

Alexander Dickson Primary School

Helping small
people with
BIG ideas



Annual Report

2019-2020

Role of the Board of Governors

Alexander Dickson Primary School is a controlled primary school. The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the management and control of the school in accordance with the Scheme of Management prepared by the South Eastern Education and Library Board. The present Board was appointed in October 2018 and will finish its term June 2022.

The Functions of the Board of Governors include:

- The appointment of teaching and non-teaching staff;
- The arrangements for the admission of pupils - drawing up admissions criteria and the application of admission and enrolment numbers;
- The determination of Curriculum Policy and of the Curriculum;
- Assisting the Principal to enable her to control the internal organisation, management and discipline of the school;
- The preparation of an Annual Report;
- The organisation of an Annual Parents' Meeting;
- Convening a meeting before each General Inspection;
- The use of school premises and the inspection of premises and equipment;
- Approval of annual budget proposals;
- Oversight of Pastoral Care.

The Governors do not have access to children's files. Issues related to a particular child's education or welfare would be discussed without the child being named.

The Board of Governors

Members

Nature of Representation

Mr L Fergus (Chairperson)	Transferor
Mr R Gibson	Area Board
Mrs G McClenaghan	Transferor - Pres.
Mr L Fergus	Transferor - Pres.
Mr J Megraw	Transferor - Pres.
Mrs L Douglas	Transferor - Pres.
Mr Z Lightfoot	Parent
Mrs A Moore	Parent
Mrs M Nield	Teacher
Mr T Weir	Area Board

The Principal, Mrs A Craig, is secretary to the Board of Governors, but is without voting rights. Mrs Craig and the staff would like to record their thanks to the support from all the Governors, and in particular, Mr Megraw and Mr Fergus who provided practical help and advice throughout the year.

Staffing 2019/2020

Teaching Staff

Principal	Mrs A Craig
Primary 1/2	Mrs M Muirhead (Senior Teacher)
Primary 3/4	Mrs R Angell & Mrs Nield
Primary 4/5	Mr A Fee
Primary 6/7	Mrs A Craig & Mrs D McCullough

The Governors are very appreciative of the work of the Principal and Teachers. The welcoming atmosphere of the school is most noticeable; many parents and visitors have commented on the evident commitment of the staff to the children.

Ancillary Staff

Classroom Assistants	Mrs L Harrison Mrs S Armour Mrs J Booth Ms M McLarnon
Building Supervisor	Mrs M McClure
Secretary	Mrs L McKaig
Supervisory Assistants	Mrs J Booth Mrs E Jones Ms M McLarnon Mrs L Harrison
Kitchen Assistant	Mrs J Brown

Once again Governors would like to pay tribute to the part played in the day-to-day life of the school by the ancillary staff. Their dedication to the children has not gone un-noticed; school benefits greatly from their hard work.

Staff Training

School was closed for 5 school development days:

1. ICT training	27.9.19
2. Primary teachers' conference	4.11.19
3. ICT training	6.1.20
4. SEN & Literacy training	6.4.20
5. Annual report writing	22.5.20

Ethos

Alexander Dickson is a warm and welcoming school where high standards of behaviour and learning are consistently demonstrated by our pupils. It is a controlled Primary school situated in a semi-rural location.

Our mission statement is:

'Our school builds relationships with kindness and honesty. We encourage creativity, imagination and independence. We will develop learning for life and work through effort and collaboration'

Our school community also agreed that its key values are:

- Honesty
- Learning
- Kindness
- Friendship
- Effort

Through a broad and balanced curriculum supplemented by a variety of extra-curricular activities, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, secure, structured environment.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum to promote the development of the whole child.
- Build high self-esteem.
- Develop healthy and respectful friendships.
- Meet needs of the individual and encourage each child to fulfil their potential.
- Create a partnership with parents and others to enhance children's education.

Strategies for learning, teaching & assessment

Our aim is to provide a broad and balanced curriculum to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible.

