

Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) 2022-2027

HM Inspectors of Education

Executive Summary

The full plan is available [here](#).



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Foreword

As we prepare and publish our Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) 2022-2027, we face unprecedented global challenges to our education systems. As a nation we are making significant adjustments to the way we live, work and learn. In the Gaelic sector, there is increased collaboration among all partners to support learners in sustaining their fluency and attainment in the language. Some of this impact is being achieved through innovative approaches to technology. We need children, young people, educationalists and partners to continue to adapt to changing circumstances. There is potential in “building forward” from the pandemic to adopt approaches that increase uptake for progressive and high-quality Gaelic Medium Education and Gaelic (Learners).

Gaelic is a growing sector of Scottish education. We have seen important system improvements during the planning period we conclude. There is a welcome expansion of Gaelic schools, more use of technology for delivering learning in and through Gaelic, new legislation and a better understanding of immersion. There are some improvements in the secondary curriculum, for example the availability of Foundation Apprenticeships through the medium of Gaelic. More adults are learning the language. These are examples of improvements for which HM Inspectors of Education, regional and national teams within Education Scotland have had collective impact and continue to support, whilst working in partnership. However, Gaelic is a fragile, endangered language. It is a vibrant, beneficial language and medium of learning, along with its associated rich culture and heritage. The outcomes of following pathways for Gaelic in life-long education include those associated with bilingualism and multilingualism, employment, social, economic and personal benefits.



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Sustaining more pace in the growth of high-quality education is fundamental to securing Gaelic's future. We need more of our learners to be fluent going into post-school destinations, with a sense of identity, responsibility and pride in Gaelic. They need to be equipped with the right skills and capacities to contribute to employment, the economy, culture as well as intergenerational transmission of Gaelic. We also need to continue to grow Gaelic (Learners), and the understanding of Gaelic as part of inclusion and diversity within the English medium sector to also contribute to the future of Gaelic. This is a collective responsibility, with each stakeholder evidencing their impact towards national priorities.

Our new GLP is part of our strategic, corporate planning and demonstrates how we continue to contribute to the further development of Gaelic Education. We have published our new Corporate Plan (2021-2026) which sets out how we will work towards our vision of achieving excellence and equity for all of Scotland's learners, with Scotland's educators. We look forward to further collaboration with our partners to ensure we deliver a positive impact for learners and educators in Gaelic Education. We will encourage innovation and adapt to ensure sustained improvement and high-quality learning and teaching for all learners of Gaelic across Scotland.



This Gaelic Language Plan was being prepared prior to the announcement of the educational reform in Scotland. We recognise that the results of the consultation on education reform will necessitate changes to our Gaelic Language Plan.

As the implementation of the consultation on reform is progressed, we aspire to this plan still enabling change and support to practitioners, and others, in order that they can better support Scotland's learners of Gaelic. This change and support is based on use of evidence from scrutiny activity.



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Key Principles

Equal respect

Under the terms of the 2005 Act, a key principle is to securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland, commanding equal respect to the English language. Public authorities, such as HM Inspectors must demonstrate how this principle will be achieved and maintained in practice.

Active offer

HM Inspectors will make an active offer of our services for Gaelic to our employees and the public. This will ensure that where Gaelic services are made available by us, Gaelic users are made aware of their existence, and are actively encouraged to use them. We will aim to ensure that our Gaelic language services are as accessible as our English language services.

Mainstreaming

The key aim of the National Gaelic Language Plan is that Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations. In order to achieve this aim, the normalisation or mainstreaming of Gaelic as part of the day-to-day fabric of modern Scottish life is a key action and public authorities are central to this.

HM Inspectors will ensure that opportunities for the public and our staff to use Gaelic are normalised, in support of the National aim that Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations.

Context

Education Scotland recognises that Gaelic is an integral part of Scotland's heritage, national identity, and current cultural life.

In our work, we seek to:

Encourage the increased use of Gaelic

Promote the acquisition and learning of Gaelic

Promote a positive image of Gaelic

Our work includes giving strategic direction to the continued development of the curriculum for Gaelic Medium Education (GME), Gaelic Learner Education (GLE) and Learning about Gaelic Language and Culture (LAGC). Throughout the plan we refer to the Gaelic sector as encompassing these three elements.

High-level Aim	<p>Publish scrutiny evidence relating to the Gaelic sector on the new Chief Inspector’s area of the Education Scotland website, including on issues bespoke to the sector. Support empowerment by sharing scrutiny evidence with senior leaders, teachers and partners, including at events. Ensure the Gaelic sector is part of the ongoing programme of thematic inspections and, as appropriate, deliver a thematic inspection on key aspects of Gaelic Education during the lifetime of the plan.</p>
Desired Outcome	<p>In taking forward our work, HM Inspectors of Education will enact the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005, particularly in playing our part in securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language.</p> <p>HM Inspectors of Education will provide independent evaluation of the quality of Gaelic across education sectors. This will be based on our unique evidence base, including observing learning at first hand. We will use this to promote improvement and provide assurance to service users, Scottish Ministers and the public about standards, quality and improvement in Gaelic Education. In so doing, we will strive to reduce gaps to play our part in achieving excellence, equity and equality for the Gaelic sector.</p>
Current Practice	<p>For a previous high-level aim, and as part of inspection and review principles and code of practice, we reviewed how well programmes of independent and further inspection, and other evaluation activities support improvement for the Gaelic sector.</p> <p>Having HM Inspectors of Education or Associate Assessors with expertise in Gaelic Education, including a ability to speak Gaelic, as part of inspections and evaluation activities gives bespoke local evidence to feed into local, national and system improvement and reporting.</p> <p>Our publication of the Advice on Gaelic Education outlines and clarifies key effective practices for the Gaelic sector. It assists educators apply some of the overarching Framework for Evaluating the Quality of Services and Organisations to the sector.</p> <p>We share our evidence-based advice to influence national policy and support. Our scrutiny findings impact across all of our strategic priorities, which also are a set of corporate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These are a defined set of quantitative measures, clearly linked to our inputs, outputs and short-term outcomes.</p> <p>Our impact from scrutiny includes improving the strategic leadership of Gaelic; leading on immersion pedagogy; and unpacking further Curriculum for Excellence, including foundation apprenticeships, A 1+2 Approach to Languages and providing professional advice on the expansion of funded early learning and childcare to 1140 hours.</p>

