

What is Blasad Gàidhlig?

Blasad Gàidhlig is a Gaelic language support initiative for GLPS/ L1+2 from Fèisean nan Gàidheal's formal education arm, Fèisgoil.

It has now been running for over 5 years and aims to work with teachers as well as children in building confidence in their Gaelic acquisition through expressive arts. Much of the language learned is delivered through song and game.

We work with classes from nursery – P7 and aim to deliver progressive lessons for all involved. Over the past few years we have compiled a progressive course which our tutors are encouraged to follow, although we recognise that each tutor also has an individual input, playing to their own particular strengths.

Our tutors have an up-to-date PVG through FnG and attend training events that we run to aid them in their delivery.

Blasad Gàidhlig works best when the class teacher is engaged in the session and learns alongside the children.

During the pandemic we have been delivering Blasad Gàidhlig online sessions and while we are looking forward to getting back into schools, we are happy to pursue the digital delivery in schools throughout the country for as long as necessary.

When schools are keen to become involved we would look to enter discussions with relevant Local Authorities to discuss funding.

Fèisean nan Gàidheal's main funders are Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Creative Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and The Scottish Government.

Eilidh Mackenzie

Fèisgoil Manager

Fèisean nan Gàidheal

November 2020



Gaelic at Ladeside Primary School

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Who are you – name & school/background information?

- **Kathleen Hamill**
Headteacher at Ladeside Primary School, Falkirk Council.
- We have 350 pupils at Ladeside. This includes our Early Learning Centre (Nursery) and our Support Facility (our 'Base') for children on the Autism Spectrum.
- No one at Ladeside has a 'Gaelic background' - all new to the language, but keen to be involved as part of the Scottish Government's 1 + 2 initiative.
- Our 1st language is English.
- Our 2nd language is Spanish
- Gaelic is our L3
- Very fortunate to have had excellent support & input from Eilidh at Feisan nan Gaidheal and from our tutors. Initially we had Linda, and now we have Norrie who works with P4-7 classes. Just this week Katie will begin working with P1-3 classes.

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What are the practicalities? How has B.G. working in your school?

- Need to **want** to do it & need to know that support is available!
- It has helped, of course, that I am very enthusiastic about Gaelic culture, although a complete beginner as far as the language is concerned!!
- Identify other staff members to be 'on board' with you – especially now with on-line learning.
- Support your staff/collegiate input & activities
- High priority on School Improvement Plan/ Standards and Quality Report
- Spread the word among parents/carers.
- Although this is currently our L3 we have tried to introduce Gaelic throughout the school.
- Children do get 'mixed up' with their L2/L3 vocabulary but that's what happens with language & it is all part of the learning 'journey'.
- How does L3 fit into the curriculum? Although we **do** have set times for input, we do not 'isolate' the language and, as with our L2, use the vocabulary throughout other subject areas. All schools do this, and we know it increases confidence and spontaneity.
- We link our Gaelic learning for example with handwriting practice, art work, signage in school, outdoor learning, etc.
- Being involved in Blasad Gaidhlig has been a totally positive experience and we could not have progressed with Gaelic language & culture without this support. We would have missed out on a lot of fun & enjoyment and our children (and staff) would not have had the opportunity to learn first-hand about Gaelic culture through song & language.
- When singing is 'allowed' consider forming a Gaelic choir. We already had a school choir & it became a Gaelic choir when Norrie worked with them!
- We are currently looking after the Gaelic resources for Falkirk Council and will have a Gaelic Language section in our School Library.

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How the children and staff have reacted to sessions

- We really enjoy having our Gaelic tutors in school, but of course, this school year is very different.
- However, our on-line sessions with Norrie (& soon to start with Katie) are working really well & it has been well worth the effort to set up these sessions using Microsoft Teams.
- P4-7 sessions with Norrie last about 30 min & class teachers must be involved in order to keep the class focused and to help Norrie identify children when they are responding.
- Children & staff have reacted very well to these sessions, but we can't wait to get back to normal & welcome our tutors back 'in person'.
- We wish we could sing! Really miss our choir time!
- Our children are generally good listeners, but we **do** use incentives and award Gaelic star certificates each week! Norrie also uses a points system which works really well.
- There is no pressure on staff and they can, if they wish, participate along with pupils. Their main task is to encourage pupil participation/effort, etc.
- Staff appreciate information about Gaelic culture & this fits in well with our topics.
- For our P7 classes, this is their 2nd Or 3rd year learning Gaelic with Norrie. They are doing well and enjoy being challenged with the new vocabulary/language structures which Norrie gives them.

4**Other info/moving forward?**

- We aim to provide Continuing Professional Development in Gaelic for staff
- Plan for input in Gaelic for our Early Learning Centre
- Have talks with our 'link' teacher at Larbert High School re the provision of Gaelic in S1
- Use websites such as 'Go Gaelic'
- Improve Gaelic signage around the school
- Improve our consultation with pupils and families re 1+ 2 languages
- Make links with other schools / support group / share resources, etc

Kath Hamill

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