



**TRINITY NURSERY SCHOOL**

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS ANNUAL REPORT**

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21**

[www.trinitynurseryschool.co.uk](http://www.trinitynurseryschool.co.uk)

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Principal: Mrs Saoirse Alexander

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## Chairperson's Address 2020-21

Dear Parents and Carers

It is my privilege as Chairperson of the Board of Governors to present to you the Governors' Annual Report of Trinity Nursery School for the academic year **2020-21**.

This period has been one of the most challenging times for our school since it was founded in May 1976. As well as coping with the many challenges presented by the global pandemic, our small school community said farewell to several valued colleagues and friends.

Mrs Zaron Perry retired on 31 August 2019 after 19 years as Principal. Under her leadership, the school was assessed as "Outstanding" on two occasions by the Education & Training Inspectorate in 2011 and 2018. Mrs Perry was an Associate Inspector with ETI, and acted as a mentor to beginning Teachers, Students and newly appointed Principals. She also formed and led an innovative cluster group of Nursery Schools, providing professional training for all staff. Mrs Perry has since been awarded an MBE for her services to Pre-School Education in the New Year's Honours List 2022.

Mrs Veronica Bintley stepped down from her role as Chairperson of the Board of Governors in May 2021 after 7 years. Mrs Bintley, a passionate advocate for our school, carried out her duties with great diligence and commitment. She devoted much of her time to the staff and school particularly during her last year of office. She will be greatly missed for her integrity, honesty, attention to detail but most of all for her friendship.

Mrs Lauren Ferguson stepped down from her role as Parent Governor after 3 years' service in June 2021. Mrs Ferguson was a very pro-active member of the board of governors and will be remembered for her support in fund-raising events.

After nearly seven years service, our Special Needs Assistant, Miss Ruth Hall moved to another educational setting in February 2021. Mrs Amanda Gourley, our Secretary, also with nearly seven years of service obtained a promotional post in a local school in April 2021.

The Governors offer grateful thanks to Zaron, Veronica, Lauren, Ruth, and Amanda for their professionalism, service, commitment, and massive contribution that they have made to our school and wish to extend best wishes to each of them for the future.

The Governors also wish to thank and pay tribute to our two job-share teachers, Mrs Claire Ingham and Miss Kerry Adair who stepped forward to act as joint Principals from the beginning of the first term in September 2020 until the school welcomed our new Principal, Mrs Saoirse Alexander on 1 January 2021.

Mrs Alexander holds a BA and MA Degree in Early Childhood Education and has additional qualifications in ICT, Art and Design and Musical Theatre. Mrs Alexander has a wide range of teaching experience across mainstream and independent schools and has a passion for teaching and learning in the early years.

So, a new chapter has begun for our school! Mrs Alexander, along with her highly qualified team has continued to provide quality learning to your children with great resilience and perseverance during these challenging times.

I, and the other governors, look forward with confidence that Trinity Nursery School shall continue to grow and flourish under Mrs Alexander's leadership.

Yours faithfully

*Josephine Murray*

**Chairperson, Board of Governors**

**January 2022**

## **Aims of Trinity Nursery School**

### ***Caring for your child, sharing in their future.***

“We, the staff of Trinity Nursery School, aim to provide, in partnership with parents, a safe, secure environment wherein the social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs of children will be met. We strive to foster positive attitudes towards learning through engagement in creative play and opportunities designed to stimulate interest and imagination.

By celebrating the individuality of every child and simultaneously recognising their differing needs, we intend to create a nurturing educational context within which all children may achieve their full potential.”

## **Membership of the Board of Governors Term of Office, 2018 – 2023, (amended from 2022)**

The Board of Governors of Trinity Nursery School is made up of eight voting members, two co-opted members and the Principal, as Secretary to the Board of Governors.

The Board has an important strategic role to play in the management of the school and it is responsible for the implementation of policy decisions covering a wide range of educational and professional issues. The main responsibilities and functions to be covered include the Curriculum, Employment, Enrolments and Admissions, Pastoral Care, Financial Management, Annual reports, School Development Plans, Pupil Discipline and Pupil Suspension and Expulsion.

Governors meet regularly to discuss these matters with the school Principal, having at least one meeting per term. They undertake this role in a voluntary capacity and provide a vital contribution to school life and development. Governors are also offered the opportunity to attend regular training courses organised by the Education Authority.

