



SURVEY ON LANGUAGE USE BY PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

This survey is being undertaken to assess language practice among young children.

This is part of the Islands Gaelic Research Project (IGRP) which is being carried out by Soillse to research the vitality of Gaelic language and culture. Soillse is an inter-university Gaelic research collaboration led by the University of the Highlands and Islands, of which a central research objective is developing a meaningful partnership with the Gaelic communities of Scotland and elsewhere.

The IGRP will study the vitality of Gaelic in key locations in the Western Isles. This study of Gaelic language development among children **aged 3-5** is a key component of the project. Please be assured that this is not an assessment of pre-school provision in the Western Isles. We believe that the language usage of the youngest members of our communities is an important linguistic marker for the Gaelic language, and for community and cultural vitality.

We acknowledge the additional burden this places upon you, and your participation is hugely appreciated. Your responses will contribute to language planning to safeguard Gaelic as a community language. This element of the IGRP has the support of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's Gaelic Education Advisory Committee; all sgoiltean-àraich/pre-schools in the Western Isles have been approached, and you are strongly encouraged to participate.

All staff involved in delivering this questionnaire have Protection of Vulnerable Groups clearance, and the research methodology has been approved by the Board of Ethics of the University of the Highlands and Islands. All data collected will be anonymised, and treated in the strictest confidence, meaning that it will not be possible to identify individual responses when the project results are presented.

Tapadh leibh

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Reference Number	Fieldwork date/Researcher	Date of data entry/Worker	Date of data validation/Worker	Output Area Reference

SECTION A - BACKGROUND DATA

Ascribe a unique number to each child (e.g. 1/20, 2/20, 3/20, 4/20, etc.)	
Name of Sgoil-àraich/Pre-school unit	

1) What is the gender and age of the child?

	Female	Male	Age at first enrolment	Age now
The child				

SECTION B – LANGUAGE ABILITY DATA

2) How would you describe the ability of the child in spoken Gaelic on arrival/enrolment at the sgoil-àraich/pre-school, considering their age?

	Fluent – native-speaker ability	Good Gaelic	Reasonable Gaelic	A few words of Gaelic	No Gaelic
The child					

3) On enrolment at the sgoil-àraich/pre-school, how would you describe the ability of the child to understand Gaelic?

	Native-like understanding	Good understanding	Reasonable understanding	Understood a few words of Gaelic	No Gaelic
The child					

4) To what extent is the child's spoken ability in Gaelic now due to the support of the sgoil-àraich/pre-school?

	Completely	To a large extent	About half	To some extent	To a small extent
The child					

5) To what extent is the child's ability to understand in Gaelic now due to the support of the sgoil-àraich/pre-school?

	Completely	To a large extent	About half	To some extent	To a small extent
The child					

SECTION C – LANGUAGE PRACTICE DATA

6) What language did the child speak to the following people at the time of enrolment at the sgoil-àraich/pre-school? (Answer where applicable)

	Gaelic only	Mainly Gaelic	Mix of Gaelic and English, roughly even	Mainly English	English only	Another language
Pre-school teachers/practitioners						
Other pre-school staff (e.g. auxiliaries/support workers)						
Other pre-school children						

7) What language does the child speak to the following people now? (If the child is still three years of age, please disregard this question.)

	Gaelic only	Mainly Gaelic	Mix of Gaelic and English, roughly even	Mainly English	English only	Another language
Pre-school teachers/ practitioners						
Other pre-school staff (e.g. auxiliaries/ support workers)						
Other pre-school children						

8) When pre-school staff speak to the child in Gaelic in which one of the following ways does the child respond?

Responds in Gaelic only	Responds mainly in Gaelic	Mix of Gaelic and English, roughly even	Mainly English	English only	Another language

SECTION D – SUPPLEMENTARY DATA ABOUT YOUR CATCHMENT AREA

We kindly request that the pre-school director or relevant member of staff completes this supplementary section once on behalf of the sgoil-àraich/pre-school, rather than for each child.

S-1) What is the language policy of the sgoil-àraich/pre-school unit?

Gaelic-medium		Mainly Gaelic-medium		Mainly English-medium		English-medium	
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S-2) Over the past ten years, what percentage of children were already Gaelic speakers before they enrolled?

0-5%	5-10%	10-30%	30-60%	60-100%

S-3) How would you describe the sgoil-àraich's/pre-school's catchment area? (Tick the answer that applies.)

An area in which most parents raise their children through the medium of Gaelic	
An area in which a substantial minority (less than 50%) of parents raise their children through the medium of Gaelic	
An area in which a small minority (less than 30%) of parents raise their children through the medium of Gaelic	
An area in which very few parents raise their children through the medium of Gaelic	
An area in which it is exceptional to raise your children through the medium of Gaelic	

S-4) In your opinion, to what extent do people in the following groups speak Gaelic on a day-to-day basis in your catchment area?

	Most of the time	A good amount of the time	Some of the time	Not much of the time	Not at all
Older adults (65+)					
Mature adults (35-64)					
Young adults (20-34)					
Teenagers					
Primary school-children					
Pre-school children					

SECTION E – NOTES AND COMMENTS

In your professional opinion, what advice would you give, or what comments would you make, to the Islands Gaelic Research Project team in relation to any of the issues raised in the questionnaire, or in relation to the vitality of Gaelic in general?

(If appropriate, please write in the box below.)

CEUD MÌLE TAING

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THANK YOU