



Glasgow City Council

Education, Skills and Early Years Committee

Report by Executive Director of Education

Contact: Jean Miller Ext: 74213

**Item 7**

1st June 2023

## Gaelic Medium Education 2023

### Purpose of Report:

To update the committee on the development of Gaelic Medium Education and consider the strategic priorities moving forward.

### Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to consider the report and ask the Executive Director to bring further updates to the Committee.

Ward No(s):

Citywide:

Local member(s) advised: Yes  No  consulted: Yes  No

### PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

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## 1 Background

- 1.1 The Education (Scotland) Act 2016 places a duty on education authorities to promote and support Gaelic Medium Education (GME) and Gaelic Learner Education (GLE) and establish a process by which parents can request Gaelic Medium Primary Education (GMPE) from their education authority.
- 1.2 Glasgow City Council (GCC) first began to develop Gaelic Medium Education (GME) when it opened Bun-sgoil Ghaidhlig Ghlaschu in Ashley St, Woodlands in 1999. Hillpark Secondary hosted a Gaelic unit where young people were taught Ghaidhlig and two social subjects through the medium of Gaelic. They experienced the remaining curriculum in the mainstream secondary school.
- 1.3 In August 2006, Glasgow City Council (GCC) opened its first dedicated, all-through GME school when the existing GME Primary School, Bun-sgoil Ghaidhlig Ghlaschu, and the Gaelic unit at Hillpark Secondary School relocated to the former Woodside Secondary in Berkeley Street.
- 1.4 As the demand for GME has grown in the city, the provision of educational establishments has continued to expand and GCC provision is the largest in Scotland with the exception of Western Isles and Highland Councils. Our current provision includes early years provision across five sites, three council and two funded providers - Rowena in the north west, Berkeley Street in the north west, Lyoncross in Pollok in the south, with funded providers operating at Seudan Beaga and Oganon both in the south of the city; current primary school provision exists across three sites – Bun-sgoil Ghaidhlig Ghlaschu (Glasgow Gaelic Berkeley Street), Bunsgoil Ghàidhlig Ghleann Dail (Glendale Gaelic), Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Bhaile a' Ghobhainn (Govan Gaelic) and a secondary provision at Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu, Glasgow Gaelic Secondary School (Ard-sgoil - Berkeley Street Campus).
- 1.5 Presently the numbers enrolled in each school are as follows;

Bun-sgoil Ghaidhlig Ghlaschu	454 (Includes NE annex)
Bunsgoil Ghàidhlig Ghleann Dail	178
Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Bhaile a' Ghobhainn	205
Ard-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu	449

This session 58 pupils will leave Ard-sgoil and 118 will start S1 in 2023.

## 2 Bun-sgoil Ghaidhlig a Challtainn – Calton Gaelic Primary School

- 2.1 A statutory consultation was held 2019/20 which agreed the establishment of Govan Annexe as a school in its own right to support the growing demand for GME in the South of the city. It also agreed the development of a fourth GME primary school in the north east of the city. This consultation also defined catchment areas for each of the current and the proposed GME primary schools in the city.

- 2.2 On the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 the Scottish Government publicly announced the projects which had been successful in being considered for part-funding from tranche 2 of the LEIP fund (the Learning Estate Investment Programme). One of these was the proposal for a fourth GME school in Glasgow. LEIP funding operates slightly differently from previous iterations of Scottish Government funding programmes, however, fundamentally provides 50% of the cost of a new school development, based on an established area/cost metric.
- 2.3 The chosen site for development is the former St James Primary School and building work is underway to construct the new Calton Gaelic primary with parts of the old building being retained as well as a whole new section. It was hoped that the building would be ready by the start of session 2024/25, however, this is now likely to be session 2025/26. This is due to the condition of the old building, impact of the pandemic and rising costs of materials. It is anticipated the new school will open in August 2025.
- 2.4 In the interim period, an annexe of the Berkeley St primary provision was created in the new North Kelvinside Primary School. From August 2023, this will be called Bun-sgoil Ghaidhlig a Challtainn (Glasgow Calton primary school) and an advert is underway for an acting Headteacher on a 23 month secondment period. It is hoped that by doing this now, the school will begin to develop its own identity and this should ensure a smoother transition when the new building is ready to be occupied.

### **3 Ard-sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu – Glasgow Gaelic Secondary School**

- 3.1 The growth of the primary estate has in turn led to the growth of the secondary provision at the Berkeley St campus. Ard-sgoil Ghaidhlig Ghlaschu provides the full curriculum although not all subjects are taught through Gaelic due to recruitment issues in some areas.
- 3.2 The campus has been expanded in recognition of the increase in pupil numbers, and this has included a full-sized games hall and increased specialist rooms for science and technical. The Scottish Government has recently agreed to a grant for capital funding which will be used to further transform some classrooms and spaces in those soon to be vacated by the Technical Support Service.

