix i – Gaelic version)
- The Resilience Matrix
- The Child's Plan

These components should be used proportionately to identify and meet the child or young person's needs. For further information and documentation regarding this model, please refer to [The Highland Practice Model](#) (Highland Council, 2015)



\* LAC = Looked After Child

Fig.1

### 3 THE HIGHLAND PRACTICE MODEL AND GME

As part of an agenda for improvement within GME and in response to professional views highlighted through The Gaelic Education Audit, The Highland Council (2017), the Local Authority identified ASN as an area for development, both locally and nationally. Separately this concern has been well documented through academic reports and has also been communicated by parents and Partners. In response, the '*Gaelic Medium Education Additional Support Needs Working Group*' was established in 2017. This group consists of staff representing GME at early years, primary, secondary, ASN and senior management levels, in addition to staff with an interest/responsibility for Gaelic from The Highland Council Psychological Service, Speech and Language Therapy Service and Education Scotland. The group is in ongoing consultation with national ASN and Linguistics experts. The GME ASN Working Group identified the following recommendations and considerations for Highland professionals, which were subsequently approved by Bernadette Cairns, Head of Additional Support Services; Norma Young, Authority Lead for Gaelic Education; and Jim Steven, Head of Education:

- [Highland Practice Model Guidance](#) **must be adhered to in full**;
- A professionals' 'working example' of a completed Child's Plan should be available for staff, annotated with specific guidance for GME and other multilingual learners;
- The Highland Council ASN Matrix will identify the level of need in schools, without being specific about home/curricular languages;
- The [Overview of \(3 Year Old children\) Early Pre-school Skills](#) and [Overview of Pre-school \(4 Year Old children\) Skills](#) documents are used to provide a simple but holistic way of monitoring child development across key domains and for clarifying concerns that arise. They can provide insight into a child's language development, rather than into their learning of a particular language.
- Early intervention approaches should be encouraged and developed for children from birth to starting school, early intervention strategies from specialists can be accessed via [bumps2bairns.com](http://bumps2bairns.com);
- Schools should be supported in providing core information for visiting specialists regarding GME and multilingualism;
- Schools should be supported in providing core information for parents regarding GME and multilingualism and the benefits and challenges of continuing with GME at transition points;
- Current national research must be made widely available and support ongoing improvements and developments for Gaelic Medium Education and ASN.

As an ongoing priority, Highland Council professionals continue to work collaboratively, both locally and nationally, to address resource development requirements and more effectively meet the needs of GME ASN pupils. In particular, this may involve the development of:

- Additional tools for school based assessment and individual support;
- A suite of diagnostic tools to support the identification of ASN;
- Classroom and individual adult support resources, to enhance support strategies.

## 4 UNIQUE CONTEXTS AND PUPIL NEEDS

GME is provided in communities that have different levels of fluency. In some areas of the Highlands Gaelic is frequently heard in the community, many families are fluent and some children have Gaelic as their first language, whilst in other areas many children hear little Gaelic outwith school. For all children who require additional support in their understanding of the language, the context in which they are learning and the interventions made available to help them are very important.

Children in GME are often taught in composite or multi-composite classes (see [Gaelic Education: The Highland Council Approach](#), Section 7 for definitions and guidance) alongside pupils at different year groups/stages in their education. This offers some advantages to language learners but also requires a high level of differentiation in teaching, in both content and methodology. All children need work that is appropriately differentiated according to individual needs and matched with suitable resources, whether they have ASN or not.

When pupils have ASN in a Gaelic medium provision, the school, pupil, parents/carers and support services work together closely to support the child's learning. This partnership working follows the Staged Interventions approach (Fig.1) taken to address any additional need. However, this can be complicated by issues associated with learning an additional language e.g. distinguishing the early identification of specific learning difficulties like dyslexia against traits associated with learning an additional language.

## 5 ADDITIONAL RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The Highland Council provides additional support through a resource allocation model that provides both Teacher and Pupil Support Assistant (PSA) input based on identified need. PSAs may work with all pupils across a school and often focus particularly on pupils with a high level of need, as directed by the Head Teacher. Another approach would involve PSAs supervising a group, who have been instructed initially by the teacher, so that teacher can then work more closely with pupils who have more additional support needs. Occasionally, GME classes can receive access to a PSA that has been allocated to support multi-composite classes, in situations where class numbers are very high.

It is important to note that pressures exist regarding both Gaelic PSA and Gaelic ASN Teacher allocations. This is due to recruitment challenges, which can affect the identification of suitably qualified staff members that have the linguistic competence to effectively support pupils through the medium of Gaelic. The Highland Council is engaged in local and national workforce planning, recruitment and retention projects to address these areas of concern across all areas of Gaelic Education.

