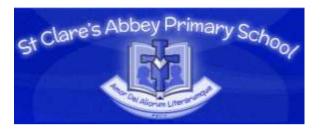
# St Clare's Abbey Primary School



# Annual Board of Governors' Report 2020 - 2021

Approved by Governors: 27/01/22

#### **CONTENTS**

										<u>Page</u>
Governors Report										4
Board of Governors										5
Staffing Complement				•••	•••	•••	•••	•••		6
Staff News										9
Enrolment				•••	•••	•••	•••	•••		9
An overview of schoo	l life in 2	2020/21	<u>, amids</u>	t Covid	Pander	nic, Yea	<u>ar 2</u>			
1 Physical layout of	School									10
2 The school timetab	ole									10
Key 2020/21 Achieve	<u>ments</u>									
1 A programme of st	aff deve	elopmer	nt was ir	mpleme	nted tha	at react	ed to Co	ovid pre	essure	11
2 A programme for e Mathematical and			•	ve oppo	rtunities	s to dev	elop the	eir 		11
3 A programme for e their ICT skills	ensuring 	that pu	pils and	d staff h	ave opp	ortuniti 	es to de	evelop 		12
4 A programme for d	levelopi	ng Pers	onal De	evelopm	ent and	d Mutua	l Under	standin	g	13
5 A programme for h	elping p	oupils w	ith Spe	cial Edu	cationa	l Needs	s/Additio	nal Ne	ed	13
6 A programme for e	nhancin	ng the qu	uality of	our Nu	rsery pr	ovision				13
7. Drama and Music										14
8. ECO Schools Wee	ek									14
9. PE										14
10 A programme for o	develop	ing Par	ental Er	ngagem	ent					14
11 Community Links										14
Other important inforn	nation f	rom 202	20/21							
12 Attendance										14
13 Charity Donations	S									15

14 Destination of School Leavers	•••	 	 	 	 15
15 School Funds Account		 	 	 	 16
16 LMS Budget Plan		 	 	 	 17
17 Conclusion					18

# St Clare's Abbey Primary School Newry

#### Governors' Report 2020/21

#### **Dear Parents**

I am pleased to have this opportunity to present to you the 2020/21 Governors' Report for St Clare's Abbey Primary School. Due to Covid restrictions and mitigations it was an incredibly challenging year for everyone associated with our school: parents, pupils, governors and staff. As a Board of Governors, we are extremely proud of how the St Clare's Abbey community rose to the challenges of this new way of living and learning. Whilst there were a lot of losses in the year there were also some opportunities that arose out of the new ways of operating. As a school we tried to make the best of a dreadful time.

We are deeply committed to working closely with you, the parents, and we view this report as a very important source of information for you. Thank you for taking the time to read it and for the interest and support you show to the school community of St Clare's Abbey.

Yours sincerely

Canon Francis Brown

Chairman

#### St Clare's Abbey Primary School

#### **Board of Governors: 2020/21**

#### **Trustees**

Canon Francis Brown (Chairperson)
Mr Gerard Keenan (Vice-Chairperson)
Sr Julie Mc Goldrick
Mrs Siobhan Gorman

#### **SELB Representatives**

Mrs Karen Mc Nally Mr Brendan Keenan

#### **Department Representative**

Mr Shane Comer (Chairperson)

#### **Parent Representative**

Mr Mark Doran

#### **Teacher Representative**

Miss Patricia Mc Coy

#### **Principal**

Mrs Michelle Monaghan

#### Co-opted member

Mrs Ciara Reilly

#### Secretary to the Board of Governors

Mrs Bridie Downey

#### What Are Their Main Responsibilities?

The Governors are ultimately responsible for the overall management of the school. They are required to meet a minimum of three times each year, but in practice may meet more often than this.

#### Some of their Duties Include:

- · Overseeing the curriculum.
- The control of the budget.
- The provision of information to parents.
- The selection of staff.
- The maintenance of the premises (shared responsibility with SELB).
- The Admissions Policy.
- Fostering links with the local community and pursuing the objectives of Mutual Understanding.

Warmest thanks are extended to our Governors who give so freely of their valuable time.

