



Building
together
for our future.

Braidside Integrated Primary
and Nursery School



Board of Governors
Annual Report

June 2022

Dear Parents,

During each school year, we publish our Annual Report of the Board of Governors. The last annual report was published in May 2021. The report aims to outline some of the work in school during the previous year, in addition to Governors and Parents' Council information, school developments and associated programmes/ projects, information on the school community and beyond, SEN provision and any future developments.

Another school year has passed and still we are managing the impact of the pandemic in school. While we are thankful that we have not had any whole school lockdowns, as in the previous two school years, this year has perhaps had more disruption than the last two due to the increased number of positive cases in the school community and staff shortages. During the third term in school we have seen the start of a return to normality and we were delighted to hold events such as sports days and leavers' assembly with parents present. At all times, we remain vigilant to practices and procedures which ensure the health and safety of the children and the whole school community.

School Vision Statement

"We aim to work together to support each child in reaching their personal and academic potential within a culture of mutual respect".

Braidside IPS is a place where the ethos and principles of integrated education; of equality, faith and values, parental involvement and social responsibility; have been firmly embedded in all we do and seek to achieve. Our ethos of integration and our vision statement emphasise that we want all children to feel important, to feel valued,

to be part of a vibrant and creative learning community, to feel that they belong, to reach their personal potential and be proud of their achievements. We seek to do this within a culture of equality; where all children are aware of their inherent worth and where kindness, responsibility and respect for all is evident across the school.

We are focused on delivering high quality learning and teaching, utilising a range of creative approaches and strategies, allowing children to access the full breadth of the NI curriculum and to reach their individual academic potential.

We aim to do this, in partnership with you, the parents. We encourage you to be involved in the life of the school, to support your children and to help us to continue to build a vibrant integrated community. With the passing of the Integrated Education Bill earlier this year, we hope more children across NI will have the opportunity to access integrated education moving forward.

J McAuley

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Board of Governors Report

The current membership of the Board of Governors is as follows:

Current Governors

Parents and former parents make up the majority of our Board of Governors, with some valuable help from volunteer representatives appointed by the Department of Education. A list of Governors follows:

Foundation Governors

Stephanie McMullan, Chairperson, Martin McConville, Vice Chairperson, Dr Aisling O'Boyle, Secretary,
Dermot Black, Matthew O'Neill

Parent Governors

Pauline McNeill, Linda Loughran, Elaine Hamill, Chris Ryan.

Department of Education nominees

Steven Johnston, Alan Law, Diane Mallon

Teacher Governors

Karen Turner, Elizabeth Heffron

Other members

Graham Cochrane co-opted, Treasurer, Ian McKay co-opted
Julie McAuley, Principal.

Chairperson's Foreword

We are nearing the end of an academic year like no other, which has brought both huge challenges and wonderful moments as we acknowledged and appreciated each step towards normality.

I'd like to start my report by expressing thanks to our parents and wider school community for their patience and understanding during the year, as we had to restrict access to the new school building to keep our pupils and staff safe.

After a long wait, we were so pleased to be able to hold our official opening of the new build, albeit a much smaller and more socially distanced event than we would have ideally planned. This event brought together a small group of our pupils, our staff team and current school governors, alongside some of our previous staff and governors who played such an important role in the development of the school over the years. To mark such an important part of our school history, we were so pleased to welcome a number of special guests, including Minister McIlveen, Tim McGarry and Baroness Blood.

Since Easter, we have been in a position to bring bigger numbers safely into the school, which has allowed us to offer school tours for parents, open days for prospective pupils, our first event in our wonderful new hall and most recently fantastic KS1 and 2 Sports Days...the first in 3 years.

We continue to face financial challenges experienced by everyone within the education sector, however we have been so grateful for additional financial support which allowed us to implement activities focussed on small group Maths based support, improving the mental health & wellbeing of pupils and staff and preparing for the implementation of new Special Education Needs procedures.

As term 3 has been so busy, due to planning so many of our special events for our pupils and parents, it has not been possible to hold our usual Annual Parent's Meeting. We aim to return to holding this important event in the next academic year, to give new and existing parents the opportunity to hear more about the operations of the school and the opportunities to become more involved.

On behalf of our Board of Governors, staff, pupils, parents and the wider school community, I want to express sincere thanks to Mrs McAuley for the hard work and commitment she demonstrates every day. This year has been particularly difficult in terms of staffing, due to high levels of staff absences in all schools and poor

availability of substitute teachers. It is testament to Mrs McAuley and other staff within the school that we have been able to continue face to face teaching to the level that we have.

