



REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Annual Parents Meeting
16th March 2023



For the Academic Year
2021/22

Overview and Context

The Annual Parents Meeting was held in March 2022 as an in person meeting following a Zoom meeting for the 2020/21 academic year at Blackwater Integrated College. This was due to the COVID-19 restrictions that spanned through 2020 and into 2021.

As always, parents were notified in advance of the meeting and the Annual Report will be posted on the College website and parents made aware of its location should they wish to access it.

The following report covers the academic years 2021/22.



BLACKWATER INTEGRATED COLLEGE
(BLACKWATER INTEGRATED COLLEGE LTD)

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (DIRECTORS)
ON THE 2021/22 COLLEGE YEAR

Contents

1. Overview and Context
2. College Staff
3. Membership of the Board of Governors
4. Curriculum Details
5. Chairperson's Report
6. Principal's Report
7. Pastoral Care
8. School Development Plan
9. Financial Statement

Blackwater Integrated College -Teaching Staff 2021/22

Principal Mr S Taylor BA (Hons) PGCE PQH (NI)

Senior Leadership Team

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Vice Principal | Ms P Gilmore |
| Pastoral Coordinator | Mrs J Millington |
| Assessment and Reporting | Mrs L McVeigh |
| C2K Coordinator | Mr D McAlorum |
| Bursar | Mrs S Telford |

SENCO

Mrs K Mallon BA (Hons) PGCE

Art & Design

Miss L Laird BDes (Hons) PGCE

ICT

Mr D McAlorum BSc (Hons) PGCE

English

Mrs E Killen BA (Hons) PGCE

Ms P Gilmore BA (Hons) PGCTEFL PQH (NI)

Mrs Y Taylor BA (Hons) Grad Dip Ed

Geography

Mrs Janet Lockhart BSc (Joint Honours) PGCE

History

Mrs A Ward BA (Hons) PGCE

Home Economics

Mrs H McBrearty BEd (Hons)

Languages

Mrs K Love BA (Hons) PGCE

Learning Support Centre
Mr C McClean BSc (Hons) MSc PGCE
Mrs R Morrison BTh PGCE

Mathematics
Mrs L McVeigh BSc (Hons) PGCE PQH (NI)
Mr J Killen BEd

Music
Mrs E Stott BMus (Hons) PGDip MTh PGCE

Physical Education
Mrs J Millington BSc (Hons) PGCE
Mr M Sunerton BSc (Hons) PGCE

Religious Education
Miss E McAllister BEd

Science
Mrs A Cockfield BSc (Hons) MEd PGCE
Miss J Conaty BSc (Hons) PGCE

Technology and Design
Mr J Johnson BEd (Hons) PGCE

Board of Governors 2021/22

The Board of Governors is comprised of up to 16 members. The Principal attends all Board meetings and many sub-groups in a non-voting capacity. The Board of Governors meets on a monthly basis.

Some of the College's business is handled by sub-groups, established to address various areas of policy. They meet as often as required and report back to the full Board of Governors. Any recommendations made by the Committees must be ratified by the full Board before they become policy.

Governors also attend meetings of groups which have close links with the school e.g. meetings of the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education. All Governors are offered a programme of training to assist them in their role. The Board of Governors and the various constituencies of Foundation Governors, Department of Education Nominees, Parent Governors and Teacher Governors must be balanced in terms of religious tradition.

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| Mrs A Toman | Chair (DE Representative) |
|-------------|---------------------------|

| | |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| Mrs D McBay | Foundation Governor |
| Mrs F Lowry | Foundation Parent Governor |
| Mr M Coburn | Foundation Parent Governor |

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Mrs A Cockfield | Teacher Representative |
| Mrs E Killen | Teacher Representative |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Awaiting appointment | Department of Education Representative |
| Awaiting appointment | Department of Education Representative |
| Awaiting appointment | Department of Education Representative |

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Mrs A Grimason | Parent Governor |
| Mrs V Haslett | Parent Governor |
| Mrs M McKervey | Parent Governor |

Foundation Governors

The Scheme of Management provides for the appointment of six Foundation Governors, of which one third should be parents of pupils attending the College; these are Parent Foundation governors. These Governors serve for four years.

Parent Governors

Parent Governors will be elected at the AGM as required.

Teacher Governors

Mrs A Cockfield and Mrs E Killen are currently the teacher governors as nominated by staff in August 2021.

Department of Education Nominees

Four members are appointed to the Board on the nomination of the Head of the Department of Education to serve four years. We are still waiting on 3 appointments to be made and have returned relevant paperwork to DE.

Additional Information

Mr Stephen Taylor (Principal) was also an ex officio member of the Board of Governors for the 2021/22 Academic year. The Board meets every other month of the academic year from September to June. The Finance and Audit Committee may on occasions meet monthly before full Board meetings. There are two main groups that meet in the Education group and Policy / Staffing group that meet 2/3 times per year or as required. The Committees report to the full Board on their recommendations.