## 6 TEACHING APPROACHES AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

To summarise, it is recommended that 'Total Immersion' is delivered from GM 1 to at least the end of GM 2 and possibly the end of GM3; this decision is informed by teachers' monitoring and tracking of progress and achievement. Therefore, 'Immersion' is delivered from GM 3 or GM 4 – GM 7, when English gradually introduced; in addition a further additional language (or languages) is delivered from GM 5 as part of the [1+2 Language Learning Approach](#) (see Gaelic Education: The Highland Council Approach for further detail)

GME Immersion continues until the end of primary school. It is important to be clear that as the majority of children will be learning through a language in which they are not initially fluent, it is fair to predict that learning progress could initially be slower. Consequently, a significant focus on listening and talking throughout [Curriculum for Excellence \(CfE\)](#) Early Level is particularly important within GME. This focus, delivered through Immersion approaches, where spoken communication is supported with visuals, expression, tone and gestures, is also reflected in the [Literacy and Gàidhlig Benchmarks](#), Education Scotland (2017). This approach allows pupils to catch up and often overtake peers studying mainly through their 'home language', Language 1 or (L1). Research into bilingual education for learners who are members of the majority language and culture group of the larger national community, for example Genesee in Mehisto indicates that learners who are learning subjects through another language (L2) can, in well implemented programmes:

- attain the same levels of academic achievement and the same levels of proficiency in their L1 as similar students being educated entirely in their L1
- develop the same appreciation and understanding of their L1 culture as students on L1 programmes and can develop greater understanding of the L2 culture
- attain very advanced levels of functional proficiency in the L2.

Genesee in Mehisto, retrieved from: Bilingual learners and bilingual education (2015)

It is expected that by GM 7, most learners will have achieved ***the stage of broadly equal competence in Gaelic and English*** as documented by O'Hanlon, McLeod and Paterson (2010), [Education Scotland](#) (2015), [Stòrlann](#) (2015) and [Bòrd na Gàidhlig](#) (2017):

***GME aims to address the needs of both fluent Gaelic speakers and pupils who do not have full fluency. The 'Total Immersion' in the first three years and continued 'Immersion' thereafter mean that each pupil who goes through this education system will gain the necessary and appropriate language skills – both in Gaelic and English. Pupils will also receive an excellent education in all other areas of Curriculum for Excellence. Indeed, research shows that when GME pupils reach P7, on average their English language skills tend to be better than those of their mono-lingual counterparts.***

[Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education](#), Bòrd na Gàidhlig (2017)



## 7 EARLY INTERVENTION APPROACHES & CONSIDERATIONS

### Early Learning and Childcare Settings

Early learning and childcare provision plays a pivotal role in developing language for children preparing to enter GME. Children are encouraged to play, sing, listen and talk entirely in Gaelic. Some children learn quickly in this 'Total Immersion' environment, (see ***Gaelic Education: The Highland Council Approach***, Section 6 for information) whilst others take more time to become comfortable in the language. Early years practitioners play a vital role, providing a good language model and a rich learning environment. They also support the assessment of children's early development and provide support to meet needs, which may involve other professionals.

#### **Developmental Overviews:**

Staff in all Early Learning and Childcare settings complete a Developmental Overview for all children. The overview identifies a range of skills that 3 or 4 year olds are expected to have achieved. The language aspects of this overview relate to general oral language development and comprehension and so is appropriate to use in both EME and GME. Assessment of language development should however, reflect abilities in the child's primary language – be this Gaelic or another. Involving parents, may in some cases be the best way to access key information. These tools can identify ASN at an early stage and can support conversations with parents about possible concerns.

[Developmental Overview of Pre-school Skills \(3 Year Old children\)](#)

[Developmental Overview of Pre-school Skills \(4 Year Old children\)](#)

Recording curriculum progress in the language of the classroom also provides useful information for Primary 1 teachers to consider during transition processes, in addition to further supporting needs identification.

#### **Addressing Concerns and Challenge in Early Learning and Childcare:**

Within an Early Learning and Childcare setting, information about concerns, challenges and strategies are recorded on a [Pre-school Form 1](#). Separate [Guidance for using the Pre-school Form 1](#) is available for practitioners and highlights that; ***in Gaelic Medium Education, Gaelic language development should be the focus of strategies used to support next steps in children's learning.*** Ideally, all support would be through the medium of Gaelic and specialist services would also be able to deliver support, therapies and direct interventions through the medium of Gaelic, but this is unlikely to be the case. Where appropriate, specialist services will mentor and provide consultation to GME staff, who can in turn provide the direct intervention and support required. However, where the specialist is required to provide the interventions themselves, it is acceptable that this be provided with English instruction.

