

Ashgrove Primary School



Board of Governors Report

for

2006/2007

Ashgrove Primary School

Ashgrove Road, Newtownabbey, Co Antrim, BT36 6LJ

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Board of Governors Annual Report 2006 - 2007

Dear Parent or Guardian

As Chairman of the Board of Governors, it gives me great pleasure to report on another year in the life of Ashgrove Primary School.

The year 2006 - 2007 was one in which Ashgrove continued to attract large numbers of Primary 1 children as well as pupils from other schools, and so the school maintained a healthy enrolment when many schools were in decline. High standards of care and teaching were reflected in the security, happiness and learning of our children. Ashgrove remains a thriving, happy centre of learning.

As chairman I would like to thank the governors and staff for their continued commitment and hard work. Once again they have given generously to the many needs and opportunities that make the school so important to all of those in the community, and in particular, to the children of Ashgrove.

Yours sincerely

Alan Craig
(Chairman of the Board of Governors)

This report has been prepared by the Board of Governors in accordance with Article 125 of the Education Reform (NI) Order and Statutory Rule 2003 378.

Membership of the Board of Governors

Parent Representatives:	Mr A Craig (Chairman)
	Mr S Barnes (Vice-Chairman)
Teacher Representative	Mr M Morrow
NEELB Representatives	Mr A Kell
	Councillor Mrs J Crilly
Transferor Representatives	Mr R Hogg
	Mr D Ireland
	Mrs L McNutt
	Mr D Orr
Secretary to Board of Governors	Mr P Waddell (Principal)

The present governing body was formed to serve from 2005 until 2009.

Function of the Board of Governors

The governors are responsible for all aspects of school - pupil admissions, the appointment and development of staff, the curriculum, safety and welfare, finance and school/community relations. The governors in Ashgrove aim to provide the highest standards of education and care for each child in the school, and to respond to any encouragement and concerns that you may have.

Permanent Staffing 2006 - 2007

Principal	Mr P Waddell	
Vice-principal	Mr D Graham	
Primary 7	Mr N Agnew	Mr D Graham
Primary 6	Miss L Quail	Mr M Morrow
Primary 5	Mrs S Christie	Mrs V Luney
Primary 4	Miss J Wylie	(Head of Key Stage 1)
	Mrs M McAllister	Mrs Mannion
Primary 3	Mrs A Blair	Mrs L Torrie
Primary 2	Mrs A McBride	Mrs J Copeland
Primary 1	Mrs M McCoy	Mrs J Adair
Special Needs	Mrs L Doherty	

The teachers in Ashgrove continued to display a high level of professionalism and dedication. Throughout the school teaching was conscientious and of a high standard. Once again the governors would like to express their appreciation of the excellent work done.

The school continued to benefit from the excellent work of a number of other people who make up the professional team:

Classroom Assistants	Mrs G Finlay	Mrs H Kyle
	Mrs Lloyd	Mrs C Lowry
	Mrs McMillan	Mrs McWilliams
	Mrs L Noble	Mrs O'Donnell
	Mrs Vick	
Secretary	Mrs Y McDonald	
Buildings Supervisor	Mr W McCormick	
Cleaners	Mrs L Horn	Mrs L Smith
Supervisory Assistants	Mrs A Bunting	Mrs H Campbell
	Mrs Cleland	Mrs S Maginnis
	Mrs G McFerran	Mrs A McMillan
	Mrs Meehan	Mrs H Montgomery

Once again all our children benefited greatly from the invaluable contributions of the cook and her staff, from parents and from friends.

Staff and Curriculum Development

Throughout the year staff ensured that teaching and learning was broad, balanced, challenging and supportive. Teachers met regularly to plan and co-ordinate the curriculum as required by the Curriculum (Programmes of Study and Attainment Targets at Key Stages 1& 2) Order (NI) 1996 AND THE Education Order (NI) 2006. In response to the strengths and priorities of individual children and of the school in general, each member of staff was actively involved in a programme of whole-school development that included:

- preparation for the Revised Curriculum;
- review of creativity throughout the school;
- development of Art & Design across the curriculum;
- development of Music across the curriculum;
- review of standardised assessment Primary 2 – Primary 7;
- planning for teaching and learning;
- review of general non-curricular policies;
- audit and planning for school development; and
- review of Special Educational Needs policy and provision.

Achievements at the Ends of Key Stages 1 and 2

In the school year to which the annual report relates progress remained good and was generally commensurate with ability. The Ashgrove catchment is changing, with a broadening range of abilities now evident in most classes, yet the results at the end of each key stage have remained almost universally above the Northern Ireland average.

