

The Highland Council

Agenda Item	9
Report No	G/22/25

Committee: Gaelic

Date: 19 November 2025

Report Title: Gaelic 1+2 Update Report

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - People

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on key developments in 1+2 Gaelic Learner education across Highland, with a particular focus on strategic actions aligned to the Highland Council's Gaelic Language Plan and Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education.

It highlights progress within the Gaelic 1+2 project to date, with the continued development of online Live Lessons, supporting schools across Highland to deliver Gaelic as either an L2 or an L3 language.

- 1.2 This report also provides an update from the Mòd Academy programme delivered by Fèisean nan Gàidheal, which has been supporting Primary schools in the Lochaber area through class-based lessons on Gaelic language, music and culture. These sessions aim to encourage more pupils to take part in the Royal National Mòd this year, through building confidence in Gaelic performance.
- 1.3 This report also provides an update from the Blasad programme, delivered by Fèisgoil, who are supporting the delivery of Gaelic 1+2 through a series of class-based lessons in schools across Sutherland and Caithness that were not previously offering Gaelic as an additional language. These sessions aim to develop an interest in Gaelic learning through song and games that will allow the school to continue and progress with further Gaelic learning.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- Note the continued development of Gaelic 1+2 support across the Authority.
 - Note the progress made with Mòd Academy towards supporting pupils and schools in Lochaber with their Gaelic learning and to increase the uptake of Gaelic Learner competitions at the Royal National Mòd 2025.
 - Note the progress made with Blasad class lessons to develop Gaelic in Sutherland and Caithness schools and to assist achieving the target of 70% of primary schools delivering Gaelic as an L2 or an L3 language.

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource - For the financial year 2025/26 the Council submitted a Gaelic Specific Grant (GSG) application for £1.3M against total projected expenditure of £8.3M and was awarded £940,000. The funding provided by the Scottish Government through the 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 and Gaelic Learner Education. In addition to core Council funding and the GSG, 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. Gaelic 1+2 Update

5.1 Project 3 Targets:

The Strategic Priorities in the Highland Council GLP are to;

- deliver continued promotion and growth in GME and GLE at all levels including delivery of Gaelic as a modern language, with 70%* of primary schools providing Gaelic as an L2 and L3 to increase the provision of Gaelic across the authority. *This percentage relates to English Medium Primary Schools, including English Medium within a GME school, that offer Gaelic as an L2 or an L3 additional language.
- expand the delivery of Gaelic Medium Education with increased secondary subject delivery, creation of new standalone schools and new early years, primary and secondary provision.

To support the GLP strategic priorities in Gaelic education, the following outcomes are planned for 25/26 in relation to the Gaelic Specific Grant.

6. 1+2 Gaelic Support Officer Update

- 6.1
- Continue to support other local authorities within the Northern Alliance and across Scotland through working closely with the Gaelic 1+2 Development Officer in Argyll and Bute, to share and deliver Gaelic offering across Scotland.
 - Support and develop the 1+2 Gaelic Learners curriculum through being part of the Curriculum Improvement Cycle for GLE, led by Education Scotland.
 - Organised and ran an In-Service training day for Secondary Gaelic Learner Education teachers. This was held at the Council offices in Dingwall and attended by 13 practitioners in-person and online. Presentations were also delivered by Education Scotland, Stòrlann, BBC Bitesize and others.
 - Supporting schools with bespoke 1+2 queries on how best to support their school. Promoting our current offering of Live Lessons and twilight training sessions, as well as the self-study modules.
 - Presented at The Highland Council Probationers Inset Day in August 2025, providing an overview of Gaelic and the 1+2 initiative, highlighted the support options available for delivering Gaelic as an additional language.
 - Continue to support Sgioba na Gàidhlig through liaising with team members as required for various project elements, such as Mòd Academy, Blasad Gàidhlig and The Highland Council Web Redesign project.
 - Collating Good News items and creating the videos in advance of Committee meetings.
 - Adding to and compiling progress and update reports for funding and committee reporting.
 - Direct support to schools (ongoing):
 - Glen Urquhart High School
Continue to teach S3 and S4 GME pupils in school. This will be the first year that pupils have sat Gàidhlig National Qualifications in this school. Currently 1x S4 is sitting National 4 Gàidhlig and 2x S4 are sitting National 5 Gàidhlig.
 - Dornoch Academy
Supporting an S4 pupil sitting National 5 Gàidhlig this year. Teaching is delivered once a week online and self-study work is prepared via the Google Classroom to be completed when timetabled for Gàidhlig.
 - Kinlochleven High School
Supporting their S1 and S2 Gaelic Learner classes online. Due to issues with finding cover the school requested support until Easter time.

