

ANNUAL REPORT

2024– 2025

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ANNUAL REPORT

2024 – 2025

Foreword

It is a privilege to present this annual report on behalf of the Board of Governors of Victoria Park Primary School. The report aims to present the achievements and activities of the children in our School in a straight-forward, informative and understandable manner.

I encourage you to take time to read all sections of this report. It is only by reading it in its entirety that the wide range of activities that make up the education and development of our children, along with their achievements, can be fully appreciated.

A lot of hard work and effort goes into making Victoria Park Primary School run in the smooth and efficient manner which it does. Board of Governors wishes to place on record its appreciation of the commitment and dedication shown by the teaching and support staff, who together make Victoria Park Primary School not only a school to be proud of, but a great place to be.

We are blessed to have Mrs. Gourley as our principal. The professional, enthusiastic and positive leadership given by Mrs. Gourley is reflected in the success of the School.

I also wish to place on record my thanks and that of the entire school community to Rev. McCrea for many long years of dedication not only to Victoria Park but to the wider community in Sydenham.

As the new Chair of the Board of Governors, I will strive to build on the strong foundations set by Mrs. Gourley and Rev. McCrea as we “live to learn and learn to live” together.

Stephen Warke.
Chairperson.

General Aims of Victoria Park Primary School

In September 2008 Victoria Park was formed after the amalgamation of Sydenham Infants and Strand Primary School. Both schools were very much part of the local community and aimed to provide its pupils with an education which best suits their needs as they move on to the next stage of their education. At Victoria Park Primary School, we continue to do this in a bigger and better school, preparing our children to meet the demands and challenges of the 21st Century.

We feel that the strong links between home, school and the community are vital to the all-round development of children. Parents and others have an important role to play in the life of the school in general and in the welfare, education and social development of the children.

At Victoria Park Primary School, we aim to: -

1. provide a caring atmosphere
2. promote respect for self and others
3. strengthen links between home and school
4. ensure that the pupils have the best possible educational experiences to help them progress academically.

We also endeavour to provide an environment in which children can experience and build on interpersonal relationships between themselves, their peers and adults and to create a positive atmosphere in which they can mature both academically and socially.

Duties of the Board of Governors

1. Governors are responsible for the use of the funds allocated to the school by the Education Authority.
2. They are also responsible for ensuring that teachers in the school have the facilities necessary to provide a curriculum which meets the requirements of the 1989 Order and for producing a policy in relation to the curriculum.
3. Governors are required to ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place for the admission of pupils to the school and for drawing up criteria which will be used to select pupils should it happen that the number of pupils seeking to be enrolled exceed the number of places available.
4. The complement of staff in the school, both teaching and non-teaching, is controlled by the Governors and arrangements for dealing with issues involving industrial relations within the school also fall within their remit.
5. Governors are responsible for ensuring implementation of all school policies and that they are reviewed regularly.

Term of Office: - September 2018 – June 2024 (Extended to 2025 due to covid and ASOS)

Chairman: - Rev. F. McCrea Transferor Representative (St. Brendans Church)

Vice Chairperson: - Mr. S. Warke EA Representative
Miss P. Cooper Transferor Representative (Strand Presbyterian Church)
Rev D Rankin Transferor Representative (Strand Presbyterian Church)

Vacant EA Representative
Mrs. J. Shaw Parents' Representative
Mrs. T. McMaster Parents' Representative
Miss L. Dawson Transferor Representative (Methodist Church)
Mr. J. Bleakley Teachers' Representative

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. A. Gourley Principal

The Scheme of Management of every grant-aided school provides for it to be the duty of the Board of Governors to prepare an Annual Report.

The Report summarises the steps taken by the Board of Governors in the discharge of its functions during the 2024/2025 school year and gives such other information as the Scheme of Management requires.

