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**Strandtown Primary School  
Annual Report to Parents 2017-2018**

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*Dear Parents,*

*I am delighted to introduce the 2017/18 annual report from the governors and Principal of Strandtown Primary school.*

*It has been a productive year, where we have enjoyed watching our talented pupils continue to reach their full potential.*

*Strandtown Primary is uncommonly positioned in having highly professional staff in all areas of school life, who create a caring and academic environment that values the needs of every child.*

*As we are currently in the process of electing new governors for the 2018-22 period, may I express my personal gratitude to those governors who have served over the last four years; their expertise has been greatly appreciated.*

*This report strives to capture the life of our primary school and provide a flavour of the supportive environment experienced by our pupils.*

*Members of the Board of Governors work closely with the Principal and senior leadership team to: oversee strategic improvement actioned through the school development plan, scrutinise financial expenditure and safeguard our pupils. Included in this report is information on: finance, staffing, SEN provision, attendance, achievements, curriculum and other aspects of school life.*

*On behalf of the Board of Governors, I would like to thank the Principal and staff of Strandtown for collating this comprehensive report and for their continued commitment to maintaining standards in a financially challenging climate.*

*We also appreciate the excellent partnership we have with our parents, which helps to make our leadership collegiate and dynamic.*

**Natalie Gilbert**

**Chair of Board of Governors**

## **Board of Governors**

The Governors comprise four Transferor representatives, two Education Authority Belfast Region representatives, two parent representatives, a teacher representative and the school Principal, a non-voting member who acts as secretary. The following Governors have served from 2014-2018:

E.A. REPRESENTATIVES:                      Mrs Natalie Gilbert: Chairman  
Mrs Bhavani Conaghan

TRANSFEROR REPRESENTATIVES:        Mr Peter Quigley  
Mr Robin Quinlan  
Mr Harry Black  
Rev Helene Steed

PARENT REPRESENTATIVES:                Mrs Judith Cochrane  
Dr Linda Keown

TEACHER REPRESENTATIVE:                Mrs Sue Carrigan

SECRETARY:                                      Mrs V Hutchinson

MINUTE SECRETARY:                            Mrs W Savage

During the year 2017/18 the Governors met monthly to deal with various items, including staff appointments, school policy matters, admissions policies, schemes of management, school maintenance, the building project and Performance Review and Staff Development.

### **Sub – Committee members**

**Finance:** Mrs Natalie Gilbert, Mrs Bhavani Conaghan, Mr Peter Quigley, Rev Helene Steed, Mrs Judith Cochrane (Chair of Finance Committee)

**Designated Governor for Child Protection:** Mrs Bhavani Conaghan

**Curriculum:** Mrs Natalie Gilbert, Dr Linda Keown, Mr Robin Quinlan, Mr Harry Black (Chair of Curriculum Committee)

Each Governor was a member of the appointments panel when required.

The current Board of Governors is reaching the end of its term and the Board will be fully reconstituted in the Autumn. New parent and teacher nominations have been submitted have been and we await to hear membership from the transferor positions.

## **School Development Plan**

This year has been about a whole school community evaluation of three key strands: leadership and management, outcomes for learners and quality of provision. In addition to this our safeguarding processes and practices have been closely scrutinised and held under review. We have sampled the views and opinions of the school community through Year 7 pupil questionnaires, parent questionnaires and whole staff survey and audits. Our pupils indicated to us that they generally feel very happy and safe in school, listened to and supported by their teachers. Our parent questionnaire was completed by 244 parents, a very encouraging response rate. The results of the parent questionnaire found *Leadership and Management* to be outstanding, *Quality of Provision* as very

good, *Outcomes for Learners* as very good and *Care, Welfare and Safeguarding* as very good. The parental comments gave some constructive feedback and an action plan has been constructed to take forward actions in response to certain areas. Healthy eating, homework expectations and consistent approaches to dealing with behaviour were all commented upon and have been taken forward as priorities within the School Development Plan for next year. The staff survey was very positive and acknowledged staff feeling valued and cared for in their workplace.