6.2 1+2 L3 Live Lessons

- Focusing on schools that do not currently deliver Gaelic as an additional language and schools that do but have new teachers that require support to deliver Gaelic as an L3.
- Supporting teachers by providing a direct Gaelic teaching input, aimed to build their confidence to then deliver the learning activity to their class. This allows for further consolidation learning after the lessons led by the class teacher.

- Signposting additional resources created by Highland: Gaelic 1+2 modules, GLEANS Challenges and Highland Digital Hub resource, schools have additional support to continue to deliver Gaelic as an additional language.

6.3 **1+2 CLPL Training:**

Increasing the number of teachers able to deliver Gaelic as an additional language in class, by:

- Signposting the learning activity resources available online within the Northern Alliance Modules.
- Encouraging participation in the Live Lessons as a next step.
- Building confidence in using Gaelic Providing opportunities for teachers in Gaelic L3 schools or other schools to become familiar with the vocabulary and structures within the Go!Gaelic resource.
- Providing the opportunities to practice saying the vocabulary and phrases within the group and to ask any questions.

6.4 **1 plus 2 Update:**

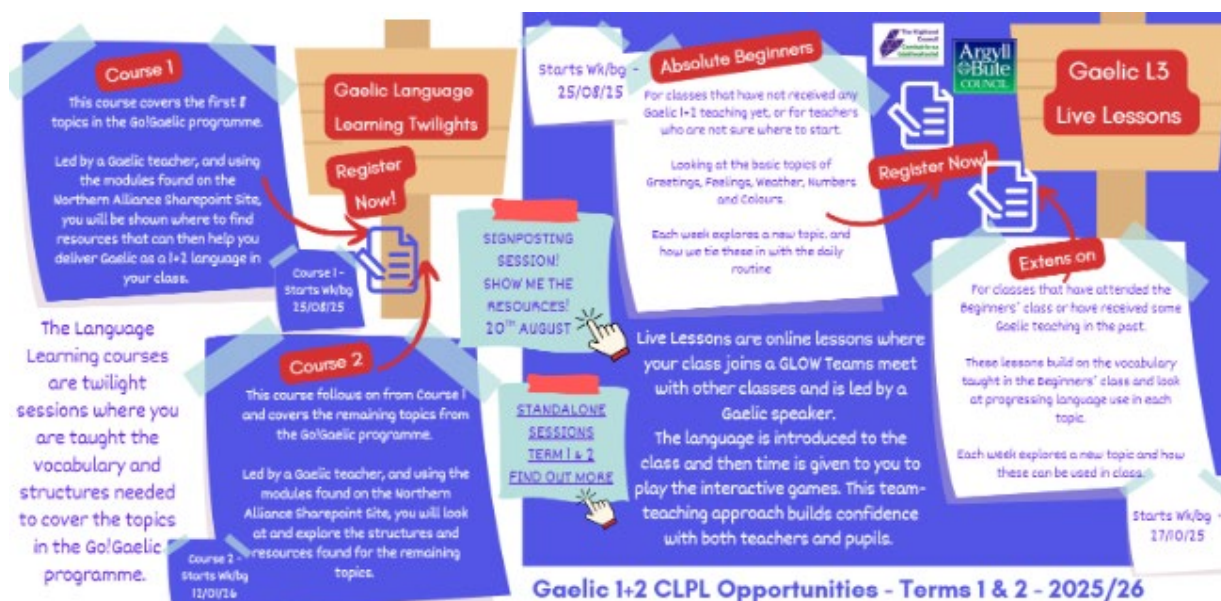
Since the end of the last quarter a new programme of CLPL opportunities for Gaelic 1+2 was created for session 2025/26. The flyer below outlines these opportunities, which are delivered in collaboration with the Gaelic 1+2 Officer from Argyll & Bute.

Live Lessons are on offer to all schools who are teaching or wishing to teach Gaelic as an L3 language. These online interactive sessions, that classes join through Teams, are set at either Beginner (level 1) or Extension (level 2) levels, which allow progression from levels 1 to 2 over the course of the year. Both Beginner and Extension courses run twice per year and take place twice per week to allow for timetable clashes.