Due to a smaller numbers of Governors in the 2021/22 Year these topics were generally covered as a focus during full Board meetings



College Security.

The College is required to include in the Annual Report measures which have been put into place to safeguard the security of the students and staff within the College site. Blackwater Integrated College recognises the need to provide a secure learning and working environment for students and staff.

Visitors to the College identify themselves at reception and are accompanied around the site by a member of staff. All visitors are logged coming on to the site and leaving the site in accordance with new GDPR regulations. They are also issued with an identifying name badge and lanyard that they must wear at all times. The side gate to the College now remains locked during the school day and is only opened for deliveries by Mrs Thomas with the key remaining in the main office.

All staff members exercise a collective responsibility for the identification of any strangers on site.

Practice fire drills are held at least once a term and this is managed by J Taylor (Buildings supervisor). Furthermore, there is a telephone link to the main office close to every classroom for emergency situations.

Fire safety was significantly upgraded in the College during the 2021/22 year with a new fire alarm system installed throughout the College by EA.



Curriculum

The curriculum in Blackwater Integrated College is delivered by subject specialist teachers who regularly update their knowledge and skills through training and sharing of practice.

The College has recently invested in developing e-learning and is now well equipped with class sets of Chromebooks. These are available for use in lessons, and homework is also set on Google Classroom. All students are trained in how to use this and are developing confidence and competence in the wide range of ICT skills required for the 21st century life and workplaces. Since September 2022 all Year 8 and Year 9 students have their own Chromebook and there enough class sets to cover all other year groups.

Blackwater Integrated College offers an accelerated learning class in each year at Key Stage 3, enabling students to access a tailored curriculum and this has enhanced outcomes for all at Key Stage 4. The most recent inspection by ETi confirmed that “The outcomes attained by the pupils in most of the subjects at GCSE grades A* to C are in line with, or above, the corresponding NI subject averages”.

As the College has developed and the range of both academic and vocational subjects has expanded at Key Stage 4 there has been a rise in standards: the majority of those following the Vocational Programme now achieve five or more GCSEs or equivalent qualifications. ETi confirmed that “pupils attain good standards in a wide range of vocational subjects”.

Excellent pastoral systems support the students in their learning, and guidance on how to study effectively is delivered in the Personal Development programme and supplemented by enjoyable practical workshops at appropriate times.

Progress is tracked throughout a student's time at the College: targets are shared and students have access to further interventions as required.

In 2022 GCSE results 89% of Blackwater students achieved 5+ GCSE grades at A*- C and 58% including English and Mathematics. Both of these figures show the curriculum offer at Blackwater is tailored to meet student needs.

In Years 8, 9 and 10 students study the following subjects:

Art & Design, Careers, English, French/Spanish, Geography, History, Home Economics, Information & Communication Technology (ICT), Learning for Life and Work, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Religious Education, Science and Technology & Design.

In Years 11 and 12 the choice of subjects taken at GCSE/BTEC level is:

Art & Design, Contemporary Crafts, CoPE, English, Essential Skills Numeracy and Literacy, French, Geography, History, Hospitality, ICT, Learning for Life and Work, Mathematics, Music, Occupational Studies, Physical Education, BTEC Sports Firsts, Prince's Trust Achieve Programme, Religious Education, Spanish, Science (Double Award and Single Award) and Statistics.

Students are also given the option of following a more vocational programme of study which includes GCSEs in Occupational Studies, Art and Contemporary Crafts and recognised qualifications in ICT and CoPE as well as RE and Essential Skills in Numeracy and Literacy.

Students with Special Educational needs are supported either in mainstream classes or through the Learning Support Centre (Unit) and teaching assistants work with the SENCo and teaching staff in their duties to assist these children.

Accessibility.

Work was recently completed by EA to improve disabled access through the College. The installation of two wheelchair lifts and automated doors and access ramps to several classrooms means a greater number of classrooms in the College are now accessible to wheelchair users.

There is also access to a new disabled toilet that has been purpose built to improve facilities beside the Learning Support Centre. The College does however still present some challenges due to the number of sets of stairs around the site.

Report from Chair of Board of Governors

On behalf of the Board of Governors I am pleased to present my sixth report as Chair.

Again the lives of everyone in the School community were disrupted by the pandemic during the academic year 2021/22. The widespread roll out of vaccines to combat covid 19 enabled most of the business of the Board of Governors to be conducted in face to face meetings. However, students and staff have continued suffer from the effects of the pandemic, especially in the early part of the school year and this is detailed elsewhere in the annual report.

