



Forge Integrated Primary School



Annual Report of the Board of Governors 2022 - 2023



Principal's Note

The 2022-23 school year saw us emerge completely from Covid restrictions and allowed a much fuller and more complete school experience for all. Educational visits, including residential trips were once again a regular feature of school life and we saw the resumption of all the events and activities that had been either stopped or restricted during the previous two years.

There remain many challenges to face. Social and financial pressures remain and issues like attendance which naturally decreased due to the pandemic have yet to return to desired levels and need to be built up and sustained.

A positive and forward-looking attitude has been a defining characteristic of our school since its beginnings and that ethos continues to underpin our resolve to sustain and improve the work we do with children to develop them as capable, positive and forward looking people.

Neville Watson



This report is presented under the Scheme of Management of Forge Controlled Integrated Primary School and refers to the academic year 2022-23.

Membership

Boards of Governors are made up from volunteers and at Forge we have elected parent representatives, elected teacher representatives, representatives nominated by the Education Authority and representatives nominated by the Department of Education

This report spans a period where the Board of Governors was reconstituted with a newly constituted board installed in January 2019 and extended on two occasions to maintain continuity through a period of disruption precipitated by the pandemic.

Forge Integrated Primary School Governors, (Constituted in 2019 and serving until 2024)	
Chairperson	Mr Michael Prendergast
Vice Chairperson	Mrs Denise Toner
Designated Governor for Safeguarding	Mrs Claire Humphrey
Elected Parent Representatives	Dr Jennie Carlsten Mr Cahir Hughes Mr David Majury
Elected Staff Representatives	Mrs Grainne Kerr Mrs Joanne Mercer
Education Authority Nominees	Mr Nicky McBride Mrs Florence McCaw Mrs Catherine McKeown Mrs Heather Harold
Department of Education Nominees	Mr Michael Prendergast Mrs Denise Toner Mrs Claire Humphrey
Secretary/ Principal (Non – Voting)	Mr Neville Watson

The Work of the Board

In 2022-23 the board held 5 full board meetings via video conference and in person to deliver its statutory functions.

These include the employment of staff, delivery of the curriculum, financial management of the school and care of its premises.

Additionally, governors met in subgroups to consider specific issues and carry out certain duties such as safeguarding.

Members also attended meetings relating to the function of the Project Board to deliver the ongoing new build project.

Governors also contributed to several school and community events and undertook training organised by the Education Authority.





Attainment and Achievements

Standardised testing was carried out in the summer term and staff reviewed the data gathered, reviewed pupils' progress and shared that information with colleagues at handover. There is no doubt that the pandemic years have impacted some pupils' progress and that it will take time and consistency to build up skills and experience.

The data below represents the % of children at Forge performing in the top 5 bands in GL Progress Test (standardised tests) in English and Mathematics in spring/summer 2023. While we know there has been a detrimental impact on progress for some pupils, scores in these assessments across KS1 and remains above the 60% average level that is reflected in standardisation.

English	May 2023	KS1 (P3-4)	65%	KS2(P5-7)	74%
Mathematics	May 2023	KS1 (P3-4)	81%	KS2(P5-7)	65%

New Build

Forge IPS was announced in March 2016 as one of a number of schools to have a new school built as part of the Fresh Start funding for shared and integrated education projects.

A Project Design Team, comprised of school staff, architects and design consultants and Education Authority Officials has met on a monthly basis to develop designs for the new build in readiness for a planning application and further progress towards construction.

A Project Board, comprised of representatives of school management and governors, the Education Authority, Design Consultants and the Department of Education has met regularly during the course of the year to oversee progress of the project.

While progress delayed in 2022-23 due to protracted planning discussions, the Board of Governors continue to work to overcome those complexities and progress the project.