An important aspect of the school development planning process is the examination of pupil performance in literacy and numeracy. In June 2018 we have very encouraging statistics on pupil performance from their end of year standardised tests. In Key Stage 2, 54.3% of pupils are performing higher or much higher than expected in comparison to their potential in literacy and/or numeracy. Only 8.9% of pupils are performing lower than would be expected, half of these pupils presenting with a special educational need. Addressing any underachievement continues to remain a priority for teachers to ensure every pupil achieves in line with their potential.

### **Enrolment and Pupil Profile**

Our enrolment in June 2018 is 980. There was a lot of movement in-year as families relocated both in and out of the area. We have a projected enrolment of 984 in September 2018. It has been encouraging to have the build project commence in school. This is estimated to complete in May 2019 and will provide some much needed additional accommodation for growing pupil numbers.

The build project to date has created different mobility routes and access to site in the mornings and afternoons. Pupils have been encouraged to arrive no earlier than 8.40 a.m. in the morning, unless they are attending breakfast club as the school site is very constricted with the works. There have been changes to the opening times of gates around the school. This has presented challenges for families arriving to school for breakfast club and collection at afterschool clubs. We have been able to keep access at the rear and front of the school to support collection and drop-off.

### **Financial Statement**

During this period of financial crisis, we have had to very tightly monitor expenditure. The school's current position has been assisted by a steady increase in pupil numbers, the generation of additional income through extensive use of Hire of Premises, an Acting Principal and vital PTA fundraising monies used to prop up the budget. We have a yearly input of around £15,000 from Hire of Premises and the PTA funds have been used to significantly support key maintenance and resourcing. In May 2018, £10,500 was used from PTA fundraising to fund teacher requisitions for classroom materials for 18/19. As a result, we have not closed in deficit this year.

Our budget allocation for 2018/2019 is £2,375,147. With all the support and input from PTA and school fund we have been able to create a proposed expenditure of £2,330,839. This will hopefully assist us in the subsequent years with the very difficult budget projections ahead.

Parent representatives along with staff met with key politicians in June 2018 to represent Strandtown's financial situation and the unique challenges that arrive from existing in a 1931 listed building. We are hopeful that they can represent Strandtown's needs fully to the Department of Education and the Education Authority.

Parental contributions to school fund generated a wonderful £16,947. As with previous years, school fund monies have been used to support resources, maintenance (particularly maintenance of ICT equipment around the school), end of year pupil awards and transport to extra-curricular activities.

The school accounts went through audit in February 2018 and this has given continued reassurance around the management of internal monies.

#### Audited School Accounts – Summary as at 31 December 2017

Department	Income	Expenditure	Surplus / (Deficit)
School Account	£71,858.74	£56,830.37	£15,028.37
Residential Trips	£74,548.17	£92,339.98	(£17,791.81)
Hire of Facilities owed to EA LMS	£61,055.00	£14,468.46	£1,586.54
Other	£41,226.70	£47,309.82	(£6, 083.12)

#### SEN Profile

The following figures show the number of children on the Code of Practice as of June 2018:

Stage 1: 66 pupils    Stage 2: 76 pupils    Stage 3: 31 pupils    Stage 4: 2 pupils    Stage 5: 28 pupils

Our SEN pupils continue to avail of reading support, spelling support, writing support and different Maths interventions. We also have a Literacy Strategy group which assists many children with a dyslexic diagnosis. Our 'Chill Out' room allows pupils with sensory issues and concentration difficulties some time out to refocus for classroom learning.

#### Staffing

In June 2018 we say goodbye to four retiring members of staff: Mr McClenaghan (Principal), Mr Whitla (Head of Year 6), Mrs Robinson (Head of Year 4) and Mrs Millar (Year 7 teacher). Mrs Hutchinson was appointed to continue as Principal and this post will formally take effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September. Due to the current needs of the school and the financial context the Governors decided to continue with the Posts of Assistant Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Principal. Miss Bailie and Mr Ewart were successfully appointed to these posts in May 2018 for a further year, Mr Devine was appointed as Head of Year 6 and Mrs Carrigan was appointed as SENCo on a permanent basis. From September Miss Courtenay will be Head of Year 4, Miss Bailie - Head of Year 5, Mr Devine - Head of Year 6 and Mr Ewart - Head of Year 7. Mrs J Fleming resigned as classroom assistant and cleaner in Strandtown to take up a job in the Health Trust.