As always, Mrs McAuley is supported by a fantastic staff team, both teachers and ancillary staff, who regularly go above and beyond for the benefit of the pupils and the whole staff team.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to my fellow governors for their commitment and support for the school and for the staff during the last year.

We look forward to the coming academic year, hopeful that we will see a year of less disruption, less pressure and more normality for the children, staff and parents.

Stephanie McMullan (Chair of Board of Governors)

Extended Schools Programme

During 2021-22 the school received Extended Schools funding of £4463, down from just over £21,000 in the previous year. Funding had been significantly reduced because the school had not met the criteria in place to qualify for the full Extended Schools funding. This was a disappointing development, as we had missed the criteria by a very small margin (free school meals entitlement). As a result, it was important to prioritise those activities we believe are essential to the school and support the work in the School Development Plan. Therefore, those activities we were able to fund included support for pupil mental health and wellbeing through the school counselling service, anti-bullying sessions for KS2 pupils and Fresh Little Minds sessions for the early years' children. We have also funded Jo-Jingles sessions for P1, Playsport activities and the vital work of the morning Reading Club which supports literacy development in school. As in previous years, feedback from parents and children who have participated in the counselling service has been wholly positive. This year we received 14 referrals to the counselling service and have been able to provide 6-8 weeks of sessions to each child referred. Throughout this school year of 2021/22, we have continued with the Well-being Wednesday initiative and this enabled us to cover aspects of physical, social, emotional and mental health with the children too. Together with the counselling service we seek to help and support the children with the variety of challenges they face; which is not confined to curriculum and academic matters. As stated in our school vision statement, at Braidside we are

focused not only on enabling children to reach their academic potential but also their personal potential. Moving forward into the next school year, we hope to extend well-being provision further and continue to embed these practices into school life.

At the time of writing this annual report, I am pleased to inform you that, for 22-23 we have received the full allocation for the Extended schools' programme, as we met the criteria related to the required percentage of children receiving free school meals. This is excellent news and will allow Mr Calderwood, Extended Schools Coordinator, to plan for a range of activities and opportunities for the children in the new school year.

Braidside Breakfast Club

Parents will be aware that we launched the "Braidside Breakfast Club" in October 2021 following consultation in the previous school year. This provision has been kept under review by the Board of Governors throughout the school year. Usually on a weekly basis we have between 15-20 pupils attending breakfast club. The children can choose from a selection of breakfast cereals, toast, fruit / yoghurts and a variety of juices. During the third term, we have also introduced scrambled eggs on a Friday, for those that would like a hot option. The club is facilitated by 3 members of staff and the children can access some table top activities after they have eaten. We have been pleased with the introduction of the breakfast club and hope this will continue to grow in the next school year.

Parents are asked to book and pay for places at Breakfast club in advance. In the next school year Breakfast club will commence on Monday 12th September, to allow preparation time for bookings to be made and collated.

Engage Programme

In September 2020, the Department of Education launched the "Engage Programme" with the objective of supporting children and young people as they returned to school following the first lockdown from March- June 2020. It was the aim that the programme would "limit any long-term adverse impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on educational standards by supporting pupils' learning and engagement... through provision of high quality one-to-one, small group or team teaching in every school in NI."

In 2021-22 all NI schools were once again allocated funding on the basis of their enrolment size and free school meal entitlement. The funding that Braidside received has enabled us to again engage full-time teaching for the 21-22 school year. Our Engage teachers for this school year being Miss O’Kane and Mrs Speers. A plan of small group numeracy support was put in place and children throughout P2-P5 were identified to receive small group support in an intensive manner for a period of 6-8 weeks. These children have received lessons which have focused on key concepts of numeracy, and number specifically, which form the basis of mathematical knowledge and skills. Thereby enabling children an opportunity to develop and reinforce their mathematical knowledge.

For the school year 21-22, we have provided numeracy support to 80+ children from P2 to P5. However, it is important to note that, due to staff illness and shortages, the Department of Education (DE) enabled schools to utilise the Engage programme teaching staff in classes where there were absences. While this has been beneficial to schools in terms of maintaining face-to-face teaching, there is no doubt this impacted delivery of the numeracy support, particularly in the most challenging second term. Looking ahead, we hope that DE will once again have the capacity to provide schools with the funding for these type of support programmes, which are incredibly beneficial to the children. However, given the current situation with the NI Assembly no confirmation of funding has been received to date.