- 3.3 In April 2021 the Gaelic Medium Education report to the Educational, Skills and Early Years committee provided a detailed analysis of the accommodation requirements of Ard-sgoil Ghaidhlig Ghlaschu to meet the needs of the growing number of pupils moving from the GME primary schools. For an S1 intake of 140, the secondary school would need more classrooms across the school, some of which would need specific adaptations for practical subjects. An S1 intake of 160 to 180 moving through would result in a school roll of around 950/1070. An intake/school of this size may require 10-12 additional general classrooms along with an increase in specialised rooms – additional two science labs (total of 7) one art room (total of three) and two IT rooms (total of three). With Technical Support Service moving from the Berkeley Street campus in the near future, it is anticipated the cap will increase again next session.
- 3.4 Previous reports to Council have noted that the space presently used by the primary school within the campus would be required to allow for sufficient expansion of the secondary. The recommendation was for a North West school to accommodate Bun-sgoil Ghaidhlig Ghlaschu.

#### **4 Staffing**

- 4.1 Over the years, the recruitment of high quality, gaelic speaking teachers has been a priority of Education Services. This hasn't always been easy and the numbers of student and probationer teachers is the responsibility of the Scottish Government. It is worth noting that increasingly we are able to employ new teachers who were educated at our own GME schools. However, recruitment can still be challenging and this is particularly the case at promoted post level especially for Headteachers (HTs). Presently, we have two vacancies in our Gaelic Medium Primary Education (GMPE) and are having difficulty recruiting to these. At secondary level, we have an acting Headteacher on a 23 month secondment who is a Gaelic learner aiming to develop fluency.
- 4.2 Due to the difficulties in recruiting to Headteacher posts, some parents have asked us to reconsider whether having fluent Gaelic language is an essential requirement or desirable for HTs in Gaelic schools. We feel that this must remain essential for permanent posts since we expect children and young people to be in a fully immersive GME experience. A Headteacher is not simply a manager of a school, they are the lead learners for staff and children. They need to be involved in all aspects of school life, visiting classrooms on learning walks and to support the development of learning and teaching, leading whole school activities such a staff training and assemblies with children, and constantly speaking Gaelic to children in their daily interactions to support their language development. The feedback from the Glendale Gaelic inspection identified the need to strengthen immersion and the spoken word – a fluent speaker is essential for driving this forward. Even in the face of recruitment challenges, it is crucial to hold onto this principle and not dilute the high quality GME experience for children and young people. It is also worth noting that GME is not the only sector facing challenges with Headteacher recruitment.

- 4.3 To try to build more capacity for leadership within our schools, we are encouraging colleagues to participate in leadership development programmes including the 'Into Headship' programme (the qualification required for a Headteacher post in Scotland). The new cohort of 'Into Headship' participants has the highest number of Gaelic participants ever.

## **5 The Growth of GME across Glasgow**

- 5.1 This is an area of GME which tends to attract the most communication from stakeholders, particularly parents and the wider Gaelic community. In recent years the growth in popularity of GME across the city (but mainly in the North West and parts of the South) has led to planning decisions around numbers in the GMPE schools and overall primary estate, to ensure that there is guaranteed provision and progression to secondary without any further admission issues. This has led to the introduction of caps for GMPE schools so we can plan to have the appropriate school environment (eg types of classroom, changing facilities etc) and quality teaching staff who speak Gaelic, to deliver as full a curriculum as possible. As has been highlighted earlier in the report, the Berkeley campus is limited in terms of available space on the campus hence why its growth has to be planned appropriately.
- 5.2 Statutory guidance issued by Bòrd Na Gàidhlig came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017, Part 1 of which sets out the actions education authorities must take to assess demand on receipt of a request for GMPE. Following a request from five parents, GCC Education Services carried out a full assessment of GMPE. The assessment was carried out in 2022 and in April 2022 there were 178 requests for placements within GMPE (this number had already reduced from the initial number of applications) for 140 available places. By June 2022 there were 157 children on the full list so 17 over the allocated number of places. 140 placements had been issued but some of these were not to a first choice GMPE provision.
- 5.3 In August 2022 130 children started in GMPE on the first day of the session. Unexpectedly, 10 children who were supposed to start enrolled elsewhere. There were still 12 children on the waiting list but the places available in GME were in Govan Gaelic and the North East Annexe (soon to be Calton Gaelic) and the parents did not want these places. This would suggest that the school itself may be more important to some parents than the provision of GME but more information around why some parents are making these decisions would be helpful.
- 5.4 The assessment concluded that by highlighting that issues with recruitment, appropriate space in the secondary, the need to build leadership capacity and to maintain the quality learning experience for children and young people, the cap would remain at 140 places but hopefully increasing to 180 places in the future depending on the availability of space in the secondary.