Teaching Staff 2024 – 2025

Foundation Stage

Primary 1	Room 1	Ms K. Potts	<i>RE Coordinator</i>
	Room 2	Mrs J. Hamilton	<i>ABL Coordinator</i>
Primary 2	Room 3	Mrs E. Salisbury	<i>Literacy Coordinator</i>
	Room 4	Mrs C. Lennox	

Key Stage 1

Primary 3	Room 5	Miss H. Wilson	<i>Drama Coordinator</i>
	Room 6	Mrs V. Jenkins	<i>Dep. SENCO. Art coord.</i>
Primary 4	Room 7	Miss F. Dunn	<i>World Around Us Coordinator</i>
	Room 8	Mrs D. Adams & Mrs D. Youde	<i>Assessment Coordinator.</i>

Key Stage 2

Primary 5	Room 9	Mr J. Bleakley	<i>IT Co-ordinator</i>
Primary 5	Room 10	Miss N. Montgomery Mrs S. McDonnell	<i>Music Coordinator</i> (Maternity Leave)
Primary 6	Room 11	Mrs G. McDougall	<i>Head of Pastoral Care, CLA</i> <i>& Dep. Designated Teacher CP</i>
Primary 6	Room 12	Mr R. Gullen	<i>PE Coordinator</i>
Primary 7	Room 13	Miss A. Fulton. Mrs C. Perrott.	(Maternity Leave)
	Room 14	Mr D. Ryden VP	<i>Head of KS2, .Designated</i> <i>Teacher CP, Numeracy Coordinator</i>

Nurture Class Teacher Mrs L. McKnight SENCO

Learning Support Mrs P. Bower

ENGAGE Miss A. Bloomfield.

Victoria Park Primary School

Support Staff 2024-2025

We continue to be indebted to our Secretaries, Caretaker, Cleaners and Lunchtime Supervisors for their invaluable roles and support. Their good attendance, loyalty and service enhance the continuity of staff in the school.

Clerical Staff

Mrs D. McCabe	Executive Officer
Mrs E. Luke	Senior Clerical Officer
Mrs I. McCune	Senior Clerical Officer

Building Supervisor

Mrs M. Wallace	Building Supervisor
Mrs V. Martin (Long-term sickness leave)	

Cleaners

Mrs E. Crooks
Mrs K. Fleming.
Ms N. Maghie
Miss B. Peden
Mrs M. Wallace

Lunchtime Supervisors

Senior Playgrounds

Miss J. Price
Miss B. Hudson
Mrs C Gibson

Junior Playgrounds

Mrs A Wright
Mrs S. Hutchinson
Mrs L Howard
Mrs M. Wallace

Classroom Assistants

Mrs S. Hughes	P1	
Miss C. Tate	P1	
Mrs I. Ward	P2	
Mrs K. Kane	P2	) Job share
Miss L. Clasper	P2	)

Transfer Procedure

School Performance 2024/2025

The Department of Education abolished academic selection. However, the Grammar Schools set up a new Common Entrance Assessment (SEAG) for pupils wishing to apply for Grammar School places.

Out of 57 pupils, 23 sat this test. Two tests were completed on Saturday mornings in local grammar schools. Pupils were awarded a standardized score and Cohort Percentile.

13 pupils gained places at local grammar school. There were 9 pupils with a statement of special needs.

Leavers Destination

The number of pupils leaving Victoria Park Primary School from P7 was 57.

SCHOOL	NO. OF PUPILS
Ashfield Boys' High	20
Ashfield Girls' High	15
Bloomfield Collegiate	3
Grosvenor Grammar	2
Strathearn School	4
Priory College	6
RBAI	2
Campbell College	1
Wellington College	1
Breda Academy	2
St. Joseph's College	1
	57

Northern Ireland Curriculum

Victoria Park Primary School educates children from Foundation Stage, through Key Stage 1 and up to the end of Key Stage 2 (P1-P7).

All staff are trained in current education initiatives and five Staff Development Days per year are used for planned development programmes all staff, teaching and non-Teaching, in line with the School Development Plan.

Policy Statements and detailed Schemes of work are in place for every area of the curriculum.

Pastoral Care

All Pastoral Care policies: - discipline, child protection, equality, anti-bullying and health and safety policies are given in the School Prospectus, as are School Rules and Pupils' Code of Conduct to new pupils and P1.