Multi-agency professionals working directly with GME pupils must have access to information that supports and informs their understanding of the unique components of the context. It is recommended that visiting professionals develop an understanding of GME immersion approaches and in line with the Highland Practice Model this should be supplemented by strong partnership working with educational practitioners, parents/carers and pupils; providing holistic support for all children and young people. This collaborative approach is particularly important before, during and after key transitions. With the right approach, time, commitment and support, becoming multilingual is widely accessible through the medium of Gaelic.

## 8 ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Funding, resource development, workforce planning and infrastructure and development projects are all crucial in delivering educational 'Excellence and Equity', as highlighted by [The Scottish Government](#) (2017). In Highland, particular concerns have been voiced by professionals and parents/carers regarding the limited resources available to meet ASN demands in GME. Highland Council recognises ongoing development work is essential to respond to increasing demands for identification, assessment and support strategies and is actively engaged in local and national projects that seek to challenge and address these pressures. Additionally, by encouraging and supporting the development and sharing of best practise, individual pupil needs can be met with increasing efficacy.

### Principles of Assessment

Informal assessments such as observations, interviews and checklists, including dynamic assessment of learning potential, are recommended strategies alongside suitable standardised tools. Cautions about cultural sensitivity apply to any assessment approaches. An individualised approach to assessment, taking account of each learner's unique social context, would therefore be advised.

### **Assessment Approaches Should Be Carried Out:**

- Holistically;
- In a collaborative manner;
- Within an ecological framework and taking account of home and school contexts;
- Over time;
- Through triangulating information from a range of sources;
- Through all languages used by the learner;
- By actively seeking and incorporating pupil views in the process.

### **GME Considerations:**

- English Medium Education diagnostic assessment tools should be used with caution in GME due to assessment standardisation being based on monolingual, English speaking learners, taught within a distinctly different education model;
- Supporting the development of a child's first language(s) enhances all additional language learning;
- The motivation for learning a language is the need to communicate. This holds implications for planning and structuring within the classroom environment;
- It is crucial for young GME learners to be supported in the development of functional oral language to support play and social communication;
- Having high expectations is important;
- Equality and diversity is crucial e.g. respecting the home language/environment;
- Do not assume that low attainment is due to being multilingual.

The progress and attainment of GME pupils, including those who are advanced learners, should be closely monitored so they are doing as well as they can. Cognitive challenge should remain appropriately high and not be reduced, even if the Gaelic language demand is reduced to meet an individual's stage of linguistic ability. A pupil's conceptual thinking may be in advance of their ability to speak Gaelic. So, while the rate of language

acquisition for some multilingual children may be initially slower/delayed in the early stages, an accelerated rate of learning curve often follows. However, other factors must also be considered to maximise learner potential.

## Language Impairment in Bilingual Children

The identification of language impairment in a monolingual child is already a complicated, controversial and emotive process; so the addition of the complicating factors of a bilingual or multilingual child makes the process even more challenging (Deponio et al., 2000). Bilingual children often exhibit delays in language acquisition so it is important to highlight that “***bilingualism does not cause communication disorders***” (Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, retrieved from: Stow & Pert, 2014) and, of equal importance, that being bilingual/multilingual does not preclude a person from having a language impairment (Deponio et al., 2000; Rhys & Thomas, 2012). The prevalence of language impairments (and possibly other developmental difficulties) is estimated to be the same in bilingual children and monolingual children (Deponio et al., 2000; Mueller Gathercole, Thomas & Hughes, 2008; Rhys & Thomas, 2012). According to research, a bilingual child with a language impairment would display a persistent impairment in both languages, not just one (Donaldson, 2014) (accepting the differences in orthography) (Thomas & Lloyd, 2008), and may not display the decoding (phonological awareness) difficulties (Deponio et al., 2000) that are so often an indication of dyslexia in monolingual, English speaking children (The British Psychological Society, 1999).

