

TAUGHMONAGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

&

NURSERY UNIT



ANNUAL REPORT

2023/2024

Our Vision/ Motto and Ethos

Motto: Learning Without Limits

Our Mission is to:

- Respond to children in a holistic way embracing emotional and academic success.
- Provide a safe environment where children can flourish and will value experiences as a learning opportunity.
- Fully utilise and maximise the skills and talents of the staff, children and parents to provide a rich learning environment.
- Create opportunities for community and parents to develop partnerships to enable participation in learning and decision making.
- Give children the development in skills and resilience to ensure the best possible future for themselves and within society.

Vision:

Taughmonagh Primary School envisions a safe and nurturing environment where every child feels valued and included. We are forward-thinking, inspiring young minds to embrace change and diversity. We strive to create a community that celebrates differences and fosters a love for learning in every child. We aspire for children to have the enjoyment for learning and to achieve their utmost academic and social development throughout their education.

Ethos:

Our school is a warm, welcoming, nurturing, and safe place for the whole community. We will endeavour to provide a stimulating environment to support children of all abilities. We will celebrate their success and achievement and promote resilience and value all learning.

We value input from all stakeholders in the development of our school to ensure a positive learning environment for all of our young people. This is evidenced by the opportunities provided to contribute to the formation of this three-year development plan. Our School is located in the heart of the Taughmonagh estate, and we are proud of the opportunities we provide for Parents and the wider community to be involved in our school

Function of Board of Governors

Governors are responsible for the use of the funds allocated to the school by the area board. They are responsible for ensuring teachers in the school have the facilities necessary to provide a curriculum which meets the requirements of the 1989 Education Order and for producing a policy in relation to the curriculum. They are responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put in place for the admission of pupils to the school and for drawing up criteria which will be used to select pupils should the school be oversubscribed.

The Annual Report of the Board of Governors is made to the parents of the school's pupils, and the Chair would be pleased to offer clarification on any relevant matter.

We believe the contents of this report indicate a successful year for the school, despite changes in Leadership and Staff and the potential uncertainty that this could have brought, and that this is based, as always, on the effective partnership between children, their parents, the Governors and all the staff who are employed in the school that enabled continuity of service and learning.

It gives us pleasure to deliver this report in the knowledge that Taughmonagh Primary School and Nursery Unit is a school meeting and addressing the challenges in education. Staff continue to develop their own skills to ensure the children in their care have the skills to become employable, motivated and well-rounded citizens.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2018 – 2024

In December 2023, Mr Arthur O'Brien resigned as Chair of Governors following a long period of service to Taughmonagh Primary School and Nursery Unit. An assembly of thanks was held including Staff, Pupils, Governance and Parents.

Members – we have 9 voting members and 1 non – voting (Principal)

Transferors' Representatives	Mrs B Dillon, Mrs E Simpson (Vice Chair of Governors), Rev L Stewart, Mr I Patterson (Chair of Governor)
Board Representatives	VAC (as of December 2023), Mr C Reid
Parents' Representatives	VAC, Mr D Green
Teachers' Representative	Mrs C O'Kane
Secretary	Mrs Wilson

The Board of Governors are appointed for a four-year term. This has been extended due to Covid and reconstitution commenced in June 2024. Governance works in partnership with the Principal and Staff. Its main purpose is to ensure the provision of an excellent education for all children.

The Governors in this school, as in every other Controlled School, have a legal obligation to manage the school, which includes:

I) Financial Management

II) Management and Appointment of Staff

III) Admission of Pupils

IV) Curriculum

V) Resources

VI) Child Protection, Safety and Security

Responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school rests with the Principal who advises the Board of Governors on issues arising.

Governor Meetings

The Board of Governors met formally on 4 occasions to discuss school business:

- 3rd October 2023
- 28th November 2023
- 27th February 2024
- 14th May 2024

🚩 Additional meeting with DE/EA 19th June 2024.

In addition to this, some Governors were involved in sub committee meetings, for example, Recruitment, Complaints, Principal PRSD and also informal discussions and attendance at school functions. Some of the main issues/scenarios dealt with at Governors meetings during 2023 – 2024 are noted below:

- Recruitment of permanent staff to ensure a consistent strategic approach and consistency for teaching and learning
- Discussions around a specialised unit in addition to the four speech and language classes on site.
- Open enrolment procedure and admissions criteria
- Staff welfare

- Transition of a new Principal into Taughmonagh Primary School and Nursery Unit
- LMS and Finance
- Maintenance
- SEND and GDPR
- Update of a range of school policies

The Governors would like to record their appreciation of work done by the teaching and non-teaching staff of the school in promoting the academic achievement, security and well-being of the pupils.

