



Sandbrook Nursery School

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

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 2021-22 Annual Report.

Whilst not entirely over, it feels as though we have come out the other side of the Covid-19 Pandemic with life returning to relative normality. I want to pay tribute to all our staff, led by Mrs. Cromie, for how they have met the challenges head on and delivered safe learning throughout the year.

For me, the highlight of the year was the collaboration with the Northern Ireland Hospice, promoting inclusivity, courage and friendship whilst working on designing an Elmer which we all came to know as 'Sandy'. I was very proud to see 'Sandy' on display with the herd in the foyer of the Grand Opera House in Belfast. It was fantastic that we also raised £2115 for the Northern Ireland Hospice.

I'm delighted to say that Sandbrook Nursery continues to go from strength to strength, delivering child centred learning that captivates the imagination on a daily basis. On behalf of the Governors, 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 on to 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 (this has been extended due to pandemic to June 2023)

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 2021-2022 a total of 52 children were enrolled in two classes of full-time sessions. Annual attendance of children was 85%.

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
Secretary	Mrs. P Cooke
Building Supervisor	Mr. J McConkey
Catering Assistant	Mrs. C. Neill

Staffing and Staff Development

Mrs Cromie is the class teacher in Nursery 1 and Mrs S Campbell and Mrs P Gorman are class teachers in Nursery 2. Mrs Cooke has continued in clerical position on a temporary basis 10 hours per week and also took on the role of SEN Assistant 15 hours (November 2021-June 2022).

Staff Development Days and Baker Days

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 2021-2022, 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 Refresher training and Responding to Neglect in Educational Settings. All staff completed training on Safeguarding and Child Protection, Autism NI Impact Training and Anaphylaxis Awareness in Schools Training.

Bakers Days	Day	Date	Focus of Staff development
	1	23.8.21	COVID Risk assessment/Cleaning Schedule Classroom organisation and curriculum planning
	2	24.8.21	School Calendar Planning Classroom organisation and curriculum planning
	3	25.8.21	Induction Day + Child Protection and Safeguarding
	4	26.8.21	Classroom organisation and curriculum planning Staff Handbook and School Policies
	5	27.8.21	Epi-Pen training Classroom organisation and curriculum planning
SDD	Day	Date	Focus on Staff Development
	1	25.10.21	School Development Planning SDP Transition Programme Early Years Network Autism NI – Autism Impact
	2	1.11.21	Observation and Planning Training
	3	22.12.21	Open Evening/Saturday
	4	4.1.22	Well-Being
	5	18.3.22	Review of whole school planning focus – Outdoor Play /Report writing

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 (1 Stage 3, 3 Stage 2, 1 Stage 1). 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 continued to enhance 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. Nursery also purchased Christmas and end of year gifts for the children and provided party food.

First aid information sessions were held for parents – 1 evening and 1 Saturday. These were 2 hour sessions that informed parents of the basics of first aid that may be required for their children.

All of the children participated in a number of charity fundraising events throughout the year including; Macmillan Coffee Morning £127.51, World Kindness Day £146.49, Children in Need £49.66, a sponsored Danceathon for NI Hospice raised £1575.90 ,NI Children's Hospice – Topsy Turvy Day - £359.42, Easter Ballot (NI Hospice) £180, Forget-Me-Not (Christmas Jumper Day and Ballot) £350.

The Christmas Nativity was online this year and enjoyed by all. We also continued with 'Graduation' meeting all Covid guidelines and completed another successful graduation day. 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. Alexander Dickson Memorial Primary School
5. Andrews Memorial Primary School
6. Dundonald Primary School
7. Eden Primary School
8. Euston Street Primary School
9. Lisnasharragh Primary School
10. Nettlefield Primary School
11. Orangefield 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. We were fortunate enough to take the children moving on to Victoria Park Primary School for an outdoor playground visit to meet their teachers. Another step in building relationships for pre-school/primary school transition.

School has had support from many professionals this year including the Special Educational Needs Early Years Inclusion team, the NI RISE team and the Educational Psychology Department at EA.

The school also had 1 PGCE student studying at university of Ulster on observation days.

We continued to build our connections in the local community alongside Eastside Early Years Network.

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 2021-2022 was:

£216,483

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	2021-2022	£216,483
Proposed Expenditure	2021-2022	£212,148

Covid

This was another unusual year with Covid and many mitigations put in place that would see Nursery a different place. Covid guidelines meant that children and parents required new guidance for the school year. The parents happily signed a Home/School Agreement. The parents were again not allowed into the school building and procedures continued for dropping off and picking up children from the playground entrance. School remained open throughout 2021/2022. 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 playground markings and art easels ensuring that the children's needs were met in an holistic approach with a focus on outdoor play. The Minister of Education awarded schools £1000 for outdoor play equipment/resources, this also enhanced outdoor play. The nursery was also part of the Engage II funding for school year 2021/22. The nursery purchased

an assessment tool for Speech and Language and used money to employ a teacher to implement this. However, due to the rise in Covid cases and shortage in supply teachers it was difficult to employ a teacher and a percentage of this funding was removed from the budget.

Celebration at Sandbrook Nursery School

This year we celebrated Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee. We hosted a garden party for children and parents. The garden party was supported by the parents with every child having at least 1 adult in attendance. The garden was full and it had a lovely community feel especially as COVID restrictions started to ease. The children made a picture for The Queen and posted it to Buckingham Palace, and much to our delight we received a lovely card from the Palace thanking the children for their gift. For this special day we also had our 'Danceathon' to raise money for the NI Hospice.

We took part this year in 'Elmer's Big Belfast Trail' with the NI Hospice. Sandbrook Nursery School was the first nursery to sign up for this and we rose to the challenge. The nursery had to raise £1000 for the NI Hospice and we raised an amazing £2115. We held a 'Danceathon', 'Topsy Turvy Day' and had an Easter Ballot. We employed an artist Fionnuala Duffin who worked with the children to design and decorate a 'mini' ceramic elephant that was then placed in The Grand Opera House as part of the herd. 'Sandy' the Elephant was 1 of 70 elephants placed throughout Belfast and the Antrim Castle Gardens for everyone to see. The children, staff, parents and governors were very proud to have involved in helping such a worthy cause.