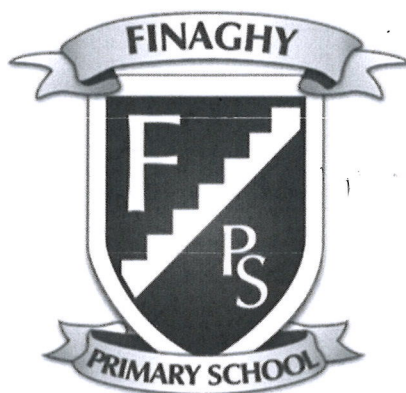


Finaghy Primary School

Board of Governors



Annual Report

2023-2024

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BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The academic year 2023-2024 has been an exceptionally busy and challenging time for the governors. The Board have met regularly throughout the year to progress school business and encourage continuous improvement in all aspects of curricular and extra-curricular activities.

I am disappointed to report little has changed in the past year with the education budgets still facing increased pressures and requiring strict monitoring. Additionally industrial action by the unions did have an impact on staff moral and the children's learning experience.

Thankfully the new academic year has seen an end to the industrial action.

The highlight of the year was, after a ten year saga, the official opening in November of the extension to the school estate.

The state of the art facility provides a high-tech ICT suite, vibrant music room, a calming sensory space and other much needed learning areas.

Already the benefits to pupils and staff can be clearly noted.

In June we celebrated the 90th Birthday of the school. Over the years we have grown from a humble rural public elementary school to a thriving diverse state of the art school at the centre of the local community.

The school has enjoyed another year of achievement and progress in the classroom.

Levels of academic success remain high and our pupils well motivated.

The first results of the new SEAG Transfer tests met and exceeded our expectations.

A wide variety of staff-led free clubs ensure we offer our pupils exciting opportunities to work, play and make friends together.

Enrolment remained positive proving the popularity of all that Finaghy P.S. offers to children, their parents and the local community.

Throughout the period of this report, much of the non - financial discussion continued to focus on classroom practice and the development of our outdoor learning programme.

The Exceptional Closure Days have been well used by staff to cover a wide range of topics including literacy, on-line assessment, and outdoor learning. Strategies in support of staff welfare and mental health were also examined. This training and preparation compliments classroom practice and lesson planning.

Janine Beattie and her enthusiastic colleagues, ensure that our Day Care facility continues to thrive and play an integral part in the life and success of the school. The Sports Zone continues to be well used by pupils and the local community.

Governors applaud the activities and invaluable fundraising of the PTA that continues to play an important role in school life.

Whilst school life evolves, some things remain constant; the public often overlook the greatest resource a school can have; that is its staff. So I record with appreciation the professional and dedicated performance of the SMT and all our staff under difficult circumstances. Every day they are working in the best interests of the pupils as they "prepare today's children for tomorrow's world."

As their tenure of office ends, I thank the outgoing Board of Governors for their hard work throughout the last five years and who have given so generously of their time and talents in the interests of the school, staff and pupils.

Peter Breene M.B.E. Chairman September 2024.

COMPOSITION OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2023-2024

(Reconstitution of Governors took place during the 2018-2019 session.)

Area Board Representatives:

Mr T Dale MBE (Vice-Chairperson)

Mr P Bell (Honorary Bursar)

Transferors' Representatives:

Mr P Breene MBE (Chairperson)

Mr D Savage

Rev C Gracie

Mrs N. Vincent

Parents' Representatives:

Mr R Rice

Teachers' Representative:

Miss J Mawhinney

Secretary to the Board (non-voting):

Mrs Rosalind Corbett (Principal)

Responsibilities of Governors

- 1 Finance
- 2 Management and appointment of Staff
- 3 Admission of pupils
- 4 Curriculum
- 5 Resources
6. Child Protection, safety and security

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

Accounts Summary

Private accounts – year ended 31 August 2024

The cash position of the school's private funds is summarised as follows:

	31-Aug-24 £	31-Aug-23 £	31-Aug-22 £	31-Aug-21 £
General account	73,187	66,059	33,077	13,365
Investment account	44,559	21,367	409,281	422,088
Daycare account	57,776	41,475	42,964	32,892
Total cash on hand	175,523	128,901	485,323	468,345

LMS accounts – year ended 31 March 2024

In addition to staff costs, major expenditure is summarised as follows:

	12 months to 31 March 2024 £	12 months to 31 March 2023 £	12 months to 31 March 2022 £	12 months to 31 March 2021 £
Accommodation	-	6,188	4,826	-
Electricity	22,198	25,912	24,249	9,108
Water	7,395	6,836	6,991	3,981
Natural gas	7,285	7,088	5,558	-
Building repairs & maintenance	4,734	2,853	9,935	4,108
Fittings, fixtures & equipment repairs & maintenance	11,615	8,445	15,681	8,839
Grounds maintenance	(100)	-	6,417	618
Other premises, fixed plant & grounds	5,142	4,417	5,672	6,229
Books, practice materials & teaching requisites	7,078	14,403	9,158	3,347
School contribution - instrumental tuition	-	-	-	-
Hire of equipment/facilities	1,359	17,561	(1,125)	-
Licences	159	159	387	158