- 5.5 Initially, this session there were 190 applications for GMPE for 140 places. At this point in May 2023 there are 167 on the GMPE list (140 places have been allocated within this) and there continues to be movement. The numbers have reduced due to places secured in independent schools, placing requests to other GCC schools and enrolment in GMPE schools in other neighbouring Authorities.
- 5.6 There has not been significant change in those requesting GMPE this session compared to last session. Part of the difficulty in relation to planning is that less than 20% of children coming into GMPE are coming from Gaelic speaking homes and this makes future planning for demand more difficult.

## 6 Admissions Criteria

- 6.1 Following an earlier consultation which involved the Gaelic community through Bòrd Na Gàidhlig and Comann Nam Parant Glaschu, Glasgow's approach to enrolment in GME has always been an inclusive one. This effectively means that each child, within a specified catchment area, is entitled to apply for a place in GME provision. However, within the context of a growing demand for GMPE in recent years, this approach has been questioned by parents who speak Gaelic or have a child in a Gaelic early years establishment. There have been discussions about whether this group of parents should be ranked for a place above others.
- 6.2 Also, the statistics on the demographics of the schools show that the inclusive policy is not attracting a fair representation of Glasgow's communities either in relation to socio-economic data or diversity, and this needs to be explored to ensure equity or opportunity.

Establishment	DECILE										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Unknown
Sgoil Araich - Glasgow Gaelic Nursery	8.8%	8.8%	17.6%	5.9%	8.8%	5.9%	11.8%	8.8%	11.8%	11.8%	0.0%
Bunsgoil Glasgow Gaelic Primary School	12.9%	14.2%	11.6%	6.6%	9.4%	6.6%	6.3%	8.3%	13.3%	10.1%	0.7%
Glendale Gaelic Primary School	8.0%	4.5%	15.3%	7.4%	8.5%	2.3%	10.2%	27.8%	4.5%	8.5%	2.8%
Govan Gaelic Primary School	13.1%	14.1%	8.7%	14.1%	5.8%	2.4%	11.2%	18.9%	6.8%	3.4%	1.5%
Ardsgoil Glasgow Gaelic Secondary School	12.3%	13.0%	9.6%	9.9%	4.9%	4.3%	8.3%	17.7%	9.2%	9.9%	0.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>7.2%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>15.8%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>

Decile 1 is the most deprived areas and Decile 10 is the least deprived areas.

Establishment	BME	Not known/Not Disclosed	White Other	White Scottish/British
Sgoil Araich - Glasgow Gaelic Nursery	8.8%	17.6%	5.9%	67.6%
Bunsgoil Glasgow Gaelic Primary School	7.7%	3.7%	6.8%	81.8%
Glendale Gaelic Primary School	6.3%	11.9%	7.4%	74.4%
Govan Gaelic Primary School	4.9%	18.0%	4.9%	72.3%
Ardsgoil Glasgow Gaelic Secondary School	4.7%	0.9%	3.6%	90.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>82.0%</b>

## 7 Summary

- 7.1 The GME update of 2021 stated that ‘Glasgow City Council has actively promoted and supported GME making very effective use of the Gaelic Grant (from Scottish Government) as well as the core budget....As a result GME has thrived in the city and continues to increase in popularity’.
- 7.2 At the time the report was written, we were in the midst of the Covid Pandemic whilst now we are dealing with the long term impacts of the Pandemic on children, young people and their families. We are also supporting children and young people who are being affected by the cost of living challenges with child poverty continuing to be significant. The Council itself is having to make savings across all its services, including Education Services. In this changed context, it is important to reflect on the strategic direction of GME in relation to our next steps. When doing this we will continue to ensure that we consult and engage with our stakeholders through a range of methods including our strategic and operational groups, parent consultation activities, linking with key organisations particularly Bord ne Ghaidhlig and Comann Nam Parant and Scottish Government.

## 8 Policy and Resource Implications

### Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Within the existing Education Service budget and grants from Scottish Government including some LEIP funding for the new Glasgow Calton primary and a capitol grant for work to be carried out in the secondary school.
<i>Legal:</i>	As highlighted in section 1 and 5
<i>Personnel:</i>	Within existing resources
<i>Procurement:</i>	N/A

**Council Strategic Plan:** Grand Challenge 1 Mission 4 *Support Glasgow to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant* – Agree and implement the Plana Gàidhlig 2023 to 2028.

Grand Challenge 2 Mission 3 *Raise attainment amongst Glasgow’s children and young people* – Continue to expand Gaelic Medium Education (GME) provision and maintain GME working group.

**Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.*

Outcome 14 Glasgow City Council (Education Services) has continued to improve outcomes in relation to attainment and achievement for children and young people including those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, those for whom English is not their first language, those who identify as black and minority ethnic, and disabled children and young people

*What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?*

Positive impact in relation to supporting the development of Gaelic language in the city.

*Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.*

It may offer opportunities to young people in the area of gaelic language employment.

**Climate Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:*

No

*What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?*

None

*Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?*

No

**Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:**

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report  
Y/N

No



If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

## **9 Recommendations**

- 9.1** The Committee is asked to consider the report and ask the Executive Director to bring further updates to the Committee.