

# Education (Scotland) Act 2016

**Report by HM Inspectors of Schools to give an independent view of the determination for Glasgow City Council to establish Gaelic Medium Primary Education from August 2022, unless it would be unreasonable to do so. Glasgow City Council has designated the whole of the council as the assessment area for which it will assess the need for Gaelic Medium Primary Education.**

**May 2022**

## 1. Introduction

**1.1** This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Education \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#) (the 2016 Act). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial view of the determination to establish further Gaelic Medium Primary Education in Glasgow City Council from August 2022. This is based on a request received by the education authority from parents of children under section 7 of the 2016 Act. The request is, as required, from parents of children under school age, whose children have not yet started to attend a primary school. The education authority has designated the whole council as the assessment area for which it will assess the need for Gaelic Medium Primary Education.

**1.2** Section two of this report sets out brief details of the assessment process and HM Inspectors' views on the determination for the education authority to establish Gaelic Medium Primary Education.

HM Inspectors considered:

- the details received from the council on the parental request;
- other information received from the education authority that they, as required, took into account during the initial assessment about the demand for Gaelic Medium Primary Education;
- HM Inspectors' national expertise to comment on the potential need for and possibility of securing Gaelic Medium Primary Education in the designated assessment area. This national expertise draws on the wider parental, Gaelic and educational context in Scotland; and
- mandatory factors that must be considered by the education authority in its determination of the potential need for Gaelic Medium Primary Education. This is in accordance with section 1.52 of the Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education 2017.

**1.3** Section 3 of this report summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the need to establish Gaelic Medium Primary Education. Upon receipt of this report, the 2016 Act requires the education authority to have regard to it in preparing their report on the determination to establish Gaelic Medium Primary Education. The education authority's report must include an explanation of how it has complied with its duty to secure the provision of Gaelic Medium Primary Education, unless it would be unreasonable to do so.

**1.4** The education authority must publish its final report no later than ten weeks after deciding to conduct a full assessment. HM Inspectors will publish our report on our website at the same time as the education authority is publishing their final report.

**1.5** In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- synthesis of all relevant documentation provided by the education authority in relation to the proposal;
- discussion with the local authority and relevant consultees; and
- review of the council's Gaelic Language Plan.

## 2. Assessment process and HM Inspectors' determination on establishing Gaelic Medium Primary Education

**2.1** Glasgow City Council notified HM Inspectors on 8 April 2022 that they had received a parental request for an assessment of the need for Gaelic Medium Primary Education. This request is for further Gaelic Medium Primary Education to be established at P1 within the

education authority from August 2022. The education authority advised HM Inspectors that they had undertaken an initial assessment of this request received on 25 February 2022. This evidenced that there is a demand for Gaelic Medium Primary Education. HM Inspectors agree that there is sufficient demand for establishing Gaelic Medium Primary Education from August 2022. HM Inspectors' strong view is that the education authority proceeds with meeting this potential need for Gaelic Medium Primary Education in 2022.

**2.2** The information provided by the education authority shows parental interest in enrolling their children in Gaelic Medium Primary Education. Gaelic Medium Education in the council is very successfully attracting parental interest. However, existing provisions are not meeting all parental demand, resulting in oversubscription. The council is providing 3-18 provision and is expanding its provision. These continued plans will increase future capacity for enrolment in primary and secondary. The pace of expansion is not yet keeping up with parental demand for Gaelic Medium Education. The council should ensure that the ongoing P1 enrolment targets for which they plan are sufficient, meet demand and enable continued growth in Gaelic Medium Education. The council has used a model of having temporary annexes established at existing schools until more permanent arrangements can be made. The council should continue exploring such approaches while permanent building work is completed. The council discussed with HM Inspectors how arrangements with neighbouring authorities could assist in meeting current demand for Gaelic Medium Education. In collaboration with parents, the council should continue longer term strategic and sustainable planning that results in securing requests for Gaelic Medium Education. This should be in accordance with the legislative requirements of the 2016 Act. In so doing, they should ensure that parents' voices are heard, and that any potential equity and equality barriers to Gaelic Medium Education are addressed. These include arrangements for free transport and supporting parents into work, study, or training. The council should ensure that they continue to access Scottish Government specific funding for Gaelic and support from Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

**2.3** The education authority has a statutory Gaelic Language Plan, 2018-22. This plan recognises year-on-year growth in Gaelic Medium Education within the local authority. The plan recognises that Gaelic is "inclusive, open to all to live and enjoy". Furthermore, the plan details a strategy for growth that "must not temper our ambition for the language and the Gaelic Medium Education." The council should continue to consult with parents on meeting their demands for providing progression for those who have started learning Gaelic through immersion in nursery. Parents highlight the importance of the Gaelic language to them as part of children's identity and culture. The council is currently preparing its next Gaelic Language Plan. This plan should be clear on how all reasonable future demand for Gaelic Medium Education will be met.

**2.4** The education authority has designated the whole of the council for the assessment area, for which it will assess the need for Gaelic Medium Primary Education. HM Inspectors are of the view that parents should continue to be consulted on the best available location of proposed Gaelic Medium Education service. In 2017, Bòrd na Gàidhlig published Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education asking that catchment areas, placing guidelines, and guidelines on enrolment and admissions be established for Gaelic Medium Education. The education authority should continue to take forward these duties to enable equal and equitable access to Gaelic Medium Education. It would be important for the education authority to complete Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments.

### **3. Summary**

**3.1** HM Inspectors have assessed and commented on Glasgow City Council's determination of the potential need for securing further Gaelic Medium Primary Education within the education authority from August 2022. We have drawn on our national expertise to comment on the potential

need and possibility of securing further Gaelic Medium Primary Education. This has taken account of the wider parental, Gaelic and educational context in Scotland. HM Inspectors are of the view that further Gaelic Medium Primary Education needs to be secured in Glasgow City Council from August 2022. This is to meet the demand demonstrated by the initial assessment. We have summarised our views on a number of mandatory factors for the education authority to consider for successful implementation of Gaelic Medium Education.

**HM Inspectors**  
**May 2022**