#### **STAFFING COMPLEMENT 2020/21**

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>
Mrs Michelle Monaghan	Principal
Mr Eddie Sweeney	Vice Principal
Mrs Martina Toner	Member of School Leadership Team SENCO
Mrs Eimear Gallagher	Head of Nursery
Miss Blanaid O'Shea	ECPD teacher (Education Centre for Physically Disabled Children.)
Mrs Caitriona Cribbin	Primary 1 Teacher ( 4 days per week) Member of School Leadership Team, Head of Foundation Stage, Joint Literacy Co-ordinator &
Mrs Aoife Mc Parland	Primary 1 Teacher
Miss Clare Mackin	Primary 1 Teacher - Sub-covering Mrs Mc Keown
Mrs Jayne Davey	Support Teacher - Maternity leave Terms 1 & 2, returned to school Term 3
Mrs Monica Keenan	Primary 2 Teacher. Play Based Learning Co- ordinator
Mrs Ciara Kearney	Primary 2 Teacher
Mrs Geraldine Tierney	Primary 3 Teacher
Mrs Mairead Browne	Primary 3 Teacher
Miss Elayna Duffy	Primary 3 Teacher Coordinator for The Arts
Mr Brendan Byrne	Primary 4 Teacher
Mr Aidan Clarke	Primary 4 Teacher
Mrs Emma McKeown	Working From Home
Mrs Katharine Doherty	Working from home  Term 1  Maternity leave Terms 2 and 3
Mr Paul Hillen	Primary 5 Teacher – Sub-covering Mrs Doherty
Mr Mark Digney	Primary 5 Teacher Appointed to post of temporary PDMU coordinator.
Mrs Sonya McVeigh	Primary 6 Teacher Coordinator for World Around Us
Miss Roisin Rocks	Primary 6 Joint ICT Co-ordinator
Mrs Michelle McParland	P7 Teacher Joint ICT Co-ordinator
Miss Patricia Mc Coy	Primary 7 Teacher Member of School Leadership Team Head of Key Stage 2 Joint Numeracy Co-ordinator

#### **AUXILIARY STAFF**

<u>NAME</u>	POSITION
Mrs Bridie Downey	Executive Officer
Mrs Marie McNeany	Clerical Officer
Mr Cormac Murphy	Building Supervisor
Mr Edmund Heaney	Building Supervisor
Mrs Louise Morgan	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Catherine McQuillan	Classroom Assistant & Website co-ordinator – Working From Home
Mrs Amanda Keenan	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Lorraine Mc Cann	Classroom Assistant
Ms Martina Connolly	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Deirdre Murtagh	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Therese Murphy	Classroom Assistant Working From Home
Mrs Patricia Gray	Classroom Assistant
Ms Angela Campbell	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Nuala Rafferty	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Marie McCartan	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Aneta Palis	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Fiona Mc Govern	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Maggie Rogalska	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Mona Mc Ardle	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Carol Murphy	Classroom Assistant- Nursery
Mrs Breege Mc Anulty	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Attracta Byrne	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Colette Lundy	Classroom Assistant
Dr Ewa Jadczak	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Orla Mulholland	Assistant - ECPD
Mrs Phyllis O'Hare	Assistant – ECPD
Mrs Teresa Hollywood	Assistant- ECPD.
Mrs Yvonne Mc Mahon	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Claire Mallon	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Caroline Mulligan	Classroom Assistant

Ms Sabrina Philips	Classroom Assistant
Mrs Michelle Burke	Classroom Assistant
Ms Erin Grant	Classroom Assistant
Miss Lisa Rea	Classroom Assistant

#### **CLEANERS**

NAME	POSITION
Mrs Mc Shane	Cleaning Supervisor
Mrs Doherty	Cleaner
Mrs A Mc Shane	Cleaner
Mrs Gallagher	Cleaner
Mrs Rooney	Cleaner
Mr G Hutchinson	Cleaner

#### **SUPERVISORS - DINING HALL/YARD**

<u>NAME</u>	POSITION
Mrs E Kay	Senior Supervisory Assistant Dhall/Yard
Mrs R Doherty	Dhall/Yard Supervisory Assistant
Mrs A McShane	Dhall/Yard Supervisory Assistant
Miss Betty Woods	Dhall/Yard Supervisory Assistant

#### STAFF IN DINING HALL/KITCHEN

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>
Mrs Elaine Murphy	Canteen staff, who were amazing throughout the
	year taking meals to all classrooms so that class
	bubbles would not be compromised in the canteen.

#### SCHOOL CROSSING PATROL OFFICER

Mrs Sobala

#### **EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST**

Mrs Caroline Flynn

#### SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY

Fr Krzysztof/ Fr Alphonsus- Mid year change Sr Rosemary Lynchehaun

#### **SCHOOL COUNSELLOR**

Mrs Sineen O Hare

#### SCHOOLSPEECH THERAPIST

Mrs Marianne Mc Grath

#### **Staff News**

We thank the temporary teachers we had in school during 2020/21 for the effort they invested: Miss Clare Mackin- Substitute teacher for 1 Mr Paul Hillen- Substitute teacher for P5

We congratulate Mrs Katherine Doherty and her husband on the birth of their son James. Congratulations also to Mr Brendan Byrne and his wife on the birth of their son Aodhan, to Mrs Jayne Davey and her husband on the birth of their daughter, Monica and to Mr Mark Digney and his wife on the birth of their son, Dan.