The also wish to record their appreciation of parental support in upholding the ethos and policies of the school and especially commend the efforts of the small group of Parents Group members who have started to plan for the fundraising of 2024 – 2025.

Financial Management

The Board of Governors continue to monitor finances carefully to ensure that our budget is spent efficiently and prudently. The school continues to battle against budget reductions in real terms whilst trying to meet inflationary costs, incremental pay awards and additional costs. Governors are pleased to provide an overview for the financial year 2023-2024.

Total Budget allocation 2023 – 2024:	£1,058,148
Carryover into 2024 – 2025:	£66,921

On top of the budget allocation, additional finance was received from:

- Belfast City Council Hardship Fund
- Kellogg's
- Shared Education

The Education Authority funded:

- Cut back of trees
- New security system on our playground gates
- New boiler

BANK ACCOUNTS

Taughmonagh Primary banks with Santander. These were audited in October 2023 by Mr Russell.

School Fund

School fund consists of money raised by pupils and staff for use within the school and for any charities supported by the school. (Includes money for ring-fenced projects / educational trips etc.)

Closing balance (as of 30th July 2024): £10,788.31

Contribution to shows / productions, gifts, music costs, crafts, money for projects etc. are all paid for from this fund.

Staff Fund

The staff hold a staff fund to purchase gifts/cards for members of staff who are celebrating or leaving. This fund is not the responsibility of Governance and is not audited or controlled by the School.

ii) Duties in relation to Management and appointment of staff

The school benefits greatly from the experience, talent and dedication of all teaching and nonteaching staff and relies heavily on their excellent services for its effective day-to-day running. The governors appreciate the efforts shown by all the adults in the school community to make Taughmonagh PS a happy and safe learning environment and are very appreciative of the work and duties undertaken by all members of staff for the benefit of the whole school community.

STAFF DEPLOYMENT 2023-2024

Nursery 1	Mrs R Doggart
Nursery 2	Mrs M Morgan
Primary 1	Mrs J Campbell
Primary 2	Miss J A Swales
Primary 3	Mr T Milligan
Primary 4	Mrs S Scott
Primary 5	Mrs D Robinson
Primary 6	Mr M Wheatley
Primary 7	Mrs K Browes
Speech and Language Unit 1	Mrs C O’Kane
Speech and Language Unit 2	Mrs S Holmes (Unit temporary until June 2025)
Speech and Language Unit 3	Mrs P Roberts
Speech and Language Unit 4	Ms R Graham
Nurture Room	Mrs L Wilson
Learning Support withdrawal	Miss S Mairs
<i>Classroom Assistants</i>	
Nursery 1	Miss P Johnston
Nursery 2	Miss J Campbell
Primary 1	Mrs R Mairs, Miss C Jackson
Primary 2	Miss E Bell
Primary 3	Ms D Brush
Primary 4	Mrs M Bostock, Ms K Lavery
Primary 5	Mrs T Downey
Primary 6	Mrs V Gibson, Miss C Cormack
Primary 7	Mrs A Vance, Mrs C Gibson, Mrs N Jackson, Mrs K Donnelly
S.L.U. 1	Mrs K Donnelly, Miss C Traynor, Mrs J McCann
S.L.U. 2	Mrs B Mercer
S.L.U. 3	Miss K Hall, Mrs R Lavrijsen, Ms K Boyd
S.L.U. 4	Mrs L Chivers
Nurture Room	Mrs E Woods
Clerical Officer	Mrs D Wright
Building Supervisor	Mr C Johnston
Cleaning staff	Mrs A. Saulters / Ms P Bowden/ Mrs D Brush/ Miss C Cormack / Ms A Mercer

Kitchen staff

Although employed by the School Meals’ Service rather than the school, school meals make considerable contribution to the well-being and nourishment of our pupils for which we are very grateful. We must note the untimely passing of Mrs P Bowden in October 2024. Mrs Bowden was a member of the catering staff as well as our cleaning team. A void has definitely been left in our school. Our pupils and staff were involved in a colour run February 2024 in her memory.