Staff development was maximised during the staff development days this year. All staff have contributed fully to the curriculum and yeargroup teams and successfully completed their PRSD, EPD 2 or EPD 1. This year three teachers participated in the Developing Quality Teaching programme which is designed to support the development of outstanding skills in teaching and learning.

Days lost per teacher due to sickness was 4.2 (NI average 8.7) for 2016/2017.

## **Promoting Health, Wellbeing, Child Protection and Attendance**

This year we have engaged fully with the parent focus group to consider a number of strands under this banner. We have pupils engaging in the daily mile but we need to ensure this is consistently adopted across the school. Our parent questionnaire indicated a need for greater promotion around Healthy Eating and this has been prioritised to carry forward next year.

We were delighted to engage the Year 6 and Year 7 pupils and parents in two important programmes *iSmart* (Year 6) and *What's Inside* (Year 7) both run by Love for Life. Both programmes also contained appropriate information on child development and puberty. The *iSmart* programme was part of a larger school initiative to promote E Safety across assemblies. Next year we hope to take these lessons into classrooms in a more planned and progressive manner. We participated in a Life Guards' programme with our Year 7 pupils. Across 6 weeks the pupils engaged in different forms of physical exercise and tracked how their own fitness improved during this time. This was a wonderful success and had a significant positive impact upon all our Year 7s.

We have engaged and involved Action Mental Health to come and deliver a *Healthy Me* programme to our Year 7s in September 2018 and hope we can include Year 6s in this programme in 2018/19. Staff have all been taken through the aims and objectives of the *Healthy Me* programme and we are looking forward to this important strand of support from Action Mental Health.

The Safeguarding Team continued to meet throughout 2017/18 and the Action Plan targets for 2017/18 were all achieved. Instant communication with parents via email and the website notifications is essential for maintaining cooperation and response to school arrangements. A number of risk assessments have been completed and indeed the one regarding extreme weather was activated on numerous occasions throughout the extreme weather of 2017/18. Miss Courtenay made herself available every Monday lunchtime in the library should any pupil want to come and have a chat.

Mr Ewart continued to work diligently with the EWO this year in monitoring pupil attendance, engaging with parents and making referrals to the service for additional home support. We have made 7 referrals to the EWO service and one of these cases was closed during the year. At present 3.5% of pupils' attendance falls below 85%. Our communication with parents around pupil absence continues to be well received and assists our assurances around pupil safety.

### **Attendance Levels:**

<u>2012/13</u>	<u>2013/14</u>	<u>2014/15</u>	<u>2015/16</u>	<u>2016/17</u>	<u>2017/18</u>
96.1	96.7	96.3	96.3	96.6	96.2

For 2016/17 the Northern Ireland average was 95.5%.

### **Positive Behaviour**

In August 2017 we devoted a staff development day to consider the approaches and promotion of positive behaviour within the school. There is a continued need for consistency and fairness. We introduced the 'Go for Green' token system which would be a whole school approach to acknowledge and celebrate positive behaviour. The pupils and staff responded very well to this initiative and it was celebrated in weekly assembly. The challenge for 2018/19 will be on how keep this approach fresh and relevant for the pupils. With regards to anti-bullying approaches, the SLT are satisfied with the appropriateness of policies and expected practices and we want to ensure these are adopted consistently and fairly across the whole pupil population.

The play leader initiative continues to be a success and we were delighted that this year the pupils in Year 7 were also able to support Year 5 pupils. It is a wonderful scheme and has assisted our younger pupils transition with the new break and lunch time arrangements due to the building project.

### **Pastoral Programmes**

This year we have had 52 pupils attend Life Skills with around 30 pupils attending R Time; these are social development programmes for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The 'Games Room' continues to be available to pupils on a daily basis and was relocated to room 39 for the duration of the build works. On average we would have 18 pupils attend regularly with 34 pupils having availed of this space throughout the year.

The support Mrs Hunt provides to pupils in her role as Pupil Support Coordinator is an essential service for vulnerable pupils, 36 pupils are currently in receipt of this programme. Referral is made by the Principal or Head of Year. The support pupils and parents have received through these channels has been greatly celebrated by parents and on questionnaires. Despite extreme budget positions it is an important school priority that this area of support continues. The number of pupils who present as needing input from this programme is growing.