Dr. Fiona Lyon is a chartered teacher, independent specialist in ASN and a member of the [Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit](#) Working Group (Scotland). Her research interests lie in the area of phonological awareness, dyslexia, persistent difficulties with numeracy and the development of resources and strategies to support students with dyslexia. In discussions with Highland Council, addressing the issue of support for multilingual pupils, Fiona highlighted the following:

**When a multilingual pupil fails to make sufficient progress, it is important to identify the cause as early as possible. It should not be assumed that the problem stems from the fact that the pupil is accessing the curriculum through an additional language. Assessment of multilingual learners requires that additional factors should be taken into account. Some potential indicators could be the result of linguistic/cultural factors, e.g. omission of words. The selection and analysis of assessment tools is particularly important – the contexts and vocabulary of formal tests may be inappropriate and may be biased against learners from groups other than those on whom the test is normed.**

**Pupils in GME can overcome barriers to literacy in similar ways to all other pupils. ICT can facilitate access to the curriculum for multilingual pupils. Equipment and programmes can support oral, written or visual content to enrich the curriculum.**

**The parents of multilingual children who have difficulties should be encouraged to participate in Parent Forums, where possible.**

**Dr. Fiona Lyon (2017)**

## Multilingualism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Neurodevelopmental disorders are characterised by physical, mental and/or sensory functional difficulties that emerge in childhood or adolescence due to differences in the development of the brain and/or other parts of the nervous system (Hughes &

Chitsabesan, 2015). According to the DSM-V (APA, 2013; APA, 2015) neurodevelopmental disorders include: intellectual/learning disability; specific learning disorders; communication disorders; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); autistic spectrum disorders (ASD; sometimes referred to as autism spectrum conditions or ASC); foetal alcohol spectrum disorders, developmental coordination disorder (DCD) and Tourette's syndrome among others. It is suggested that 5-12% of all children in the United Kingdom are affected by one or more neurodevelopmental disorders (Law, retrieved from: Öztürk et. al., 2018).

Multilingualism can be both a challenge and opportunity for those living with neurodevelopmental disorders (Öztürk, Gibson, Howard, & Katsos, 2018). Despite the understandable concerns that growing up with multiple languages would cause problems for those with neurodevelopmental disorders, there is no evidence of any negative impact (Öztürk et. al., 2018). According to a recent (2016) systematic review of 50 studies investigating multilingualism and neurodevelopmental disorders (38 regarding communication disorders, ten on ASD and two on intellectual disabilities) by Uljarevic and colleagues (cited by Öztürk et. al., 2018), it is possible for children with neurodevelopmental disorders to develop multilingualism with appropriate support in each language. Their language skills may develop at a slower pace and perhaps not to the same level as typically developing peers, however the pace and level would be comparable to monolingual peers with a neurodevelopmental disorder, given similar language learning opportunities (Öztürk et. al., 2018).

A holistic approach to assessment and intervention is recommended that is culturally sensitive, considers the whole child and all their languages (O'Toole & Hickey, 2012; Öztürk et. al., 2018; RCSLT, 2007). Families should be empowered to use their home languages and children with neurodevelopmental disorders should not have their experiences of languages restricted where such an approach could deny full participation in family and community life (Öztürk et. al., 2018).

## **Dynamic Assessment**

Archie MacLulich supported an extensive audit of ASN support in GME for Bòrd na Gàidhlig, published in [\*\*Audit on Additional Support Needs In Gaelic-Medium Education & Staff Training Needs Analysis\*\*](#) (2017). He concluded that the most suitable type of assessment for GME children, in lieu of appropriate standardised tools, were dynamic assessment approaches. Dynamic assessment is underpinned by Vygotsky's concept of the 'Zone of Proximal Development' (retrieved from: Peña, Iglesias & Lidz, 2001). In more traditional forms of assessment it is the ability of the child working independently that is measured, whereas with dynamic assessment it is the child's ability to learn and make progress after the intervention of a coach or teacher (mediation) that is measured (Peña et al. 2001; Lauchlan, 2012). Dynamic assessment is a more unbiased measure, so children who may not perform well on a standardised test perform optimally by ensuring that they understand the task's demands and can give a better indicator of ability and knowledge as answers in either language could be recorded (O'Toole & Hickey, 2012). The bilingual child's response to the mediation could differentiate between those with language impairment and those demonstrating a lag in one or both languages due to insufficient exposure (O'Toole & Hickey, 2012).

## **Primary GME**

Children entering GM 1 may or may not have some level of spoken Gaelic, however all are expected to learn entirely through the medium of Gaelic. The early months of GM 1 have a strong focus on extending the spoken language of the class and using this to understand the expectations, process' and routines of the school. Some children may

take longer to understand and follow spoken instructions, participate in discussion or make their needs known. The underlying causes of why they are taking longer to communicate effectively could be developmental, environmental or due to a specific difficulty (or a combination). As learning progresses and written language is introduced, any difficulties or delay in communication may become more apparent and more of a barrier to learning. Taking a developmental approach to teaching and learning helps foster each individual's language development.

