

Parental Experience, Magaidh Wentworth - Comann Nam Pàrant

Key messages from the presentation to represent the views of families

Parents have welcomed the Advice on Gaelic Education and some of their comments are:-

'The content is quite uplifting. It is coherent and ties in well with general comments both CnP Nationally and CnP Locally have made about GME.'

'There is recognition of the informal use of Gaelic. I like this awareness of an essential aspect to fluency in Gaelic.'

'I welcome this paper from Education Scotland and think that it provides useful advice to those responsible for delivering GME while providing parents with an idea of what best practice in GME looks like.'

'This is what we should be aiming for and what successful GME looks like'

'Particularly pleased to see the importance of ethos included – children need not only to be able to speak Gaelic but to be motivated to want to use it!'

Concern was raised at a recent Comann Nam Pàrant conference that Education Authorities were not ensuring this Advice was being used in schools.

Parents are hoping Education Authorities will have firm guidance in light of the Education Bill.

I would like to share with you my experience of the development of Gaelic Medium Education over the last 30 years. I was not a Gàidhlig speaker then, however my husband was and we wanted our children to have Gàidhlig.

With the support of Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Àraich, we established a Gaelic nursery and that was the start of our continued Gaelic Medium Education journey. We carried out our research, disseminated information to parents in and around the local community and we had enough children to get a P1 class started. The education authority supplied us with a demountable unit for a classroom and we found a teacher.

Gaelic Medium Education has now become well-established and research is evidencing that it is successful. Teachers and children have access to quality resources to deliver GME.

There are many opportunities for our young people to use their Gàidhlig out with school and Gàidhlig is more visible in communities.

Moving forward

A right to Gaelic Medium Education would be welcomed by parents through this Education Bill to secure the continuity of progression for GME from 3-18 years.

We should remember that although parents are choosing GME for their children, we need to ensure that our children are kept motivated to use their Gàidhlig.

Thank you for listening.

Magaidh Wentworth, June 2015