There are now 3 key stages within Primary school.

The Foundation Stage - P1 & P2

Key Stage 1 - P3 & P4

Key Stage 2 - P5, P6 & P7

The curriculum is set out in 6 areas of learning:

1. Language and Literacy (including Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing; schools are also encouraged to teach additional languages);
2. Mathematics and Numeracy (focusing on the development of mathematical concepts and numeracy across the curriculum).
3. The Arts (including Art and Design, Drama and Music);
4. The World Around Us (focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in Geography, History and Science and Technology);
5. Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (focusing on emotional development, social skills, learning to learn, health, relationships and sexuality education and mutual understanding in the local and global community);
6. Physical Education (focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding through play and a range of physical activities).

Emphasis is on the development of skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and for operating effectively in society. Through opportunities to engage in active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum, children should progressively develop:

Cross-Curricular Skills:

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using Information and Communications Technology

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities:

- Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making
- Self-Management
- Working with Others
- Managing Information
- Being Creative

Qualities of confidence, self-esteem and consideration of others will be developed alongside increasing competence in the basic skills. A variety of teaching approaches involving activities organised on a class, group and individual basis will be pursued. Effective learning will be achieved by careful matching of activities and content to individual needs.

Assessment is an integral part of planning, learning and teaching in our school. The teachers use various forms of assessment including teacher observation, marking written tests and assessment tasks. Pupils receive clear guidance on the quality of their work and assessment is used to inform teaching and improve learning. Assessment for learning techniques are being used in all classes, children are currently involved in self-assessment whilst peer assessment is evident in some classrooms.

Assessment/Reporting

Detailed monitoring of pupils' progress takes place throughout the year and written reports are issued to parents at the end of the summer term. Parent/Teacher consultations occur twice yearly in October and February when children's work is reviewed and assessed. Other parent consultations are welcomed during the year on request.

CAT4, cognitive ability tests were completed in January by P4 and P6. P3 – P7 children did not complete GL standardised tests in May as school closed on 23.3.20 due to COVID-19.

The P7 children leave school with a formal Record of Achievement Booklet, which they take to their new school.

Languages

To enhance children's learning, every child received specialist language teaching. P1-P7 pupils were taught Spanish and this was solely funded by school fund. This scheme is excellent as children leave us with a huge advantage over their peers. The teaching staff are very grateful to the specialist teacher Mrs Anne Gorman.

End of Key Stage Assessment 2019/2020

This information was not reported to the Department of Education, CEA or parents due to industrial action.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Pupils from Primary one to seven were encouraged to participate in after-school clubs during the year. These proved to be very popular as the school staff offered a wide choice of activities. The activities varied during the year and included football, gymnastics, multi-skills, dance, scripture union and judo. The P6 children spent 6 weeks at Forest School at Mount Stewart during February and March.

Music

Our singing group 'Small Children Big Voices', involving children from P4 – P7, sang at the Harvest and Carol Services. Due to the early closure of school the production 'Robin & The Sherwood Hoodies', for which they had been working very hard, did not take place.

Drum lessons continued; Chris Mahood taught approximately 10 children every Monday afternoon.

Physical Education

In line with our curricular aims, we have planned activities to develop agility and physical co-ordination, confidence in and through physical activity and the ability to express feeling through movement. The PE programme includes

gymnastics, games, athletics and dance. Swimming, provided for pupils in Primary 6/7, unfortunately did not take place due to school's early closure. Our PE lessons and after-school games also foster and develop the values inherent in team games. The P4-7 children enjoyed weekly cricket sessions from a professional coach Ruhan, from Comber Cricket Club. P1-7 continued their very enjoyable Scottish Dancing lessons with Michelle, Johnston School of Dance, funded by The Ulster Scots Society.

There was a range of outdoor equipment available during the year for the children at break and lunch times including our fitness trail, play area and playground markings. Bikes, tricycles and scooters are frequently used by Foundation Stage/early KS1 classes as well as Ballygowan Community Pre-school & Playgroup.