As children continue through 'Total Immersion' in GM 2 and GM 3 they are expected to progress to a functional level of spoken Gaelic. In GM 3 or GM 4 children move into the 'Immersion' phase, when English is introduced as a discrete area of the curriculum, however Gaelic remains the predominant language of the classroom across the curriculum. During the Immersion phase, most children will start using English reading books and making progress with their English writing. At any time in a child's education, when additional needs are identified or suspected, the process for assessment and supporting learning or physical development outlined in Highland Council's ASN policies, should be followed. Relevant guidance documentation can be found on the Support for Learners, Policies and Guidance section on The Highland Council website, found [here](#).

### **Challenges**

Children with ASN and learning through the medium of Gaelic have an additional challenge if they also find difficulties in understanding and using the spoken language. It is important to support their understanding through responsive teaching approaches, so that they can access their education efficiently and maintain a positive self-image. Barriers to providing timely support may be due to a lack of sufficient language support within and outwith school, insufficient assessments that are able to differentiate between language acquisition and any underlying difficulties and finally an acknowledgement of insufficient ASN resources and training for teachers and pupil support assistants in what to use and how to use it. The Highland Council is engaged in numerous local and national projects to address these areas for development.

Some children will encounter greater challenge in learning than others. When this is the case, children and young people benefit from learning experiences and communicated language being presented at an appropriate level. The interventions suggested below provide some starting points and reminders, which support differentiation of the language and learning environment.

### **Intervention**

Class teachers and other practitioners attempt to meet the needs of all children. To address the needs of a child at ASN level 3 or 4 (on the Highland Council ASN Matrix) requires an understanding of who they are, where they are in their learning and development and the next steps required in order to become more independent and capable. Educational establishments often seek advice and engage in effective partnership work with [Specialist support services](#) e.g. the Speech and language therapy service or Psychological Service in order to best meet the needs of individual learners.

## 9 CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Children have an entitlement to GME enrolment, when it is locally accessible. Families of children with ASN, considering GME, can be supported to make an informed decision prior to enrolment and following input from all relevant stakeholders. ASN interventions are best supported by a robust understanding of the curriculum model, learning context and available resources. Parents/carers can visit a school at any time in a child's education to discuss individual support requirements, as part of the agreed Staged Interventions with the [Highland Practice Model](#). This approach provides opportunities to plan appropriate, proportionate and timely [Additional Support for Learning](#) that meets individual pupil needs, based on the principles of [Getting it right for every child](#).

English Medium Education and GME both effectively deliver [Curriculum for Excellence \(CfE\)](#), however each education system has distinctly different pedagogical approaches. Therefore, families selecting GME must consider the long term commitment required to secure and embed the acquisition of Gaelic language and literacy. For this reason, a continuation of GM curriculum choices following secondary transition is also strongly recommended and encouraged. Conversely, the idea that pupils can easily transfer from one medium of primary education into the other is firmly discouraged.

Pupils identified as having barriers to their learning may require additional support in order to help them learn more effectively. In the case of GME, when the classroom language is different from the 'home language', this in itself is not a justification for pupils to require Additional Support for Learning. When a child is identified as having an additional support need, this will usually be present across different languages (see Section 7). GME support interventions relating to [language](#) development should be delivered through Gaelic. For parents/carers of children, where the home language is not Gaelic, families are encouraged to promote and support the learning of Gaelic; however it will be most effective to use the strongest language in the home to support literacy development. Although each language is distinctly unique, bilingual learners have underlying cognitive/academic or literacy related proficiencies that are transferrable from one language to another. This allows learners to draw upon literacy-related concepts and skills in one language to support the other (Cummins, 2013).

A misconception exists that GME pupils can be introduced to English learning materials to support Gaelic classroom work and counter ASN difficulties. In reality, this approach can increase cognitive challenge and requires 'simultaneous translation skills', a complex, higher order thinking process that could overstretch existing linguistic capacity. As a result, English learning materials should be avoided in GME as they may make learning through Gaelic more difficult, particularly when individuals have identified needs. Similarly, consistent use of English for support purposes does not comply with the 'Total Immersion' and 'Immersion' phases associated with GME delivery. Therefore, additional support interventions should take place in Gaelic, whenever possible.