We ran our Transition Programme for pupils vulnerable at the point of moving into Year 8; 29 pupils attended these sessions this year.

### **Parent Partnerships**

The Parent Focus Group met three times during this academic year. School fund, communication, approach to extracurricular clubs and care and welfare were all discussed. Important lines of action continue to manifest from the discussions of this group. The recruitment and selection around extracurricular clubs, choirs and instrumental lessons were discussed. In response to this we are re-patterning the approach to choir participation and provision and are currently exploring with the School of Music new practices and recruitment into their lessons.

We are delighted to continue to have so many parents engaged and vetted as volunteers within the school and indeed given the high number of our school learning visits we could not sustain these activities without parent engagement.

In response to parent feedback we organised parent workshops in literacy and numeracy and invited parents in Year 5 to explore key concept areas in readiness for the Year 6 curriculum. The PTA had secured grant funding from Santander to allow us release teachers from class to run these. We had around 20 parents in attendance at each of the four workshops and surveyed feedback is very positive. We hope to secure further funding to run these workshops again next year.

The support of the PTA has been essential this year to supply funds for resources and maintenance. Aside from the financial benefits, the events remain happy and social occasions for the school community, even including a parent disco this year. Stormont Park provided a lovely venue for our recent school fun run and it was lovely to have so many families engaged in this event.

### **Pupil Voice**

Our pupils continue to be active agents of change within the school. Areas of Learning leaders have built up a process of action planning through the pupil focus groups and these groups are one of our main evidence bases for assessing the impact of the current School Development Plan. After

completing the Education and Training Inspectorate Year 7 pupil survey a group of pupils met with Inspectors to discuss the school. Our pupils mentioned their want to succeed and how they have been supported in developing readiness to move to their next school. The Year 7s recognised that their opinion on writing and science opportunities had been listened to and things had changed in school as a result. They recognised their contribution to decisions around charities, the role of the school council and the fairness that Strandtown adopts in getting everyone involved.

The School Council had another busy year, meeting with politicians and different charity and business representatives. They led a Disability Assembly and researched different charities. The council introduced *Worry Boxes* into classrooms to help pupils feel supported and share information.

### **Community Links and Partnerships**

Our four school collaborative is very important in shaping our areas of attention and improvement. We have curricular co-ordinator links as well as an extensive transition programme of support for Year 3 to Year 4. In 2017/18 we had joint staff development initiatives for the Senior Leadership Team and a four school reading project involving three teachers from each school. This link has also expanded to a four school parent workshop programme, this year E Safety and Paediatric First Aid was hosted in Belmont and Strandtown.

It was important to forge connections across the post-primary settings and this was made possible through two successful KS2/3 bursary programmes. As a result, we have connected with Ashfield Girls' HS and Ashfield Boys' HS in joint literacy programmes which have examined pedagogical, curriculum and pastoral bridges at transition. We were able to run pupil focus groups with our past pupils in these settings to explore their experiences of transition and the steps that can be taken to improve their experience. We were also delighted to be involved in curriculum projects with RBAI, Strathearn and Campbell College.

Our classes continue to engage in pupil contact sessions with St Joseph's within curricular or sporting contexts.

Business in the Community has been a wonderful agency in resourcing the school with business mentors for KS2 reading, and volunteers who have come to Strandtown to help with landscaping. Additionally, our PTA has secured funding opportunities from local business, for example Belfast City Airport to resource the relaxation garden and Santander for funding parent workshops. The school is active within the community from choirs singing to PTA fun runs and Christmas and Summer Fairs generating community support. Local businesses have provided sponsorship and technology resourcing. Our Eco club has built strong links within the community with local restaurants and environmental agencies. Multi-Agencies frequently provide support and development, for example RISE and Action Mental Health, and we have strong relationship with East Side Learning which has facilitated training for classroom assistants and teachers, and garnered our involvement in *Roots for Empathy*.

Our Parent Questionnaire rated the 'community spirit' of the school as outstanding and the parent focus group in February 2018 listed one of the strengths of the school as its sense of community. *'I like the value and importance placed on community involvement, development of the whole child and the variety of trips, activities and after school clubs'*: Parent Comment Questionnaire May 2018.