Key Stage 1	English	95% achieved Level 2 or above	(93%)
		43% achieved Level 3*	(38%)
Mathematics		96% achieved Level 2 or above	(94%)
		57% achieved Level 3*	(44%)
Key Stage 2	English	80% achieved Level 4 or above	(78%)
		27% achieved Level 5	(26%)
Mathematics		76% achieved Level 4 or above*	(78%)
		40% achieved Level 5	(39%)

Figures in brackets are the Northern Ireland averages. Those marked * are improvements on last year. Statements in **bold** are achievements above NI average.

24 of the 44 pupils who sat the transfer tests were awarded grammar school places (55%).

Ballyclare High School	7	Dominican College	1
Ballyclare Secondary School	5	Glengormley High School	14
Belfast High School	7	Methodist College	1
Belfast Royal Academy	6	Parkhall College	1
Carrickfergus Grammar School	1	Royal Belfast Academical Institution	1

The province-wide increase in children with special educational needs is reflected in the school's special needs register.

After School Activities

For part of the year the teachers provided a programme of extra-curricular activities as a valuable extension to children's learning. The governors commend members of staff for their commitment through the following clubs:

Art	Badminton	Clay	Cycling Proficiency
Computers	Drama	Football	French
Hockey	Netball	Rugby	Scripture Union
Strings Orchestra			

Music

Nineteen pupils received string tuition in school. Five successfully passed their Grade 1 violin examinations, one with merit and four with distinction. Three pupils achieved Grade 2 in violin.

The choir performed at our Harvest and Nativity services, our Leavers' Assembly and at local nursing homes and shopping centres.

Mr R Barnes and Mr R Ardill provided after-school tuition in piano and guitar respectively.

Educational Visits, Visitors, Etc

During the year many organisations visited the school, including Wildlife Volunteers, West Midland Theatre, the fire brigade, the dental hygienist, the school nurse, Team Theme football coaching, local clergy, Go Kids, Tennis Fundamentals, PSNI Community Branch, Thornton's, Ballyclare Lions Club, Northern Ireland Children's Hospice, Bryson House, Life Education Centre, Think Differently and BT Roadshow. All classes took part in educational visits outside school:

Primary 1: Streamvale Farm, Ballygally Beach, Carnfunnock Country Park

Primary 2: Tayto Castle, Belfast Zoo

Primary 3: Cavehill Country Park, Lady Dixon Park

Primary 4: Belfast City Hall, Ulster Transport Museum, The Argory, Castleward, Castle Espie

Primary 5: W5

Primary 6: Ulster Museum, residential trip to Glasgow and Edinburgh

Primary 7: Christmas Crafts and Victorian Day at the Ulster Folk Museum, Sentinus Klix Challenge, the NEELB 24 Game competition, Sentinus Technology Challenge, Newtownabbey Borough Council's Be Safe event, and ICT department of Glengormley High School, residential ski trip to Ehrwald in Austria.

Once again the school was able to acquire items of sports and ICT equipment with record numbers of Tesco tokens collected by the children, families and friends.

Sports

Badminton: Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils participated in badminton after school.

Football: The school team participated once again in the Newtownabbey Primary School League and cup competitions. Pupils from primary 1 to Primary 7 benefited from coaching by Team Theme.

Netball: Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils participated in netball after school. Teams were entered in local league and cup competitions.

Rugby: The team played in the primary schools' mini-rugby tournament at Mallusk.

Swimming: With the closure of The Valley Leisure Centre's swimming pool for refurbishment, only Primary 6 children were able to take part in swimming lessons during school hours.

Cricket: Primary 7 pupils benefited from the tuition of Greenisland Cricket Club's professional coach.

Parental Involvement, Including Parent Teacher Association

Once again the partnership between home and school was demonstrated through valued support with homework and uniforms; preparation and cleaning of infant equipment; voluntary library duties; and the shared supervision of educational visits. The governors consider parental participation an extremely important feature of our school's life and would like to express their appreciation for all support, including financial.

Under the enthusiastic chairmanship of Mrs Margaret Abernethy, the PTA continued to prosper. Many voluntary events, both social and fundraising, were held throughout the year:

- September: Annual General Meeting
- October: Hallowe'en Disco
- November: Beauty Evening
- December: Christmas Fair
- March: Family Table Quiz
- May: Treasure Hunt
- June: Family Fun Night

In another year of continuing financial stringency within the education sector, the PTA made a significant difference to the provision of experiences and resources for our children by funding the P7 bowling trip, a P2 trip to the Mater Hospital, special needs tests, science equipment, desks, cross-community programmes (contribution), sports day medals, landscaping for outdoor play, website maintenance, photocopier (contribution), computer consumables, storage units and frames for art prints.