Special Educational Needs

All teachers once again implemented our SEN Policy. The definition of a special needs child is defined by law as one who 'has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children their age.' We were also mindful of pupils who needed challenged as well as those who needed extra help.

The Board of Governors do not have special arrangements for the admission of pupils who have special educational needs unless they have a statement from the Education Authority. Their applications are treated in the same manner as all other applicants when the criterion is being applied. Such pupils are integrated into the appropriate year group. Work is set to relate to their needs and abilities, in line with the preparation for all pupils. If necessary advice is sought from relevant outside agencies i.e. psychologist, doctor, nurse, peripatetic service for hearing or sight impaired, behavioural support team or other professionals as the need arises.

Personal Development & Mutual Understanding

PDMU is a cross curricular theme which is relevant to all areas of study. PDMU is about fostering self-respect, respect for others and the improvement of relationships between people of different backgrounds and cultural traditions. In each class teachers encourage pupils to respect and value themselves and others so that good relationships will exist amongst pupils and between pupils and teachers.

P4 – P7 children had the opportunity to participate 2 afternoons per week in a sports club organised by Todd's Leap. This encouraged good relationships through sport.

The school supports various charities and a lot of money was raised during the year. We were delighted with your generosity for the Salvation Army's Christmas present appeal; we were able to donate 65 presents to under-privileged children. £100 was raised for Children in Need by holding a bun sale, the children donated to the Poppy Appeal and £429.60 was raised with Cookstown Textile Recycling.

School's Council

School's Council continued to encourage the pupils to become more involved in the decisions being made in school. Each class voted to select representatives for the Council; the P7 children being Chairperson and Secretary.

