



JORDANSTOWN SCHOOL

*A specialist school for children who
are deaf or visually impaired*

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2018-19

November 2019

Jordanstown School

Jordanstown School is a specialist school for pupils with an auditory or visual impairment. We give access to the full Northern Ireland Curriculum to all of our pupils and we offer a wide range of both academic and vocational examinations.

The Education (School Information and Prospectus) Regulations (NI) 2003 requires Boards of Governors to provide access for parents and others to information about the educational provision and opportunities offered by individual schools. This report gives an overview of the work of the school during the 2018/19 academic year in line with these regulations. It reflects the commitment and professionalism of all members of staff and the invaluable contributions of many individuals and agencies.

Membership of Governors

The Board of Governors underwent re-constitution, with the newly formed board meeting for the first time in March 2019.

Governor	Role	Nominating authority
Mrs Wendy Newbronner	Chairperson	Elected by parents
Dr Patrick Johnson	Vice Chairperson (until March 2019)	Board of Trustees
Mrs Carole Magowan	Vice Chairperson (from March 2019)	Board of Trustees
Mrs Joanne Dickson		Parent, co-opted by Board of Trustees
The Very Reverend Father Patrick Devlin		Board of Trustees
Mr Gareth Adams	Teacher representative	Elected by staff
Mrs Colette Grey		Education Authority
Mr Bryan Symington		Education Authority
Reverend Glen Jordan		Board of Trustees
Mrs Deidre Byrne		Board of Trustees
Miss Ruth Sturgeon	Acting Principal and Secretary to the Board of Governors	Non-voting member

The Board of Governors takes a central role in decision-making on strategic matters relating to the future direction of the school. These include the curriculum, finance, welfare and academic achievement of the pupils, teaching and learning, staffing, and various policies and resources.

During the school year 2018/19 the Governors ensured that the school was providing a sound education service for all of the pupils and their parents/carers. The full board met on 8 occasions. There were also sub-committee meetings to deal with teaching and non-teaching appointments. In between meetings, the Governors were consulted by the Acting Principal via email or telephone.

Staff information

Full time Teachers	12
Part time Teachers	3 (2 of whom were funded by the Board of Trustees)
Outreach Teachers	2
Classroom Assistants	12 FTE
General Assistants	1 (15 hours a week)
Discretionary support	155 hours
Sign Language Assistant	1 (funded by the Board of Trustees)
Bursar	1
Clerical officer	1
ICT technician	1
Lunchtime supervisory assistants	2
Building Supervisor	1
Cleaners	7
Development Officer	1 (funded by the Board of Trustees). This post was made redundant in February 2019.

Following 30 years' teaching in Jordanstown School, Mrs Babs McQuiggan retired in August 2019. We thank her for her hard work and support and wish her a long, healthy and happy retirement.

The following appointments were made to the staff of Jordanstown School in 2018/19

- Mr Gareth Adams – Acting Vice Principal
- Mr Kevin Stitt – Assessment Co-ordinator
- Mrs Jill McClelland – Extended Schools Co-ordinator
- Mrs Judith Boal – Examinations Officer
- Mr Colin Hughes – Numeracy Co-ordinator
- Mr Kevin Stitt – Newtownabbey Learning Community Co-ordinator
- Miss Rachel Hunter – Classroom assistant temporary

Continuing Professional Development

Classroom assistants and teachers, completed a variety of professional development courses. These included qualifications in British Sign Language qualifications, Team Teach training, and 'An Overview of Autism' led by staff from the Education Authority. During the staff development days throughout the year staff were consulted on a range of policies, discussed and implemented new initiatives within school, and completed relevant internal training.

Pupil information

Jordanstown School had an enrolment of 79 pupils at the end of 2018-19. In June 2019 five pupils left Jordanstown School at the end of their education. Two of these pupils are attending Northern Regional College where they are enrolled on Transition to Work Courses, one is attending the Southern Regional College studying childcare, one is attending 'The Bridge' and one is attending Belfast Metropolitan College studying a Route to Work course. In addition, one pupil left to attend a mainstream primary school nearer their home.

The overall rate of attendance across the school was 90.4% The Acting Principal liaised and met with the Educational Welfare Service (EWS) on a regular basis throughout the year.

Curriculum

The aim of the curriculum is to inspire and challenge our pupils, value them as individuals and help them prepare for the future. A broad and balanced curriculum, within a caring and secure environment in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum (www.nicurriculum.org.uk) is delivered in all classes. The curriculum provision is differentiated to meet the special needs of the pupils. Whole class and group teaching methods are used as well as the provision of individual support when necessary.

Curriculum provision at Key Stage 4 and 5 is enhanced through our continued involvement with Newtownabbey Learning Community (NLC). This year none of our pupils chose to study subjects in other schools but pupils from Rostulla school joined one of our classes to successfully complete their qualifications in Creative Crafts.

Religious Education continues to be a compulsory subject under the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Three pupils are withdrawn from RE classes at the request of parents. Individual pupils were prepared for the sacraments of First Confession and Holy Communion.

Guide Dogs NI continue to provide individual sessions of orientation and mobility education to pupils. These skills are then enforced by all school staff and parents.

In addition to the Northern Ireland Curriculum, the staff of Jordanstown School work in partnership with outside agencies to deliver the Expanded Core Curriculum for pupils who are deaf and the Expanded Core Curriculum for pupils with a visual impairment. This upskills our pupils while developing their independence and empowering them for the future.

In Jordanstown School we offer a wide range of vocational and academic qualifications. Pupils are entered for the appropriate external examinations. All pupils follow an individual examination pathway and enjoy celebrating their success at our annual Prize Day.