There have been no changes to the membership of the Board. I am grateful for the contribution made by the Board members covering diverse areas such as recruitment, finance, planning and policy reviews. As stated in previous years we are still waiting for some appointments from the Department of Education.

The Board has continued to be prudent in relation to finances which is difficult in the current financial climate, with budgets under strain due to covid, although some funds were made available for covid support. As a consequence of the war in Ukraine there has been considerable pressure due to increased costs such as energy, insurance and other operating costs. This is not helped by the lack of a functioning Executive at Stormont.

The Mid Down Development Proposal (MDIC) and Case for Change which was submitted by the Steering Group to the Education Authority still awaits a response.

Much of the focus for the last year has been in ensuring students and staff are safe and secure in a school environment. There have been a number of policy reviews and updates eg health and safety and risk assessments. Others reviewed included the Critical Incident policy and Newcomers policy. Work continued in relation to SEN legislation.

It is important to acknowledge the role of students, staff and parents in trying to ensure the best outcome for all students, many of whom have had a substantial part of their academic life disrupted by the pandemic and are only getting back to normal school life.

I am grateful for the efforts of everyone involved with Blackwater Integrated College, thanks for all your help and support.



**The report of the Principal of Blackwater integrated College,
Mr S Taylor, on the school year 2020/21 to be delivered
to the AGM of Blackwater Integrated College Ltd
on 16th March 2023**



I am delighted to present this report to the membership of the association detailing the main highlights of the 2021/22 academic year at Blackwater Integrated College.

The 2021/22 academic year saw us move out of COVID restrictions and return to more normality as the year progressed. We started with some restrictions as regards face coverings in place which were gradually reduced as the year moved on. Unfortunately there was still some disruption as regards illness and absence with both students and staff having to observe periods of isolation as regulations changed.

As with the last few years it was a very uncertain time for our Year 12 students given the stop start nature of their KS4 experience but all coped very well and the grades they achieved were a real credit to their hard work.

External examination results in 2021/22 at GCSE level were excellent in many areas. It is very difficult to draw comparisons with previous years given the very different circumstances surrounding GCSE grading over the last few years but the year group achieved above all targets that were set and we wish them every success moving forward.

2022 was a very important year for Integrated Education with the Integrated Education Bill completing its final stage in Assembly in March 2022 and receiving Royal Assent in April 2022. We are very hopeful that this will assist in bringing Integrated Education to the fore and also highlight the importance of our proposal in association with Mid Down Integrated College Steering Group. This proposal to form a new 11-19 Post Primary School was first published in May 2021 by the Department of Education but unfortunately we are still awaiting a decision close to two years later. Our hope is that the new Bill will help the advancement of Integrated Education across NI.

Remote learning during COVID made both staff and students aware of the importance of online learning and as a school we moved towards the introduction of Chromebooks for students to use both in school and at home. Currently both Year 8 and Year 9 have their own Chromebook and from March 2023 all Year 10 students will also have their own device. For the other year groups there are available devices that can be booked out for usage.

This has been very well received by students, parents and staff and has enhanced the ICT levels in the College as well as e-learning across a range of subjects.

Other new initiatives in 2021/22 were the Scholars Programme and the Eco Club. The Scholars Programme culminated in 11 Year 8 and Year 9 students graduating at Queens University, Belfast in April 2022. This programme is an introduction to the potential of attending University in future years and students attend 6 tutorials then a final dissertation where they are graded according to Degree classifications. It was an extremely popular programme and will run again in 2022/23 opening up new opportunities for our students in their future studies.

The Eco Club, established by Mrs Reynolds , was formed in 2022 and have already been successful in getting a grant of over £10,000 to build a polytunnel in the College and equip the Eco Club with all of the tools to be fully functional. This was installed in June 2022 and moving forward will provide an excellent resource for all students to utilise.

Opportunities for students to extend their curriculum were also very important following a few years where this was not possible. After school activities, lunch activities and Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme all thankfully resumed in the College to offer students the opportunity to avail of a full school experience.

Numeracy and Literacy events and prizes also allowed students to be rewarded for their hard work as well as raising the profile of both areas in the College. Hot Chocolate Friday was also introduced to reward students for a range of different areas of school life and it afforded a great opportunity to catch up with students on a Friday to congratulate them on their hard work.



Events at BIC 2022





Rewards at BIC 2022



Prize Winners 2022



From a sporting perspective 2021/22 saw us link up closely with Downpatrick Cricket Club. This resulted in regular coaching during PE time for our students and some students took this further outside of school and joined the club and availed of extra coaching in the evenings. BIC Girls in particular deserve great credit for their very dedicated approach and they were successful in beating Shimna IC in their first game as a team. Some of the girls also followed this on outside school and remain closely linked to the club as part of their youth teams. This is a link that will continue this year through an IEF grant with Mr Sunerton leading this.

