



cnpduneideann@gmail.com  
By email

02 03 2022

Shirley-Anne Somerville a charaid

**Re: expansion of Gaelic Medium Education in Edinburgh and the Lothians**

We write to you today regarding the expansion of Gaelic Medium Education in Edinburgh and the Lothians, including the City of Edinburgh Council's plan for a GME secondary school. We welcome your recent communication with the City of Edinburgh Council (22 February 2022) and your offer to assist with a feasibility study.

Comann nam Pàrant attended the Education, Children and Families committee meeting on 1 March 2022. Here, it was apparent that further discussion between the Council and the Scottish Government is crucial to moving the process forward. We believe that clarification on key points would significantly help progress the current situation with regards to GME provision in Edinburgh and the Lothians. We therefore seek an understanding of how the Government is to fulfil the ambitions laid out in the SNP's 2021 election manifesto which states that:

- GME education is at its most successful when it is fully immersive for pupils, and when an entire school career can be delivered through the medium of Gaelic.
- To ensure that the GME experience is truly immersive we will have a general presumption against co-locating GME schools with English medium schools.
- The SNP will support the development of additional GME primary schools in Edinburgh and the Lothians as an important step towards the creation of a standalone GME secondary school in central Edinburgh
- A central location is necessary to ensure it is accessible from major public transport hubs to allow the new standalone school to serve the wider Lothian region.
- Edinburgh City Council has taken forward important engagement on GME provision, but that the SNP will ensure that this is now incorporated within a new national strategic approach. This is essential if we are to see the faster rates of progress we seek for Gaelic.

We are keen to see the above commitments become a reality, given that they align so closely with the priorities of GME families. As such, it would be beneficial if the Scottish Government could provide greater clarification on their plans for how this might be

supported and achieved. Without such information, the development of GME in Edinburgh and the Lothians seems unlikely to progress. The Council appears unable to offer plans and proposals which meet the above commitments and, as such, GME families are not being given an option that aligns with the stated national strategic approach.

Comann nam Pàrant would welcome a meeting with you to discuss this further. It may be useful to consider establishing a short-life working group to support progression, bringing together stakeholders from each of the impacted local authorities. We are committed to working with partners at local and national level to ensure the best outcomes for the GME community.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Le dùrachdan

Comann nam Pàrant  
(Dùn Èideann is Lodainn)