Miss Mallon became Mrs Keenan in this school year, we congratulate her and her husband.

#### **Enrolment**

Our enrolment as recorded on DENI statistical return in October 2020 was 497 including 52 pupils in Nursery and we thank our deeply committed staff for the tireless work they have undertaken throughout the year. Their dedication to our pupils is unwavering.

#### An overview of achievements of 2020/21:

The number one achievement in the school year 2020/21, was the way in which staff, parents and pupils came together to support our children whilst in school during Covid and remotely during the second period of school closure due to Covid. It was a challenging time which took its toll on everyone and yet we have learnt so much from it.

#### Implementing the Covid Safety Plan:

Throughout the Summer of 2020, staff worked very hard to put mitigations in place to keep our school as safe as possible, in keeping with PHA guidelines

#### 1 The Physical layout of School changed considerably:

To facilitate recommended Covid 19 mitigations, class bubbles remaining intact:

- All staff and Pupils were allocated specific exit and entrance points.
- Each class was allocated its own playground setting. The playgrounds were cordoned off using equipment borrowed from Felix O Hare builders - we thank them for their support.
- School meals were delivered to each class. We thank the dedicated Kitchen staff under the leadership of our school cook Elaine Murphy.
- Ventilation was strictly adhered to in each class
- Cleaning schedules were implemented in each class above and beyond the daily cleaning regime. We thank our classroom assistants for their support and commitment.
- Assembly hall/gym was allocated as a second staffroom to facilitate 2m social distancing. No indoor PE was held, nor could daily Sensory Motor Group be accommodated.
- Pupils were not permitted on corridors beyond accessing stairs and all movement around the school took place outdoors.
- Pupils did not use hard copy books, so reading was completed using digital resources, school libraries/Accelerated Reader & Book Banding Resource areas were unused.
- Music Resource Area was unused as EA music tuition did not take place.
- Sunshine Room sessions did not take place due to the need to maintain 'bubbles'. The leading staff member tried to implement these virtually to varying degrees of success.
- Each class was allocated a 'Break Out Space' to assist in managing pupils who needed classroom breaks.
- Significant amounts of time were spent outdoors in PE, Play Based Learning, Pupil Leadership Team activities.

#### 2 The school timetable:

- Straddled exit and entrance times.
- Extended lunch time to facilitate allocation of playgrounds to individual classes/ meals being brought to classrooms.
- 6 times daily handwashing schedule implemented
- These resulted in a significant reduction to available teaching time across the year.

Key 20/21 achievements are listed below but once again are only a snapshot of this most unique year.

1. A programme of staff development was implemented, that reacted to Covid pressures.

#### Curriculum

Staff development prioritised:

ICT – using MS Teams more effectively to facilitate class 'meet ups' during School Closure. Also during this period classroom assistants of pupils with statements for Special Educational Needs were trained so that they could support children remotely via MS Teams. This was a great support for pupils and parents.

Another focus was the development of staff expertise in PDMU- Personal Development & Mutual Understanding. This was identified as a great area of need as so many parents and staff had observed the toll that school closure and Covid restrictions had had on pupils' behaviour, well being and aptitude for learning.

#### Pastoral Care/ Safeguarding

A comprehensive system of pastorally supporting struggling families as a result of Covid was implemented. This involved 6 members of the Safeguarding team staying in touch with families on a weekly basis during School closure and signposting the way to support services as required.

#### **Continuing Professional Development**

- Early Professional Development courses 2 teachers completed EPD2 (in spite of Lockdown)-Mr Hillen & Miss Mackin. We were privileged to play a role in their early professional development.
- Masters Study 1 teacher undertook Masters modules.
- 2. A programme for ensuring that pupils have opportunities to develop their Mathematical and Communication skills was led by Numeracy co-ordinators Miss McCoy and Mrs Mc Goldrick and Literacy co-ordinator Mrs Cribbin.

#### Numeracy

In Numeracy Teachers in all classes made recordings of the weekly Numeracy maths target. These 'taught' the pupils as they would have been taught in class and were posted on Seesaw each Monday, to help parents and pupils. An exceptional bank of resources has been created that will be used as part of our regular practice. It was time consuming but we are delighted as this had been an area of concern for a long time; that so many parents were not aware of the approaches we used to teach Numeracy topics. This was one of the gains arising from Covid School Closure.

