

Advice on Gaelic Education

**Gaelic Medium Education: creating an ethos for
Gaelic in Gaelic Medium schools and other
settings**

Updated March 2022

13. Gaelic Medium Education: creating an ethos for Gaelic in Gaelic Medium schools and other settings

Key messages:

- All Gaelic Medium provisions need to aim to have a permeating ethos that is conducive to learning Gaelic. For this, all staff, children, young people and parents have a meaningful contribution to make.
- All members of a school's community need to have a positive and inclusive attitude to the Gaelic language and to those who speak it and are learning the language.
- When Gaelic and English Medium provision are together in the one school, all children need to have an opportunity to learn about Gaelic language, culture and heritage as part of Scotland's identity.
- Children and young people need to be encouraged to speak and use Gaelic for a range of purposes in the development of their learning across the curriculum and add to the ethos for Gaelic in a school.

13.1 All Gaelic Medium provisions need to aim to have a permeating ethos that is conducive to learning Gaelic. For this, all staff, children, young people and parents have a meaningful contribution to make.

13.2 An ethos for Gaelic is created with the **use of Gaelic for delivering all four contexts of the curriculum**. It is based on a sense of pride in Gaelic language, culture and a celebration of bilingualism.

13.3 All members of a school's community need to have a positive and inclusive attitude to the Gaelic language and to those who speak it and are learning the language. There needs to be a **common understanding of why Gaelic is important and its value to learning**. An ethos for Gaelic is caring, nurturing and respectful and one in which all staff, children and young people engage regularly in conversations through the medium of Gaelic. This makes Gaelic the language of the school and ELC setting. Additionally, all those connected to Gaelic Medium provision need to have an understanding of why they will hear Gaelic being spoken and used in the school and ELC setting. If they are not yet fluent in Gaelic, they need to be committed to using and learning some Gaelic, even basic everyday exchanges. Immersion is a particular way of learning. All should understand its rationale and associated practices. In Gaelic Medium provision, Gaelic is heard and visible all the time within classrooms and playrooms, beyond the classroom/playroom and outdoors. This helps develop children's and young people's fluency. It gives children real-life opportunities to be applying their Gaelic. Gaelic is used in whole-school events and venues, for example at assemblies, at prize-giving, in making announcements, in visiting classrooms and playrooms, in the dining room and in answering the telephone. Gaelic is visible, for example in signage and in communications such as letters and emails. This helps embed Gaelic out with the classroom and playroom.

13.4 When **Gaelic and English Medium provision are together in the one school, all children need to have an opportunity to learn about Gaelic language, culture and heritage as part of Scotland's identity**. The 1+2 Approach to language learning presents opportunities for learning Gaelic. All staff, children and young people need to have a shared understanding of the rationale for Gaelic. In situations where Gaelic and English Medium provision are together in the same school, Gaelic is heard and visible all the time within

classrooms, beyond the classroom and outdoors. Those doing Gaelic Learner Education also practise their Gaelic to help develop their fluency and to give real-life opportunities to apply their Gaelic. Gaelic is used in whole-school events and venues. It is visible, for example in signage and in communications such as letters and emails. This embeds Gaelic out with the classroom and playroom.

13.5 Children and young people need to be encouraged to speak and use Gaelic for a range of purposes too in the development of their learning across the curriculum and add to the **ethos for Gaelic** in a school/ELC setting. This presents a great opportunity for children to be leaders of their own and other's learning and achievement. In developing the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence, there are many opportunities for children and young people to be active and independent in enterprise, cultural, musical, sporting, and volunteering and leadership activities and events. In doing this, children's and young people's achievements should be recognised through profiling and with school, local and national awards and trophies. A responsibility for ensuring an ethos for Gaelic also extends to visitors to the school/ELC setting, whether this may be as a partner, parent or a member of the community. They also need to play their part in enhancing the school's ethos for Gaelic with their commitment to the use of Gaelic. The use of **information communications technology** and music should also be maximised to create an ambiance for Gaelic in schools/ELC setting. As visitors approach the school, there should be visible and audible signs that Gaelic is valued and used in the school/ELC setting.

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