Happy Healthy Minds Pilot/ Well-being Funding/ Outdoor Learning Project

Throughout the course of this school year, the EA have introduced a number of programmes and pilots in schools throughout NI for different purposes.

November 2021 saw the launch of the Healthy Happy Minds pilot in schools, for the purpose of therapeutic services and counselling for pupils. Using this funding we were able to double our current provision of counselling in school and also provide drama therapy in school for a number of pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2.

In addition, we also received funding for Well-being in schools. With this funding we held Mental Health workshops for the children with HIP Psychology, after school multi-sport sessions, we purchased PE resources for the school and facilitated after-school yoga sessions for school staff.

Lastly, in relation to the outdoor learning project, we have used the funding for both the primary and nursery school to purchase outdoor play equipment and resources to enrich and extend the outdoor learning opportunities.

Parental Involvement

As an Integrated School, it is a central principle that parents are actively involved in their child's education and in the activities occurring in school. During the last couple of years, we have had very limited opportunities for parental engagement; due to being unable to have parents/ visitors in the school premises. However, we were able to conduct Parent Interviews this year via telephone and teleconference platforms. Annual reports were issued in June 2022, followed by the annual standardised scores for children in P2 upwards.

We have had more pleasing developments since Easter '22, which has provided some encouragement for the way ahead. We were able to hold face-to-face induction sessions for our prospective P1 and Nursery children, we held some tours of the new school for interested parents, as well as a music recital for children/ parents who attend singing lessons and held our Leavers' assembly on Friday 24th June.

In addition to these activities we have had tremendous support and involvement from the parent community across a range of pupil events and activities, most notably for a variety of Sustrans events throughout the school year, the school Easter raffle, collections for the Trussel Trust in the autumn, Mother's day event, Science week participation, Maths week, World Book Day, the Used Uniform collection and Anti-Bullying Week. We are grateful to the parent community for their ongoing support of the children not only through homework tasks but also in ensuring children come to school prepared for the day's learning. It is through working together, in partnership, that we will enable the children to meet their full potential.

We will always continue to engage/ communicate with parents through our Facebook page and school website, school app and the text message service. Having good communication between the school and parents/children remains a priority for Braidside.

For the next school year, we hope to see the school Parents Council re-form and begin again to hold regular meetings. In the past, the parents' council has been a vital part of the school community, arranging and holding events which support the work of the

school, allowing for fun events for the children and bringing parents together. We hope that once again we could have a thriving parents' council and would welcome and encourage new parents to get involved. Please do keep a look out for developments in the next school year.

The school community and beyond

As social responsibility is one of the key principals of integrated education, it remains important to us, as a school community, that we reach out to help and support our local community and those in need. This year, Braidside community has been working to support others through the Rotary Club Hampers appeal, just before Christmas. We were inundated with donations. Again the collection we held for the Trussel Trust was supported superbly by parents and children. It is truly integration in action, when the children demonstrate such an awareness of world and local issues and seek to make a difference. In addition, P6O and P1H have been developing links with Pinewood Home, adjacent to the school, by writing letters and sending cards to the residents. We hope that in the future we will look to identify others in need and do what we can to reach out and show kindness and compassion.

During 21/22, we were delighted to offer the children in P4 upwards the opportunity to participate in Musical Theatre singing lessons with local teacher, Mrs Phoebe McDonald. It was wonderful to see the children perform in a music recital in June and we hope to continue with this provision next year.

We also have an EA music tutor who provides strings tuition to a small group of children during this academic year, although impacted by the lockdown too.

Throughout 2021/22 and particularly since the Covid pandemic began, Ms McAuley has attended virtual meetings of the local Ballymena Primary Principals' Association as well as the Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools (APTIS). Attendance at these groups allows for inclusion in professional discussion forums as well as the sharing of good practice.