Exam expenses	-	-	13,183	6,923
Stock - value adjustment	(7,241)	(4,100)	(101,267)	-
Other operating costs	25,838	29,376	26,873	14,936
Non-capital purchases	5,982	17,534	2,014	387
Capital expenditure	25,715	17,015	10,864	10,864
	117,159	153,687	39,416	69,498

STAFF AND CLASS STRUCTURE 2023-2024

Principal: Mrs R Corbett
Vice-Principal: Ms J Mawhinney

Classes:

P1 Mrs J Gough

P1 Mrs S Watson

P2 Mrs D Adamson/Mrs S Stevenson

P2 Mrs E Brady

P3 Mrs A Flanagan

P3 Mr D Matchett

P4 Miss J Cargill

P4 Mr R Falls

P5 Miss S Davidson

P5 Mrs E Boomer

P6 Ms J Mawhinney

P6 Mrs S Graham

P7 Mr K Platt

P7 Mrs L Emerson

Reading Recovery (part-time) Mrs H Currie

English as Additional Language (part-time) Mrs S Stevenson

Classroom Assistants: Mrs K Langtry, Miss L Meehan,
Mr P Murphy, Miss L Chisholm, Mrs F Hillock, Mrs E Ward,
Mrs Quinn, Ms J Beattie, Mrs Bell, Mrs Matchett, Mrs Russell, Mrs O'Hagan, Mrs Uprichard,
Mr S Owens, Mrs J Makwana.

Secretaries: Miss E McGarvey, Mrs K McNeilly

Daycare Manager: Ms J Beattie

Caretaker: Mr D Courtney

Head Cook: Mrs Angela Brown

Staff Changes

Governors reviewed staffing and made forward plans for the academic year 23-24

Mrs Sandra McCurdy was on a third year of her career break.

Mrs Lindsey Moffett was on the second year of her career break.

School Activities 2023-2024

We operate as a 'full-service extended school' providing:

- Breakfast Club from 8.00am.
- Daycare Centre operating until 6pm throughout the year
- Finaghy SportsZone, open to the community each night and during weekends.
- Public Library
- Benmore Community Pre-School Playgroup
- Evening classes including sports clubs.
- Extension. Our brand new extension comprising an ICT Suite, Music Room, Sensory Room, Counselling Suite and small group learning space opened in November 2023.
- Our range of extra-curricular activities included sports (football, hockey, athletics, rugby and cricket), coding, cookery, Helping Hands, Survival skills, fitness and gardening. Our Eco-Garden also continues to serve as a great resource for teaching and learning.

Our PTA ran a number of successful events including a very successful International Evening celebrating the many different cultures represented in our school community. They continued their Parents' Working Group to provide practical maintenance work for the school grounds. They were able to run a very successful barbeque and family fun night at the end of the school year. There were a number of smaller scale fundraising initiatives run by the PTA to boost funds. At the end of the year, PTA donated £3000 to buy reading books to improve the quality of Reading Resources as part of the school's development of Reading.

Teaching & Learning

Our School Development Plan had a focus on Literacy, ICT, Pupil and Staff Wellbeing and Outdoor Learning. The school has refined their use of the GL suite of online testing and use the results to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

In Key Stage 1, in addition to the revision of activities to promote independence and discovery-based learning, there has been further development of play and in-situ assessments.

In Key Stage 2, the Literacy curriculum has been revised to incorporate new activities that reflect the enhanced areas of learning outlined above. In ICT, the new ICT suite provided an excellent resource for pupils to further develop their ICT skills through completion of ICT tasks each term. As part of Wellbeing, the school joined the "Being Well, Doing Well" project run by EA. There was a whole school community audit carried out of this area providing an insight into what the school is doing very well alongside a small number of areas for improvement.

Despite Industrial Action, the staff continued to provide excellent teaching and learning experiences for the pupils.

Open Morning

We were able to host our Annual Open Morning again in November 2023. This was a very successful morning where we showcased the best of what Finaghy Primary has to offer to prospective parents. Enrolment numbers were positive with 55 pupils applying for places in Primary 1 for entrance in September 2024.

Special Educational Needs

Mr R Falls continued in his role as SENCO. Miss Sophie Torrans was employed to provide small SEN group support in Literacy and Numeracy Mrs H Currie continued to assist with Reading Recovery on a part-time basis. Mr Falls was supported in the increasing workload of SEN by Miss Sophie Davidson.

Mr Falls' 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 EA Educational Psychologists, EA Peripatetic service, RISE Team, Harberton Outreach and other agencies to provide individual assistance for children. We also employ a part-time teacher and a classroom assistant two days each week to assist with Newcomer children.

