

Rationale

Planning a Play Pedagogy within the GME total immersion phase

“Interactions in Gaelic are a key driver in planning progression in the curriculum for GME”
Realising the Ambition

7.2 ...learning will firstly have a very strong focus on listening and talking in Gaelic through a play-based curriculum, which is widely evidenced to be the most appropriate approach for the development of young children’s early learning. ***Education Scotland Advice on Gaelic Education Gaelic Medium Education: total immersion***

Key messages for the Gaelic total medium immersion stages

- Take a Child Centred Approach.
- The basis of learning during the total immersion stages, as reflected in Realising the Ambition, states that interactions with children in Gaelic are a key driver.
- Use intentional and reflective interactions, experiences and spaces

A Play Pedagogy that simultaneously promotes interactions based on a conscious and clearly understood Gaelic total immersion language progression framework will help ensure that learning provisions have a child centred play pedagogy that is built upon reflective interactions, experiences and spaces within a Gaelic total immersion framework.

When considering your interactions, experiences and spaces, you must apply a flexible, responsive and intentional planning to allow for child led rich interactions.

Highland’s Words Up Early key messages support practitioners in their interactions in Gaelic for all young children and embed the principles of reflective and sensitive ‘serve and return’ interactions.

Child-led, adult facilitated play allows for rich language learning opportunities whereby children are more likely to learn vocabulary that is functional to them and their interests.

How do we promote Play within the GME total immersion stages?

When we promote the pedagogy of play in GME, we can ensure children are at the heart of this narrative by creating an *interactions agreement* with our children exemplified below based on the language used in Realising the Ambition:

- I need to hear you using high-quality Gaelic with me and others when I am playing and learning and beyond.
- I need you to care and nurture me, while modelling Gaelic, play, acting and using prompts to aid my understanding, while I play and learn through open ended experiences.
- I need you to create spaces where Gaelic is valued and used all of the time.
- As I play, I need you to be working alongside and interacting with me to make sure I can develop my knowledge and skills in Gaelic language while also following my interests, and allowing me to be creative and curious in meaningful contexts.

Ensuring A Consistent Approach across the stages of total immersion within GME

Gaelic Medium total immersion stages begins with sgoil-àraich provision up to and including Primary 3 and should consider and reflect the needs of the children within each individual setting.

The total immersion stages need to ensure a consistent approach is taken to language learning and the pedagogy of play within each of their contexts.

'Consistency does not mean doing the same thing, it means being responsive to individual needs, and preventing any needs, risks or concerns getting any worse.' (Realising The Ambition:38)

Key Questions to support reflection during transition planning within a GME context

- How does your Gaelic medium immersion pedagogy take the key features of 'Realising the Ambition - being me' into consideration?
- Does your total immersion pedagogy for Gaelic take a child centred developmental approach?
- Realising the Ambition states that 'Children learn and develop at different rates personal to themselves. They are continually trying to make sense of the world around them. Children learn best when they are active, busy learners. It could be said that they are learning all of the time from all of their experiences. In essence, this is their curriculum.' How can your sensitive and responsive interactions in the total immersion phase support this?
- What are the barriers might you face using a total immersion pedagogy and play pedagogy within the total immersion stages? How might you address this?

Further reflections as part of the Refreshed Narrative on the Curriculum for Excellence- How can your community partnerships promote Play within your total immersion stages?

- Community based support for Gaelic immersion – do you have an active online or other community plan to promote relationships with families if children are unable to attend daily sessions in your setting that will ensure all children have opportunities to hear and use Gàidhlig?

- Family Learning – how will you keep families engaged using a play based pedagogy? How can they be actively involved participants as partners to your children’s learning within GME?
- Have you considered what partnerships you will work with as part of your local school community with a focus on your Gaelic medium context?
- Have you promoted wider community links and resources that support Gaelic specific experiences with a focus on using a play based approach?