

COVID-19

We are very aware that disruption due to COVID-19 has been a very difficult time for all parents and that some Gaelic Medium Parents have had additional concerns regarding the lack of language immersion during the period of absence from schools. As mentioned in our last newsletter we have been supporting parents by updating our website every few days with new resources and categorising according to age group. We would like to thank teachers and schools for all the work that has been produced for GME pupils and to other Gaelic bodies who have been working very hard to support pupils, parents and teachers in any way they can.

<https://www.parant.org.uk/>

Some examples are; BBC Alba have had more children's programmes available, Comunn na Gàidhlig's local officers have been adapting to new online ways to allow children to receive extra-curricular Gaelic support, Fèisean nan Gàidheal have been doing online music lessons through the medium of Gaelic along with their running of Café Bheairteis. Bòrd na Gàidhlig's "Cleachdiaigantaigh" initiative has many of the new activities advertised on that website. Both Stòrlann and Education Scotland have developed their online bank of resources to support pupils with opportunities through the medium of Gaelic which is extremely important especially for those pupils with no Gaelic at home. With online live Gaelic bookbug sessions, new YouTube channels, FilmG competitions among some of the opportunities available throughout the lockdown there was something for all ages.

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Tha sinn mothachail gu bheil am buaireadh a th' air tighinn an lùib COVID-19 air a bhith duilich do phàrantan agus gu bheil uallach a bharrachd air cuid de phàrantan FMG leis nach eil clann a' faighinn bogadh sa chànan nuair nach eil iad anns an sgoil. Mar a chaidh ainmeachadh sa chuairt-litir mu dheireadh, tha sinn air a bhith a' tabhann taic do phàrantan le bhith ag ùrachadh ar làrach-lìn a h-uile beagan làithean le stuthan ùra air an roinn a rèir aois. Bu mhath leinn taing a thoirt do thidsearan agus sgoiltean airson an obair a chaidh a dhèanamh airson sgoilearan FMG agus do bhuidhnean Gàidhlig eile a th' air a bhith ag obair gu dìchealach gus taic a thoirt do sgoilearan, phàrantan agus do thidsearan ann an dòigh sam bith. <https://www.parant.org.uk/>

Seo eisimpleirean den obair a chaidh a dhèanamh: tha barrachd phrògraman chloinne ri fhaighinn air BBC Alba; tha oifigearan ionadail aig Comunn na Gàidhlig air a bhith a' dèanamh nithean air-loidhne gus cothrom a thoirt do chloinn taic thar-churaicealaim fhaighinn ann an Gàidhlig; tha Fèisean nan Gàidheal air a bhith a' tabhann leasanan ciùil air-loidhne tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig cho math ri bhith a' cur air bhonn Café Beartais. Tha an iomairt aig Bòrd na Gàidhlig, "Cleachdiaigantaigh", a' sanas mòran de na gnìomhan ùr seo air an làrach-lìn sin. Tha Stòrlann agus Foghlam Alba le chèile air an stòras de ghoireasan air-loidhne aca a leasachadh gus taic a thoirt do sgoilearan le cothroman tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig, rud a tha fìor chudromach gu h-àraid do chloinn aig nach eil Gàidhlig san dachaigh.

Despite these measures and additional resources such as a prolonged period of absence from language immersion and how this has affected pupils is of course a concern for parents. This concern, along with no reference to GME in the Scottish Government Education Recovery Plan, prompted CnP (N) to write to the Education and Skills Committee at Scottish Government raising GME issues. We also encouraged local Comann nam Pàrant groups and individual parents to write to the Scottish Government, and we thank all those who took the time to write.

Following this we were pleased that on the 24th June, The Scottish Government published advice on Gaelic Medium Education for schools and local authorities returning after COVID-19. Although schools are now hoping to go back full time in August the guidance still applies. Most importantly GME is identified as a priority for Local Authorities in the recovery phase:

This advice note clearly identifies young people in Gaelic medium education as a priority group for whom recovery and transition arrangements need to be an identified priority for local authorities.