We recognise and celebrate the achievements and success of our pupils at special assemblies and during Prize Day. Our pupils continue to enter and excel in a wide range of competitions.

Pupils in the secondary department were entered for and experienced success in a varied range of external examinations and assessments. This year we introduced a new qualification CCEA Entry Level in Life Skills. In August 2019, the external examinations results were published and 43% of pupils entered achieved grade A-C at GCSE.

In line with statutory requirements, teachers reported outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 and 3 in the areas of Using Maths, Using ICT and Communication in pupils' annual reports.

Curriculum enhancement activities

The pupils continue to be given opportunities to participate in many activities to foster their academic, personal and social development. This includes regular visits for different classes to:

- Supermarkets to develop their independence skills
- Horse Riding
- Donkey Sanctuary

In addition to these regular visits, pupils undertook a wide range of educational trips linked to the areas of the curriculum which they were studying. These included trips to W5 and War Years Remembered.

Our Pupil Council meets regularly and continues to give pupils a voice. It also develops their confidence and skills. This year the Pupil Council was led by Mrs McNeill. Pupil voice is also included in the Individual Education Plans.

Super Learning Days took place throughout the school year and pupils thoroughly enjoyed these. Examples included a Charlie and the Chocolate Factory day for the primary pupils, and an ICT day for the post-primary pupils.

Ulster Rugby and the GAA ran successful workshops which were also attended by pupils from Thornfield and Rostulla Schools.

Extended schools

The extended schools programme co-ordinated by Mrs McClelland provided a range of activities for our pupils this year. Pupils were able to take part in After School clubs, a Film Club at lunchtime and a range of Healthy Lifestyles activities.

Community links

Jordanstown School is a full and active member of the Newtownabbey Learning Community. This year we offered a qualification in Creative Crafts to the NLC. We were delighted to welcome pupils from another school to join with our pupils to successfully complete the course.

All school staff and parents continue to work together in the best interests of the pupils. In order to maintain these vital links, we held a parent workshop, an annual Parent-Teacher Consultation Evening and Annual Review meetings. Parents were invited to a number of school events throughout the year.

Jordanstown Together, our parent-staff association, continued to meet regularly and organise events. They are hopeful that they will be able to support the purchase of a swing for the primary playground.

The school is currently involved in a successful Erasmus project enabling our staff to share their expertise with other European Schools and learn from best practice across Europe.

Safeguarding pupils

We have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the children in our charge and we carry out the responsibility through the Pastoral Care and Child Protection Policy which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment to enable each child to reach their full potential.

Child Protection procedures continue to be fully implemented and appropriate background checks through AccessNI are carried out on all members of staff and volunteers. Procedures have been set up to further protect our children by ensuring that everyone who works in the school is aware of the reporting and recording procedures in place.

Miss Ruth Sturgeon was the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, and Mr Gareth Adams and Mr Sam Murray were the Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection. Dr Patrick Johnston remained as the Designated Governor for safeguarding pupils.

A comprehensive review of the pastoral policies and procedures took place in 2018/19 and further policies will be reviewed in 2019/20.

The school has a confidential recording system for information about suspicion of abuse, disclosure of abuse and complaints against members of staff.

Premises

The Principal and Governors oversee the upkeep of the school buildings, with maintenance works carried out under the auspices of the Education Authority's Property Services.

The health and safety of all pupils and members of staff is paramount and procedures are continually reviewed. The school closely follows the guidelines of the Health and Safety Policies of the Education Authority. All portable electrical appliances are regularly checked to ensure they comply with regulations and are safe to use. Maintenance is kept up-to-date and safety is continuously monitored. Fire drill procedures are regularly reviewed and there are written procedures in place with allocated assembly points clearly signed.

The school premises were used by a variety of organisations associated with the visually impaired and deaf, including RNIB, Angel Eyes, NDCS and the BDA. The hydrotherapy pool was used by community physiotherapists from the Northern Health Trust.

Security of pupils and staff

- The exterior of the school is monitored by an extensive range of CCTV cameras.
- Access through all exterior doors is controlled by means of an electronic security mechanism.
- All visitors are asked to report to the school reception where their visit is recorded by the Vis-Ed computer system. They receive a visitor's badge which they are required to wear for the duration of their visit.
- Classroom based staff are on supervision duty in the dining room, corridors and playground during the morning break, lunchtime and end of the school day.
- The Building Supervisor is on duty around the school during the day and will escort contractors as necessary.
- The school premises are made secure by the Building Supervisor/ Principal/ responsible person in the evening and/or weekends.

Finance

Jordanstown School operates a partially delegated budget which is delegated by the Education Authority using the formula applied to all other special schools. The Board of Governors are furnished with a detailed transaction report as available from the Education Authority.

Throughout the year the school is fortunate to be in receipt of a small number of donations from organisations and individuals. Donations such as these enable us to enhance the provision available for the pupils through extra-curricular activities and the purchase of additional educational resources.

Conclusion

The Board of Governors wishes to thank all the members of the school community who have contributed to the work of the school over the past year:

- The teachers for their dedication and hard work and for the personal interest they take in each pupil.

- The support staff who contribute so much to the smooth running and welcoming atmosphere in the school.
- The members of Jordanstown Together for their interest, support and hard work.
- The parents for their cooperation and support on which the school can always depend.
- The pupils for their enthusiasm and willingness to cooperate with all of the school staff.

We would also like to thank The Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind for their continued support. Their support is essential to enhance the education of our pupils, in particular their funding to employ a teacher to provide intensive literacy and numeracy support for pupils.