

Agenda Item	6
Report No	G/8/25

# The Highland Council

**Committee:**           **Gaelic Committee**

**Date:**                   **4 June 2025**

**Report Title:**       **Gaelic Education**

**Report By:**           **Assistant Chief Executive - People**

## **1. Purpose/Executive Summary**

1.1 This report informs Members of the recent key areas of improvement and development within Gaelic Education (GE), including;

- Muirtown Primary School's leadership of Gaelic Learning across the curriculum to create a positive and inclusive ethos for Gaelic across the school;
- a detailed mapping of schools for the Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) Strategic Priority on increasing Gaelic language learning as an L2 and L3 across all Highland primary schools; and
- Strategic learning for Gaelic Education (GE) professional learning opportunities.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i) Note the leadership shown at the Muirtown to grow interest and involvement in Gaelic across the school;
- ii) Note and welcome the progress towards the GLP target for GE education in L2 and L3 in Highland in 6.2;
- iii) Note the strategic professional learning opportunities for teachers in Gaelic education; and
- iv) Consider and agree the next steps for Gaelic Education.

## **3. Implications**

3.1 Resource – For the financial year 2025/26 the Council submitted a GSG application for £1.3M against total projected expenditure of £8M and was awarded £940,000.

The funding provided by the Scottish Government through the Gaelic Specific Grant (GSG) provides invaluable support for a wide range of projects that assist the Council in delivering its commitments under the Gaelic Language Plan with the majority dedicated to the delivery of Gaelic Medium (GME) and Gaelic Learner (GLE) Education.

In addition to core Council funding and the Gaelic Specific Grant, the Gaelic budget also secures additional funding through project-specific bids to Bòrd na Gàidhlig, and the Strategic Gaelic Plan Fund (GPF).

- 3.2 Legal - The Highland Council has a statutory duty to implement its Gaelic Language Plan in terms of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act of 2005. Section 15 Education (Scotland) Act 2016 imposes a statutory duty on all Education Authorities to promote and support Gaelic Education.
- 3.3 Risk - There are no risk implications arising from this report.
- 3.4 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people) - There are no Health and Safety implications arising from this report.
- 3.5 Gaelic - The report supports Gaelic Education development within The Highland Council area and the implementation of The Highland Council's Gaelic Language Plan and the National Plan.

#### **4. Impacts**

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 This is an update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

#### **5. Muirtown Primary School – Gaelic Learning Case Study**

- 5.1 Muirtown Primary is situated in the centre of Inverness and has been very active with its Gaelic learning since the very beginning of the 1+2 language initiative. Class teachers have undertaken Gaelic language learning classes and are now confidently delivering Gaelic as their L3 language in the upper stages. More recently they secured funding, through Seachdain na Gàidhlig, to enable them to deliver a variety of Gaelic activities to all classes in school.

This resulted in a showcase assembly where parents were invited in to find out more about the Gaelic language and its culture and to see the Gaelic learning going on in school, first hand. Muirtown Primary is a great example of a school that has embraced their Gaelic learning throughout the school, supported by both the pupils and the staff.



<https://www.facebook.com/100054644400684/videos/1969940036832921/?rdid=M2T7L0dY39puatcg#> - Full Video: Seachdain na Gàidhlig at Muirtown Primary School

<https://x.com/HighlandCouncil/status/1893960869530272249?t=U2uubUXEqEgL5ymfNJplw&s=19> – Councillor Raymond Bremner and Joy Dunlop launch Seachdain na Gàidhlig at Muirtown Primary School.

## 6. Strategic Priority GLP - Deliver continued promotion and growth in GME and GLE at all levels including delivery of Gaelic as a modern language.

6.1 The Gaelic team has continued to plan a digital offer for L2 and L3 for our Highland Schools. **Appendix 1** includes the current overview shared with schools to encourage schools to participate in the live lessons model with a view to onboarding them to offer Gaelic as an L2 or L3.

6.2 As reported in the PRMS appendix, the following table updates on the progress towards the Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan target of 70% of schools delivering L2 and L3.

### 2023/24

Area	L2	L3	Schools not delivering Gaelic	Total number of schools	Provision of L2/L3 as a percentage within the area
Mid	1	9	23	33	30%
North	2	7	21	30	30%
South	0	24	26	50	48%
West	24	23	7	54	87%

### 2024/25

Area	L2	L3	Schools not delivering Gaelic	Total number of schools	Provision of L2/L3 as a percentage within the area
Mid	4	6	23	33	30%
North	3	9	19	30	40%
South	0	24	26	50	48%
West	27	21	6	54	89%

6.3 To enable tracking of progress towards 70% of schools offering Gaelic as an L2 or an L3 language choice, a recent mapping exercise was carried out to establish which primary schools do not yet offer Gaelic. These schools were then grouped in order of priority, with primaries where Gaelic is offered in Secondary being the main priority, followed by primaries where Gaelic is not offered in Secondary, being the second priority. This information will now be used to inform discussions with schools going forward.

6.4 The opportunities for Gaelic language learning will be promoted direct to the priority schools, offering both twilight learning sessions for teachers and live lessons that are delivered online to classes, as well as a variety of self-study modules that can be accessed at any time.