The Gaelic Language Learning Twilight course is for teachers who want to familiarise themselves with the Go!Gaelic resource and pedagogy behind 1+2. This 12 week course takes teachers through the vocabulary and structures needed for the Gaelic topics. Sessions 1-6 take place in term 1 and sessions 7-12 take place in term 3.

Teachers can take part in both offers if they wish and those who have consolidated what has been learned at the twilight sessions with the live lessons have found this to be a very beneficial approach.

In addition, this year we will be offering 3 standalone online live lessons on “In the Classroom”, “Christmas” and “Gaelic Placenames”. These can be accessed by classes with some Gaelic, or with none at all.



6.5 Since the start of term, the first Live Lesson course at Beginner level has started, as well as the first part of the Gaelic Language Learning course. The numbers of new teachers attending thus far are:

Beginner Live Lessons – 14

Gaelic Language Learning Course – 11

	END19/20	END20/21	END21/22	END22/23	END23/24	END24/25	Sep' 25/26
South	25	4			9	4	
Mid	9	1	1		3		
West	28	2	2	3	8	3	
North	9	3	1		2	5	
Twilights T		10	4	3	22	12	11
Prev' Yr total	71	81	85	85	113	162	197
Live Lesson Total				25	27	23	14
Annual Total				113	162	197	222

As a result, the number of new schools adopting Gaelic as an L3 has also increased:

2024/2025 Data

Area	L2	L3	Other	Total PS	Provision as %
Mid	4	6	23	33	30%
North	3	9	19	30	40%
South	0	24	26	50	48%
West	27	21	6	54	89%

2025/2026 Data to date

Area	L2	L3	Other	Total PS	Provision as %
Mid	4	8	21	33	36%
North	3	10	18	30	43%
South	0	26	24	50	52%
West	27	21	6	54	89%

7. Mòd Academy Update Report

- 7.1 The Mòd Academy has been delivered for An Comunn Gàidhealach by Fèisean nan Gàidheal's formal education service, Fèisgoil, with funding from Bòrd na Gàidhlig, The Highland Council and An Comunn Gàidhealach.

Between March and October 2025, 20 schools took part in the Mòd Academy initiative and were taught by a team of 6 Fèisgoil tutors. During the first block, whole class sessions were delivered so that all children in the schools involved had the opportunity to learn some Gaelic songs. As the Mòd grew closer tutors then focused on those children wishing to compete. 473 sessions were delivered altogether with a total of 464 children involved. Of those, over 200 intend to take part in the Mòd either as soloists or as part of a group.

The schools involved are as follows, with those in bold including children entered to compete in October and those in Italics competing online:

Acharacle

Arnamurchan High

Ballachulish

Banavie

Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar

Duror

Eigg

Invergarry

Kinlochleven High

Kinlochleven Primary

Lochaber High

Lochaline

Lundavra

Mallaig High

Mallaig Primary

Muck

Rum

Spean Bridge

St Bride's

Strontian

- 7.2 Additional points of interest:

1. Tutors reported good engagement from school staff and children across the Lochaber area.
2. Fèisean nan Gàidheal is keen to highlight the support offered by Iain Robertson on behalf of the Meur.

3. It is understood that some schools involved themselves in the Mòd for the first time in many years, particularly those in the Ballachulish area.
4. Lochaber High School has 9 pupils entering as soloists and as a result of the work of Mòd Academy alongside the Gaelic department, they have also managed to attract 17 high school students to form a choir for the Celtic Praise event and are hopeful this will lead to further choral development in the months and years ahead.
5. Some of the schools not competing nevertheless showed keen interest in learning the songs during the first block of delivery. These schools are all learning Gaelic as an additional language and were very grateful for the support.

8. Fèisgoil – North Highland Schools

Fèisean nan Gàidheal's Fèisgoil delivers language, music, arts and cultural services to schools, local authorities, public bodies and community groups across Scotland. Examples of services we offer include:

- Gaelic sessions in primary schools where Gaelic is taught as an additional language (L1+2)
- Tours around historical sites and buildings
- Music and song classes in schools
- Gaelic taster days
- Gaelic drama tours and workshops
- Inter-generational language sessions to enrich pupils' Gaelic
- Activities delivered through Gaelic at Fèisean and community events

Fèisgoil were chosen to deliver the Blasad sessions to schools in Sutherland and Caithness as they are the only provider of in-class sessions that align with the 1+2 curriculum. To properly engage with schools that don't offer Gaelic as a 1+2 language, we felt that having a tutor in the class to work with the pupils and teachers was essential. By utilising Fèisgoil in this way, we are able to increase the numbers of schools that are delivering Gaelic and support the Gaelic plan's strategic outcome of 70% of primary schools delivering Gaelic as an additional language.

