



Sandbrook Nursery School

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

The Board of Governors is required to give parents an Annual Report so that they know what is happening in the Nursery School.

The report cannot cover every aspect of school activity. If there are any issues which you feel to be important, please contact the Principal who will notify the Board of Governors.

The future begins here

Dear Parents and Carers,

As Chair of the Board of Governors it gives me great pleasure to present the 2020-21 Annual Report.

In a year in which normal activities were curtailed by the Coronavirus Regulations, I want to pay tribute to Mrs. Cromie and her staff for facilitating home learning, safe learning in the classroom and supporting parents throughout the year. As the regulations began to ease coming into the last few weeks of term, the highlight of the year was the Graduation Event, held in the School grounds with the children front and centre, enjoying the moment.

In spite of the many challenges faced this year, Sandbrook Nursery continues to go from strength to strength, delivering child centred learning in a way that catches and captivates the imagination on a daily basis. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank all our staff for all they do to make Sandbrook such a great place to be.

As your child moves on, they go with not only our best wishes, but with a foundation that will stand by them as they progress into the next stage of their education.

Stephen Warke
Chair, Board of Governors
Sandbrook Nursery School

Membership of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors of Sandbrook Nursery School has overall responsibility for the management of the School. They work in partnership with the Principal who translates this shared responsibility into the day to day management and organisation of the Nursery.

Under the Terms of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, the Board of Governors met at least termly during the school year. The present Board of Governors was reconstituted during 2018-2019 and the Board will serve a four-year term ending in June 2022.

Representing

Chairman and EA Representative	Mr. Stephen Warke
Vice-Chairman and DENI Representative	Mrs. Alice Chapman OBE
EA Representative and Governor responsible for Child Protection and Safeguarding	Mrs. Heather Lawder
Parent Representative	Mr. Gareth Beattie
Parent Representative	Mrs. Amanda Smith
Teacher Representative	Mrs. Sandra Campbell
Secretary	Mrs. Lee-Anne Cromie

The Governors have particular responsibilities in relation to:

- The curriculum
- Pastoral Care with specific reference to Safeguarding
- Open enrolment and admissions procedures
- Behaviour Management
- Financial procedures
- The appointment of staff
- The school building and site

The Board of Governors work closely with the Principal to further develop a framework of management for the school.

Pupil Admissions

During the year 2020-2021 a total of 52 children were enrolled in two classes of full-time sessions. Annual attendance of children was 93%.

The Staff Team

Teaching Principal/ Designated Teacher for Child Protection	Mrs. L Cromie
Assistant Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection	Mrs. S Campbell and Mrs P Gorman
Nursery Assistant	Mrs. S Forsythe
Nursery Assistant	Mrs. E Allsopp
General Assistant/SEN Assistant	Miss. M Astbury
SEN Assistant	Mrs. P Cooke
SEN Assistant	Miss E Weatherup
Secretary	Mrs. P Cooke
Building Supervisor	Mr. J McConkey
Catering Assistant	Mrs. C. Neill

Staffing and Staff Development

Mrs Cromie was appointed as full time temporary Principal due to Mrs Hamilton's resignation in September 2020. Mrs Cromie is the class teacher in Nursery 1 and Mrs S Campbell and Mrs P Gorman are class teachers in Nursery 2. Miss Michelle Astbury remained in post as General Assistant 10 hours and SEN Assistant 22.5 hours (From December 2020-June 2021). Mrs Cooke has continued in clerical position on a temporary basis 10 hours per week and also took on the role of SEN Assistant 22.5 hours (September 2020-June 2021). Miss E Weatherup joined the team April 2021 as a SEN Assistant 22.5 hours per week.

Staff Development Days and Baker Day

Bakers Days	Day	Date	Focus of Staff development
	1	17/8/20	COVID Risk assessment/Cleaning Schedule Classroom organisation and curriculum planning
	2	18/8/20	School Calendar Planning Classroom organisation and curriculum planning
	3	19/8/20	Child Protection and Safeguarding Day
	4	20/8/20	Classroom organisation and curriculum planning Food Hygiene Training Staff Handbook and School Policies
	5	21/8/20	Epi-Pen training COVID Awareness Training Classroom organisation and curriculum planning
SDD	Day	Date	Focus on Staff Development
	1	2/11/20	Cancelled circuit breaker
	2	21/12/20	Down Syndrome Training and Awareness
	3	4/1/21	Admissions and application prep
	4	4/5/21	Well Being Day
	5	28/5/21	Review of whole school planning and training Clare Devlin/Report writing

The staff team are fully committed to updating and increasing their expertise. In- service training takes place in a variety of ways; during the statutory non-teaching days and School Development Days. During 2020-2021, in addition to attending a small number of training courses delivered through EA (online).

