

Gaelic Medium catchment areas for Plockton and Lochcarron Primary Schools

Comann nam Pàrant welcomes the formalisation of school catchment areas for Gaelic Medium Education (GME) for Plockton and Lochcarron Primary Schools.

The setting of a catchment area will provide clarification for parents on their entitlement to GME, and although this is not the equivalent of having provision in each locality, we hope it will encourage more families to consider GME.

As more families commit to GME, for pupils to have continuity in Gaelic provision 3-18, the GM offer in Plockton High School must be developed.

In the proposed Lochcarron catchment we note the exclusion of Applecross and hope that the recent request for GMPE in Applecross will result in delivery of GME in Applecross Primary school.

We are aware of the current issues with transport for some pupils currently travelling to GME in Plockton Primary and it will be essential that parental concerns be addressed in order to encourage uptake of GME from all areas of the proposed catchment.

However, travelling times may continue to be a deterrent to families in some parts of the proposed catchment and it may be the case that parents request GMPE provision in another school within the catchment at a future date. We would consider such a request to be reasonable, given the distances and travel times for some families to Plockton Primary, in particular from the Loch Duich catchment.

Therefore, although we agree with the setting of the catchment, we welcome the assurance in the introduction to the proposal that, should parents in the catchments of any of the other associated schools submit a request in the future for GME in line with the Education Act (Scotland) 2016, Highland Council will follow the process for requests as set out in Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education.

M. Wentworth
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