It is hoped that through utilising Fèisgoil, we are able to increase the percentage of schools in the North delivering Gaelic as an L2 or an L3 language, from 43% to 83%.

- 8.1 **Blasad Gàidhlig aig Tuath** – preparation and delivery for The Highland Council by Fèisean nan Gàidheal's formal education service, Fèisgoil, of Gaelic support sessions for schools where children are learning Gaelic as an additional language.

Cost: £17,213 funded through the Gaelic Specific Grant award from the Scottish Government.

Time-frame: Preparation began in April 2025 with delivery commencing in early September, coinciding with the launch of the Blas Festival. The sessions are staggered between early September and mid-December 2025.

Schools involved: Feeding into 7 secondary schools: Thurso High, Dornoch Academy, Wick High, Kinlochbervie High, Ullapool High, Tain Royal Academy, and Golspie High the **18 primary schools** involved are as follows:

- Crossroads
- Halkirk
- Reay

- Dornoch
- Newton Park
- Keiss
- Bower
- Thrumster
- Kinlochbervie
- Scourie
- Durness
- Achiltibuie
- Gledfield
- Bonar Bridge
- Golspie
- Rogart
- Brora
- Helmsdale

Number of sessions, schoolchildren and school staff directly involved: The anticipated number of sessions delivered during the **Blasad Gàidhlig aig Tuath** series is **176** and we expect that **over 350** primary-aged children, the majority of them second level, will have participated in the weekly sessions. At least **24 staff members** will have had direct weekly input from the progressive sessions, with the opportunity to engage as learners alongside the children in their classes.

Tutors: the preparation and delivery of the sessions will have allowed for regular work for **5 Fèisgoil tutors**, contributing to them staying and working locally.

Material covered: Fèisgoil tutors involved are encouraged to follow the Blasad Gàidhlig progressive lesson plans, compiled by Fèisgoil with over 70 progressive lessons available. Subjects of learning are linked to songs and games related to the specific subjects being taught each time and language and lesson overviews are available for class teachers as additional support.

8.2 **Additional points of interest:**

During the writing of this report some schools had not yet begun their sessions and so feedback from tutors and schools has not yet been sought. However, following sessions early in the series the following feedback was received from a tutor:

“Bha mi beagan nearbhasach gun dìochuimhnicheadh a’ chlann na rinn sinn roimhe air sgàth nan làithean in-seirbheis an t-seachdain sa chaidh... ach an-dè, cho luath ’s a chunnaic iad mi, thàinig iad thugam gus, “Madainn mhath!” a ràdh anns a’ Ghàidhlig, gun fhacal Beurla eadarainn! Bha cuid an uair sin fiù ’s a’ faighneachd “Dè an t-ainm a th’ ort?” mus do thòisich mise a’ bruidhinn! Nach mi a bha moiteil asta! Aig deireadh an leasain, bha an tidsear a’ beachdachadh air iomadh diofar dhòigh a b’ urrainn dhaibh na h-àireamhan a chleachdadh tron t-seachdain... a-rèir coltais, tha a’ Ghàidhlig spòrsail agus inntinneach dhaibh mar-thà, ’s tha e a’ còrdadh riutha a bhith ga h-ionnsachadh — abair deagh thoiseach!”

“I was a little nervous that the children would have forgotten what we did the first week as they had a week off in between due to in-service, but yesterday, as soon as they saw me they approached me and said “Good morning!” in Gaelic, without a word of English from any of them! One of them then even asked me (in Gaelic) “What’s your name?” before I had even begun speaking! Wasn’t I so proud of them! At the

end of the lesson, the teacher was thinking up all sorts of different ways they could be using Gaelic numbers throughout the coming week...apparently, Gaelic is already fun and interesting to them, and they are enjoying learning – what a fantastic start!”

Fèisean nan Gàidheal's drama officer, Angus Macleod delivers **Sporan** each year to schools during the course of a week or ten days, early in the school year. The schools are usually in Highland and are learning Gaelic as an additional language. These sessions use drama-based activity to engage children with Gaelic learning. This year, Blasad Gàidhlig schools within an hour and a half radius of Inverness were offered the opportunity and Angus visited some schools during the week of Blas Festival as an early encouragement to engage in Gaelic learning.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - People

Date: 09/10/25

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