#### Literacy

In Literacy we worked hard on the core components of Reading and Writing which had declined following the first period of school closure due to Covid. We used an online Reading Scheme – Bug Club, so that Reading from home could be appropriately pitched and kept in line with reading levels used in school

#### The effect of school closure on Literacy and Numeracy improvements:

Detailed analysis of Literacy & Numeracy assessments in June 21 have shown that attainment levels declined in all year groups when compared with levels in June 19- the most recent data from Pre Covid times.

#### Interpreting the data:

Given that it is difficult to determine what constitutes an 'average school', we use the notion that 60% of pupils should be attaining at stanine 5 and above in GL standardised tests, within an 'average school', to help establish how St Clare's Abbey is performing: Pre Covid School Closures , we were comfortably achieving this 60% in each year group, now however, following a second year of school closure, we are **not**.

NB Pupils completing test from previous June)	Stanine 5 or above June 21 (Numeracy)	Stanine 5 or above June 21 (Literacy)
Primary 4 (*PTE/M7)	13%	48%
Primary 5 (*PTE/M8)	60%	60%
Primary 6 (*PTE/M9)	57%	51%
Primary 7 (*PTE/M10)	61%	60%

We have a lot of work to do and need home, school and child to work so closely together.

# 3. A programme for ensuring that pupils and staff have opportunities to develop their ICT skills was led by ICT co-ordinators – Miss Rocks and Mrs McParland –

The main objective was:

Enhancing the ability to remain connected and communicate online during school closure. We did a lot of work on MS Teams to enable this to be used during the second period of school closure.

In an evaluation undertaken with parents at end of 19/20 and first Lockdown, some parents stated that their first 'Learning From Home' experience would have been better had pupils been able to receive 'Face to Face' contact sessions to supplement the pre-recorded structure of Seesaw provision. Therefore, upon School reopening in August 2020 - great emphasis was placed on upskilling staff with Microsoft Teams.

Initially, the ICT co-ordinators attended all EA training available. Based on this, they devised a programme to upskill staff with planned usage reflecting staff confidence and skill.

SLT were trained and this enabled staff and Governor meetings to be conducted via MS Teams.

- A group of 8 teachers were trained and went on to teach afterschool Literacy & Numeracy clubs in each year group. This happened whilst school was still open in Term 1 and the aim was to ensure that parents could link in with MS Teams remotely, just in case of a further lockdown, which of course there was.
- All teachers were trained with a view to them undertaking weekly pastoral 'meet ups' with their classes, if needed. As we know these were indeed needed.

- SEN Classroom assistants of pupils with EA Statements of Educational Need were trained as were the parents of these children, to ensure that they could receive daily face to face sessions focussed on delivering work related to IEP targets.
- By the time the second 'School Closure' period was announced our staff were able to deliver a combination of Seesaw - pre prepared and recorded lessons and work plans, supplemented with face to face teaching/ pastoral sessions delivered via TEAMS.

### 4. <u>A programme for developing Personal Development and Mutual Understanding was led by</u> coordinator – Mr Digney

Upon return to school post first School Closure period, audits were undertaken with parents, pupils and staff. These showed that pupil confidence and aptitude for learning had been impacted upon adversely. Staff opinion concurred. Therefore, a priority was to ensure that the Personal Development & Mutual Understanding Curriculum be explicitly delivered. Following a comprehensive audit of existing practice, it was decided that this could best be accommodated by weaving it through the existing learning experiences within each class, rather than delivering a stand alone PDMU commercially devised programme.

This will be a programme of staff development work which will straddle 3 years. The first year saw excellent delivery of 3 themes from the 2 strands with these being embedded into all classes from P1 - P5. Based on the Play Based Learning work undertaken since 2018, P1 - P3 are very well established with this; P3-P5 have made a good start in terms of delivery and P6 - P7 classes are still at auditing stage to establish the gaps, before identifying how these will be filled.

The curricular approach being delivered in class is supplemented by a vast coordinator led programme of visitors to school (disturbed in 20/21 due to Covid Restrictions) but ready for implementation in 2021/22. It is further reinforced by the school's pastoral programme and policies which were amended in light of Anti Bullying legislation and Covid implications.

The final means of delivery was The Rights Respecting School Programme, which again, whilst restricted by Covid, continued to be part of the fabric of our school.

# 5. <u>A programme for helping pupils with Special Educational Needs/Additional Educational Needs was led by SENCO - Mrs Toner.</u>

This was rolled out during Home Learning period via MS Teams. So many of our interventions were unable to happen due to Covid restrictions, however we were delighted that we could still implement 1:1 speech therapy (in person with mitigations) to 14 pupils and some RISE NI support via Zoom. It was a huge decline when compared to normal practice but we all did our best.

