



JORDANSTOWN SCHOOL

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

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2022-23

November 2023

Jordanstown School

Jordanstown School is a specialist school for pupils who are d/Deaf or visually impaired. 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 2022-23 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.

School Governance

During the school year 2022-23, the School Governors ensured that the school was providing a sound education service for all of the pupils. 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. The full Board met on five occasions over the course of the year. There were also sub-committee meetings to deal with teaching and non-teaching appointments and with pastoral matters. In between meetings, the Governors were consulted by the Principal via email or telephone.

Membership of the Board of Governors

Governor	Role	Nominating authority
Mrs Carole Magowan	Chairperson	Board of Trustees
Mrs Deirdre Byrne	Vice Chairperson	Board of Trustees
Mrs Colette Gray	Designated Governor for Child Protection	Education Authority
Mr Brian Symington		Education Authority
Mr John Carberry		Board of Trustees
Mrs Joanne Dickson	Parent Governor	Co-opted by Trustees
Mr Gareth Adams	Teacher Governor	Elected by staff
Dr Catherine Scully	Principal and Secretary to the Board of Governors	Non-voting member

Staff information

Principal	1
Full-time Teachers	15 FTE including 2 for Outreach and 1 funded by the Ulster Society
Part-time Teachers	3 (2 FTE)
Classroom Assistants	12.8 FTE
General Assistants	1 (2.5 hours per week)
Discretionary Support	10 (277.5 hours per week)
Sign Language Assistants	3 (funded by the Ulster Society)
Senior Clerical Officer	1
ICT technician	1
Building Supervisor	1
Cleaners	7
Lunchtime supervisory assistants	2

The following appointments were made in Jordanstown School in 2022-23:

- Mrs Hannah McVeigh – Primary (permanent)
- Mrs Catherine Keery – Teacher for Curriculum, Careers and Transition (permanent)
- Mr David Hunt – Business Studies (temporary, maternity cover)
- Mrs Martina Ilieva – Classroom Assistant (permanent)
- Mrs Adele Gilmore – Classroom Assistant (temporary)
- Miss Victoria Phillips – Classroom Assistant (temporary)
- Mr Trevor McCormick – BSL Communication and Learning Support Assistant (temporary)
- Mrs Naimo Beattie – BSL Communication and Learning Support Assistant (temporary)
- Mrs Naomi Brown – BSL Communication and Learning Support Assistant (temporary)
- Mrs Lorraine Magill – Sign Language Assistant (temporary)
- Mrs Lesley Mailey – Senior Clerical Officer (permanent)

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The following permanent staff left over the course of the year:

- Mr Lee Dougherty (Teacher of Art)
- Mrs Catherine Keery (Teacher for Curriculum, Careers and Transition)
- Mrs Helen Love (Classroom Assistant)
- Mrs Rachael Peacock (Classroom Assistant)
- Mrs Lesley Mailey (Senior Clerical Officer)

The school community is indebted to them for their service to the school and we wish them well in their future careers.

Continuing Professional Development

Classroom assistants and teachers engaged in professional development activities in a range of areas over the course of the year. These included:

- Deafness and Dyslexia
- The Magenta Principles of Teaching and Learning
- Use of the BrailleNote Touch
- Accelerated Mathematics
- Batten Disease
- Attachment Disorder
- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Whole-School Literacy Strategy
- Manual Handling
- Administration of Medication in School
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- VR simulation of VI by Angel Eyes
- Qualifications in British Sign Language (Levels 1, 3 and 6)

Pupil information

Jordanstown School had an enrolment of 88 pupils at the end of 2022-23. Five pupils left the school:

- Four Year 15 pupils took up a range of courses at colleges of further education
- A Year 11 pupil left to go to a special school closer to home

The overall rate of attendance across the school in 2022-23 was 83.9%. The Principal liaised with the Educational Welfare Service of the Education Authority regarding pupil attendance and welfare.

Curriculum

The aim of the curriculum is to enable pupils to achieve their potential and to prepare them for life beyond school. 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 across the school. 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.

Jordanstown School offers a wide range of life-skills, vocational and academic qualifications. Pupils are entered for the appropriate external examinations, and all pupils follow an individual examination pathway. We recognise and celebrate the

achievements and success of our pupils on the school website, on Seesaw and Twitter and during Prize Days.

Curriculum provision at Key Stage 5 was enhanced in 2022-23 through our involvement with the Newtownabbey Learning Community. One pupil attended two courses at Abbey Community College and one attended a course at Belfast High School. In addition, ten pupils attended Springvale Training College on a weekly basis for Entry Level courses in Hair and Beauty, Childcare or Catering. Seven pupils attended AEL in Larne on a weekly basis for Business units of the OCN Level 2 Vocational Qualification.