Individual staff responsibilities 2023-2024:

Vice Principal, Head of Key Stage 2, Extended Schools, PE and Assessment – Mrs K Browes

TA3 – Child Protection, Nurture and Learning Support Coordinator – Mrs Wilson

TA2 – Literacy and Head of Key Stage 1 – Mrs Scott

TA2 – Head of Speech and Language Unit and Shared Education – Mrs Roberts

TA1 – Numeracy and Head of Foundation Stage – Mrs Campbell

TA1 – Head of Nursery – Mrs Doggart

TA1 – ICT and E Safety Coordinator – Mr Milligan

Art Coordinator – Miss Swales

WAU Coordinator – Miss Holmes

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection – Miss Morgan

Getting Ready to Learn – Miss Morgan

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection - Mrs Okane

EAL, Mental Health First Aider, Support withdrawal, School of Sanctuary – Miss Mairs

Eco and Transfer – Mr Wheatley

Religious Education and Assemblies – Ms Graham

First Aiders – Mrs Mercer and Mrs Bostock

Stay and Play/ Breakfast Club – Mrs Mairs, Mrs Beattie, Miss Johnston

iii) Duties in relation to the admission of pupils

As the figure below demonstrates (including Nursery), we continue to maintain healthy pupil numbers.

October 2018 – 261

October 2019 – 266

October 2020 264

October 2021 – 261

October 2022 – 267

October 2023 - 265

The average attendance rate, 2023/2024 was 89.2% (P1-7) and 47 % of children were entitled to free school meals based on the October 2023 Census data.

IV) Duties in relation to the Curriculum

Curriculum Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Board of Governors of Taughmonagh Primary school that all our pupils will receive their full entitlement under the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

Since our Board of Governors regards each child as a unique person, we ensure that the curriculum caters for the needs and various talents of each child. Our aim is to offer your child a broadly based and appropriately balanced curriculum in line with the Northern Ireland Order, 1989.

The curriculum on offer was reviewed and adapted in September 2007 and all classes are following the Revised N. Ireland Curriculum. The main subjects taught are English, Mathematics, Science, RE, Geography, History, PE, Music, Art/Design and Technology.

The Cross Curricular themes of ICT, Education for Mutual Understanding, Cultural Heritage and Health Education are also important strands of learning taught mainly through the other subjects.

Development Plan

A School Development Plan was in place for 2018-2023 and is constantly evolving. With new Principalship and working alongside School Development Service, this Development Plan was extended with a Leadership and Management Action Plan to support the creation of a new School Development Plan 2024 – 2027. Action plans were drawn up for 2023/2024 under previous leadership, in collaboration between staff and the Board

of Governors. This assisted the Board of Governors in fully discharging its responsibility to determine, and keep under review, its policy in relation to the curriculum for Taughmonagh Primary School.

As the Northern Ireland Curriculum requirements continue to be revised, the teaching staff, through a process of reflection and self-evaluation, review and update schemes of work for all year groups. Consequently, the children are taught on the basis of a very broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

All aspects of the curriculum are subject to on-going amendment in the light of classroom experience. Our reflective teachers continuously update their teaching and planning for all areas of learning. Complementary to this, our subject coordinators review classroom practice and audit their subject areas then formulate action plans based on their findings. The Board of Governors then review the relevant information.

The Board of Governors is pleased that in reviewing another year it can again commend the staff for the diligence, perseverance and effort displayed in the teaching of its pupils.

Our priorities for the year were also strongly influenced by the strategic directions as outlined in 'Every Good a Good School'.

During 2023 – 2024, the Governors oversaw the implementation of the action plans which had been developed for the Nursery and Foundation Stage, ICT, SLU, Literacy, Nurture, Numeracy, Shared Education and extended schools. Coordinators implemented and evaluated 2023 – 2024 action plans and hold these within their coordinator files.

During the school year all parents were invited to a teacher meeting and an annual end of year report was written for each child in June. There is an open-door policy which allows the parents to discuss any concerns with the Principal or class teacher at any time. Teachers were available via seesaw also as an additional form of communication.

School Development Days & Baker Days

During 2023 – 2024, the Principal and one teacher undertook PRSD, with the remaining staff not completing due to Union Action.

5 'Baker Days' and 5 'Staff Development Days' utilised for:

Baker Day

1. Numicon Training
2. Child Protection Training/ Trauma Informed Practice
3. SMART Target Training/ Use of Adult Assistance
4. EAL Training / including CERF Overview
5. The previous format was staff had a floating day over the summer to complete a day when they wished.

School Development Day

1. Safer Schools training
2. CSSC – School Ethos/Vision
3. SDS – Action Plan Writing
4. Report Writing
5. Parent Meetings

With Staff involved in Industrial Action, it was more challenging to review progress/pupil progress/coordinator accountability. However, from June 2024, union action was terminated and therefore, 2024 – 2025 will see a key focus on:

- Coordinators to review planning and feedback
- Trust colleague networking/sharing practice
- Pupil Voice
- Internal Standardisation
- More frequent book scoops in Head of Key Stage Meetings

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The Principal recognises the commitment of staff in managing change in the best interest of our pupils.

