



**PÀRANTAN  
GÀIDHLIG**

DÙN ÈIDEANN

**Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig  
Fios Cudromach  
Gaelic Medium Education  
Key Information**

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## Cò sinn | Who we are

Comann nam Pàrant is the national organisation which offers advice and support on Gaelic Medium Education (GME). It is a network of local groups across Scotland, representing the interests of parents whose children are educated through Gaelic. This includes cròileagan (playgroup), sgoil-àraich (nursery), bun-sgoil (primary school) and àrd-sgoil (high school).

Comann nam Pàrant (Dùn Èideann is Lodainn) is the local group that represents families across Edinburgh and the Lothians. We campaign for the development of GME by liaising with families and advocating on their behalf to City of Edinburgh Council, to the Scottish Government and to other relevant parties. We do this by undertaking research, writing and presenting reports, supporting local and national initiatives, promoting Gaelic activity and providing information to families.

## Cùl-eòlas | Background

Parents and carers have always been at the heart of Gaelic Medium Education (GME) in Edinburgh and the Lothians. GME in Edinburgh started with a small group of parents setting up a Pàrant is Pàisde playgroup and campaigning over many years for formal education in Gaelic to be introduced in the city. From that campaign came the establishment of the GME primary unit and sgoil-àraich at Tollcross in 1988, followed by the creation of a stand-alone primary school at Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce in 2013. This has been accompanied by the flourishing of cròileagan groups across the city, bringing more families into GME.

These developments have been achieved through the hard work and dedication of people in cròileagan groups, in schools and in the Gaelic community, as well as cross-party political support at a local and national level and the associated executive bodies.

Comann nam Pàrant (Dùn Èideann is Lodainn) has represented and supported families throughout this period in our goals of establishing, maintaining and developing Gaelic Medium Education in the city. Now, in working towards a stand-alone Gaelic High School for Edinburgh, we continue to advocate for families throughout their journey in GME and are committed to collaborating with all partners.

## An t-àm ri teachd | Looking ahead

Following the decision by the Council not to move to Statutory Consultation and instead to undertake further parental engagement, we look forward to supporting the Education, Children and Families committee in achieving this.

We very much welcome the ongoing discussions on the development of a new GME high school, and the huge potential such a venture holds for the future of GME in Edinburgh and the Lothians. In addition to this pressing issue, we also look forward to collaborating with the Council in the expansion of early years and primary provision. We are committed to working with partners at local and national level in the development of GME for Edinburgh and the Lothians.

## Cuspair cudromach | Key issues

As noted in our recent correspondence with the last committee, we kindly request:

- information on the plans for engagement with GME families, proposed timings for these and how the Council envisages these discussions taking place.
- an update on the progress of identifying any other potential sites for the new GME high school
- assurances that that GME pupils at JGHS would not be affected by a catchment review until a guaranteed, sustainable, long-term alternative for secondary school provision is available
- an update on discussions between the Council and Scottish Government
- details on any timescale to which the Council is currently working towards regarding the new GME high school and any key dates within this

We recommend reading Comann nam Pàrant's last written deputation, submitted to the committee in March 2022, which outlines in greater detail key aspects of GME provision.

## GME in Edinburgh and the Lothians

**40** children in sgoil-àraich

**389** pupils in GME primary  
education

**157** pupils in GME secondary  
education

## Gaelic in Scotland

**87,056** people have some Gaelic language skills

That's around **1.6%** of the population

**5,935** live in Edinburgh and the Lothians



### **Sgoil-àraich**

Housed at Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, sgoil-àraich offers GME nursery provision for children aged 3-5. Sgoil-àraich has 40 full-time spaces which allows learners to attend 1140 hours a year. Òganan are a partner provider for nursery provision.

[taobhnairce.edin.sch.uk](http://taobhnairce.edin.sch.uk)

### **Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce**

After many years of campaigning by families and supporters, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce opened in 2013 as Edinburgh's first ever dedicated GME primary school. The school is open to any children from families in Edinburgh and the Lothians who wish for their child to learn through Gaelic Medium Education.

[taobhnairce.edin.sch.uk](http://taobhnairce.edin.sch.uk)

### **GME at secondary level**

Pupils currently receive their GME secondary provision at Àrd-sgoil Sheumais Ghilleasbuig (James Gillespie's High School). Comann nam Pàrant, along with families and supporters, are campaigning for a stand-alone GME High School for Edinburgh.