Community

The school engaged in several community events during the 2022-23 school year. Most classes participated in local church visits, and we celebrated Interfaith Week with visitors from most of the main world faith groups to the school to share their stories. Sporting events were a feature of the year with children participating in local football and cross-country competitions. Our choir performed for residents of local care homes and several seasonal events. Two of our pupils were selected to greet the King and Queen's Consort on their arrival in Belfast and Pre School-Leader, Stephanie Cherry attended the King's Coronation in London.

It has been refreshing to see an increase in community engagement following a number of year where that aspect of school life has been muted and we look forward to building on that in years to come.



Security, Safety and Safeguarding

The Board of Governors continue to oversee security and safety at the school and work with the Principal to address Health and Safety issues. The school has improved physical security in recent years through the installation of additional safety fencing, door access systems and CCTV. Emergency Plans are reviewed and updated regularly and regular evacuation and lock down drills are carried out. Two members of staff – The Principal and the Secretary are trained in First Aid up to First Aid at work standards and a significant number of teachers and assistants have completed emergency first aid training.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and Practice are reviewed annually, and a full review was conducted in Autumn 2021 and approved by the Board of Governors. There is a dedicated Safeguarding Governor who meets with the staff Safeguarding team and reports back to the Board of Governors.



The governors continue to support the implementation of several ongoing pastoral care initiatives including the Barnardos Paths Plus scheme, which includes a 'Friendships Group' and the continued provision of counselling services for pupils through a contractual agreement with FamilyworksNI.

The school's Child Protection Team consists of Ms. Mahon (Designated Teacher for Child Protection), Mrs. Kerr (Deputy Designated Teacher) and Mr. Watson (Principal). Mrs Claire Humphrey is the dedicated Safeguarding Governor.

All concerns and queries regarding child protection should be addressed in the first instance to Ms. Mahon or one of the other team members.

Safeguarding Policies and Procedures are available on the school website and on request from the school office.

Special Educational Needs

The Board of Governors continue to oversee the school's policy and procedures on SEN and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), Ms D Mahon, reports to the Board of Governors on an annual basis. The School also employ a dedicated Learning Support Teacher (LST), Miss L MacKenna.

The school's SEN and Inclusion policy was reviewed and approved by the Board of

Governors in Autumn 2016 and is compliant with the 1996 SEN Order and the SEN Code of Practice. The school is currently undertaking a comprehensive review and update of SEN policy and procedure in line with the Education Authority's programme for implementation of the 2016 SEND Act.

SEN provision, like all provision has been negatively impacted by the pandemic. Funding from EA for SEND implementation has been invaluable to the school in recent years allowing us to cope with the ever-increasing burden of SEND administration and supplementing the SEN support we have been able to offer pupils through additional learning support allocation. A reduction in this funding at the turn of the fiscal year would have negatively impacted the school's capacity to

meet demand in this respect and the Board of Governors took the decision to sustain current resource for the next fiscal year from our LMS budget resource.

Forge Staff



Teaching		
Senior Leadership Team	Mr N Watson - Principal Mrs G Kerr – Vice Principal & English Ms D Mahon SENCO/DTCP Mrs P McAleer - Assessment Mrs S Gowan – Maths Mrs J Foster - ICT	N/A P5 P7 P4 P3 P1
Middle Leaders	Mrs J Mercer – PDMU Mrs P Salmon – Eco-Schools Mrs S Gray – Newcomers, Integration and Diversity Miss S Houston - Music Mrs L O'Malley – RE Mrs S Rocks – PE Miss A Masterson – Paths/PDMU Miss C Mahon – Art Mrs S Gamble – World Around Us Mrs G Wood – Pupil Voice Miss L MacKenna – Learning Support	P1 P2 P2 P3 P7 P3 P3 P4 P5 P6 P6 N/A
Temporary Teachers Employed to Implement SEND Programme	Mrs McKinney	