### **Achievements and Standards**

Across the last school development plan there was a focus upon developing extended writing opportunities in Literacy. This focus has produced a pleasing and sustained increase in pupil standards

at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. Additionally the development of ICT has firmly taken root within the school. As resourcing has improved pupils have been given opportunities to develop their ICT skills and use technology to enhance their learning of other areas of the curriculum. This again has been noted through the end of key stage levelling process.

Targets are set collectively with staff and have all been broadly achieved. The end of Key Stage data indicates strong progress in Using ICT and illustrates the strides that have been taken in writing skills.

We are firmly positioned above Northern Ireland Averages and the performance of our pupils entitled to FSMs exceeds NI averages.

Maths KS1	Level 2 and above	*NI 89.3%	Sch 99.6%
Comm. KS1	Level 2 and above	NI 88.2%	Sch 97.4%
ICT KS1	Level 2 and above	NI 89.9%	Sch 99.6%
Maths KS2	Level 4 and above	NI 78.8%	Sch 89.3%
Comm. KS2	Level 4 and above	NI 79.6%	Sch 88.4%
ICT KS2	Level 4 and above	NI 84.2%	Sch 91.7%

\*16/17 Best Estimate

As a school our assessment of learning is very robust. However, staff audit in February 2018 indicated that we wanted to allow pupils more opportunities for enquiry based learning, with less boundaries around their achievements and facilitating more opportunities for pupils to respond to teacher feedback. Our focus upon appropriate marking strategies and the revised marking policy is reflected in the Year 7 questionnaire: 94.2% of my teachers let me know how to improve my work and 91.6% of pupils said teachers helped pupils to set their own learning goals or targets to get better.

### **Transfer to Post-Primary**

Our Year 7 pupils are transferring to 16 different post-primary destinations. The majority of our pupils transferred to Ashfield Boys' HS, Ashfield Girls' HS, Sullivan Upper, Strathearn, Grosvenor Grammar, Campbell College, Bloomfield Collegiate and Priory College. 83% of pupils received their first preference and 12% of pupils received their second preference.

### **Curriculum Updates**

**The Arts:** An overview has been established for the progressive skill development of creativity, ensuring progression and continuity in the children's creativity in Art, Music and Drama. Age-appropriate units of work, linked closely to the connected planning, have been trialled and proven successful in some year groups, but have not yet been implemented consistently. A key element in these units is the opportunity for the children to develop confidence, oral presentational skills and written communication through role-play and other drama-based activities.

Responses from focus groups of children indicate that they enjoy all aspects of the Arts. They see and understand that they are successful in the Arts when their own work and that of their peers is displayed around the school. The children also report that they would like more opportunities for 'free' and observational drawing as a stimulus for their creative writing, and vice-versa.

A small number of classes benefitted from visits by local artists.

**ICT:** After having liaised with ICT co-ordinators from Belmont, Dundela and Greenwood it was decided that a joint action plan target for internet safety would be appropriate for all four schools. Parents



attended an internet safety session held in Belmont Primary School, led by iTeach. ICT internet safety assemblies were taken by ICT co-ordinators with a focus on online gaming, video sharing and social media. The Use of Internet and Digital Technologies policy, iPad usage policy and ICT policy were all updated.

Every room now has two laptops at their disposal as well as at least three iPads. These are to be used to help strengthen links with ICT across the curriculum. 55 new 2017 iPads have been purchased using funds donated by our PTA. We also wanted to ensure that pupils are given opportunities to use ICT throughout the curriculum.

The ICT code club has continued to take place on Wednesday afternoons. This year it has been available for Years 6 and 7. The club has been used to extend some of the more advanced ICT users in a more creative way. This allowed some pupils to achieve Level 5 at the end of KS2.

Attainment levels at the end of KS1 and KS2 have been raised significantly. 25.95% of pupils achieved Level 3 at the end of KS1, and 6.6% of pupils achieved Level 5 at the end of KS2.

The school website continues to be used in an effective way by office staff, year heads and co-ordinators. Alongside the school app and parent mail, it has proved to be a valuable way to communicate with parents.