Parents were invited to contribute to the school audit through a questionnaire distributed in the summer term. There was a return of 90 completed questionnaires, representing a total of 121 pupils, 34% of the 356 pupils on roll. The exercise was generally positive, while raising a number of issues for consideration in relation to healthy eating and to information relating to the curriculum and the Board of Governors.

Links with Charities and the Local Community

An extensive programme of outside visits and visitors to the school enriched the curriculum of each class. As well as choral visits, harvest gifts were donated to deserving people in the district.

The Governors wish to congratulate the school community on its generous contributions of £3650 for Northern Ireland Children's Hospice. In addition, £100 was raised through the sale of seals for the Northern Ireland Council for Orthopaedic Development. Children continued to collect used postage stamps for the Dogs Trust, and dog food, blankets, etc for the local dog shelter. The Royal British Legion was supported through the sale of poppies and £544 was raised for Water Aid in conjunction with Ballyclare Lions Club.

Art work by Primary 1 and 2 children from Ashgrove Primary was unveiled for permanent exhibition in Whiteabbey Hospital.

Schools Community Relations Programme

Inclusion, tolerance and co-operation have always been key values in Ashgrove and cross-community contact schemes continued during the year. Once again pupils, parents and staff benefited from a joint programme of activities involving Ashgrove and pupils from St. Mary's-On-The-Hill.

Security / Personal Safety

The following measures (additional to those included in our health and safety policy) were taken to improve the security and personal safety of all within school:

- our Designated Teacher for Child Protection received upgrade training;
- requests were again placed with NEELB for a drop-off lay-by and for a permanent structure to replace the mobiles;
- assistance was sought from the Traffic and Community Branches of PSNI in relation to anti-bullying, stranger danger, drugs awareness and road safety;
- the Chief Inspector of the Education and Training Inspectorate was invited to school to discuss a number of issues including security of mobiles;
- the security system controlling access to the school was upgraded further;
- pupils attendance during 2006/2007 was 95%.
- the principal monitored pupil attendance monthly and worked with parents and the education welfare officer in relation to any child below 85%.
- parents were reminded to report to reception upon arrival at the school;
- criminal record checks and references were obtained/updated for all volunteers wishing to work in the school; and
- access to the main school building was improved with ramps at all entrances.

LMS and Allocation of Delegated Budget Share

As the financial crisis in education developed it proved necessary for the school to operate within a significantly more limiting budget during 2006/2007.

Budget and Expenditure Report for the 12 Months Ending March 2007

Description	Budget For Year	Expenditure For Year	Expense Balance
Salaries	753853	775861	-22008
Premises	14520	19407	-4887
Books, Tools & Materials	12157	11667	490
Miscellaneous Expenses	45747	27797	17950
Income	-41316	-33936	-7380
Grand Total	<u>£784961</u>	<u>£800796</u>	<u>-£15835</u>

The LMS accounts have been scrutinised by the Board of Governors, NEELB and C2K.

Complaints Procedure

If any parent has concerns about a child's safety the class teacher should be consulted. If this is either unsatisfactory or inappropriate the parent should speak to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mr Graham, or the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Miss Wylie. If issues remain the principal should be consulted. Any matter not resolved by this stage should be addressed by writing to the Chairman of the Governors.

Conclusion

Finally I wish to place on record my thanks to all members of the school community who have worked so conscientiously to ensure that pupils at Ashgrove Primary School receive the best possible care and education.

As Chairman I recommend this report as a true record of the discharge of the functions of the Board of Governors at Ashgrove Primary School during the school year 2006/2007.

Signed _____

Alan Craig, Chairman

Dated _____

School Closures 2006/2007

Christmas Term

start back	Wednesday 30 August 2006
half-term holiday	30 October - 31 October
start back	Wednesday 1 November 2006
Christmas holiday	25 December 2006 - 5 January 2007

Easter Term

start back	Monday 8 January 2007
half-term holiday	12 February - 16 February 2007
start back	Tuesday 20 February 2007
Easter Holiday	2 April – 13 April 2007

Summer Term

start back	Monday 16 April 2007
May Day holiday	7 May 2007
start back	Tuesday 8 May 2007
last day of term	29 June 2007

Teacher Training (Baker Days) (23, 24, 25, 29 August 2007)
(one flexible day in July/August 2007)

Teacher Training (Exceptional Closures) (27 October 2006)
(9, 19 February 2007)
(4 May 2007)