Mrs Cromie, Mrs Campbell and Mrs Gorman attended Child Protection and Safeguarding training 'Sign Posts to Safety'. All staff completed training on Safeguarding and Child Protection, Covid Awareness, Food Hygiene Level 1, Adverse Childhood Experience Training, GDPR, Safe Place Training, Supporting Communication Difficulties (and other courses)

in Children with Downs Syndrome and Anaphylaxis Awareness in Schools. Mrs Cooke and Mrs Gorman completed Makaton training Foundation Stage.

The Pre-School Curriculum

The school curriculum is based on the N.I. Pre-School Curriculum Guidelines. The aim of the Board of Governors is to provide a stable and nurturing environment in which the potential of each child is realised in all aspects of their development. For young children, a play-based curriculum is essential to their learning process and affords them an appropriate way to progress and flourish. The staff work as a team to deliver a rich, challenging and motivating curriculum appropriate to the child's age and stage of development.

Although young children learn in a holistic way, the Pre-School Curriculum recognizes the need for progression in learning and so is organized in six discrete areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional development
- Language development
- Early Mathematical development
- Physical development and Movement
- The World round Us
- The Arts

The staff team planned a framework for potential progression in learning incorporating these areas but one that also responded to the needs and interests of the children.

Mrs Cromie is the Designated Teacher to whom all Child Protection referrals should be made and in their absence, Assistant Teacher Mrs Campbell and Mrs Gorman are the Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection.

Special Educational Needs

Children with special educational needs were identified, assessed and Individual Education Plans were devised to meet their needs, 6 children were placed on the register (3 Stage 5, 4 Stage 4, 1 Stage 3). Regular contact was maintained throughout the year with outside agencies including Speech and Language therapists, Autism Advisory Service, Educational

Psychologists, Early Years Special Educational Need Inclusion Service, Health Visitors and members of the N.I. R.I.S.E. team.

All professionals contributed advice and assistance for specific individuals and this multi-agency approach proved effective in collaborating to adequately meet the range of diverse needs.

Parental Involvement

Partnership with parents was steadily becoming an important part of Nursery life 2019/2020. However, due to the ongoing COVID restrictions parents were unable to come into the building. This put a pause on the parenting programme. Seesaw communication app was introduced to the parents to develop communication and also to assist with any closures and need for online/remote learning.

Parents and carers contributed to the School Fund which pays for the children's daily snack and enrichment activities including cooking and tasting activities, aspects of play, art and craft resources and visitors to school, i.e. Wee Critters; World of Owls, Mr Hullabaloo and any other topic based visitors. Although visitors were restricted this year we were able to connect virtually and we also used funding to purchase much need resources for the school. Nursery also purchased Christmas and end of year gifts for the children and provided party food. All of the children participated in a number of charity fundraising events throughout the year including; Children in Need £173, Comic Relief £108.10, a sponsored disco for Mencap £380.25 and NI Children's Hospice £85.75 (Christmas Jumper Day).

Parents contributed to Macmillan Coffee Morning raising £147.40 and they also donated food to East Belfast Mission – Neighbour in Need Appeal.

Other fundraising for school funds included Christmas Ballot £202, school disco £380.25, and school photographs £416. The money raised bought books and outside equipment.

The Christmas Nativity was online this year and enjoyed by all. We also introduced 'Graduation' to Sandbrook. This was well attended by the parents and enjoyed by everyone.

Parents do have opportunity to discuss their child's needs and progress throughout the year in a range of ways. These ways have changed due to COVID and included a more virtual approach. These include:

- Informal daily contact
- Telephone calls
- Arranging a meeting via zoom/telephone call with the child's teacher as the need arises
- Report Term 1
- Parent/teacher meeting Term 2 – phone call or zoom
- Transition report in June

The Class Teachers offered consultations via telephone/zoom Term 2 to share with parents how their child had settled and progressed in all areas of learning throughout the school year. Teachers also completed transition reports in Term 3. With parental consent, transition forms were forwarded to their chosen Primary School in the summer term. Children transitioned to a variety of Primary Schools; in total eleven different schools.