It is vital that schools are planning separately for GME and take steps to mitigate any language loss due to the absence of Gaelic immersion during the extended absence from school. Schools and Local Authorities should also consider external support such as Spòrs Gàidhlig and Fèisgoil. If any parents require more information about this, then please don't hesitate to contact us. The Advice is published on;

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-gaelic-medium-education/>

Prior to the announcement that schools would be returning full-time in August we were pleased that at least some schools had taken the decision to prioritise GME in their blended learning model.

Le seiseanan *Bookbug* beò air-loidhne sa Ghàidhlig, seanalan YouTube ùr agus farpaisean FilmG am measg nan cothroman a bha ri fhaighinn thairis air na mìosan a dh'fhalbh, bha rudeigin ann dhan h-uile duine.

A dh'aindeoin na chaidh a dhèanamh agus na goireasan a chaidh a thabhan, tha e fhathast, mar a bhiodh dùil, a' dèanamh uallach do phàrantan a bhuaidh a th' aig ùine cho fada às aonais bogadh sa chànan air sgoilearan. Thug an t-uallach seo, cho math ri dìth iomradh air FMG ann am Plana Feabhas Foghlaim Riaghaltas na h-Alba, air CnP(N) sgrìobhadh gu Comataidh an Fhoghlaim agus Sgìlean aig Riaghaltas na h-Alba airson aire a tharraing gu ceistean FMG. Bha sinn cuideachd a' moladh do bhuidhnean ionadail Chomann nam Pàrant agus do phàrantan fa leth sgrìobhadh chun an Riaghaltais agus tha sinn a' toirt taing dhan fheadhainn a rinn an oidhirp se a dhèanamh.

A' leantainn seo, bha sinn toilichte gun do dh'fhoillsich Riaghaltas na h-Alba stiùireadh air 24 Òg-mhios a thaobh FMG do sgoiltean is ùghdarrasan ionadail a' tilleadh às dèidh COVID-19. Ged a tha sgoiltean a-nis an dòchas a dhol air ais làn-ùine san Lùnastal, tha an stiùireadh fhathast ri leantainn. Nas cudromaiche, tha FMG air ainmeachadh mar phrìomhachas do dh' Ùghdarrasan Ionadail anns an ùine feabhais:

Tha an nota stiùiridh seo ag aithneachadh gu làidir òigridh ann am foghlam meadhan Gàidhlig mar bhuidheann prìomhachais agus feumar coimhead le prìomhachas air feabhas is eadar-ghluasad dhaibhsan taobh a-staigh an ùghdarrais ionadail.

Tha e deatamach gu bheil sgoiltean a' planadh fa leth airson FMG agus gu bheil iad a' gabhail ceumannan gus dèiligeadh ri cànan a chaidh a chall air sgàth dìth bogadh sa chànan nuair a bha iad far na sgoile cho fada. Bu chòir do sgoiltean is ùghdarrasan ionadail cuideachd beachdachadh air taic bhon taobh a-muigh, leithid Spòrs Gàidhlig agus Fèisgoil. Ma tha barrachd fiosrachaidh a dhìth air pàrantan mun seo, cuiridh fios thugainn sa bhad. Tha an Stiùireadh air fhoillseachadh aig,

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-gaelic-medium-education/>

National Parent Forum Q + A with John Swinney

On the 16th June the National Parent Forum of Scotland hosted a live Q + A session with Depute First Minister, Education Minister Mr John Swinney. The National Parent Forum of Scotland requested questions to be submitted beforehand. We encouraged GME parents to submit their questions. We were very glad to have Gaelic Medium Education represented at the meeting. If you missed the session you can catch up online on YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzOYSr8KsuY>

We would like to thank National Parent Forum of Scotland for putting this event on and especially to their chair Joanna Murphy for the difficult job she had chairing the session.

Parental Survey – Comann nam Pàrant

The National Parent Forum have been asking parents to tell them about their experience of learning at home and how they feel about the proposed return to school. We have shared the survey on social media and hope that you have managed to respond. We are planning a shorter survey with some specific questions on GME and will be sharing this shortly with parents. We hope that this will give parents an opportunity to help us identify good practice as well as some of the challenges during lockdown and for the recovery period.

Mus deach ainmeachadh gum biodh sgoiltean a' tilleadh làn-ùine san Lùnastal, bha sinn toilichte gu robh co-dhiù cuid de sgoiltean air roghnachadh prìomhachas a thoirt do FMG anns am modail ionnsachaidh aca.