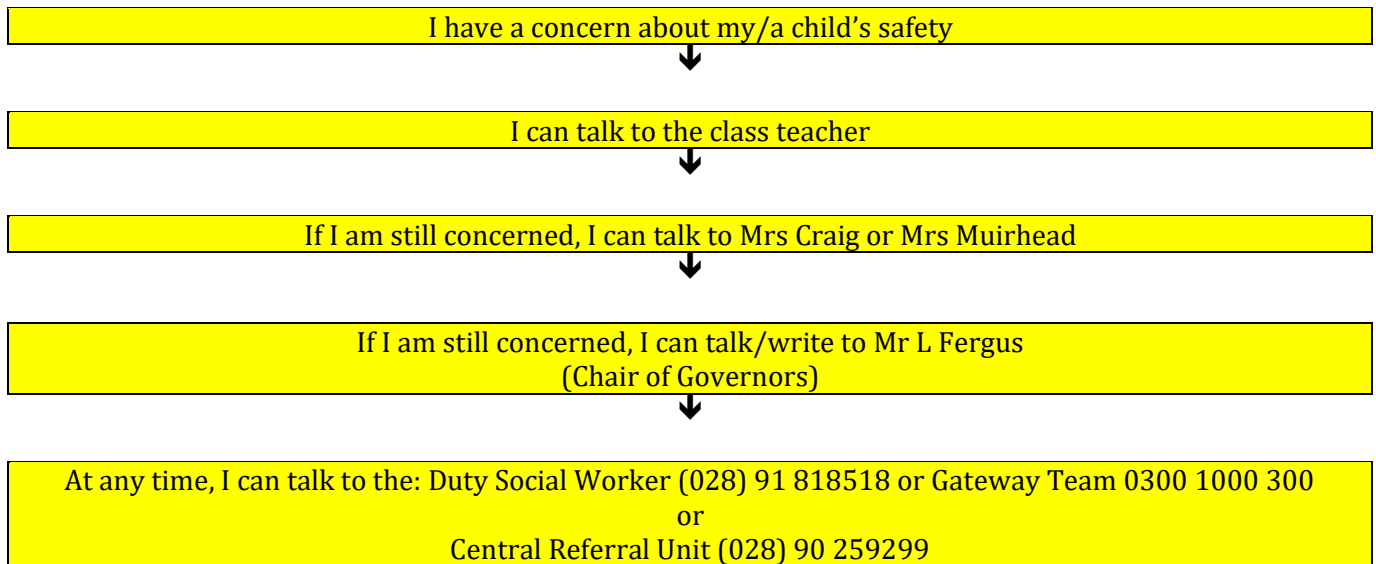
Pastoral Care/Child Protection

The welfare and happiness of the child is central to the ethos of Alexander Dickson Primary School. The school encourages a caring commitment from all adults who come into contact with pupils. Parents are seen as a vital part of pastoral care and are encouraged to liaise closely with the school regarding all aspects of your child's welfare.

The school maintains a register of parent volunteers who have been screened by the police, the parents help with swimming, day trips and the school library. The Board of Governors would like to express their gratitude to this small but dedicated group of parents.

Our Child Protection Policy has been distributed to all families. It outlines the procedures to be followed if we feel a child's safety is in jeopardy. The designated teacher for child protection is Mrs A Craig; her deputy is Mrs M Muirhead. Any concerns related to a child's well-being should be reported to the designated teacher.

Procedure for reporting suspected child abuse:



Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies have been circulated to families; additional copies of these policies may be obtained from the website.

Healthy Lifestyles

We continued various schemes to encourage children to make healthy options with their diet and lifestyle.

- Break – fruit or raw vegetables.
- Water – children were encouraged to keep a bottle of water in their classrooms.

Community Links

An important aspect of school life is the continued links with the local community. A high point in the school year was our Christmas Carol Service in the church. Once again we were well supported by parents and the congregation of the church. The children performed very well in what was a most enjoyable programme. Our thanks to the Church Session, their help and support were greatly appreciated.

The P1-4 children performed to a very appreciative audience in December. Their hard work and that of their teachers resulted in an excellent Nativity Play.

Our links with Ballygowan Pre-school & Community Playgroup continued to strengthen.

We invited a number of people into school to perform talks to the children. The Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service, a dental hygienist, the recycling bus and Courtney from Moneyreagh Community Church. Charlie, the golden retriever and his owner visited P1-P4 to highlight dog safety. The Young Enterprise initiative worked with P7 children and we were delighted to have won overall 'Business Beginnings' at St George's Market, Belfast. A representative from Santander visited P4/5 children to explain business in the community.

P7 children unfortunately did not get to invite their grandparents and 'senior' friends to morning tea because of the early closure due to COVID-19.

The school has continued to receive regular input at Assemblies from representatives of the local churches. The Board of Governors would like to record their appreciation to Rev Cooper, Robin Fairbairn, Rev Smylie, Rev Gilpin, Rev Johnston and Moneyreagh Community Church for the interest they show in the school.

The link with Saintfield High School continued; P6 and P7 children benefitted from a day spent baking, as well as spending an afternoon sampling the secondary school curriculum. They also enjoyed a morning at Blackwater Integrated College; an opportunity to experience life in secondary school. P6 had a fabulous morning working in the home economics department at Blackwater Integrated College.

Intergenerational Project

P6/7 were once again involved in an Intergenerational Project this year with Ballygowan Seniors. However, this animation project was cut short by the early closure in March.

Parent/Teacher Links

Once again the well-established parent/teacher links were very much in evidence throughout all classes in the school. Curriculum afternoons were held during September to give parents the opportunity to meet the class teachers and to receive information about procedures, policies and activities. Parent/Teacher consultations were held during October and February and progress reports were sent home in June.

The parents' consultation group continues considering policies and procedures prior to ratification by the Board of Governors.

On 19th November the Governors hosted a meeting where Mrs Craig outlined the School Development Plan and in particular, the plans for 2019/2020.

A meeting was held for the P6 parents in March to explain the transfer procedure from primary to secondary school. There was an open morning for prospective P1 parents in early December 2019.

Induction for the Primary 1 intake for September 2020 was postponed until August; a lot of information and photographs/videos was shared with the parents digitally.

