

Advice on Gaelic Education February 2015

Update March 2022



For Scotland's learners, with Scotland's educators



14. Gaelic Medium Education: learners with additional needs

Key messages:

- Legislation places duties on local authorities, and other agencies, to provide additional support where needed to enable any child or young person to benefit from education.
- At this stage in the development of Gaelic Medium Education, while it is desirable, there are still **challenges in providing some of this support through the medium of Gaelic**.
- This may result in access to some identification of needs and support services being available through the medium of English but for there to be an awareness of the approaches to Gaelic Medium Education.
- The aims and goals of Curriculum for Excellence and the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014* place a **responsibility on all staff to meet the needs of all learners**.

14.1 An area of specific need identified for Gaelic Medium Education is **assistance for children and young people who need additional support with their learning**.

All children and young people from birth to 25 are entitled to support with their education. This may be ongoing, day-to-day help from staff and needs to be caring and inclusive. Entitlement to additional support is linked to disability or health needs, social or emotional factors for short- or long-term periods which is tailored to the individual to help overcome any barriers to learning. Bòrd na Gàidhlig have commissioned an audit in this area with recommendations for action and an analysis of the professional learning needs of staff.

14.2 Legislation places duties on local authorities, and other agencies, to provide additional support where needed to enable any child or young person to benefit from education. For some children and young people, **targeted support** is required to meet additional needs. At this stage in the development of Gaelic Medium Education, while it is desirable, there are still **challenges in providing some of this support through the medium of Gaelic**. Early identification of barriers and subsequent support is key. Support to remove barriers that may restrict access to learning will ensure that every learner has every opportunity to achieve the best they can. This may result in access to some identification of needs and support services being available through the medium of English at this current time. For this to be successful, all those involved in supporting the full range of children and young people with targeted support need to be aware of the approaches to Gaelic Medium Education. It is not appropriate to use assessments to identify needs through the medium of English at a stage when children's learning is focusing on the development of the Gaelic language. It is highly inappropriate.

14.3 **Policies** for supporting learners in Gaelic Medium Education, which take full regard of legislation, are required at local authority and school level. This should lead to a stronger understanding and commitment that Gaelic Medium Education is suitable for all children and young people, including those who need support with their learning. Switching from Gaelic to English Medium Education, as is practice in

some schools, is not a solution to meeting the learning needs of children and young people.

14.4 The aims and goals of Curriculum for Excellence and the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014* place a **responsibility on all staff to meet the needs of all learners**. This represents best practice in learning and teaching.

Personalised learning means tailoring learning and teaching to learners' needs. Staff do this by knowing learners well and building on prior learning so that all learners can participate, progress and achieve. Personalised learning focuses on the individual learner from the earliest level through to lifelong learning. Learners are involved in planning next steps in learning and in deciding which qualifications to study for and at which level, taking into account opportunities for and entry requirements of further and higher education and employment, as well as strengths and interests. Personalisation means a broad range of approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.

14.5 All staff need to be responsible for planning suitable programmes of learning for all children and young people regardless of individual abilities, to enable all learners to receive their **entitlement to an education that meets their needs**. Across stages, schools should not assume that children and young people who need support in their learning are not required to study a language or able to learn through the medium of Gaelic.