

# Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide - Language Policy

Revision: 1

Effective date: 2020-Dec-13

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## 1. Introduction

This document lays out a policy for Gaelic language usage within our school and with our community and stakeholders.

## 2. Policy Statement

As a school community, we strive to facilitate the complete and fluid acquisition of Gaelic. We are also dedicated to the growth and development of the Gaelic speaking community of Nova Scotia. As a result, our commitment to the language will be reflected in all our policies, publications, communications, and activities.

## 3. Document Production

- 3.1. All documents published by the school will be produced in Gaelic only or bilingually, with Gaelic given prominence in titles and appearing first in body text or will exist in a parallel version of the document available in English.
- 3.2. All versions of these texts will be available to parents, sponsors, and interested community members upon request.
- 3.3. In the event of a discrepancy between the two documents, the Gaelic version will be treated as the correct document. In such a case where a discrepancy exists and the English text is preferred, a vote from the working group is required to change the Gaelic text, and any change to the Gaelic text will constitute a formal change in documentation and will need to follow appropriate voting procedures for a policy change.
- 3.4. Any change to the English text, so long as it is to better reflect the message being conveyed in its Gaelic counterpart, will not require a vote to change policy, only consensus that the new interpretation of the Gaelic text is clearer or more precise.
- 3.5. The choice to forgo strict adherence to the Gaelic policy can be made in the production of some promotional material or fundraising letters. However, Gaelic must be given a place of prominence in the following locations:
  - Titles
  - Greetings and sign-offs (in letters and emails)
  - Signatories (Gaelic or English names being used as suits the signitor)
  - Any other place wherein text is not purely informational

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## 4. Daily Use

- 4.1. The goal of this Policy is to establish Gaelic as the primary language of communication within the walls of the school, as well as to maintain that status when students are not in the school, but on school time and to carry this ethos into the administration of the school.
- 4.2. Though the school will have Gaelic as the primary language in the classroom and as the preferred language during meetings of the working group, it is recognized that community meetings can be conducted bilingually when necessary, with Gaelic given prominence whenever and wherever possible.
  - 4.2.1. The degree of bilingualism in meetings may depend on said meeting's purpose, and those in attendance (e.g.. a school registration meeting with many non-Gaelic speakers in attendance would be conducted in mostly English, with Gaelic being given prominence wherever and whenever possible)
  - 4.2.2. It should also be seen as a goal of the working group to work towards Gaelic being the primary language of meetings.
- 4.3. The goals regarding daily use of, and giving prominence to, Gaelic mentioned in section 4.1 and 4.2 will be accomplished by adhering to the following points:
  - 4.3.1. All teachers who are employed by the school must speak Gaelic to a high standard.
  - 4.3.2. Though other employees will not need to speak Gaelic, fluency in the language will be seen as an asset. All employees will also be expected to actively support the Gaelic ethos of the school in whatever way they can.
  - 4.3.3. Working Group Members will also be encouraged to develop at least a passive command of Gaelic that is high enough to allow them to follow discussion in Gaelic during meetings, if they do not already speak Gaelic.
  - 4.3.4. Teachers must communicate in Gaelic with one another when talking to each other, and with students while at the school whenever possible and appropriate.
  - 4.3.5. Teachers should communicate in Gaelic with any and all parents

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who wish to do so.

Note: If unsure of a parent's language preference, the teacher will utilize a bilingual greeting. e.g. "Ciamar a tha thu/ How are you?"

- 4.3.6. Children will be expected to speak Gaelic at all times while at school under usual circumstances.
- 4.3.7. Volunteers will be encouraged to use as much Gaelic as they can.
- 4.3.8. Whenever possible, excursions or field trips will be conducted with the language policy in mind. This means that:
  - 4.3.8.1. When possible, locations where Gaelic services will be available will be chosen (e.g. Baile nan Gàidheal).
  - 4.3.8.2. For locations where Gaelic services are not available, volunteer chaperones will help the teacher maintain the Gaelic policy with the children to the best of their ability.
  - 4.3.8.3. This may include interpreting exhibits in Gaelic for the children in the absence of a formal guide or preparing information or activities for them in Gaelic.
  - 4.3.8.4. Exact actions on the day of an excursion may vary, but should always be in the interest of upholding the students' Gaelic immersion and the school's Language Policies.
- 4.4. The daily use of Gaelic Policy is in part dependent on the following sections as these areas aim to result in more families using Gaelic, and therefore more Gaelic speaking parents who can volunteer.

## 5. Strategy for Gaelic in the Home

- 5.1. This section of the school's language policy is written with the intention of empowering students and their families to expand their bubble of Gaelic usage outside of the classroom and into their homes and communities.
- 5.2. Parents will be encouraged to learn and use Gaelic with their children.
- 5.3. Parents will also be, to a point that is fair and feasible, supported in their journey to learn and integrate Gaelic into their households, and will be provided with strategies and resources regarding how to do so. This may include:
  - 5.3.1. Resources to help families structure their own "Family Language

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Policies” to encourage the habitual use of Gaelic in their households.

5.3.2. Language classes for parents.

5.3.3. Mentorship programming, where one fluent parent volunteers to complete volunteer mentorship hours with a parent who is a learner.

5.4. Though every effort will be made to make the above resources available to parents, the degree to which the above mentioned resources will be made available to parents will be subject to the availability of funds, volunteers and other resources.

## 6. Strategy for Gaelic in the Community

6.1. The school will work to normalize the use of Gaelic in communities, from its fluent use to symbolic ornamentation of speech with Gaelic words, proverbs etc.

6.2. It will therefore be a goal of the school to be an ever strengthening pillar of the local community, as well as the wider Gaelic community in Nova Scotia by:

6.2.1. Ensuring that we have a presence at local community events to promote the use of Gaelic in our students’ communities.

6.2.2. Providing a space for the use of Gaelic inside and outside of school hours.

6.2.3. Encouraging the use of Gaelic in the wider community.

## 7. Conclusion

7.1. It is the hope of the school and its working group that these policies help to expand the use of Gaelic in the communities that it serves, as well as establish Gaelic as the language of daily use within the school.

7.2. This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and that relevant stakeholders are familiar with it.

7.3. Relevant stakeholders will be made aware of any updates or new versions of this Policy.

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## Revision History & Approval

Revision	Date	Approved by
1	2020-Dec-13	Working Group