School Trips

Trips were unfortunately cancelled due to the closure on 23.3.20.

Website

Our school website www.alexanderdicksonprimary.com was once again updated by Mr L Fergus in consultation with Mrs Craig. This site was accessed by parents and pupils who required information about policies, procedures, letters and upcoming events in the school calendar. A link was established to our Facebook account.

Facebook

Weekly postings of school events kept parents and the community up-to-date with events in school. It was also used to showcase pupil achievement.

Parent Teacher Association

The continuing support of the Parent Teacher Association is very much appreciated by the Governors. As in almost every school in Northern Ireland the funding from the Department of Education is insufficient to meet the needs of the school. A bag pack in Tesco and several school events took place e.g. Halloween disco and a Christmas draw before the early closure on 23.3.20.

The Income and Expenditure account will be added when prepared.

Once again Governors would like to commend the work of the PTA and thank them for their loyalty to the school.

Open Enrolment and Attendance

Under the Government's Open Enrolment Policy, the school enrolment number was set at 145 and the admissions number was set at 21. The annual statistics for 2019/20 showed 94 pupils on the school roll on 11th October 2019. The average daily attendance was 93%.

Transfer Procedure – 2019/20

Governors pass on their best wishes to Primary Seven as they move on to the next stage in their education. The children transferred to 6 different schools. The statistics are:

Saintfield High School	11	Methodist College	1
Blackwater Integrated College	1	Lagan College	2
Regent House Grammar	1	Grosvenor Grammar School	1

School Fund 2019/2020

School fund is mainly made up from donations by parents. However other sources of income include sales of ties, school photographs and collection of used clothing. The school fund is used to subsidise various activities including day trips, Spanish lessons and P7 leaving gifts. It is also used to buy costumes and props for school productions, books and sundry items.

Governors would like to thank Mr R Creelman who audits this account and Mrs McKaig who carries out the administrative work involved in running it.

The School Budget

The Board of Governors has a fully delegated budget that is calculated by the Education Authority using a formula that applies to all Primary schools in its area. The main element of the formula is the number of pupils enrolled at the school. The Education Authority requires the Board of Governors to have a robust 3-year plan in place.

SCHOOL FUND 2019/20

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

Opening balance

RECEIPTS

School Fund 432 P6/7 Residential and day trips	2,572	
Miscellaneous		
Late Bird/Early Bird Club	1,012	
Ulster-Scots	1,275	
Cookstown recycling	429	
PTA	12,550	20,411

PAYMENTS

Residential trip and school outings	2,980	
Miscellaneous	1,574	
Late Bird/Early Bird	1,192	
Spanish	396	
Highland Dancing	1,100	
PTA re: equipment	12,550	19,792
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Closing balance		417

Receipts and Payments have been prepared from the accounting records provided. No verification work is carried out or any opinion expressed.

R Creelman
26th November 2020

Alexander Dickson Primary School
Parent Teacher's Association
Income and Expenditure Account for the Year-ending 31st August 2020

Opening Balance per Bank as at 1st September 2019

£ 14,484.55

Income Generating Activities			
Description	Income	Expenditure	Surplus (Deficit)
	£	£	£
Tesco Bag Pack	1065.83		1065.83
Halloween Disco	281.62	91.41	190.21
Nativity Calendars	180.00		180.00
Christmas Ballot	887.00	35.00	852.00
Nativity Ticket Sales	243.00		243.00
World Book Day	84.50		84.50
Movie & Munch Afternoon	248.00		248.00
Donation from Mr Creelman	250.00		250.00

Expenses/Purchase of Equipment for School			
Big screen donation		4800.00	
PTA T-shirts		84.50	
Computer Suite Donation		7510.58	
PTA UK Membership		73.00	
Library Books		1490.52	
Totals	3239.95	14085.01	-10845.06

Closing Balance per Bank as at 31st August 2020

3639.49

L Turkington
Treasurer