

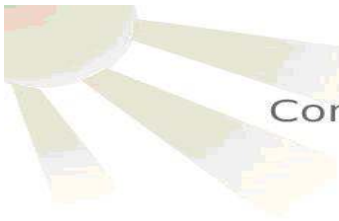


Comann nam Pàrant
Gaelic Medium Education in Scotland



COMANN NAM PÀRANT NEWSLETTER

WINTER/SPRING
2012



COMANN NAM PÀRANT

Foreword

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Comann nam Pàrant newsletter. This is the second of what we hope will be a quarterly publication containing information and items of interest for parents with children in Gaelic medium.

We have just held the ninth Comann nam Pàrant Gaelic week in Edinburgh for Gaelic medium primary pupils. This year's event had 270 children take part in activities at the Royal Botanic gardens, National Galleries, Edinburgh Castle, Holyrood Park and Our Dynamic Earth. We are able to deliver all these sessions in Gaelic thanks to a number of Comunn na Gàidhlig staff who are willing to participate and with support of education staff at the venues teach the classes although each year we are seeing more of the organisations with their own Gaelic speaking staff members.



Magaidh Wentworth
Parental Officer

Our parent advisors have also had a busy start to the year with a number of events throughout the country, especially busy was the three day Baby Show at the SECC in Glasgow where 4 parent advisors spoke to around two hundred parents.

We are hoping that as well as items from local groups for future editions we will have some of the parental advisors share their experiences in promoting Gaelic medium education.

Magaidh Wentworth
Parental Officer

Comann nam Pàrant annual AGM

Comann nam Pàrant (Nàiseanta) will hold their Annual General Meeting in the Alexandra Hotel, The Parade, Fort William, on Friday 18th May 2012 at 7.30pm.

Following formal proceedings, Dr Donalda McComb, Head Teacher, Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu will give a short presentation on the development of Gaelic medium education at secondary level.

Following this there will be an opportunity for questions and discussion.

All interested in Gaelic medium education are most welcome to attend.



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Parental Advocacy - Coinneach Maccoinneach

I would like to start by welcoming four new parents onto the Advocacy scheme!

Aileen and Jennifer join us from Meadowburn. They attended, and I'm sure enjoyed, their induction day in Glasgow earlier this month and both seem like very enthusiastic individuals who are keen to work together to make an impact on the Gaelic education scene.

We have also managed to snap up Elaine and David in Glasgow itself. Both are represented on the Comann nam Pàrant Glaschu board, so are very well equipped to deal with the inquisitive public on matters relating to GME!

And so speaking on behalf of Comann nam Pàrant groups everywhere, welcome!

There was supposed to be a further training day in Inverness earlier this month in an attempt to find parents to hold positions across Skye, which is an area we are currently quite weak in, and also add to the team in Inverness. However, with parents inevitably being so busy, the logistics didn't quite pan out, so we will attempt to hold another training day sometime in June and continue the expansion!

Since numbers and statistics have started to be recorded at various Advocacy Scheme events across the country, a picture is beginning to emerge as to which areas are strong and to which more support is needed, which is good, as this was exactly what we were aiming to achieve! The numbers are definitely encouraging, with very few people remaining unimpressed with the idea of Gaelic medium education after they have spoken to one of our advocates, which is a credit to both our advocates and also the amount of good research which is currently being undertaken on the subject of bilingualism and its benefits. If you're wanting to know more about bilingualism, all you have to do is go to our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ComannNamParant) and scroll down our page, which is inundated with articles and papers on the subject. There is also a recording of Professor Antonella Sorace, of Edinburgh University, giving a lecture on the subject.

It will also be interesting to see if, in a few months time, once Primary school enrolment for the school year 2012-13 has concluded, there is a direct correlation between successes on the Advocacy scheme in various regions and the number of new families entering Gaelic medium education in those respective schools.



Coinneach Maccoinneach
Parental Officer



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Fios is Freagairt Dvd

Comann nam Pàrant are delighted to announce that the DVD which accompanies the Fios is Freagairt booklets has now been proofed, edited, dusted and released!

It has already been shipped out to various schools, nurseries and local community groups around the country! So if you want to get your hands on a copy just get in touch with your local school (or local CnaG Iomairt officer if you're lucky enough to live in an area with one!) and ask if you can have a shot! And if they don't have one, all they need to do is email Coinneach at Comann nam Pàrant at coinneachm@cnag.org.uk and he will get one sent out asap!



The DVD will also be available shortly to watch online at our website www.parant.org.uk

Asha Rennie - New teacher on the block!



New teacher, Asha Rennie

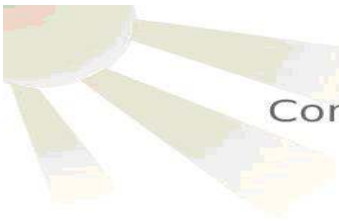
So, who are you? - My name's Asha and I'm from Muir of Ord in the Highlands and I'm currently doing a PGDE (post-graduate diploma in education) to go on top of my shiny new Gaelic degree.

So you want to be a teacher then, in GME? - I do indeed! I've never wanted to do anything else and I believe that Gaelic is vital to maintaining the culture in Scotland. I also believe that teaching Gaelic is an important career choice, which will enable me to help save the language. My dad has Gaelic too, so I'm sure that helped sway me.

Your dad has Gaelic, does this mean you've spoken Gaelic since birth? - Nope, he moved home when he was around 12 years old and has since lost most of his Gaelic. But as I was learning, he would help out when he could.

When did you start learning Gaelic? - Not until I started Secondary school.

Are you enjoying teaching so far? - Aye, the course is busy but enjoyable. I don't get a minute to myself! I'm looking forward to next year when (hopefully!) I'll have my own class for an entire year. I'm getting along well in the class and on the course, but realising fast that I have a lot to learn as well, but that's the career after all!



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Main news summary! (January-March)

Highland classroom assistant posts saved (13/01/12)-

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-16543569>

Bilingual children gain better focus, literacy skills: York U Study (10/02/12) - <http://www.exchangemagazine.com/morningpost/2012/week6/Friday/12021016.htm>

Why Bilinguals Are Smarter (17/03/12) - http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/18/opinion/sunday/the-benefits-of-bilingualism.html?_r=2&scp=1&sq=bilingualism&st=cs

Bòrd na Gàidhlig's new education website (09/02/12) - <http://www.gaidhlig.org.uk/fdp/en>

Head teachers told to promote bilingualism (24/02/12) - <http://www.parant.org.uk/>

Bilingual skills may protect aging adults from dementia (01/04/12) - <http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/322242>



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Facebook/Twitter/Website reminder

If you haven't done so already, don't forget to follow us on Twitter (@ComannNamParant), like us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/ComannNamParant) and bookmark our website (www.parant.org.uk)!



These methods of social media, in particular the Twitter and Facebook pages are massively helpful for giving us a means of letting you all know what's happening without sending you annoying e-mails! What better way than for the news to be simply mixed in with your normal news feeds where you can glimpse over it (or ignore it!) at your leisure! They also act as a great forum for parents across the country to communicate

with each other and share their successes and/or grievances, or to ask Comann nam Pàrant for help. So feel free to start posting and tweeting away on our walls, but remember to keep it appropriate!

So get following, liking, clicking and sharing!