**PDMU** : A greater focus on the teaching of PDMU has been in place with teachers now recording pupil learning through the use of PDMU Learning Logs. This reflects much of the good practice taking place within classrooms. A new focus on 'Anti- Bullying Week' has been established over the last 2 years which has proved very successful. Our school Anti Bullying Week now connects with the National Anti-Bullying Week. Pupils in focus groups can reflect on what they have learnt during Anti-Bullying Week and also confirm that they all know what to do when they are being bullied. School Council has a strong role to play in representing the 'pupil voice' within the school. Strandtown sees RSE as important aspect of PDMU that needs to be infused next into our PDMU curriculum. Two members of staff have received training in RSE with further whole staff training planned for the start of the next Academic year.

**RE:** Naomi Fox continues to be a welcome addition to the Year 6 curriculum as she takes the pupils through the Old Testament in an engaging way. Pupils reflect this positive impact repeatedly in the Year 6 pupil focus group feedback sessions. Over the period of the last SDP, assemblies have become more child focused and more meaningful. This is reflected in the feedback received from pupils across all year groups in pupil focus groups. Class assemblies, visiting speakers, special assemblies all have continued throughout this year and in most year groups new songs have been taught to the pupils.

**WAU and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)** : there have been more opportunities for the teaching and learning of scientific skills in WAU, more STEM investigations have been included in each term and the pupils are gaining experience of independently recording these experiments. Book Looks undertaken in January 2018 monitored the teaching and learning of STEM and WAU skills in all year groups throughout this year and showed clear developments in this area. We will continue to develop the use of ICT and iPad technology in this area of the curriculum.

**Maths and Numeracy:** This year we were encouraged to see a more consistent approach to problem solving, processes and mental maths adopted across the school. We also connected with the three infant schools to consider progressive approaches to mental maths, including *Strandtown's Number Talks* sessions. We ensured that all yeargroups explored maths in 'real life' settings and this included a drive on financial capability. The highlight of this scheme being the Year 7s entrepreneurial approach to the summer fair. Our teachers have been active in planning with the three infant schools as well as sharing good practice across the other primaries in East Belfast.

### **Language and Literacy**

There is a wide variety of writing genres being explored across the year groups. Collegiate book looks and regular sampling of writing books have demonstrated that pupils' experiences in their writing have been enriched by a more structured, specific and engaging focus. There is a consistency within the marking process in writing books with a particular focus being placed by staff on constructive feedback. Pupil focus groups highlighted a desire for more extended writing opportunities. Free writes are well embedded in planning and classroom practice and are extremely popular with all pupils as they allow children to showcase their writing abilities and promote their creativity. There is a more connected approach being used with pupils responding positively to the variety of stimuli available to them. Some of the best pieces are exemplified through the Trio of Arts (Art, Drama and Music) stimulus.

Short reads have been introduced across all year groups. These are particularly popular with boys who like the more accessible and informative nature of the texts. Pupil focus groups also highlighted pupils' enjoyment of the connected themes explored within the short reads. At present, there is a 4 school reading partnership financed through the 'Achieving Belfast' initiative. This has enabled three of our Year 4 teachers to visit Dundela Infants School to observe the teaching of reading in Year 3. These visits have been reciprocated with Dundela, Belmont and Greenwood teachers visiting Year 4 classrooms in Strandtown. This shared approach with our three feeder schools will ensure a consistent Year 4 intake with regards to reciprocal reading standards and has generated new resources to be used in Year 4 from September 2018.

Opportunities for the use of iPad apps and digital technologies are being increased. There should continue to be a focus for staff on identifying key learning opportunities through ICT experiences.

### **Music and Performance**

Singing, recorder and ocarina is being completed in all classrooms from Y4- Y7. Pupils are listening to pieces of music and are able to respond to them. There are classes creating their own music in response to what they have heard this could be developed further across classes. This year our pupils performed wonderfully at a range of different events. Senior Choir sang in Harvest assembly. At Christmas time, Y4 had a concert, Junior Choir went to a nursing home and the community centre to sing, Fun Choir sang in the end of term assembly and Senior Choir sang in the Music Box event in the Waterfront Hall with Peter Corry. We had a wonderful Spring Concert involving pupils from Years 5 -7. All music groups were involved, with other drama and dance pieces included. Over 350 children were involved. More children are now receiving instrumental lessons from the School of Music than ever before, over 200. In June, 90 children completed exams from Grade 1 – Grade 4. Recruitment into choirs and for learning of instruments has been subject to much discussion at parent focus group and parent questionnaire. We are considering a positive approach to pupil involvement in choirs which will involve pupils from Year 4 to Year 7 and reduce any disappointment

from apparent 'non selection'. We have asked to engage with the School of Music to consider having instrument lessons available for pupils to start in Year 5.