The policy for Child Protection is issued every year to the whole school as is a reminder of the school's duty regarding any concerns or disclosures and a designated teacher and deputy for Child Protection have been appointed.

Detailed copies of all policies, pastoral care and subject areas, are available from the school and also on the school website.

School Procedure for Assessment and Key Stage Testing

Victoria Park is concerned with both Key Stage One (KS1) and Key Stage Two (KS2) Statutory Testing.

Children complete Key Stage One in Primary 4. KS1 testing takes place in the Spring of the P4 year. Likewise, KS2 testing is completed in the Spring term of the children's P7 year.

Using its policies and half-termly planning the teachers agree on the content and levels of work to be undertaken. At the end of each term the children take class tests and they are carefully recorded. Literacy and Numeracy skills cover Levels 1 to 5 of the NI Curriculum.

Pupils' records of standardised tests are also kept in their profiles.

Following KS1 and KS2 Testing the teachers are involved in setting school targets. All pupils' records are used in this process and we are pleased that the children are reaching the expected targets.

Summary Sheet of English and Maths for both Key Stages appears on the following page.

Victoria Park Primary School

Key Stage 1 Results 2024-25

Key Stage 1 –Primary 4’s Results June 2025.

	<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	
English	30%	70%	(70% L2+)
Maths	33%	72%	(72% L2+)

Key Stage 2 –Primary 7’s RESULTS June 2025.

	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Level 4</u>	
English	4%	23%	73%	(73%L4+)
Maths	4%	23%	73%	(73% L4+)

School Activities

School Development Programme

The school continues to connect with the community and to consult with local primary, special and post primary schools.

Staff continued to monitor pupil progress and all pupils undertook standardised tests. School implements GL Assessment Digital tests which assessed the pupils' Literacy, Numeracy, IQ (CAT4) and Attitudes to Learning. (PASS)

School came to the end of the 3-year SDP in June 2024 for Victoria Park Primary School and this was evaluated in preparation for the next 3-year cycle of School Development Planning.

All subject co-ordinators prepared an action plan, which was based on the previous year's performances. These were reviewed regularly to enable every subject to be promoted and developed. These form an Appendix of the main SDP.

Health and Safety

In the new school building, annual Fire Safety Inspections were carried out. The fire extinguishers, alarm system, emergency lighting and electrical equipment were routinely checked, and Fire Drills were carried out during the year. (One per term).

The school continued to be cautious with the risk of Nut Allergies and Parents were advised to exclude nuts and nut related foods from children's breaks and lunches.

Fund Raising

Our Fitness Freddie day in October raised £3500.

The sponsored walk was organised by the PTA, as well as other events through the year, and raised over £5000 for their funds.

The school continues to appreciate the support and generosity of parents and family for all of these events.

Music

Choir

We were pleased that the Choir continued grow and to begin to take part in a number of services throughout the year., including. Harvest, KS1 Nativity, Christmas Carol Services and P7 Leavers' Service in June.

A whole school production of Matilda, the Broadway Musical, was also presented in April 2025.

This year we were delighted to continue with the School of Music staff with lessons in strings, brass and woodwind tuition. The Guitar Club continues with almost 20 children receiving weekly tuition.

We were also grateful to Mrs McDonnell for undertaking the hymn practices, accompanying the hymns at the school assemblies and for organisation of the school's musical groups.

Christmas

At Christmas all of our children, musical groups and readers joined together with parents who were invited to our traditional Christmas Celebrations. Due to space limitations in our Hall we held 2 separate services; a P1 -P3 Christmas Nativity and P4-P7 Carol Service. We were delighted to see our hall filled to capacity at every service with parents and families of our children.

Sport

Swimming:

KS2 pupils resumed swimming lessons at Templemore Pool.

Parents continue to pay voluntary contributions each week towards this although a growing number are choosing not to pay the voluntary donation.