High-level Aim

Publish scrutiny evidence relating to the Gaelic sector on the new Chief Inspector's area of the Education Scotland website, including on issues bespoke to the sector. Support empowerment by sharing scrutiny evidence with senior leaders, teachers and partners, including at events. Ensure the Gaelic sector is part of the ongoing programme of thematic inspections and, as appropriate, deliver a thematic inspection on key aspects of Gaelic Education during the lifetime of the plan.

Actions Required

- Ensure scrutiny is consistently delivering positive outcomes, with a common purpose resulting in equal respect for Gaelic as a sector and language for learners, educators and our own staff.
- Ensure that our scrutiny activity enacts, applies and evaluates legislation, policy and guidance specific to the Gaelic sector, including the objectives set within strategic planning, such as the Corporate Plan and Gaelic-specific national priorities.
- Continue to support quality and improvement of the Gaelic sector at a local, national and system levels during the recovery period thereby securing the delivery of better learning experiences, and excellence and equity, for learners in the Gaelic system.
- Continue to carry out and publish an annual programme of scrutiny, aligned with our Standards and Evaluation Framework, previous GLP high-level aims and demonstrating equal respect to the sector. HM Inspectors of Education or Associate Assessors with expertise in Gaelic Education will lead on these activities.
- Increase the breadth and depth of evidence we gather on local authority, college, community learning and development and Gaelic Learner Education. In so doing, ensure that publications on inspection incorporate the distinctive approaches of the Gaelic sector to set expectations and model equal respect.
- Use the findings from scrutiny to support the identification of priorities for improvement in Gaelic Education at local, regional and national level and across all sectors of Scottish education and to influence professional learning and leadership.
- Increase the quality, breadth and depth of evidence and reporting on the Gaelic sector as part of the ongoing programme of thematic inspections.
- Deliver a thematic inspection on key aspects of Gaelic Education during the lifetime of the plan.
- In deciding on arrangements for further inspection of individual provisions, ensure that the strengths and development areas of GME provision impact on decisions.
- Ensure improvement from scrutiny findings by participating in direct professional dialogue and engagement with staff in both scrutiny, other directorates and partners to support improvement, and wider professional learning and leadership.
- Work with and inform the National Research Strategy to identify best practice in education which can be used within the Scottish system.
- Invest in our staff who deliver services for Gaelic so that more staff can contribute effectively to the principles of inspecting in the Gaelic sector.
- Continue to provide a Gaelic version of inspection questionnaires, letters and reports of Gaelic medium provision and ensure that evaluative comments are made about Gaelic Education in inspection letters.

High-level Aim Support scrutiny and self-evaluation for improvement in the Gaelic sector. This will ensure continuing transparency in how we inspect the Gaelic sector, and updating our Advice on Gaelic Education, based on best practice in scrutiny findings and our scrutiny frameworks, as appropriate.

Desired Outcome In taking forward our work, HM Inspectors of Education will enact the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005, particularly in playing our part in securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language.

HM Inspectors of Education will provide independent evaluation of the quality of Gaelic across education sectors. This will be based on our unique evidence base, including observing learning at first hand. We will use this to promote improvement and provide assurance to service users, Scottish Ministers and the public about standards, quality and improvement in Gaelic Education. In so doing, we will strive to reduce gaps to play our part in achieving excellence, equity and equality for the Gaelic sector.

Current Practice There is no dedicated scrutiny and self-evaluation framework for the Gaelic sector. The purpose of the Advice on Gaelic Education includes assisting educators to apply it to the “How good is our ..?” series.

The Advice on Gaelic Education has had measurable impact at local, national and system levels, and beyond.

- Actions Required**
- Use the knowledge and evidence from inspection, review and other scrutiny activities for improvement purposes to update the Advice on Gaelic Education and contribute to the Chief Inspector Reports.
 - Engage with our staff and stakeholders to embed an improved approach to quality improvement and self-evaluation, from which we can clearly evaluate the impact of our work.
For this, we will share regularly our inspection evidence, including challenge questions and effective practice. We also need to ensure that our support for Gaelic Medium Education has equal respect to what international inspectorates do for similar systems of education.
 - Share effective practice from the Gaelic sector using the same approaches as available through English.



Please see the full version of the Gaelic Language Plan on our corporate website.

This has more details of how our Gaelic Language Plan links to the National Gaelic Language Plan, National Performance Framework and the National Improvement Framework.

The full version of the Gaelic Language Plan also has details of other high-level aims and corporate objectives.