

# Advice on Gaelic Education

**Gaelic Medium Education: the immersion phase  
(immersion in the Broad General Education from  
end of P3/beginning of P4 onwards)**

Updated March 2022

## 8. Gaelic Medium Education: the immersion phase (immersion in the Broad General Education from end of P3/beginning of P4 onwards)

### Key messages:

- In the immersion phase, the curriculum in its entirety continues to be taught through the medium of Gaelic across all four aspects of learning.
- In the immersion phase, children begin to **read and write skills in English language** and to learn at a quicker pace across the curricular areas and contexts.
- Teachers plan children's learning to develop vocabulary, phrases and syntax connected to the different areas of the curriculum, language skills, grammar and an appreciation of bilingualism and Gaelic language and culture.
- In the immersion phase **teachers lead learning in all curriculum areas, including the newly introduced English, through the medium of Gaelic.**
- **When Gaelic Medium Education is being delivered successfully, the immersion phase is planned to operate throughout primary and into secondary.**
- **In secondary, Gaelic immersion pathways are taken forward within a broad general curriculum up to the end of S3 as a minimum entitlement leading to qualifications in and through Gaelic.**
- **There is a high expectation that young people will continue in Gaelic Medium Education to achieve awards and qualifications in and through Gaelic in the senior phase leading to post-school positive destinations in the Gaelic sector.**

**8.1** In the immersion phase, the curriculum in its entirety continues to be taught through the medium of Gaelic across all four aspects of learning. As such, the approaches detailed above continue to apply to the immersion phase, articulated to children's improving fluency and being age- and stage-appropriate. Teachers' monitoring and tracking of progress and achievement should confirm that **children now have a secure base in Gaelic language to transfer to develop reading and writing skills in English language**, and to learning at a quicker pace across the curricular areas and contexts.

**8.2** In the best examples, staff show a very strong commitment to **ensuring that the curriculum is delivered totally through the medium of Gaelic**. They transform all learning into opportunities for children to hear and use Gaelic with an initial emphasis remaining on listening and talking. They use creative ways to enable children to learn the language with ease and in situations that they enjoy. This includes a planned, integrated approach to grammar and one which is motivating to children. This should include analysing the quality of children's fluency as they move from total immersion to increase the standard of fluency. Teachers will take forward grammar in collaborative, fun-type activities and through memorisation of songs and set phrases. They will also use examples of oral and written text where grammar is accurate to build further children's confidence and fluency. Staff work with others to support children and parents to develop and use the language at home and in the community.

**8.3** In best practice, in the immersion phase **teachers lead learning in all curriculum areas, including the newly introduced English, through the medium of Gaelic**. They enable children to develop vocabulary connected to the different areas of the curriculum, language skills, grammar and an appreciation of Gaelic language and culture. They have clear plans and strategies in place to support them in doing this. Across the curricular areas, as teachers set outcomes for learning they also set ones connected to developing children's learning of Gaelic. The children themselves also have a role in setting these outcomes for language based on the feedback that they are receiving on their work. Non-contact time for teachers of Gaelic Medium provision is covered by staff who speak Gaelic. Teachers need to be supported by support staff for Gaelic who speak high-quality Gaelic. Their deployment needs to be planned with them to maximise their impact, both within the classroom and beyond. School

leaders need to have a clear rationale on how they are ensuring that the balance of teaching through the medium of Gaelic is kept in favour of Gaelic. **When Gaelic Medium Education is being delivered successfully, the immersion phase is planned to operate throughout primary and into secondary.** In secondary, Gaelic immersion is taken forward within a broad general curriculum up to the end of S3 as a minimum entitlement. **In secondary, Gaelic immersion is taken forward within a broad general curriculum up to the end of S3 as a minimum entitlement within pathways leading to qualifications in and through Gaelic. There is a high expectation that young people will continue in Gaelic Medium Education to achieve awards and qualifications in and through Gaelic in the senior phase leading to post-school positive destinations in the Gaelic sector.**

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