Non- Teaching		
Classroom Support Staff/ Supervisory Staff	Ms J Heaney Ms C Morsman Ms J McLoughlin Mrs A Kirk Mrs R Maxwell Mrs O Rankin	Mrs S McWilliams Mrs S Lyons Miss R Brown Miss Z Ferris Miss S Moore Mrs I Korkoszynzka
Secretary	Miss K McStravick	
Caretaking & Cleaning	Mr D Reid Mrs G Whyte Ms T Toner	Mrs B Jones
Catering	Mrs H Palmer Ms T Toner	Mrs D Stelges Mrs L Bain
Pre School Playgroup Staff		
	Mrs S Cherry - Leader Ms S Veitch - Deputy Leader Mrs H Reid - Playgroup Assistant Miss Lynn Weir- Playgroup Assistant	

Our staff continue to engage in a broad range of professional development opportunities to feed into school improvement. The Board of Governors recognises the very significant contribution made by teachers and also by Non-Teaching staff in ensuring that Forge is a safe, positive and progressive place to learn. Industrial action has been a feature of the past number of years and is an ongoing issue that remains unresolved. School staff have engaged in action proportionately and in a manner that minimises any impact on pupils.

Professional Development

Staff engaged in online and face to face training at various points during the school year. We look forward to further enhancing this important aspect of school development in the coming months.

Contributing to External Teacher Training and Development

We hosted student teachers for teaching practice from Stranmillis College during the 2022-23 school year.



Pre-School

Mrs Stephanie Cherry has continued to lead the Pre-School team who continue to develop the Pre-School which has again enjoyed full capacity this school year. Like their primary counterparts, the Pre-School team had to operate with the challenges of operating under pandemic conditions. The Board of Governors acknowledges the solid work done by the Pre-School team and the voluntary Pre-School Management Committee in giving our children the best start to their education.



Mrs Stephanie Cherry at the King's Coronation in 2023

Parental Engagement

The Governors acknowledge the high levels of parental engagement through home learning and attendance at online Parent/Teacher Meetings held in October and February.

The school has continued to develop home school communication through use of social media pages on Facebook and Twitter, a static website, SeeSaw and Microsoft Teams. A number of other online resources procured by the school to help support remote and disrupted learning continue to be used including the 'Bug Club' reading programme and 'Mathletics'.

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has been a valuable body providing support to the school through fundraising and through social events. The work of the PTA, particularly in supporting social events was severely impeded by pandemic restrictions and fundraising activity was also muted in acknowledgment of the financial impact of lockdowns on some families.

Pupils

The Board of Governors recognise that pupils are at the heart the school. We congratulate our current pupils and leavers on their successes in every sphere of life. Attendance at school during 2022-23 was 94%. We hope to see that improve further in the 23-24 school year.

We recognise the value of the very broad and holistic nature of learning at Forge where classroom learning is supplemented by well-structured, field trips, visitors to the school, residential experiences and participation in sporting, arts, and cultural events.

The School Development Plan and School Development Plan Evaluation offer a more comprehensive overview of the current and ongoing work of the school and can be viewed on the school website www.forgeips.co.uk.



Beyond Forge

The 2021/22 school year saw 53 pupils transfer to post primary education. Lagan College continues to be the most popular (89%) destination school for transferors, but we have also seen a broad range of destination schools:

School	2020 No.	%	2021 No.	%	2022 No.	%	2023 No.	%
Lagan Coll	20	46%	30	54%	47	89%	32	54
Grosvenor GS	1	2%	5	9%	1	2%	4	7
H/wood IC	1	2%	0	0	0	0%	1	2
Aquinas DGS	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%		
Malone Coll	4	9%	2	3%	1	2%	2	3
Methodist Coll	1	2%	3	5%	1	2%	10	17
St Joseph's Coll	6	14%	5	9%	0	0%		
Wellington Coll	9	21%	2	3%	1	2%	2	3
OLSP Coll	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	2	3
Ashfield GHS	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%		
RBAI	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	2
Victoria Coll	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%	1	2
H/house Coll	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%		
St. Louise's	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%		
Campbell Coll	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2
Priory IC	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2
Assumption GS	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2
All Saints Coll	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2
Unplaced	0	0	3	5%	0	0	0	0
Totals	44	100%	56	100	53	100%	59	

Finance - School LMS (Local Management of Schools) Budget

Schools are given a budget so that they can plan spending to meet the priorities they have identified.