**The most recent reconstitution period for Boards of Governors of controlled and maintained schools was expected to have run to 2022. However, given the pressure and disruption placed on schools due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Minister of Education has given approval to reschedule the next**

**reconstitution to 2023, Circular 2021/20 dated 31 August 2021 refers. Schemes of Management will permit governors to remain in post until either re-nominated or replaced.**

The Board of Governors in post during **2020-2021** are as follows:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Post</b>	<b>Representative status</b>
Mrs Veronica Bintley	Chairperson	EA Representative
Mrs Josephine Murray	Vice Chairperson	EA Representative
Cllr Roberta Dunlop	Governor	EA Representative
Mr David Stanley	Governor	DE Representative
Mr Paul Stitt	Governor	DE Representative
Mr Mark Hamilton	Governor	Parent Representative
Mrs Lauren Ferguson	Governor	Parent Representative
Mrs Claire Ingham	Governor	Teacher Representative
Miss Kerry Adair	Governor	Teacher Co-opted Representative
Mrs Nichola Gordon	Governor	Co-opted Representative
Mrs Saoirse Alexander	Principal	Secretary to Governors

Trinity Nursery School will follow the “Guidance for the Election of Parent Representatives in Controlled Schools, Reconstitution of Boards of Governors, Term of Office (2018 - 2022\*)” document to fill a vacancy if a parent representative has to be replaced during this period. The Department of Education’s (DE) Circular No 2017/20 parts 2 and 4 outlines the legal position and arrangements that would meet with DE approval governing the election of parent governors.

\* Reconstitution period for Boards of Governors has now been rescheduled to 2023, DE Circular 2021/20 dated 31 August 2021 refers.

## **Staff Team in post during 2020-21 are as follows:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Post</b>	<b>Working Pattern</b>
Mrs S Alexander	Principal (Teaching)	Full-time (January 2021 onwards)
Mrs C Ingham	Joint Acting- Principal (Teaching) Teacher	Full-time (September to December 2020) Part- time (job share, January 2021 onwards)
Miss K Adair	Joint Acting-Principal (Teaching) Teacher	Full-time (September to December 2020) Part- time (job share, January 2021 onwards)
Mrs N Thompson	Nursery Assistant	Full-time
Miss A McMeekin	Nursery Assistant	Full-time
Miss R Hall	Special Needs Assistant	Part-time
Mrs A Gourley	Secretary	Part-time
Mr G Wilson	Building Supervisor	Part-time
Mrs R Armstrong	Catering Assistant	Part-time

*NB: All the above are permanent members of staff*

## **Staffing, Staff Training and Development Focus**

Mr Wilson, Building Supervisor, returned to the school from his career break in May 2021.

Arrangements were made with the Education Authority to progress the recruitment of the posts of secretary and temporary SEN Assistants.

Our staff team is 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.

Our Principal has undergone First Principal Training and a Qualifying Leadership Course in Stranmillis University College and Makaton Training with Miss Adair in a bid to support supernumerary children for the upcoming academic year 2021-22.

Due to the ongoing pandemic and industrial action, the annual review cycle for Performance Review and Staff Development (PRSD) did not take place for teaching staff.

A new School Development Plan will be written in the Autumn Term of 2022 and preparations for this have already taken place.

## **Pupil Admissions**

During the year 2020-21, a total of 52 children plus 1 supernumerary were enrolled in two classes of full-time sessions.

Due to the popularity of our school, it is notable that enrolment applications have far exceeded available places for the past 20 years.

## **School Curriculum**

In the nursery, the children learn through play in a carefully structured programme, suitable to their age and stage of development. Staff aim to provide a happy and secure environment where each child will experience success and have fun while learning many new concepts. Staff work as a team to deliver a rich and varied curriculum appropriate to each child. The curriculum was enhanced by a small number of visits from individuals with differing interests when restrictions permitted.



The Pre-School curriculum incorporates **six** main areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Language Development
- Early Mathematical Experiences
- Physical Development and Movement
- The World Around Us
- The Arts

To complement the preschool curriculum, a range of visitors both virtual and in person were arranged for the pupils' enjoyment. Some of these included, Joe and the Gathering Drum, The Ark Farm and Mr Hullabaloo. We hope that next year we will be able to plan and enjoy an end of year trip to The Ark Farm.

## **Special Educational Needs**

Trinity Nursery School prides itself on its' provision for special needs. The current policy that is being used is available on the school's website <https://trinitynurseryschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Special-Educational-Needs-and-Inclusion.pdf>. The policy has been updated annually with the exception of this academic year as the school is awaiting further advice from the Education Authority on the SEND Implementation Draft (2016) and will update the current policy accordingly once received.

Staff identify the educational and welfare needs of each child at the earliest opportunity to ensure early intervention if required. Children with special educational needs are assessed and Individual Education Plans are devised to meet individual needs. Contact is maintained throughout the year with outside agencies including Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists, and members of the NI RISE team, all contributing advice and assistance for specific individuals. For those children who held a statement of Special Education Needs, classroom assistants were recruited to provide specialised one to one support. In addition to this the school also supported children whose first language was not English. These children were provided with varying levels of support to suit their individual needs.

During the academic year, resources were purchased to be used in the Quiet Rooms so that they doubled up as a Sensory Room at the start of the school

day. This provided a safe place for the children to explore and meet their sensory needs as well as having a calm and quiet space.

Trinity Nursery School continues to provide a Blue Badge parking space within the carpark for those children who are Blue Badge holders. The nursery school also has an onsite disabled toilet and changing facility and the main door provides disabled access.

## **Parental Involvement**

Staff enjoy a very real and positive rapport with our parents who are encouraged to take an active role in school life throughout the year.