Fòram Nàiseanta Phàrantan: Ceistean is Freagairtean le Iain Swinney

Air 16 Òg-mhìos chum Fòram Nàiseanta Phàrantan Alba seisean beò leis an Iar-Chiad Mhinistear agus Ministear an Fhoghlaim, Iain Swinney. Dh'iarr am Fòram gun deidheadh na ceistean a chur thuca ro làimh. Mhol sinne do phàrantan FMG ceistean a chur thuca. Bha sinn air leth toilichte gu robh FMG air a riochdachadh aig a' choinneamh. Ma chaill sibh an seisean, tha e ri fhaighinn air-loidhne, air YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzOYSr8KsuY>

Bu mhath leinn taing a thoirt do Fòram Nàiseanta Phàrantan Alba airson an tachartas seo a chur air dòigh agus gu h-àraid don chathraiche aca, Joanna Murphy, oir cha b' e obair fhurasta a bh' ann a bhith na cathraiche air an t-seisean.

Suirbhidh Phàrantan – Comann nam Pàrant

Tha am Fòram Nàiseanta Phàrantan air a bhith ag iarraidh air pàrantan innse dhaibh mu mar a chaidh dhaibh le bhith ag ionnsachadh aig an taigh agus ciamar a tha iad a' faireachdainn mu bhith a' tilleadh dhan sgoil. Tha sinn air an suirbhidh a chur suas air na meadhanan sòisealta againn agus tha sinn an dòchas gun deach agaibh air freagairt a chur thuca. Tha sinn fhèin an dùil suirbhidh nas giorra a chur air dòigh le ceistean sònraichte mu dheidhinn FMG agus bidh sinn a' sgaoileadh seo gu pàrantan a dh'aithghearr. Tha sinn an dòchas gun toir seo cothrom do phàrantan ar cuideachadh le bhith ag aithneachadh deagh eisimpleirean de dh'obair cho math ri cuid de na dùbhlain a nochd tro *lockdown* agus airson an ùine feabhais.

Annual General Meeting

On the 19th June we held our Annual General Meeting over Zoom. Holding a Zoom meeting was a first for us, but we are very pleased that it worked well. We had over 14 in attendance with representatives from across the country. We are very pleased that our 3 officer bearers, Helen MacKinnon from Glasgow as Chair, Fiona Stephens from Edinburgh as Vice Chair and Gill Steele from Aberfeldy as Secretary, are willing to remain in their roles for another year. Marsaili Dow also continues in her role as treasurer. We would like to thank them and the rest of the committee for their continued hard work in representing the Gaelic Medium parents' voice across the country. We were also delighted to welcome Emma Burrows from Portree to the committee, great to have a representative from the Isle of Skye. With the ongoing threat of COVID-19 we plan to continue utilising Zoom as our meeting platform which should also make it easier for members to attend meetings.

Edinburgh Gaelic week for schools

Due to COVID-19 we had to cancel our Gaelic School's week in Edinburgh at the end of April. We had almost 400 pupils registered this year, and we were looking forward to seeing them. We have worked with Our Dynamic Earth, one of the venues that we visit every year, to produce online Gaelic resources for schools. There are now eight worksheets translated into Gaelic which have been sent round schools. Topics include, Rainforests, Fish, Antarctica and Clouds. We hope that these resources are useful for teachers and have given pupils the opportunity to receive exciting resources in Gaelic. If there is any teacher or school who hasn't received these and would like a copy, then please contact – innes@cnag.org