# 6. <u>A programme for enhancing the quality of our Nursery provision was developed by</u> Head of Nursery

Mrs Gallagher Head of Nursery had a great first year in her new post. Ably assisted by Mrs Murphy and Miss Rea, great efforts were made to ensure that pupils progressed in their early years skill acquisition, in spite of the long perod of school closure. Seesaw app was used to great effect to maintain connections during Learning From Home and supported learning in school was implemented for 3 pupils.

#### 7. Drama and Music

We were unable to facilitate any work in these areas due to Covid restrictions and mitigations, a huge loss to wellbeing within our school.

#### 8. Eco Schools work

Our lovely 'Grandparents Gardening ' group' was unable to happen\_due to Covid restrictions and mitigations, a huge loss to wellbeing within our school.

We did however have a wonderful programme in place for Term 3-P7 pupils, entitled the 'Giving a little bit back' project. This saw P7 pupils leaving a legacy for younger pupils by working on a range of Eco Projects to improve the school grounds. Another gain arising from the Covid experience which will shape how we develop the P7 Pupil Leadership Team in our school in future years.

#### 9. PE

All PE had to happen outdoors as the school hall was required for accommodation to facilitate 'bubbles'. This was a huge challenge and whilst we tried to take the children outside as often as possible, weather did impact negatively on frequency of sessions.

# 10. A programme for developing Parental Engagement was undertaken by Parental Coordinator, Miss O'Shea in conjunction with the Principal and Vice Principal

Our parents engaged exceptionally well with us. Whilst earlier sections in the report show stark figures re the decline in pupil attainment, we have no doubt that scores would have been lower again without the high level of home school engagement that we shared with our parents.

#### 11. Community links.

Work in this field was significantly less than in pre-Covid times. Whilst we strove to manage transition discussions between phases via Zoom/Teams it was not as effective as face to face arrangements that have been built up over the years.

Our links with external agencies/ guest speakers and Residential Home partnerships were severely challenged.

#### 12. Other important information from 20/21 school year:

#### Attendance:

96.35%

This is significantly higher than usual and is due to the coding guidance issued by DENI during school closure. Inhouse figures based on pupil engagement during school closure would indicate a lower percentage.

#### 13. **Charity Donations:**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Amount</u>
15.12.20	St Patrick's Missionary	76.50 (Paid)
17.12.20	Christmas donations in lieu of presents £733.40 - Hospice £733.40 - St Vincent de Paul	1,626.80 (Paid)
17.12.20	Christmas Jumper Day	68.00
17.12.20	SMA Fathers Dromintine – Christmas Cards	95.00 (Paid) (£70 cheque £25 cash)

Sincerest thanks to parents for their generous contributions to each of the above funds and to the school council for firstly selecting the chosen charities for the year and secondly for co-ordinating the fundraising events each month. Sadly this was significantly disturbed by school closure. School funds have suffered a great loss as we missed out on monthly fundraisers from March to June and our Sponsored walk.

#### 14. Destination of School Leavers

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF PUPILS
St Joseph's High School	22
Abbey Grammar School	4
St Colman's College	4
St Mary's High School	17
Our Lady's Grammar School	6
Sacred Heart Grammar School	11
Newry High School	3
St Mark's High School	4
St Paul's High School	2

GL assessment did not take place in recognition of the disruption that Covid closure had had on pupils' education.

#### 15. School Funds Account

Summary of Lodgement and Expenditure Account 2020-21

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	CHEQUE JOURNAL - 2020 - 2021																					
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#### 16. <u>LMS Budget Plan 2020/21</u>

20/21, our jour

BOG approved

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	EA Office: Armagh				
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4	Pupils and Teachers		YEAR 1	TEAR 2	YEARS
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	CATEGORY		Category 4		

#### 17. Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to peruse this report. The Board of Governors trusts that it gives a good insight into the unique challenges of 2020/21 – a most unusual year due to the global pandemic and 3 months of school closure/remote learning - the second period in two academic years..

The Governors recognise the huge contribution made by staff, parents, pupils and indeed the whole Governance team. We are very proud of the efforts made by our school during this time and trust that you will continue to commit to the huge work needed to help reduce the gaps that have arisen following our pupils' Covid Closure experiences..

If you seek clarification on any of its contents, please feel free to contact:

- o School Principal Mrs Michelle Monaghan, or
- o Chairman of St Clare's Abbey Board of Governors Canon Francis Brown.