Peace IV: Collaboration in Shared Education Project

As of June 2022, we have now completed 5 years of our partnership in Shared Education with Buick MPS in Cullybackey. In the Autumn Term of 2017/18, we started with P1 and P2 with a focus on play. In 2018/19 our partnership expanded to

P1-P3 and the focus for year 2 moved to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). In 2019/20, the focus had been on art. While Shared Education took a pause during 20/21, we were so pleased to see shared education sessions restart in 21/22. The objectives of the project are to enable shared teaching and learning sessions; to improve pupil outcomes, build relationships between the pupils, teachers, parents and wider community, to enable continued professional development for teachers and to share in the process of reconciliation. As this school year began lessons resumed via online platforms and children participated in lessons with their partner classes. However, as the year progressed we were able to hold in-person sessions and our P1-3 children finally visited each other's schools and enjoyed lessons together.

Following the interruption to Shared Education, due to the pandemic, we have been informed that the programme will continue for 2 more terms, allowing for children in P1-3 to benefit from the project until Easter '23. We have always enjoyed our shared education partnership immensely and we will be considering how best to take this forward.

School Development Plan 2020/21

In June 21, we were once again advised by the Department of Education and Education Authority that due to the pandemic, we should plan for a Transition Year in school, which would focus solely on key aspects of work, which were pertinent to the school and to the current world-wide circumstances; given the impact this has had on education in general. At the start of the year, we identified 4 aspects that we wished to focus on this year. This information is summarised in the table below:

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Focus for Development Action Plan</u> <u>2021/22</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Further Details</u></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">1. Learning and Teaching: ICT</p>	<p>*To incorporate various elements of IT into pupil learning experiences, across the curriculum, in teaching plans and topics. *To implement an IT timetable across the key Stages enabling access to equipment for all children.</p>

	<p>*To collate all appropriate documentation to support IT delivery and provision throughout the school.</p> <p>*To promote greater awareness of digital technologies and pupil experiences through the use of the school website.</p>
2. Health and Wellbeing	<p>*To develop and implement a revised “Addressing Bullying in Schools” policy and implement procedures to support this in school.</p> <p>*To continue to expand / record the range of Well-being Wednesday activities to support the children’s mental, emotional and physical health.</p> <p>*To revise and relaunch the Healthy Eating Policy in school and procedures to support this.</p> <p>*To launch and develop the Braidside Breakfast Club.</p>
3. Assessment	<p>*For staff to have a clear understanding/overview of Braidside Assessment principles and procedures</p> <p>*To develop a self-evaluation schedule/assessment schedule</p> <p>*To reintroduce internal standardisation procedures</p>
4. Integration	<p>*To review and update the Integration Policy</p> <p>*To develop and promote through practice, activities and events the integrated ethos of the school</p> <p>*To begin work on the Excellence in Integrated Education award</p> <p>*To begin work on the implementation of the principles of the Children In Crossfire “Educating the Heart” training programme across FS, KS1 and KS2, in order to achieve the Compassionate School Award</p>
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In the last number of years courses and professional development for teachers have become less frequent and throughout 2021/22 any courses which staff attended have largely taken place remotely using either Teams or Zoom.

Staff attended the following training opportunities:

All teaching staff: Dyslexia training, C2k training for Microsoft Surface Pro, Educating the Heart INSET, RISE training webinars (as appropriate), Emotional Resilience workshop

J McAuley: Various DE/ EA courses/webinars/ engagement sessions for Principals, Principals' Well-being Conference

K Bradley: SEN PLP Training

S Hart: SEND implementation, SEN PLP Training

D Calderwood/ C Fulton/ C Young: Educating the Heart programme

C Fulton: ICT course

In addition to these sessions Ms McAuley participated in a year-long leadership development programme with the EA entitled "Leadership Matters".

Mrs Fenton continues to attend monthly CEC meetings and the annual union conference as the UTU rep in school. We also offer Mrs Fenton our warm congratulations following her election to the role of Vice-president of UTU for 22-23.

Mrs O'Neill and Miss Hart also attended the INTO conference this year while Mrs Caulfield attends regular meetings in her role as UNISON rep in school.

Governors too have benefitted from a variety of training opportunities provided through the EA Training Programme and covering Safe-guarding and Child Protection, Induction for New Governors, Recruitment and other relevant matters.

Special Educational Needs

Over many years, staff at Braidside IPS have committed time, enthusiasm and resources to meeting the needs of those children who have special needs. We continue to provide additional support for special educational needs at Braidside. This ranges from differentiated work, to a short boost to ongoing withdrawal support. While most support is offered in class through individual education plans and differentiated teaching, a team of experienced early years teaching assistants provide support in the Nursery, P1 and P2 classes. We also have a small number of SEN assistants who work 1-to-1 with specific children. This support team accounts for most of our targeted funding for meeting additional needs. Ensuring that all children access the curriculum, make progress and achieve their best outcomes is key to all provision. As noted earlier we continued to work with a range of external services and had support from RISE

NI, Behaviour Support, Literacy Support, Autism Advisory and Intervention Service and from the Educational Psychology service.