Coinneamh Bhliadhnail

Air 16 Òg-mhios, chum sinn ar Coinneamh Bhliadhnail air Zoom. B' e siud a' chiad uair a rinn sinn a leithid air Zoom, ach tha sinn toilichte gun do dh'obraich cùisean cho math. Bha còrr is 14 neach an làthair le riochdairean bho air feadh na dùthcha. Tha sinn air leth toilichte gu bheil trìuir de na h-oifigearan againn a' fuireach anns na dreuchdan aca airson bliadhna eile – Helen NicFhionghain à Glaschu na cathraiche, Fiona Stephens à Dùn Èideann mar iar-chathraiche agus Gill Steele à Obar Pheallaidh mar rùnaire. Bidh Marsaili Dow cuideachd a' cumail a' dol mar ionmhasair. Bu mhath leinn taing a thoirt dhaibh agus dhan chòrr den chomataidh airson an obair chruaidh a tha iad a' dèanamh le bhith a' riochdachadh phàrantan meadhan Gàidhlig air feadh na dùthcha. Tha sinn cuideachd toilichte fàilte a chur air Emma Burrows à Port Rìgh chun a' chomataidh; tha e math riochdaire fhaighinn às an Eilean Sgitheanach. Leis gu bheil COVID-19 fhathast na chunnart, tha sinn an dùil leantainn le coinneamhan tro Zoom agus bu chòir gum bi e nas fhasa do bhuill a bhith an làthair cuideachd.

Seachdainn Gàidhlig Dhùn Èideann do Sgoiltean

Air sgàth COVID-19, thàinig oirnn an seachdainn Gàidhlig an Dùn Èideann a chur dheth aig deireadh a' Ghiblein. Bha faisg air 400 sgoilear air clàradh am-bliadhna, agus bha sinn a' coimhead air adhart rim faicinn. Tha sinn air obair a dhèanamh le *Our Dynamic Earth*, aon de na làraich air am bi sinn a' tadhal gach bliadhna, airson goireasan air-loidhne a chruthachadh sa Ghàidhlig do sgoiltean. Tha a-nis ochd duilleagan-obrach air an eadar-theangachadh dhan Ghàidhlig agus chaidh an cur a-mach gu sgoiltean. Am measg nan cuspairean tha Coilltean-uisge, Èisg, Antarctica agus Sgòthan. Tha sinn an dòchas gum bidh na goireasan seo feumail do thidsearan agus gun d' fhuair sgoilearan an cothrom obrachadh air na goireasan inntinneach seo ann an Gàidhlig. Ma tha tidsear no sgoil ann nach d' fhuair iad seo agus a bhiodh ag iarraidh lethbhreac, cuiribh fios gu innes@cnag.org

Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular Community

This research on the use and transmission of Gaelic as a communal language in the Western Isles, Staffin and Tìree was published recently. The research has been conducted between 2015 and 2017 by Soillse's Islands Gaelic Research Project. The principle author of the book and the report is Conchúr Ó Giollagáin along with the field workers Gòrdan Camshron and Pàdruig Moireach. Other authors involved in the publication are Brian Ó Curnáin, Iain Caimbeul, Brain MacDonald and Tamás Pérerváry.

The research project draws together a series of surveys and consultations within the Gaelic speaking communities as the basis for forming a diagnosis and prognosis for the future of Gaelic in the islands. The final chapter of the book proposes a new model of language policy which the researchers believe is needed to effectively address the decline in community use of Gaelic.

The report shows the real endangerment of the language in the traditional Gaelic communities. However, it also gives us evidence that we need to increase our efforts in support of the language by reviewing and reforming relevant legislation and effectively monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of all our activities. In the past Comann nam Pàrant have supported a number of campaigns for Gaelic schools in different areas of the Western Isles and, it is our opinion that the new Gaelic policy of automatically enrolling children in GME unless parents request otherwise, should be taken further and Gaelic schools be established with English medium education phased out in most schools. We also would like to see an increase in provision for the 0-3 age group with a strong focus on supporting families' use of Gaelic in the home.

Staing na Gàidhlig anns a' Choimhearsnachd Dhùthchasach

Chaidh an rannsachadh seo air cleachdadh is toirt seachad na Gàidhlig mar chànan coimhearsnachd anns na h-Eileanan an Iar, Stafainn agus ann an Tìoradh fhoillseachadh bho chionn ghoirid. Chaidh an rannsachadh a thoirt gu buil eadar 2015 agus 2017 tro Phròiseact Rannsachaidh Gàidhlig nan Eilean aig Soillse. B' e prìomh ùghdair an leabhair agus na h-aithisg Conchúr Ó Giollagáin, còmhla ri luchd-obrach Gòrdan Camshron agus Pàdruig Moireach. Bha ùghdaran eile na lùib cuideachd: Brian Ó Curnáin, Iain Caimbeul, Brain MacDonald agus Tamás Pérerváry.