Throughout GME and the [Broad General Education](#), [Bòrd na Gàidhlig](#), [The Scottish Government](#), [Education Scotland](#) and Highland Council are in agreement that ***Gaelic should remain the predominant language of the classroom***; as detailed in [Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education](#) (2017). However, at times there are exceptions:

**The language of delivery of additional support will depend on the needs of the child, the availability of resources and the availability of suitably qualified staff.**

[Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education](#), Bòrd na Gàidhlig (2017)

## 10 NATIONAL RESEARCH EVIDENCE

The following information comprises national documentation, for reference purposes, relevant to Gaelic Education, Literacy in Gàidhlig and Additional Support Needs in GME; available on Education Scotland's [National Improvement Hub](#):

[Advice on Gaelic Education](#) (Education Scotland, 2015) Section 14, GME: Learners with additional needs

This national advice document outlines the need for all those involved in supporting children and young people to have an understanding of the approaches to teaching in GME. Policies for supporting learners in GME which take account of legislation are a statutory requirement for all local authorities. Removing learners from GME is not a solution to meeting learning needs.

[Improving Practice in Gaelic Education \(Education Scotland, 2010\)](#)

A short practitioner-focussed briefing to support practitioners to meet the learning needs of those who require support for their learning within GME.

[Quality and improvement in Scottish Education](#) (Education Scotland, 2012-2016)

This report of HM Inspectors' findings highlights many strengths, including the commitment of staff, the continual improvement of learning experiences for pupils, and the creation of an education system which is highly inclusive. There is particular reference to GME.

[Supporting children with effective strategies in GME](#) (Education Scotland, 2017)

**Resources and materials available from [Bòrd na Gàidhlig](#):**

[Statutory Guidance for Gaelic Education](#) (Bòrd na Gàidhlig, 2017)

This guidance has been divided into two parts. Part 1 deals with the provisions for Gaelic as cited in the [Education \(Scotland\) Act](#) (2016) and the duties on education authorities to promote and support Gaelic. Part 2 provides further Guidance relating to the provision of Gaelic education in schools.

**Resources and materials available from [Stòrlann Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig](#):**

[Additional Support Needs: A collective resource for GME](#) (Stòrlann, 2017)

This online resource has been derived from the recommendations from an audit on additional support needs commissioned by Bòrd na Gàidhlig:

[Audit on Additional Support Needs In Gaelic-Medium Education & Staff Training Needs Analysis](#) (Bòrd na Gàidhlig)

[Materials and videos from a conference on ASN in GME](#) (Edinburgh University, June 2014)

**[Speech Therapy and Gaelic \(STaG\): Activities for English speaking Speech & Language Therapists, supporting Gaelic medium schools](#)**, Stòrlann (2018)

This resource, developed in partnership with Speech & Language Therapist Services in the Outer Hebrides operates as an App download or via a browser, so is therefore suitable for Android, Apple, Windows and Chromebook technology (mobile phone downloads are restricted as devices are too small). The app is for 1:1 intervention

support on initial/medial/final sounds and associated vocabulary. Intuitive activities are designed to be used under the supervision/instruction of English speaking Speech & Language Therapists, supporting Gaelic medium schools. Associated support materials are also available.

### **Other useful websites:**

[Dyslexia Scotland](#)

[Inclusive practice in language learning](#)

[Languages without limits](#)

## **11 ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS TOOLS**

The following list provides a summary of ASN tools, resources and websites, which may be useful across GME by teachers and/or Specialist support services:

- Assessment of reading skills in GME: Exploring teachers' perceptions and present practice by Fiona Lyon & Sarah MacQuarrie, chapter 3 in [Additional Support Needs: A Collective Resource for GME](#)
- [Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit](#)
- Multilingual assessment tools / checklists, e.g. BOLD
- [Dè th' ann an diosleacsia](#) (Fiona Lyon on behalf of Dyslexia Scotland)
- [Gaelic Phonological Screening Test](#) (GL Assessment, Fiona Lyon (2012)) – Use in P1, P2 and P3
- [Gaelic Reading Project](#)
- [Highland Literacy Blog](#) - [Emerging literacy](#) section contains a Gaelic phonological awareness screen: [Measadh Neo-fhoirmeil air Mothachadh mu Foneòlas airson aois-sgoile](#) – The screening tool can be used by teachers to identify children's strengths and gaps in phonological awareness. This is only completed when children have the language comprehension to access the assessment. Teachers use professional judgement to determine when to introduce and how to pace phonics instruction, as part of children's wider oral language development.
- [Persistent Literacy Difficulties Practice Paper, Highland Council Psychological Service](#) (2016)
- [SLT Assessment and Intervention: Best practice for children and young people in multilingual settings](#) (The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists)
- [Speech and Language Therapy: Clinical Guidelines for Working with Multilingual Children](#) (The Highland Council)
- [Special Needs Assessment Profile](#) (Hodder Education, Weedon and Reid (2008))



