



Agenda Item 8

**Report on the Survey to the Future
Demand for Gaelic Medium
Education in Falkirk Council**

Falkirk Council

Title: Report on the survey to the future demand for Gaelic Medium Education in Falkirk Council
Meeting: Education, Children and Young People Executive
Date: 28 January 2020
Submitted By: Director of Children's Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with the outcome of the survey exercise undertaken with the parents of children starting their ante pre-school year to determine the future demand for Gaelic Medium Education (GME) in Falkirk.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Education, Children and Young People Executive is asked to:

- (1) note the contents of this report;**
- (2) agree the proposal set out in paragraph 4.12 below to engage further with parents / carers who have indicated an interest in accessing GME for their children;**
- (3) agree that, should recommendation (2) above be agreed, that the Director of Children's Services be instructed to provide a further report to the Education, Children and Young People Executive Committee; and**
- (4) determine what other actions, if any, officers should be instructed to take.**

3. Background

- 3.1. At its meeting on 17 September 2019 the Education, Children and Young People Executive considered a report that detailed the existing arrangements for the delivery of Gaelic Medium Education (GME) to Falkirk's children and agreed that a survey should be undertaken to determine the future demand for GME.
- 3.2. The survey was open from 18 September to 11 October. Parents/ Carers of ante pre-school children attending all of Falkirk's Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) provisions were invited to complete the survey which asked:

- Whether the parent/carer already had a child enrolled in a Falkirk school;
 - If the parent/carer would be interested in GME for their child if it was provided within Falkirk; and
 - If the parent/carer would be interested in GME for their child if it was provided outwith the Falkirk Council area.
- 3.3. As detailed in the report to the Education, Children and Young People Executive of 17 September there have been around 20 Falkirk children accessing GME across the P1-S6 stages for a number of years.

4. Considerations

Results of the survey

- 4.1. The survey (see attached as appendix 1) was distributed to 885 parent/carers with three year old children attending an ELC provision.
- 4.2. The survey received a 19% response rate (170 out of 885) with responses from 37 ELC settings and nil or no responses from 14 ELC settings.
- 4.3. Of those who responded, 66% already have a child enrolled in a Falkirk school.
- 4.4. 67 parents/ carers out of the 885 who were invited to complete the survey (7.6%) indicated that they would be interested in GME if it were to be provided in Falkirk.
- 4.5. 31 parents /carers out of the 885 who were invited to complete the survey (3.5%) indicated that they would be interested in GME if it were provided outwith Falkirk.
- 4.6. The figures outlined in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7 above would suggest that there **may** be demand for GME in Falkirk that is greater than long standing uptake figures to access provision.
- 4.7. The survey results are attached as appendix 2 to this report.

Children's Services View of the results of the survey

- 4.8. Given that the survey asked for a simple yes / no response it is difficult to determine how robust these figures are as those responding positively have only been in receipt of information regarding the nature of GME as set out in the survey document. See attached as appendix 1.
- 4.9. Across Scotland, with the exception of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Edinburgh and Glasgow Councils GME is usually provided from one central location which necessitates all of the children attending the school to be transported in taxis.

- 4.10 Other factors, such as continued association with a child's community peer group may also impact a parent / carer final decision regarding whether to access GME provision or not.

Proposed Next Steps

- 4.11 Officers consider that it would be prudent following the completion of this survey for further work to be carried out to seek to establish how many of those who have indicated that they would be interested in accessing GME would retain that interest when they know and understand more about the delivery of GME.
- 4.12 It is proposed that a seminar is arranged for those parents / carers who have at this stage expressed an interest to share more information about GME delivery and to then determine how robust the expressed interest is in accessing GME.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. If agreed the proposal at paragraph 4.12 above would seek further views from parents / carers regarding the future demand for GME.

6. Implications

Financial

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Resources

- 6.2 None

Legal

- 6.3 None

Risk

- 6.4 None

Equalities

- 6.5 There is no requirement to undertake an EPIA

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 6.6 None

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 Further engagement with the parents/ carers who have expressed an interest in accessing GME will help to inform the Council if existing arrangements for the provision of GME are sustainable in the long term.

Director of Children's Service

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Appendix 1 – Survey to determine the future demand for Gaelic Medium Education in Falkirk.

Appendix 2 – Results of Gaelic Medium Education Survey to determine the future demand for Gaelic Medium Education in Falkirk.

List of Background Papers:

None

Dear Parent / Carer

Gaelic Medium Education (Survey)

Falkirk Council are carrying out a short survey to find out what the future need for Gaelic Medium Education (GME). Currently Falkirk Council meets the demand for GME by accessing school places in neighbouring Councils and transporting pupils to these schools.

We would appreciate if you could take a few minutes to complete this.

Completed forms should be handed in to your school/early years office.

Thank you
Children's Services

Name of Child

Name of Early Years/Nursery Establishment

What is Gaelic Medium Education?

Gaelic Medium Education is an option within Scottish education that gives children and young people an opportunity to become fluent in Gaelic. Gaelic medium education is open to everyone, those who speak Gaelic and those who do not. All children/young people in Gaelic Medium Education follow the Curriculum for Excellence.

In the initial years of primary school pupils are taught only in Gaelic - this is called 'total immersion'. This is followed by 'immersion' which means Gaelic is still the language of the class and used for most lessons but pupils are taught to read and write in English as well.

Q1. Do you already have a child enrolled in a Falkirk School?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Q2. Would you be interested in Gaelic Medium Education for your child if it was provided in Falkirk?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Q3. Would you be interested in Gaelic Medium Education for your child if it was provided in a neighbouring Council?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Please provide your contact details if you would like us to contact you with the results from this survey (this will be published on our website?)

Name:	
Address:	
Tel No:	
Email Address	

Gaelic Medium Education Survey

Appendix 2

Falkirk Council carried out a short survey to find out the future demand for Gaelic Medium Education (GME) between 18 September and 11 October 2019. The survey was distributed to 885 parents with 3-year-old children attending an Early Years setting. The survey received a 19% response rate with 170 responses from 37 Early Years settings and 14 Early Years settings returning a nil or no response.