Due to government restrictions relating to Coronavirus, the school was unable to hold an Induction Day for new families to visit the school and meet the staff as normal. As an alternative, a virtual tour was uploaded onto the YouTube channel to coincide with the application portal for prospective parents.

Remote learning was in place from January – March 2021 and supervised learning for vulnerable children and the children of key workers was provided on site during this time. Parents were kept well informed by staff during this time through electronic means and two way communication was encouraged between home and school.

As some restrictions remained in force at the end of the school year, the school celebrated a virtual Graduation for each class when the children left in June 2021.

## **Transition to Primary One**

Class teachers held consultations with parents to share how their child had progressed in all areas of learning throughout the school year. Transition reports were sent to parents before the end of June 2021. Transition meetings took place between teachers from Trinity Nursery and P1 teachers from the various primary schools and transition forms were forwarded to the primary schools.

Our children transitioned to **eleven** local Primary schools:

1. Ballyholme Primary School
2. Ballymagee Primary School
3. Bangor Central Integrated Primary School
4. Clandeboye Primary School
5. Crawfordsburn Primary School
6. GlenCraig Integrated Primary School
7. Grange Primary School
8. Penrhyn, Preparatory Department of Strathearn School
9. Rathmore Primary School
10. St. Comgall's Primary School
11. Sullivan Upper Prep

**\*We wish our leavers every success and happiness in their new schools.**

## **Community Links**

The school is very much part of the local community and benefits from excellent partnerships with local schools, businesses and charities. Some local businesses contributed much needed cleaning and PPA supplies to school during the year and we thank them for their ongoing support.

Trinity Nursery School has provided several students from local schools and colleges the opportunity to undertake work experience during the academic year.

The school also has valuable support from many professionals including the NI RISE team and the Educational Psychology Department of the Education Authority.

## **School Premises**

Due to restrictions caused by the pandemic, the Health and Safety Committee were unable to carry out their annual inspection and prepare a report of the premises and equipment of the school to the Chief Executive of the Education

Authority. However, approval was sought from and granted by the Education Authority to defer the inspection by the Committee until the beginning of the first term of 2021-2022.

An outstanding issue of dampness in classrooms which should have been addressed in the summer of 2019 was postponed by the Education Authority until new contractors were tendered.

The safety and security of staff and children are our prime responsibility at Trinity Nursery School. Concerns were raised by staff due to repeated aggressive behaviour from a parent during the drop off and collection of their child. Unfortunately, the Governors and Principal had no option but to introduce a policy of zero tolerance to safeguard staff and pupils for the new intake of children in August 2021.

## **Finance**

The Board of Governors is responsible for the use of funds allocated to the school by the Education Authority. 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.

The Governors, in partnership with the principal are responsible for managing this delegated budget, held centrally by the Education Authority.

The school budget is robustly monitored by the Principal and the Finance Committee of the Board of Governors. Regular Governor Finance meetings ensure that the school is resourced in keeping with the priorities of the School Development Plan and the school's financial position

The Common Formula Budget available for 2020-21 was £195,686. This is supposed to cover staff salaries, utilities, school repairs, equipment and resources. Unfortunately, the school's basic running cost total is more than the amount provided in the Common Formula Budget and therefore the school continues to increasingly face a deficit position.

### **Financial Summary**

Common Formula Budget	2020-21	£ 195,686
Total Planned Expenditure	2020-21	£ 203,188
In year Surplus/Deficit	2020-21	£ -7,503

Carryover from previous year	2019-20	£ -15,973
Projected Total inc. Surplus/Deficit	2020-21	£ 226,664
Total Final Expenditure	2020-21	£219,154

In addition to the Common Formula Budget the school was also awarded monies to help relieve the financial pressures placed on the school due to the ongoing pandemic. These funds were used to support additional cleaning measures and pay for much needed PPE equipment to ensure that the school operated in keeping with the additional government guidance at the time. Additional funds were also received for the purposes of enhancing pupil and staff wellbeing. These funds were used to create a Sensory Room in each classroom to help improve child wellbeing as outlined in the Special Educational Needs section of this report.

### **Fundraising and Charitable Donations**

Parents and carers contribute to the School Fund which pays for the children's daily snack and enrichment activities, art and craft resources and visitors to the school, as permitted in accordance with ongoing restrictions.

The children participated in fundraising events throughout the year. A particular highlight this year was a sponsored walk in May 2021 to celebrate the school's forty-fifth birthday raising nearly £1,400.

Trinity Nursery School is extremely grateful for an anonymous and extraordinarily generous charitable donation of £2,000. This donation alongside the fundraising effort raised this year will be used to replace the outdoor play equipment in the playground to the front of the school.

The school has also continued to support the local charity Children's Cancer Fund via their annual Hats and Shades Day where we raised and donated £223.65.

### **Thanks to Trinity Staff Team**

The Governors are extremely grateful to our principal and staff team for their work in continuing to promote the aims of our school and the provision of high-quality learning to the children.

We value the work and commitment by each team member without whom Trinity Nursery School would cease to function smoothly and efficiently.