### **Breakfast Club**

Our breakfast club runs every morning in the dining centre from 8.00 a.m. Children have the opportunity to purchase a breakfast and play some table top games before the school day commences. Approximately 40 children avail of this club on a daily basis.

### **Assemblies and Visitors**

All pupils continue to meet weekly within their year groups for assemblies. Assemblies are varied and led by either Heads of Year, individual classes or visiting speakers. Pupil singing and celebrating pupil success continue to be strong features of our assemblies.

As well as local clergy we have had speakers from various charities: Samaritan's Purse, Storehouse, Marie Curie Cancer Care, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Disability Sport NI. Year groups also welcome individual speakers to their assemblies relevant to their curriculum, for example Life Guards, Bible Explorers, NI Fire Brigade and Safety Sam.

### **Charity**

All charities chosen by our school continue to be selected through our school council. During the last year Strandtown received many requests to support various charities and the school council decided to support the following: Storehouse (33 crates of food), Samaritan's Purse (311 shoeboxes), Poppy Appeal, Marie Curie (£7,000), Junior Diabetes Research Fund (£363) Disability Sport NI (£250), Guide Dogs for the Blind NI (£250), N.S.P.C.C (£2,185) and the Macmillan Cancer Fund (total still to be confirmed). As you can see our school community continues to display such generosity in support of these charities.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

The 2017/18 academic year provided our children the opportunity to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities – from sport, music, drama, health and wellbeing, technology, craft etc. Depending on your child's interests our activities provided the chance to get outside and exercise, see friends, pursue a hobby or simply de-stress and refresh their mind. They also helped limit the time children may spend time in front of a TV or computer screen!

The commitment of our teachers and the involvement of outside agencies enabled Strandtown to offer an extensive range of sports which included hockey, netball, rugby, football, table tennis, judo, Irish dancing and kayaking. Many children involved in sports got an opportunity to compete at a competitive level and in many cases represented Strandtown. Our boys' hockey team won the Plate competition at the NI finals, the boys' football team won the Ashfield Tournament, our table tennis teams were successful all year with our teams winning silver and bronze in the Ulster Primary School League, our cross country teams enjoyed success at East Belfast and Belfast Finals, our girls' netball team came runners up in the Belfast League tournament and our rugby team won the East Down Tournament.

Our Eco Club is continuing to thrive with a focus on working towards the 'Eco Schools Green Flag' in 2018/19. We have continued to offer many other well-established clubs such as 'Jumping Clay', 'Bricks4Kidz', 'Youth Lyric' and 'Strandtown Chess Club'. This year we introduced 2 new clubs: 'Ready4Anything' to promote positive mental health and 'Miniversity' which combines career topics with computer programs. Both of the clubs have been well attended and welcomed by parents.

Other clubs included our Year 5 Drama club and our French/Spanish club led by our Strandtown staff.

### **Trips**

Residential trips in 2017/18 included a ski trip to Andalo in Italy in January, 2 Holland trips in May and 5 Delamont trips in February, March, April and June. 'Topflight for Schools' was the tour operator we worked with for the Ski Trip and Holland trips.

The Ski Trip was a great success with all the children successfully skiing down the mountains by day 3 and receiving a certificate of their achievement at the close of the trip. The children had a fantastic time and made many memories.

The Holland trips involved 93 Year 7 pupils. The trips were booked as Platinum Packages so the children would have the best and safest possible experience that we could provide.

Fortunately, Delamont remained open and we were able to eventually book 4 trips. The difference this year was the length of the trips which were reduced to 2 ½ days instead of the usual 4 days. Trip 2 had to return early however they got to revisit Delamont in June for a further 1 ½ days to complete their trip. The Delamont trips all concluded very successfully with the children reflecting fondly on their experience. It also appeared that in many cases 2 ½ day trips seemed to work very well for our children, particularly for those children who are apprehensive about being away from home. This may be something we will consider again next year.

Approximately 200 children went on residential trips in 2017/18. Based on feedback from pupils, parents and teachers we can confidently close as a successful year.