Qualifications achieved in 2022-23 were:

Level 3 qualifications

AS Levels (Mathematics and Physics) – 2 at grades A to E

BTEC units (Business, Childcare and Health and Social Care) – 7 at pass or merit

Level 2 qualifications

GCSEs (English and Mathematics) – 3 at grades A* to C

OCN NI Essential Skills - Application of Number Level 1

Passed by 2 pupils

OCN NI Applied Science Level 2

Passed by 5 pupils

Prince's Trust Personal Development and Employability

Passed by 4 pupils

BTEC Home Cooking Skills Level 1

Passed by 15 pupils

Religious Education continues to be a compulsory subject under the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Three pupils were withdrawn from RE classes at the request of parents.

Guide Dogs NI continued to provide individual sessions of orientation and mobility education to pupils. These skills were 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 vision impairment. This trains our pupils in skills for overcoming the challenges of their sensory loss, while developing their independence and empowering them for the future.

Curriculum enhancement activities

A range of fun and educational events were run, including Health 4 Life Days and a whole-school Sports Day at the University of Ulster. There was horse riding for Primary pupils and football coaching by the Irish Football Association for Post-Primary pupils. There was an outing for Primary pupils to a sports event at the University of Ulster, funded by the Rotary Club. Post-Primary pupils participated in a series of Judo coaching sessions. There were special celebration events including World Book Day, World Braille Day, Sign Language Week and the Coronation. Road safety and eSafety events were run, as well as fund-raising events for charity.

The school ran the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme at Bronze and Silver Levels. All pupils completed overnight expeditions in June, which took place in Crawfordsburn Country Park. Four pupils achieved the Silver award by the end of the year, and one achieved Bronze.

Our Pupil Council met regularly and continued to give pupils a voice. It also developed their confidence and skills. This year the Pupil Council was led by Mrs McNeill. Pupil voice was also included in the Personal Learning Plans.

A summer scheme ran for one week in the school holidays, led by Miss Maguire and supported by classroom assistants and BSL support staff.

Extended schools

Extended Schools funding was used to provide Play Therapy for a number of pupils and a counsellor for Primary children.

Community links

Jordanstown School is a full and active member of the Newtownabbey Learning Community, with two Key Stage 5 pupils attending classes at Belfast High School and Abbey Community College. Pupils gave a musical performance at the switching on of the Christmas lights for Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council in December. The school continued to provide the Outreach Service for the Visually Impaired for the Locality North Region of the Education Authority.

Four Primary pupils received the Sacrament of Confirmation in St James' Church, Whiteabbey, in June.

School staff and parents continued to work constructively together in the best interests of the pupils. Parent-Teacher Consultations were held in November, and the Annual Review meetings were held in December and March.

Speech and Language Therapy continued to take place almost daily within the school, with three Speech and Language Therapists. Physiotherapy took place on a regular basis and a number of pupils benefited from a course of Music Therapy. The school provided mobility sessions for a number of vision impaired pupils, run by Guide Dogs NI, and Pet Therapy was provided during the second half of the year.

There were two School counsellors. One was for Post-Primary pupils, provided by Barnardo's with Department of Education funding. A Primary counsellor was funded through Extended Schools.

BSL classes for staff by Sign Source took place throughout the year. Funded by the Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind, it enabled four staff to secure their Level 1 qualification while five staff achieved Level 3.

Safeguarding pupils

We have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the children in our charge. Through the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the Pastoral Care Policy, the Positive Behaviour Policy and the Anti-Bullying Policy, we aim 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 protect our children further by ensuring that everyone who works in the school is aware of the reporting and recording procedures in place. The school has a confidential recording system for information about suspicion of abuse, disclosure of abuse and complaints against members of staff. The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy was placed on the school website, and a summary document was provided for all staff and parents.

In 2022-23, Mr Sam Murray was the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, with Miss Ruth Sturgeon and Mr Gareth Adams were Deputies. Ms Colette Gray was the Designated Governor for Child Protection.

Premises

The Principal and Governors oversee the upkeep of the school buildings, with maintenance works carried out by 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 follows closely 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, including regarding water hygiene

and infection control. The school's fire evacuation procedures were reviewed in 2022-23 and a revised policy document was produced. Two successful fire drills took place.

Security of pupils and staff

- Access through all exterior doors is controlled by means of an electronic security mechanism.
- All visitors are asked to report to the school Reception. In 2022-23, the electronic visitor recording system remained suspended to minimise potential for infection spread. Instead, a paper-based system was used.
- Staff did supervision duty in the dining room, corridors and playgrounds during the morning break, lunchtime and end of the school day.
- The Building Supervisor was on duty around the school during the day and escorted contractors as necessary.
- The school premises were 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.

The school benefits from charitable funding from the Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind. Where a particular need is identified which cannot be covered by the partially delegated budget, a specific funding request can be made to meet that need. In 2022-23, the school received funds amounting to £344,769 from the Ulster Society.

Throughout the year the school was also fortunate to be in receipt of a small number of donations from other 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 and support staff for their dedication and hard work and for the personal interest they take in each pupil;
- The parents for their partnership and support, on which their children's progress and wellbeing depend centrally;

- The pupils for their efforts, enthusiasm and willingness to cooperate with all of the school staff.

The school would like to express particular thanks to 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.