In relation to SEN, there is a considerable amount of work which is required, ensuring that children's needs are identified, targets set, work implemented and reviewed as well as liaising with EA SEN Branch and outside agencies. I am very grateful to our teachers for their hard work and especially to the SENCo, Miss Hart for her diligence, dedication and commitment to this significant role and workload.

Throughout the last 2 years, considerable work has been undertaken in preparation for the SEND implementation. This involves preparatory work for the changes resulting from the SEND Act, the SEN code of practice as well as changes to pupil IEPs, which will become PLPs (personal learning plan).

Sustrans: Active Travel Programme 2021/22

Since the return to school in September 2020, we have continued to focus on a range of Sustrans and Road Safety events and activities while also pursuing the Gold Award. The 21/22 school year has been another busy one and children have participated in The Bike to School Week, Ditch the Stabilisers, Road Safety week, The Big Walk and Wheel; incorporating the Walking Bus which was so well supported. We were delighted this year to achieve 1st place in the NE region (large school category) and 2nd in NI overall in the Big Walk and Wheel. Thank you to Mrs Horan, our Active Travel Champion, for her organisation of the Sustrans activities.

Attendance

As 2021/22 began, we continued to monitor pupil attendance closely, endeavouring to meet the target of 94% for the year. Measures employed include regular calls to parents to follow up on pupil absences, monthly reviews of pupil/class attendance, meetings with our Educational Welfare Officer and letters/ calls to parents where The Department of Education continue to underline the importance of regular attendance at school for children in having a positive impact on progress and outcomes.

However, as we know, in this school year attendance has been impacted greatly by increased cases in the school. The table below provides the monthly attendance figures up to the end of May '22.

Month	Attendance %
September '21	94.79%
October '21	92.6%
November '21	92.8%
Dec '21	85.11%
Jan '22	87.36%
Feb '22	87.62%
Mar '22	90.3%
Apr '22	90.17%
May '22	90.69%

Whole school attendance from Sept '21- end May '22= 90.56%

As we begin the new school year, in September '22, we intend to continue with the regular reviews of pupil attendance and hope to re-introduce the monthly tea parties to encourage school attendance. We hope that we will see a return to pre-pandemic percentages and will be aiming to reach 94% attendance, with parent support.

Braidside Facebook Page and Website

The Braidside Facebook page continues to allow us the opportunity to keep parents up-to-date with the many different activities that go on throughout the week. It also allows you to have a glimpse of what happens throughout various year groups and to celebrate and enjoy school life. I am very grateful to Mrs O'Neill, Mrs Young and Miss Hart who oversee and administer the page.

Our school website was invaluable during the first lockdown and was used as the primary platform for remote learning in March 2020, then moving to Microsoft Teams and Seesaw in January 21.

Current data reveals that visits to the website have continued to increase across the 21-22 school year, achieving between 3800- 5500 views each month. Many parents/guardians also have access to the school app which we have used to send alerts and

information to parents. Our primary objective is that these approaches will foster good communication links, develop a good sense of community and allow everyone to share in the activities and events that form school life.

Leavers' Destinations June 2021

In June 2021 47 children transferred to post-primary school:

Slemish College: 22 (47%)

Dunclug College: 10 (21%)

Ballymena Academy: 2 (4%)

St Louis: 2 (4%)

St Patrick's: 7 (15%)

C. House: 1(2%)

St Conor's, Kilrea: 1(2%)

Cullybackey: 1 (2%)

1 child elected to home school

Assessment Outcomes (2021/22)

As a school we continue to use GL standardised assessment tests to collect and collate information on pupil progress in Maths (PTM) and English (PTE) tests, and data from this allows us to track attainment. Standardised testing took place in May 2022 and outcomes were issued to parents after the annual reports.

During the Autumn term, we have an annual staff development day where we scrutinise and analyse the children's scores. We endeavour to track children's progress individually as well as identifying specific areas within literacy and numeracy for future development. This data is in addition to teacher observations and formative assessment procedures which occur normally through the course of a school year.

**Thanks go to our pupils, staff, parents and Governors
for their support and interest across the school year.**