These included:

1. Victoria Park Primary School
2. Dundela Infants Primary School
3. Belmont Primary School
4. Greenwood Primary
5. Harberton Special School
6. Greenwood House Assessment Centre
7. Oakwood School and Assessment Centre
8. Brooklands Social Communication Unit
9. St Patricks Primary School, Holywood
10. Christ the King Primary School, Omagh

11. Holy Rosary Primary School

External Relationships and Partnerships

Sandbrook Nursery School is an integral part of the community, thus effective links continue to be maintained with outside agencies and local Primary Schools. The Nursery promotes continuity of experience between the Pre-School and Primary One. Part of this process is Transition meetings between the Principal, Assistant Teacher and staff from the receiving Primary Schools. Due to COVID these meetings were carried out via telephone or virtual meetings i.e. Zoom. We were fortunate enough this year to take the children moving on to Victoria Park Primary School for an outdoor playground visit to meet their teachers. This is a huge step in building relationships for pre-school/primary school transition.

School has had support from many professionals this year including the Education Authority Language and Communication Service, the NI RISE team and the Educational Psychology Department at EA.

The school also had 3 students studying NVQ Level 3 from Belfast Met on placement for the year.

We continued to build our connections in the local community alongside Eastside Early Years Network. We have also been able to work with Eastside Early Years Network to produce a 'Transition Booklet' for all new children and they also produced a 'Meet the Staff' document for the nursery, these documents were very useful during COVID do ensure new children got a feel of the nursery.

The Premises

The outside area of the school has been significantly developed with the addition of resources outside include fencing around safety surfaces, moving fence to increase size of playground , enclosure of sand pit and an outdoor classroom.

The School Budget

The Board of Governors is responsible for the use of funds allocated to the school by the Education Authority, Belfast Region. The school receives money from the Department of Education on an age weighted pupil unit basis and on the number of pupils in the school. Other factors considered include special needs and factors relating to the size and design of the building which affect running costs. The Governors, in partnership with the Principal are responsible for managing this delegated budget, centrally held by the Education Authority. The Common Funding Formula Budget available for 2020-2021 was:

£205,431

This covers staff salaries, utilities, grounds maintenance, school repairs, equipment and resources.

Financial Summary – The school works on a 3 Year Financial Plan

Common Formula Budget	2020-2021	£205,431
Proposed Expenditure	2020-2021	£223,119

Covid

This was an unusual year with Covid and many mitigations put in place that would see Nursery a different place. The introduction of 'bubbles' and isolation meant that children and parents required new guidance for the school year. The parents happily signed a Home/School Agreement and parent obliged. The parents were not allowed into the school building and this introduced new procedures for dropping off and picking up children. Halloween half term saw a 'Circuit Breaker' imposed by the Northern Ireland Executive and the school closed for an extra week. This was the beginning of a new era for remote/blended learning for Sandbrook Nursery School. Using the Seesaw app ensured this was a more straight forward experience for staff and families than previously used. January brought further lockdowns imposed by the Northern Ireland Executive for education and school only remained open for key worker provision. Sandbrook Nursery School had up to 15 children at these sessions and school meals were not provided and children finished their day at 12.30. Staff continued to provide both in school teaching as well as remote learning for children at home. This was a challenging time for the staff as key worker provision was a very open term

and staff found themselves in a vulnerable situation. School remained open throughout 2021/2021. Increased cleaning was carried out daily and weekly by all staff as part of the mitigations in place and as part of the risk assessment. The staff went above and beyond to ensure all stakeholders were safe. The school also secured extra funding during this academic year for increased cleaning and equipment (cleaning materials, learning pack resources) and also received £3200 Well Being money. This Well Being money was used to purchase an outdoor classroom ensuring that the children could use outside for story time, group sessions, music sessions and quiet time, a valuable addition to the school.

Throughout the school year Sandbrook was fortunate enough to be able to stay open for the children with exception to Northern Ireland Executive imposed closures and not be effected by any positive cases of Covid 19. The mitigations put in place and the risk assessment helped this and also the support of the parents. Attendance was up this year and this showed in the progression that the children made in challenging times.