

Gaelic Medium catchment area for (applying to both primary and secondary school education) for Craighill Primary School (soon to be part of the Tain 3-18 Campus).

Comann nam Pàrant (Nàiseanta) (CnP) welcomes the formalisation of school catchment areas for Gaelic Medium Education (GME) for the Tain Campus. We also appreciate the complexities around these catchments due to the geography of the area and the current lack of Gaelic medium education in Sutherland.

We welcome the inclusion of the Bonar Bridge Primary School catchment in the new catchment for Tain, whilst the provision at Bonar Bridge remains mothballed.

We agree that the GM catchment for Tain should overlay the English Medium catchments of the schools in the Tain, Dornoch and Invergordon ASGs.

We support the request from parents and others in the community that the catchment be extended to include the Golspie High School English medium catchment, for the following reasons:

- There are some pupils currently accessing GME from Invershin, which lies between Lairg and Tain, but within the Lairg catchment. This is an indication that families are of the opinion that the travelling distance from this area is reasonable and until alternative GME provision is established within the Lairg area other families in a similar position in the future should be supported to access GME in Tain.
- The new catchment area should be responsive to the situation within Sutherland where there is currently no provision for GME. This would also support the council's stated aim, "The Council is sympathetic to the idea that Gàidhlig Medium Education should be accessible as many pupils Highland as possible, provided it is practical and reasonable to provide access."
- One of the aims of the formalising the catchment is to increase the uptake of GME by providing reassurance to parents that their transport is secure in legislation. In this instance, the exclusion of areas that have previously been included has potential to result in declining numbers of pupils in GME.

We welcome the council's commitment to continue to promote the opportunity for parents to submit a request for GMPE in line with the Education Act (Scotland) 2016. We will continue to support early years activities and promotion of GME within the Sutherland area with a view to seeing such a request from parents at some point in the near future.

Transport

We note the proposal, for all catchments, that the default position will be for the council to utilise current secondary school transport for all provision. We are concerned that this may not always be appropriate for very young children. We recognise however that

the council are keen to grow Gaelic medium education, and we assume that transport provision will encourage parents to choose GME for their children and not be seen as a barrier to accessing GME.

Promotion and Information

The council hopes that setting the catchment areas will provide clarification for parents on their entitlement to GME and this is welcome. We hope that the council will ensure that all parents in the associated schools are made aware prior to enrolment for primary education that they do have an opportunity, supported by the council, to access GME.

Tain 3-18 Campus

We note that GME in Tain will be transferring from Craighill Primary and Tain Royal Academy to the new 3-18 campus.

We hope that this will be an opportunity to build on the excellent current provision in Craighill Primary, and that there will be no dilution of the immersion experience for primary GME pupils.

We also note from the consultation that there are currently 19 Pupils studying Gàidhlig for fluent speakers in Tain Royal Academy, a very small percentage within the school which has a roll of 511 pupils. There is no reference to any other curricular subjects through the medium of Gaelic and we hope that the council have plans to develop a more robust Gaelic curriculum within the new campus, as well as supporting extra-curricular activities for both primary and secondary pupils.

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