Tha a' phròiseact rannsachaidh a' tarraing gu chèile sreath de shurbhaidhean is cho-chomhairleachaidhean taobh a-staigh coimhearsnachdan Gàidhlig mar bhonn-stèidh airson suidheachadh na Gàidhlig san h-eileanan aithneachadh an-dràsta agus na tha an dàn dhi san àm ri teachd. Anns a' chaibeadal mu dheireadh den leabhar tha moladh air modail ùr de phoileasaidh cànan a tha an luchd-rannsachaidh a' creidsinn a tha deatamach gus dèiligeadh gu h-èifeachdach ri crìonadh ann an cleachdadh na Gàidhlig sa choimhearsnachd.

Tha an aithisg a' sealltainn am fìor chunnart anns a bheil ar cànan ann an coimhearsnachdan traidiseanta na Gàidhlig. Tha e a' toirt dhuinn fianais, ge-tà, gum feum sinn ar n-oidhirpean a leudachadh ann an bhith a' cur taic ris a' chànan le bhith a' dèanamh lèirmheas agus leasachadh air reachdas agus cuideachd le bhith a' cumail sùil gheur air ar gnìomhan agus dè cho èifeachdach sa tha iad. Tha Comann nam Pàrant, anns na bliadhnaichean a dh'fhalbh, air taic a chur ri grunn iomairtean airson sgoiltean Gàidhlig ann an diofar sgìrean de na h-Eileanan an Iar agus tha sinn den bheachd gum bu chòir am poileasaidh ùr, far an tèid clann a chlàradh ann an foghlam Gàidhlig mura h-iar pàrantan an cur gu aonad Bheurla, a dhol nas fhaide le bhith a' stèidheachadh sgoiltean Gàidhlig le foghlam meadhan Beurla air a stad, beag air bheag, anns a' mhòr-chuid de sgoiltean. Bu mhath leinn cuideachd leudachadh fhaicinn anns an t-solar airson clann aois 0-3, le fòcas làidir air taic a thoirt do theaghlachaich gus Gàidhlig a chleachdadh san dachaigh.

Tidsearan Ùra / New Teachers

As you can see from the table below, this year we have 18 Newly Qualified Primary Gaelic Teachers and 12 Newly Qualified Secondary Gaelic Teachers taking up their posts. Attracting people to the teaching profession can be a challenge so it is encouraging to see these numbers coming through the different courses now available. There are a number of institutions, including Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, University of Edinburgh and University of Strathclyde, offering many different routes into teaching through a 1-year PGDE course or 4/5 year Degree course. With these courses being continually developed we hope that this will make it accessible for anyone who wishes to have a career in Gaelic teaching. The new immersion course at Glasgow University will, we hope, also provide an opportunity for adults in the Central Belt to achieve fluency in preparation for teaching.

Mar a chì sibh anns a' chlàr gu h-ìosal, am-bliadhna tha 18 Tidsearan Gàidhlig Ùr Chlàraichte sa Bhun-sgoil agus 12 san Àrd-sgoil a' tòiseachadh nan dreuchdan. 'S e dùbhlán a th' ann a bhith a' tàladh dhaoine gu obair teagasg agus, leis a sin, tha e na adhbhar misneachd a bhith a' faicinn na h-àireamhan seo a' tighinn tro na diofar chùrsaichean a tha ri fhaighinn na làithean seo. Tha grunn àiteachan, nam measg Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann agus Oilthigh Shrath Chluaidh, a' tabhann diofar shlighean gu ruige teagasg bho chùrsa aon-bhliadhna PGDE gu ceum fad 4/5 bliadhna. Leis na cùrsaichean seo an-còmhnaidh gan leasachadh, tha sinn an dòchas gum bi e comasach do dhuine sam bith cùrsa a lorg a bheir dhaibh cothrom air dreuchd ann an teagasg Gàidhlig. Tha sinn cuideachd an dòchas gun toir an cùrsa bogaidh ùr aig Oilthigh Ghlaschu cothrom do dh'inbhich ann an ceann a deas na dùthcha fileantas a choileanadh mar ullachadh airson teagasg.

Year	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
Primary NQT	17	23	17	18
Secondary NQT	7	3	11	12

