



## Community Services

# **Response to a Parental Request for Gaelic Medium Education (GMPE) in Bunessan Primary School, Isle of Mull.**

**May 2017**

**The request for GMPE in Bunessan Primary School has been successful. Information on the rationale behind this decision is contained within this report.**

This document has been issued by Argyll and Bute Education Services in response to a parental request for GMPE in Bunessan, Isle of Mull under the terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

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## **1.0 The request for GMPE and consultation process (initial assessment)**

### **1.1 Parental request for GMPE**

Argyll and Bute Council received a request for Gaelic Medium Primary Education (GMPE) in Bunessan Primary School from The Ross of Mull and Iona Comann nam Pàrant group in June 2016. The request stated that the families of the 2017 cohort of P1 children all wanted GMPE to be available in their local primary school.

The secretary of the Mull & Iona Gaelic Partnership emailed Education Services to express the Partnership's strong support for the introduction of GMPE in Bunessan Primary School.

Please follow the link below to see the Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education. This Statutory Guidance has been issued by Bòrd na Gàidhlig under Section 9 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and consists of two main parts. Part 1 provides guidance specifically relating to the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 and its provisions for the Gaelic medium primary education (GMPE) request process and the duty placed on education authorities to promote and support Gaelic education. These provisions came into force on 1 February 2017. Part 1 of this Guidance was useful

<http://www.gaidhlig.scot/bord/education/statutory-guidance/>

The initial assessment process started by liaising with Health Services on the island to ascertain how many families had children under five and where they resided. A questionnaire was delivered by post to all families in The Ross of Mull area with children from 0 . 4 years old. The questionnaire asked whether English or Gaelic Medium Education was the preferred option for each of their children and when they are due to start school.

Responses were to be returned to the authority by **4<sup>th</sup> November 2016**.

#### **1.4 Identification of the GMPE assessment area**

Caledonian MacBrayne (Calmac) were consulted with regard to the reliability of the ferry crossing from Iona to Fionnphort. Due to bad weather and stormy seas it is possible that children in Iona could potentially miss a considerable proportion of their education if they had to travel to Bunessan Primary School to access GMPE. In September 2016 there were 65 cancelled sailings, in November 2016 there were 32 cancelled sailings and in December 2016 there were 61 cancelled sailings.

## **2.0 Full assessment process responses from statutory consultees**

- 2.1** It is required that when undertaking a full assessment the views of statutory consultees be sought and their response taken in to account. Views were

### **3.0 Full assessment process consideration of mandatory factors**

- 3.1** When carrying out a full assessment, an education authority must have regard to a list of mandatory matters, and must decide to secure the provision of GMPE in the GMPE assessment area unless it would be unreasonable to do so.
- 3.2** Views provided by statutory consultees - as previously reported the response from each of the statutory consultees was in favour of GMPE in Bunessan.
- 3.3** Guidance on Gaelic Education . the education authority must have regard to this guidance when responding to a parental request for GMPE. The guidance can be viewed at: <http://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Statutory-Guidance-for-Gaelic-Education.pdf>
- 3.4** Initial assessment information . all the children whose parents requested GT UE ā B } ^••ā U!ā æ^ U&@ [ | |ā^ , āā @ •&@ [ | q ^āā \* catchment area. There will be no additional burden on Education Services to meet the travel costs of pupils accessing GMPE. The families of all children enrolling in P1 in August 2017 have requested GMPE with a further enrolment to follow. The families of those children for whom the request was made have some exposure to Gaelic at home.
- 3.5** Demand throughout the education authority area . the anonymous consultation with parents / carers of children under five years of age shows that 100% of the 2017 intake want GMPE with a future enrolment guaranteed. The fact that four families did not respond means that, as yet, their intentions are unknown. Across the education authority the numbers of children being enrolled in GMPE remains stable, with some schools receiving more pupils for GMPE than EMPE. It is therefore reasonable to assume that The Ross of Mull will experience a similar trend and that there will be future enrolments for GMPE.
- 3.6** Existing GMPE provision . Salen Primary School enjoys a healthy intake in to the GMPE P1 class each year. However, Salen is considered by

Department of the council and the Scottish Government in order to provide accommodation for the GME class.

**3.9** Costs . The Scottish Government have pledged support from their Gaelic class. The cost of staffing will be met through Gaelic

**3.10** Teachers - a suitably qualified Gaelic speaking teacher will be sought social media, through email correspondence and

