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**From:** Alasdair MacKenzie [alasdair.mackenzie@abdn.ac.uk]  
**Sent:** 13 September 2004 10:00  
**To:** info  
**Subject:** Gaelic in Scottish Culture and Education[Scanned]

Dear Mr. Boyle,

I would like to briefly air my serious concerns about the lack of cultural and educational status currently given the Gaelic language in Scotland. Despite the fact that resources exist for primary education in the language these facilities can only at best be regarded as discretionary. Also, there is little provision being made for teaching through the medium of Gaelic in secondary schools. The intake of children into the Gaelic play-groups and primary schools throughout Scotland has reached a plateau. This directly reflects the low emphasis placed on the importance of the language in everyday Scottish culture and the negative attitude of the Scottish Executive with regards to Gaelic. I would like to present a radical and forward thinking idea. Gaelic must be given equal status to English within education and culture. Furthermore, Gaelic must be made compulsory in all schools in the Highlands and Islands in order to reverse the precipitous decline in the language. The SE will argue, of course, that not enough teachers exist currently to carry this out. Therefore Funds must be released by the Scottish Executive to encourage individuals, both non native speakers and native speakers, to train as teachers through the medium of Gaelic. Only in this way will even as lowly a goal as language stability be achieved. The New Scottish parliament stands as testimony to the spending power of the Scottish Executive. If even a fraction of these funds could have been released to generate the numbers of Gaelic teachers required to stabilize and regenerate the Gaelic language then the decline of the language could be halted. Gaelic is one of the main cultural pillars which defines Scotland as a nation. Ignoring it in a hope that it will go away (as seems to be the position of the current executive) is not an option. Regards,  
Alasdair MacKenzie BSc. PhD. Dr Alasdair MacKenzie Department of Molecular and Cell Biology University of Aberdeen Institute of Medical Sciences Aberdeen AB25 2ZD Scotland.  
Tel.: +44 (0) 1224 555 893 (Lab. 555.922)  
FAX: +44 (0) 1224 555 844  
E-mail; mbi167@abdn.ac.uk