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAGm8zaeaLg/q8lNz2tWce598TGa7QSw2A/view?utm\\_content=DAGm8zaeaLg&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=uniquelinks&utlId=h0132d87150](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGm8zaeaLg/q8lNz2tWce598TGa7QSw2A/view?utm_content=DAGm8zaeaLg&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniquelinks&utlId=h0132d87150) – Gaelic 1+2 Promotional Flyer

6.5 To further support Gaelic learning in specific schools, we also propose to deliver structured Gaelic activities in-person direct to classes. Feisgoil will be the provider for this, and we can capitalise on their proven expertise in delivering targeted Gaelic lessons to further increase the number of schools delivering Gaelic as an L3 language in Highland.

## **7. Gaelic Medium and Learner Education Professional Learning update**

7.1 Education authorities and schools are expected to support and promote professional learning opportunities for teachers involved in Gaelic Medium Education (GME) and Gaelic Learner Education (GLE). This includes:

- Ensuring that teachers have access to appropriate Gaelic language training and pedagogical development.
- Supporting ongoing professional development to maintain and enhance Gaelic language skills and teaching methodologies.
- Encouraging leadership development within Gaelic education settings.

7.2 The Gaelic team have worked in partnership with HMle to provide an opportunity to engage with HM Lead Inspectors on quality and improvement in Gaelic Education. A session on ‘Professional Learning for Headteachers and Senior Leaders, The Highland Council. How good is our Gaelic sector? Under the lens: Inspection, Strategy, Impact’ will provide opportunities on;

- Setting the national strategic context for Gaelic Medium and Learner Education: Gain a comprehensive understanding of the national policies and frameworks that shape the future of Gaelic Education.
- Developing self-evaluation to improve standards and raise attainment using Quality Indicators and the Advice on Gaelic Education: Discuss effective self-evaluation approaches and articulate quality indicators to driving bespoke continuous improvement for Gaelic.
- Sharing inspection findings: Learn from recent inspection findings to identify effective practices and areas for improvement to ensure your strategic planning sustains improvement.

This webinar is led by Joan Esson, HM Inspector of Education (HMle) and Lead Inspector Gaelic Sector. This professional learning is an invaluable opportunity for senior leaders to stay informed of inspection findings, discuss successes and challenges, and collaborate on strategies to increase impact for Gaelic Medium and Learner Education.

7.3 The recently highlighted summarised inspection findings from HMle on Gaelic Education are available here [Supporting system improvement for Gàidhlig](#).

7.4 To support Gaelic Language Learning in our secondary schools, the Gaelic Team have planned the delivery of a professional learning in-service in June 2025. This is focused on Gaelic learning in secondary schools and will include contributions from Education Scotland and HMle. The in-service outcomes will provide;

- Professional Learning networks for Gaelic as Modern Language
- Discussion of the promotion of Gaelic language in schools
- Sharing of effective practice

## **8 Gaelic Education - Next Steps**

### **8.1 Promotion of Gaelic Learner Education:**

Targeted work in areas with partners to increase engagement with the live lessons in primary schools. The focus for 25/26 will be in the North area of Highland.

### **8.2 Promotion of Gaelic Medium Education:**

The Highland Council will mark a milestone 40 years since the introduction of Gaelic education provision. The first provision was established in Central primary school, Inverness, in 1985. The Gaelic team will work with corporate communications to plan a celebration of this milestone to contribute to the ongoing promotion and awareness of Gaelic education in Highland.

### **8.3 Growing Gaelic Medium Education:**

The Gaelic Team and Workforce Planning team have worked with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig to successfully increase the numbers of teachers choosing Highland for their probation year. This work will now extend to Strathclyde University to work towards increasing the number of Gaelic qualified secondary teachers choosing Highland for their probation year.

8.4 Lochaline and Applecross Gaelic Medium Education (GME) requests are ongoing. Officers will continue to work with the schools and parents to explore how best to support recruitment to the posts to establish GME in both communities.

Designation: Kate Lackie Assistant Chief Executive - People

Date: 17 May 2025

Author: Lena Walker and Ruairidh MacKay

Background Papers:

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Poster promotion of Gaelic Learner Professional Learning for teachers and Live Lessons for pupils.



## Course 1

This course covers the first 8 topics in the Go!Gaelic programme.

Led by a Gaelic teacher, and using the modules found on the Northern Alliance Sharepoint Site, you will be shown where to find resources that can then help you deliver Gaelic as a 1+2 language in your class.

## Gaelic Language Learning Twilights

Register Now!

Course 1 -  
Starts Wk/bg  
25/08/25

## Course 2

This course follows on from Course 1 and covers the remaining topics from the Go!Gaelic programme.

Led by a Gaelic teacher, and using the modules found on the Northern Alliance Sharepoint Site, you will look at and explore the structures and resources found for the remaining topics.

Course 2 -  
Starts Wk/bg  
12/01/26

## Absolute Beginners

For classes that have not received any Gaelic 1+2 teaching yet, or for teachers who are not sure where to start.

Looking at the basic topics of Greetings, Feelings, Weather, Numbers and Colours.

Each week explores a new topic, and how we tie these in with the daily routine



Register Now!

Starts Wk/bg -  
25/08/25

## Extension

For classes that have attended the Beginners' class or have received some Gaelic teaching in the past.

These lessons build on the vocabulary taught in the Beginners' class and look at progressing language use in each topic.

Each week explores a new topic and how these can be used in class.

Starts Wk/bg -  
27/10/25

Live Lessons are online lessons where your class joins a GLOW Teams meet with other classes and is led by a Gaelic speaker. The language is introduced to the class and then time is given to you to play the interactive games. This team-teaching approach builds confidence with both teachers and pupils.

# Gaelic 1+2 CLPL Opportunities - Terms 1 & 2 - 2025/26