## 12 ADDITIONAL SUPPORT RESOURCES

- [E-stòras](#)
- [Facal agus Fuaim](#)
- [Factaraidh nam Fuaimean](#), Lasadh (and other sections of this site)
- [Fuaimean Còmhlà](#), P.A. Caimbeul et. al.
- [Fuaimean Feumail](#), Mairead Monk et. al.
- [Gaelic for Parents](#)
- [Penfriend XL Gaelic](#) – Predictive writing/typing tool, Stòrlann and Penfriend
- Pioramaidean - Writing support pyramid set, Highland Council
- [Leagh, Sgrìobh, Cunntais](#) - Gaelic Read, Write, Count
- [Scottish Computer Voice - Ceitidh \(Gaelic language\)](#) – text to Gaelic speech
- Seo Niseag (and other titles) - Individual support through Clicker 6 reading support package, Highland Council
- [Stòrlann Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig](#)

## 13 ONLINE REFERENCE TOOL

**[Additional Support Needs: A collective resource for GME](https://www.storlann.co.uk/feumalachdan-taic/)**, Stòrlann Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig (2017): <https://www.storlann.co.uk/feumalachdan-taic/>

**[Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit Working Group \(Scotland\)](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/addressing-dyslexia-toolkit)**, Dyslexia Scotland (current website): <http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/addressing-dyslexia-toolkit>

**[Advice on Gaelic Education](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/Comhairle%20mu%20Fhoghlam%20Gàidhlig/%20Advice%20on%20Gaelic%20Education)**, Education Scotland (2015): <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/Comhairle%20mu%20Fhoghlam%20Gàidhlig/%20Advice%20on%20Gaelic%20Education>

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**[ASN-SLT Conference 2014 Videos](http://www.storlann.co.uk/feumalachdan-taic/)**, Edinburgh University (June 2014): <http://www.storlann.co.uk/feumalachdan-taic/>

**[Audit on Additional Support Needs In Gaelic-Medium Education & Staff Training Needs Analysis](https://www.storlann.co.uk/feumalachdan-taic/)**, Bòrd na Gàidhlig (2017): <https://www.storlann.co.uk/feumalachdan-taic/>

**[Bòrd na Gàidhlig](http://www.gaidhlig.scot/bord/)** (current website): <http://www.gaidhlig.scot/bord/>

**[Broad General Education](https://education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/Broad%20general%20education)**, Education Scotland (current website): <https://education.gov.scot/scottish-education-system/Broad%20general%20education>

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**[Dyslexia Scotland](https://dyslexiascotland.org.uk/)** (current website): <https://dyslexiascotland.org.uk/>

**[Education \(Scotland\) Act](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/8/pdfs/asp_20160008_en.pdf)**, The Scottish Government (2016): [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/8/pdfs/asp\\_20160008\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/8/pdfs/asp_20160008_en.pdf)

**[Education Scotland](https://education.gov.scot/)** (current website): <https://education.gov.scot/>

**[e-Storas](http://e-storas.com/)**, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (current website): <http://e-storas.com/>

**[Factaraidh nam Fuaimean: Lasadh](https://fnf.lasadh.co.uk/)**, Stòrlann Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig (current website): <https://fnf.lasadh.co.uk/>

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[https://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/sites/default/files/page\\_content/WhatIsDyslexiaGaelic\\_5.pdf](https://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/sites/default/files/page_content/WhatIsDyslexiaGaelic_5.pdf)

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<http://www.forhighlandschildren.org/>

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[Fuaimean Feumail](http://www.languageswithoutlimits.co.uk/Resources/gaelicphonics.pdf), Mairead Monk et al.:  
<http://www.languageswithoutlimits.co.uk/Resources/gaelicphonics.pdf>

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[Gaelic Phonological Screening Test](http://storlann.org.uk/feumalachdan-taic/powerpoints/Web-Version-FLYON-&-SMQ-Storlann-ASN-June-2014-Presentation.pdf), Fiona Lyon, GL Assessment (2012):  
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<https://education.gov.scot/what-we-do/inspection-and-review>

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**[Overview of Pre-school \(4 Year Old children\) Skills](https://highlandliteracy.files.wordpress.com/2015/08/overview-of-pre-school-4-year-old-skills-23-09-13.pdf)**, Highland Council (2017):  
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<http://www.igaidhlig.net/en/penfriend-2/>