Special Educational Needs

The mainstream school currently has 105 children who are on the Special Needs Register and who have Individual Education Plans (IEPs). To cater for these needs we have the equivalent of a full time Special Educational Needs teacher. In addition, the class teachers and assistants provide significant amounts of support to the pupils in mainstream lessons.

Mrs L Wilson now serves as SENCO/Nurture room teacher. Miss S Mairs provides SEN withdrawal/ in class support / play therapy – five days a week. Mrs Wilsons role is to identify children who have an additional educational need and liaise with class teachers, parents, educational psychologist and outside agencies to ensure adequate provision, and to supply and maintain appropriate documentation. The school works with the Educational psychologists, Peripatetic service, Children’s Interdisciplinary Teams (CIDS), Harberton Outreach and other agencies to provide individual assistance for children.

We were fortunate to avail of Equip for Life every Friday with whom they supported approximately 20 children in 1:1 reading sessions.

All children with an identified additional need (academic or behavioural) are internally assessed for an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which is constructed and reviewed on a half-termly basis in consultation with the teacher, child and his/her parents/guardians.

The school policy for Special Educational Needs is available on request.

Nurture Unit

We were funded for the continuation of the Nurture Unit for an additional year. Mrs Wilson and Mrs Woods continued to provide nurturing support for KS1 children. They had a range of difficulties including attachment, behaviour, poor social skills, immaturity, low confidence etc. A steering committee met every six weeks to discuss their progress.

Transfer to Second Level Education

31 children (across Mainstream and Unit) left in June 2024 to begin their studies in the following post primary schools:

Blessed Trinity	1
Breda Academy	11
Forthill College	3
Hunter House	1
Malone College	7
RBAI	2
Lagan	1
Laurelhill	1
Boys Model	1
De La Salle	2
Rosstulla	1

We had two children who were approved, following parent request and Board of Governor approval, to remain an additional year at Taughmonagh Primary School next year in primary 7 (2024-2025).

Extra-Curricular Activities:

We have 47% of children on free school meals and therefore, we met the criteria for Extended Schools funding during 2023 – 2024.

We were successful also in gaining £1000 from Kellogg's club towards our Breakfast Club. Taughmonagh Primary School runs a breakfast club Monday to Friday. This is free to pupils, however, in 2024 – 2025 and due to the reduction in funding, it is likely a 50p charge will be introduced.

We also provided a stay and play 2pm – 5pm Monday to Thursday and 2 – 3pm on a Friday for our pupils. This year, we were able to provide the following after schools:

- Dodgeball
- Volleyball

Extended Schools also funded Football sessions, Jump Jiggle and Jive sessions and staff well-being classes on a Wednesday.

In June 2023, the school held a Summer Scheme for two weeks. Pupils paid £20 for two weeks for this service.

The staff and pupils had the opportunity to feedback on these activities and to suggest changes for next year.

As of June 2024, there was no confirmed Extended Schools Budget in place.

Attendance

The annual attendance rate for 2023 – 2024 was 89.2%. There was a large number of pupils who were on holidays during school time in this year. Absence from school disrupts the pattern of learning. Attendance is monitored on an individual and regular basis alongside the EWO.

Some pupil activities this year:

These activities helped to enhance their curriculum experiences and involvement in school life

- Lyric Theatre provided whole school performance of waste busters
- Fitness Freddie fundraiser enabled us to purchase an outdoor hut
- Colour run in memory of Mrs Bowden
- Football team played half time at Blanchflower for NI U19 match
- School of Sanctuary award
- Drumming Sessions with Thomas
- Football with Ben Tilney
- Christmas Shows
- Leavers Assemblies/Nursery Graduation
- Shared Education with Harberton – Play Bus
- Collaboration with Breda Academy
- Summer Fair
- Christmas Community Event
- Harvest Hampers
- Valentines Disco
- Easter Bunny arrival and egg donations from local shops
- Football Tournament at Blythefield
- P6 and P7 Residential
- Fishing Trips
- Whole school trip to the Pantomime
- Sports Day for whole school
- Nurture- Parent workshops – Incredible Years