A number of volunteer helpers (parents, grandparents and friends of the school) have undergone training in Reading Partnership and provide excellent support for a number of children. The Time to Read project also continues to operate in school.

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.

Extended School Projects

Daycare Centre

Our Daycare Centre continued to run excellent services during the year. Managed by Miss Janine Beattie and her team. The centre employs seven members of staff.

The centre operates from 2.00pm until 6.00pm term-time, from 8.00am to 6.00pm during school holidays and remains open for exceptional school closure days and half-day holidays. The Daycare Centre is a fully integrated feature of the school, providing an informal yet structured environment in which children are assisted with homeworks and offered a choice of activities including sports, art and craft, IT, toys, games and outdoor play.

During the summer there was an extensive programme of trips out, visiting coaches and special activities.

The facility is run as a community business by a sub-committee of the school's Board of Governors.

Trevor Dale

Chair of Daycare Management Committee

Academic Statistics

End Of Key Stage Assessment (P4 and P7) 2023-2024

Due to industrial action by teaching staff we did not carry out End-of-Key-Stage assessment result for this period. The majority of NI primary schools have now refrained from engaging in this process due to Industrial Action. Parents can be assured that our internal assessment and reporting systems are as robust as ever, and that every child continues to have the opportunity to reach their full academic potential.

Attendance and Enrolment:

Annual Attendance: 2019: 93.1% 2020: 93.9% 2021: 91.8% 2022 92.8% 2023 92.8%
On Roll (adjusted) 382

Accounts

School bank accounts are monitored by the Salaries and Finance Committee of the school's Board of Governors, reconciled by the school's honorary bursar and signed off annually by the Chair of Governors. Income derives from community services, school fund contributions and fund-raising initiatives. Delegated budget funds are allocated by DENI annually and are managed by governors through the accounting offices of EA (Local Management of Schools: LMS).

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 D Adamson is the designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection. Ms J Mawhinney is the Deputy Designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection. Governors, Principal and staff were made aware of the (updated) requirements of any DENI circulars.

Acceptable use of the Internet

Child Protection – Training requirement for Governors on staff selection and recruitment panels.

Also: Use of pupil and staff images, Extended Schools and Child Protection, Cyberbullying and Disposal of Records schedule.

All policies, circulars and advice circulated to governors and awareness raised with staff.

Teaching staff received full update training in October 2023 from Mrs Adamson and Ms Mawhinney using material provided by the Education Authority Child Protection Support Service.

Volunteers and non-teaching staff received Child Protection training in school throughout the year as it was required.

Policy Review and Update:

The policy was reviewed and updated in September 2023.

Information was received throughout the year from Theresa Moran and Lorraine O'Neill, Child Protection Officers with Education Authority (Belfast Region) as well as a new scheme, Operation Encompass. The PSNI contact the Safeguarding Lead where there are instances of Domestic Abuse in homes of pupils of the school.

SportsZone

The SportsZone has now been operating successfully for 12 years. During term-time it has doubled the opportunity for pupils to participate in physical activity and broadened the range of sports on offer. It is also used in partnership with other schools for tournaments and competitions.

The SportsZone operates from 5.00pm – 10.00pm as a community sports resource. The range of user groups includes churches, youth clubs, mini-soccer, dads' team, cross-community projects, coaching clubs and 'works' teams.

During school holidays a range of clubs operate.

Our charging and booking policy enables equality of access for all users and facility administration is conducted by Mrs Karen McNeilly in the school office. Income from the SportsZone enables us to employ part-time caretaking staff, secretarial staff and to maintain / replace equipment. In the longer term, savings need to accrue for maintenance and upkeep.

The 3G refurbishment had required substantial ongoing fixes and maintenance. These had been mostly completed under warranty but we are pleased to report that a completely new 3G surface was sanctioned and installed by EA in 2020.

In general, the facility is treated with respect by all users. The SportsZone committee are delighted that the facility is continuing to be such a major asset for both the school and the wider community.

In-Service Training 2023-2024

Due to Industrial Action by teachers, it was not possible to introduce any new initiatives. However, we were able to continue to work on developing curricular areas that had already been on the School Development Plan before the onset of Industrial Action. 5 'Baker Days' and 5 'Staff Development Days' were utilised for developing plans for Outdoor Learning, Behaviour Management (The Calm Plan), Being Well, Doing Well awareness raising and development. These days were also used for analysis of Assessment data for Literacy and Numeracy. There was also a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching Reading across the school, including the introduction of Paired Reading at Home. Within SEN, Mr Falls provided regular training in effective strategies for working with children with ADHD, ASD and Dyslexia to teachers and classroom assistants. All teachers were encouraged to take part in the TPL webinars (Teacher Professional Learning) Programmes organised by the EA. Training was also delivered for all staff in Safeguarding and Child Protection.

School Security

Main front door is locked. Access to visitors is granted by office staff, who release door remotely. 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. 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.

During community use of site, a caretaker is present.