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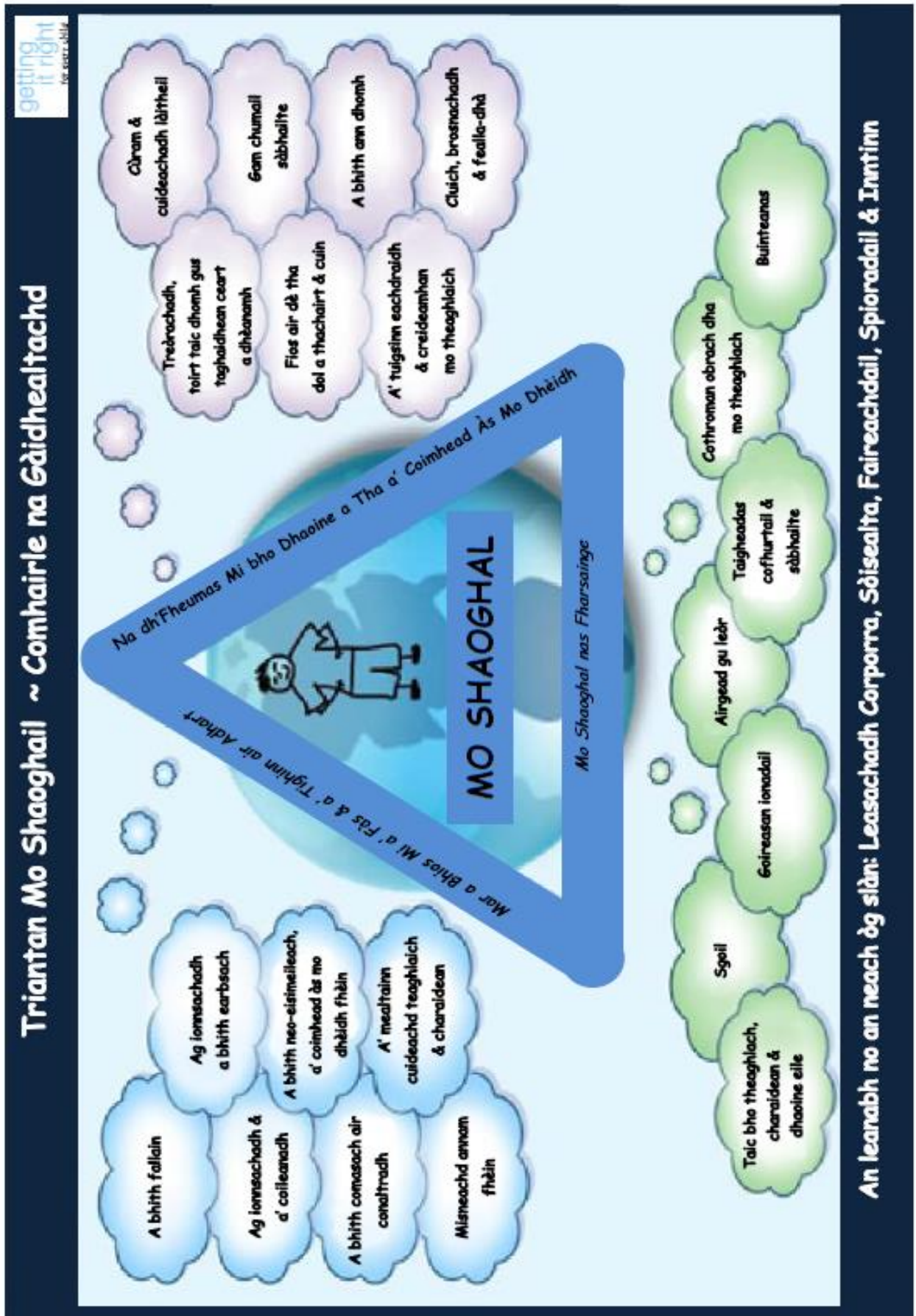
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14 APPENDIX I - TRIANTAN MO SHAOGHAIL/MY WORLD TRIANGLE



## 15 CONTACT US



For additional details regarding the content contained within *Meeting Additional Support Needs in Gaelic Medium Education: Identification, Assessment and Support Strategies* contact your local Gaelic medium setting in the first instance. For further information regarding any aspect of Gaelic Education delivery across the Highland Council area, please [Contact Us](#) at The Highland Council Gaelic Team:

### Gaelic Team

Telephone: 01463 702402

Email: [gaelic@highland.gov.uk](mailto:gaelic@highland.gov.uk)

Or

[Contact Us Online](#)

[www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)

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