The initial budget for the financial year ended 31 March 2022 was set by the Education Authority based on the Common Funding Formula.

The Board of Governors monitor and plan expenditure with the Principal. The school ended the 2022 financial year with a surplus which will support future development and rising costs.

The table below shows 2022 - 23 expenditure.

Fiscal Year: 2021 Fiscal Period: Apr22 –Mar23

Annual Budget Available	1,465,883
Income Total	4,644
Staff - Pay Teaching Total	1,031,171
Staff - Pay Non Teaching Total	200,668
Staff - Other Costs Total	275
Premises, Fixed Plant & Gds Total	61,183
Operating costs Total	61,965
Non capital purchases Total	12,156
Re-allocations Total	3,958
Capital Expenditure Total	8,431
Grand Total	1,384,452
Year End Position	81,431

Financial Outlook 2023 – 2024

Schools plan spending over a three-year period and surpluses and deficits are planned to try to keep staffing and resource levels adequate, while also keeping the budget at levels which are manageable. The current situation is extraordinary and forecasts are unlikely to accurately reflect future change.

Financial Year	2023/24
Total Estimated Budget Available (income)	£1,374,391
Total Estimated Expenditure	£1,321,994
Projected Year-End Surplus/(Deficit)	£52,397
% Surplus/Deficit	3.8%

School Funds (Non LMS) Balance Sheet & Income/Expenditure.

The tables below represent the balance and transactions on the school's private funds. In common with most schools we maintain accounts to service day to day transactions and to manage fundraising and non LMS spending. We also maintain account for use as a hardship fund through which we plan to finance initiatives such as in school counselling for pupils and a contingency fund, which allows us to cope with unforeseen pressures such as additional costs for staff due to unforeseen circumstances and the essential replacement of large items of equipment due to unforeseen failure.

These accounts are subject to external independent examination by a chartered accountant (RWCA Ltd.) on an annual basis.

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Income & Expenditure for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

<u>INCOME</u>	2023	2022
	£	£
Cheques & Cash	1,479	0
PTA & Donations	1,223	140
NI War Memorial Travel Grant	200	0
IEF Grant	700	0
ParentMail	80,950	62,748
	<u>84,551</u>	<u>62,888</u>
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
EA - Various	57,109	38,677
Trips	15,900	2,027
Swimming	3,158	504
Belfast Arts Centre	0	1,920
Classroom Expenditure - books, crafts, PPE, etc	1,677	1,355
Post Office	50	156
NATRE	90	0
Donations	195	0
Irish News Advert	300	0
Loaf Catering	50	105
Accountancy	420	0
Survey Monkey - Use of App	576	544
British Psychology Society	43	0
Mind Wise	100	0
APTIS	265	0
Science2Life	455	0
Bricks4Kidz	250	0
ACK Stage Hire	276	0
Thrive Academy	377	0
Bank Interest & Charges	79	191
	<u>81,370</u>	<u>45,478</u>
<u>Surplus/(Deficit) Of Income Over Expenditure</u>	<u>3,182</u>	<u>17,409</u>

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Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed Assets		
iPads	0	0
Bank Accounts		
Current Account	76,567	73,197
Charity Account	386	386
Total Cash at Bank	<u>76,953</u>	<u>73,583</u>
Fidelity Investment	44,255	43,425
	<u><u>121,208</u></u>	<u><u>117,009</u></u>
 REPRESENTED BY		
General Fund		
Balance At Start Of Period	117,009	99,444
Bank Interest Received	1,018	156
Surplus/(Deficit) For Period	3,182	17,409
	<u><u>121,208</u></u>	<u><u>117,009</u></u>

Uwca Ltd

RWCA Ltd
04/03/2024