Football:

The school Football Team excelled under Mr Gullen's coaching and won the Ashfield Primary Schools' Tournament as well as taking part in a number of local tournaments. The team took part in the Belfast Primary School League.

The Girls' Football Team also excelled under Ms Horner's coaching (funded via Extended Schools) and took part in a number of local tournaments.

School Assemblies

During the year the pupils took part in our weekly hymn practices and assemblies. A small group of pupils in KS2 do not participate.

In addition, Miss Potts arranged some visiting speakers. These included local ministers, charity representatives and those willing to convey life skills to pupils. We are grateful for all those who supported the school during the year.

The Pupil of the Week Awards in P1-P7 were an enjoyable part of the proceedings every week at Assembly.

Special Services were held at Harvest, Christmas and Easter times.

School Council

Elections were held in P4-P7 for our School Council. This was chaired by Mrs McDougall and meets once a month to discuss issues relevant to the pupils and school. The Council has contributed some valuable ideas.

Book Fair

As a result of the Scholastic Book Fair held in March the 60% commission received enabled the staff to select additional books for their class libraries. Mrs McCune undertook this annual event and is to be thanked her work. Thank you too to the CAs who supervised some of the sessions during and after school.

School Photographs

This year Tempest Photographers took photographs of the P1-P7 pupils and each of the classes for parents to purchase. In keeping with the Child Protection policy parental consent was sought before taking the photos.

Special Needs

Our SENCO, Mrs McKnight worked closely with the Education Authority Educational Psychologist as well as many external agencies and support services which we make great use of in supporting our pupils who have additional special needs.

Extended Schools

Funding from the Extended Schools initiative allowed the school to set up a number of clubs during and after school and funds the Girls' Football Coaching.

However, the majority of this money is used to buy in our counselling Service for 2 days per week, costing almost £16,000. The provider for 2024-25 was Familyworks NI.

Family Support Worker

School remains delighted to continue funding to maintain its own Family Support Worker, Mrs Rachel Howe. She established many new parent courses and workshops as well as organising the school's first Health Fair and Festival of Learning which were extremely successful and well supported by parents and local community agencies.

Staff Development Days 2024-25

18 th March	CAN Training.	EA Nurture Team staff.
19 th March	Addressing Bullying refresher workshop. World Around Us. ABL.	Mr Ryden. Miss Dunn Mrs Hamilton.
Tuesday 7 th May	Assessment: End of Year Annual Reports.	
Tuesday 28 th	Assessment: Data day. Analysis of GL standardised tests, pupil tracking, planning. Identification of pupils for additional support.	Mrs Youde. Assessment coord. Mrs McKnight. SENCO
Monday 30 th June.	Health & Well-being Day.	EA Nurture.

Current Enrolment

2024 – 2025

Boys: 92.2.2% Girls: 92.8%

Attendance

Overall Attendance: 92.5 %

Attendance generally is good and we are pleased to report that the percentages have increased to now be slightly above those targets set by the Education Authority.

With a small number of children falling below 90% the vast majority of pupils record good attendance.

Those pupils who fall below 85% continue to cause concern for it is at this point that a pupil's education can suffer. These children are monitored each month and the Education Welfare Officer assists with the necessary intervention. Six referrals were made by school to the Education Welfare Service.

However, it is a growing concern that more pupils are taking time off for family holidays during the term. We can supply the school holiday list for the next two years to assist parents in planning their holidays so that this can be avoided. Teachers will not provide work for pupils on holiday.

Reporting to Parents

Parent/Teacher Consultations take place twice a year. These were completed with the option of face-to-face or via telephone and a new online booking system, Equipple, was brought in and worked very successfully.

The first meeting takes place in October before the half term break. Our second set of consultations for P1 to P7 take place in March.

P7 parents also had the opportunity to meet with the Principal in February to discuss the Transfer procedure and SEAG results. Parents then complete the post-primary application via the EA Portal..

A Report addressing academic performance is issued in the summer term. Primary 7 pupils receive a Record of Achievement containing a report and giving their KS2 results as well as highlighting other achievements gained throughout their time in Victoria Park Primary School.