[jamesgillespies.co.uk/curriculum/gaidhlig](http://jamesgillespies.co.uk/curriculum/gaidhlig)

## Cùram-cloinne is cur-seachadan Childcare and activities

### **Cròileagan**

Cròileagan are playgroups for children under five to introduce Gaelic to young children and their carers. They offer a relaxed and friendly environment to learn about Gaelic language and culture, and to encourage young ones (and their families) to take their first steps in the language.

[edinburghcroileagan.blogspot.com](http://edinburghcroileagan.blogspot.com)  
[www.facebook.com/croileagan](http://www.facebook.com/croileagan)  
[twitter.com/croileagan](http://twitter.com/croileagan)

### **Òganan**

Òganan is Edinburgh's Gaelic childcare facility and offers nursery provision, wrap-around care, after school club, breakfast club and holiday club for pre-school and primary school children at Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce. Òganan also works with Àrd-sgoil Sheumais Ghilleasbuig to offer work experience and volunteer placements to high school students as well as employment to school leavers.

[oganan.com](http://oganan.com)

### **Sradagan**

A club for Gaelic-speaking children of primary school age (C4-7) in Edinburgh, Sradagan supports children to use Gaelic outwith their school setting through sports, games and activities.

[facebook.com/SradaganDhunEideann](http://facebook.com/SradaganDhunEideann)

### Primary provision

**1998:** GME class (C1-3) opened in Tollcross Primary School with a composite class of 7.

**2002:** First campaign for a dedicated Gaelic primary school

**2009:** Responding to City of Edinburgh Council's Gaelic Language Plan consultation, Comann nam Pàrant campaign for the plan to include a standalone GME primary school.

**2010:** Council proposed capping the number of pupils able to access GME. After parental objections it then proposed a small extension to Tollcross Primary School or opening another GME unit at Leith Walk Primary. Parents campaigned against these proposals as they were thought not to represent best value for money, offer a long-term solution or reflect best practice in minority language education.

**2010:** Following a series of parent meetings for GME primary and secondary schools, a consensus is reached and parents are in favour of a dedicated GME primary school and continued development of GME secondary provision at JGHS.

**2010-12:** Parents campaigned for a dedicated Gaelic primary school.

**2013:** Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce opened with an initial roll of 213 pupils.

### Secondary provision

**1988:** Some provision of GME at secondary level at James Gillespie's High School (the feeder high school of Tollcross Primary).

**2010:** The Council proposed moving the Gaelic pupils and teachers to Tynecastle High School for space reasons. This plan was dropped following successful campaigning by parents.

**2016:** The Council proposed restricting the number of pupils going to JGHS based on their distance from the school which disproportionately affected Gaelic pupils and would have effectively denied them access to GME. This proposal was withdrawn following campaigning by Comann nam Pàrant and intervention by Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

**2018:** The Council proposed moving the Gaelic pupils and teachers to Drummond High School – plans were dropped after opposition from Drummond parents.

**2020:** The Council undertook informal consultation on a proposal for GME High School in Liberton.

**January - August 2021:** Parent meetings and feedback showed there was not a majority in favour of the Council's proposal, with key concerns around immersion, location and educational offer. As such, Comann nam Pàrant advised against going to statutory consultation. The Council opted to pause the statutory consultation to look at other sites and to seek clarification whether additional funding would be available from the Scottish Government (following explicit mention in the SNP manifesto of support for a stand-alone centrally located school).

### **Secondary provision (continued)**

**December 2021 - January 2022:** The Council suggests a statutory consultation might commence in 2022. Comann nam Pàrant submits a written deputation to the Committee asking that the Council does not go to statutory consultation and instead takes more time to offer information and engage with families. Consultation decision postponed to seek further information from Scottish Government.

**March 2022:** There is a meeting of Education Children and Families committee to vote on Statutory Consultation for GME High School at which Comann nam Pàrant requests delay to ensure all options are explored with Scottish Government. The Council agrees to postpone to undertake parental consultation and seek further information from parents

## Leugh tuilleadh | Find out more

To view our reports, deputations and other key documents, visit our blog.

Key documents include (click to read)

[Manifesto letter to all parties](#)

[Deputation, 1 March 2022](#)

[Deputation, 24 January 2022](#)

[Summary of responses to our survey of Gaelic Medium Education families](#)

## Leig fios | Contact

If you have any questions or want to find out more about what we do:

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[cnpduneideannblog.wordpress.com](http://cnpduneideannblog.wordpress.com)

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