- Young Enterprise for Primary 7
- Sentinus workshops
- Stay safe around dog workshops
- Mr Hullabaloo show
- Chinese dancing workshops
- Visits to Culloden Estate
- World Book Day
- Scholastic Book Fair
- Jump Jiggle Jive Workshops
- Equip for Life workshops weekly
- Summer Scheme
- Dragon Reading Programme
- Car Boot Sale
- Parent muck in day
- Coffee mornings/school run – grab a cuppa
- Christmas gifts to all pupils
- Finance support to parents in need at Christmas (provided by Drumbeg Church)
- Halloween parade
- Fire brigade visit
- Odd sock day – antibullying
- Christmas Dinner Day
- Creation of a sanctuary area
- Outdoor classroom day
- Internet Safety Day

V) Duty in relation to Resources

During 2023-24 the school, like many schools kept new purchases to a minimum. However, despite these difficulties, Taughmonagh Primary School was able to maintain our commitment to a number of enhancing services and provision. These included Counselling from Jigsaw, Play therapy, Getting Ready to Learn.

Maintenance and Improvements

The school communicates with the Education Authority and DE in relation to their responsibility for continued maintenance and capital improvement of the school. The Education Authority provided new keypads for our playground gates to ensure our site was more secure. We also received a new boiler in May 2024.

In June 2024, The Board of Governors, SLT met with DE/EA in relation to an additional classroom for pupils with ASD/Learning Difficulties. The only room to place a unit such as this would be on the previous caretakers home situated imminently to our school. The proposal was met with concerns from staff and ongoing consultation with EA/DE is likely throughout the 2024-2025 academic year.

VI) Child Protection, Safety and Security

Maintenance of Child Protection Records

Concerns, referrals and contacts with outside agencies maintained and documented as appropriate. Class teachers received updates throughout the year on a need-to-know basis.

Mrs Wilson serves as Designated Teacher for Child Protection and is ably supported by Mrs C O’Kane as Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection with Miss M Morgan having responsibility for the Nursery and Mr Milligan E Safety.

Mrs E Simpson served as Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding throughout 2023 – 2024.

- All policies, circulars and advice circulated to Governors and awareness raised with staff.
- At each meeting of the Board of Governors Child Protection was on the agenda.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff received full updated training in August 2023 from Mrs Wilson - using material provided by DENI/EA. All staff signed the staff training register.
- Any Volunteers were vetted and received Child Protection training as required.

Policy Review and Update:

Next review was due in September – December 2024 in relation to name changes due to Board of Governor reconstitution.

Pastoral Care

We aim to establish a caring safe environment for our pupils. All the pupils have been reminded through assemblies and class activities who they should talk to if they have a worry or concern.

During this year the Jigsaw Counselling Service has been fully utilised, and all children have been made aware that this service is available for them to access. Our Counsellor is in school every Thursday.

School Security

Access to visitors is granted by office staff, who release door remotely. Taughmonagh Primary School and Nursery Unit purchased

All exterior doors are locked during school hours (can be opened from inside.) Staff hold key-fobs which can release certain locked doors from exterior. All fobs were reprogrammed and re distributed during 2023 – 2024. Front door and most of school site is covered by CCTV. The school has security risk-assessments in place and an emergency action plan for evacuation, lock-down and an off-site ‘place of shelter.’ All contractors are signed in and briefed by caretaker or principal. All unexpected visitors to site are challenged. The EA installed new security system on our playground gates and a more appropriate sign in system was installed in June 2024.

Parent group

We are fortunate to have a Parents Group who support fundraising events. They supported the following areas:

- Harvest Hampers
- Halloween Fundraising
- Tuck Shop
- Valentines Disco
- Bun Sales
- Scholastic Book Fair
- Summer Fun Day

Parental Links

We have tried greatly throughout the year to maintain links with our parents and to prospective parents. We communicate through letter, Facebook (run by a Classroom Assistant), Seesaw, twitter, school website, phone, newsletter and through our open door policy. We held annual parent meetings to discuss pupil progress and an end of year school report is issued in June. Our nursery/P1 annual open day held in November 2023 and a promotional video circulated.

Finally

The Board of Governors wishes to thank all the members of the school community who have contributed to the success of the school over the year under new Leadership.

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

- The auxiliary and ancillary staff who contributed so much to the smooth running and friendly atmosphere in the school.
- To Mrs Diane Wright for her dedication and hard work as Clerical Officer and the support she provides throughout the school.
- The parents for their continued support and co-operation, help and friendliness on which the school can always depend, especially during times of remote learning.
- The pupils who are at the heart of all we do here in Taughmonagh Primary & Nursery School, their enthusiasm for learning and their co-operation with both staff and one another.

If you need to seek further clarification about any issue or topic addressed in this Annual Report, please do not hesitate to contact the current Chair of the Board of Governors, Mr Ivan Patterson, or the Principal. We look forward to your continuing support and co-operation in the year ahead.