As well as cricket coaching students also had coaching from the GAA throughout the year through our Shared Education Programme with De la Salle. Again this has continued into 2023 and a joint team will be competing in an upcoming tournament.

A new fully equipped gym opened in the College in September 2021 to provide our students with excellent resources from a fitness point of view. This is also used by staff after school and is a great resource for all at the College.

Pastoral care remains a huge strength in the College and this has been complemented with the addition of Gary Boyd as a full time Youth Worker to support our students. Gary's role in the College is integral to a wide ranging set of interventions and supports for our students and their families. Defining the ways that Gary supports students is very difficult but his role has become central to our Pastoral system working alongside teaching staff at a time when external support for schools and students has decreased significantly.

SIMs parent App was introduced during the 2021/22 academic year to improve communication with parents. In App form this provides parents with up to date information such as messages, attendance and reports on their child. Uniform Exchange was also introduced to help support parents at a time when the cost of living has increased. We now have a good stock of pre-owned uniform and encourage exchanges at different times through the year. We have also recieved a small grant from IEF to help support families that may need some help with uniforms.

Mrs Conaty was instrumental in setting up the Period Dignity program in Blackwater during the 2021/22 academic year and funding from the Department of Education has allowed period products to be supplied for our students throughout the year.

Blackwater IC was very active in supporting Charity causes and in March 2022 we took part in 'Movin' March' in support of Autism NI and students raised £645 for this excellent cause. Students also supported NI hospice and took part in Elmer's Big Belfast Trail, raising money and designing and creating our own 'Unity Elmer' that was on display in Castlecourt during the time the trail ran and is now back in the College. Staff and students also wore purple in October 2021 to raise awareness and money for Action Mental Health, another excellent charity.

The final charity we supported was the Air Ambulance in June 2022. This was done in memory of Callum Fitzsimons, a year 9 student at BIC, who sadly passed away in April 2022. This was a tragic time for Callum's family obviously and also all of Callum's friends in the College and we were happy to do what little we could to recognise the excellent work Air Ambulance do. We all miss Callum and plan to erect a bench beside our new Polytunnel in his memory.

Supporting local charities is very important and helps our students recognise the importance of raising awareness of some issues that may not always be recognised or funded sufficiently.

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine we happily took 6 Ukrainian students into Blackwater and they have all settled extremely well and are valuable members of the College community. Continued support with English language is very important and this is ongoing to help their very difficult transition over the last number of months.

Admissions for the 2021/22 year group followed the normal process, including an Open night with reduced capacity. The reduced capacity for Primary Links in 2021/22 has undoubtedly affected BIC admissions and we are delighted to see this back up and running from September 2022. Open days, nights and 1-1 visits for many parents have now taken place and we hope this will again raise the profile of the College in the community.

Board of Governor meetings returned as normal during 2021/22. I would like to thank all governors for their support during the last few years in particular and for their continued dedication to helping the College move forward. Alongside BIC board meetings some of our governors are also members of the Mid Down Integrated College Steering Group (MDIC) and there were many meetings throughout the 2021/22 period culminating in a development proposal being submitted to the Department of Education.

We are still waiting on DE to appoint 3 more governors. This has unfortunately been 4 years now we have been waiting and hopefully it will be resolved soon. I would like to thank all of those governors who give voluntarily of their time each month and are very supportive of the College. I would also like to thank Ann Toman as Chair once again for her support over the last year.

I would finally like to take this opportunity to commend our teaching and non-teaching staff for their co-operation throughout the 2021/22 academic year in very difficult circumstances. Staff attendance and morale have also remained high in the College despite the challenges faced on a daily basis.

Annual Attendance Rate (All pupils)

Total days attended by all pupils as a % of total possible days of attendance was 81% for the 2021/22 academic year. The 2021/22 attendance figure was still greatly affected with the COVID 19 still affecting attendance for many families throughout the year. Many schools across NI and the UK are seeing attendance being a major issue post COVID.

Pastoral Care

We place great emphasis on the pastoral care of our students. The basic pastoral unit is the tutor group, which consists of approximately 20 students. A tutor is assigned to each class and usually remains with the group as they move through the College. Tutor groups meet each morning before class for registration and announcements and again in the afternoon. Form Tutors were supported by the Head of Junior School, Mrs Love for Years 8-10 and Head of Senior School, Mr Sunerton for Year 11 and 12 and the Pastoral Coordinator, Mrs Millington.

Form tutors work closely with all staff to monitor each student's academic performance and personal development. Tutor groups also follow a Preventative Curriculum during which students cover a wide range of relevant issues.

Our pastoral system is a caring system that aims to put the children at ease right from the first day, free from worries and concerns, allowing them to feel safe and secure in their environment and to grow in confidence. There is also a major focus on promoting positive behaviour throughout all year groups.

Small class sizes and the relationship with the form tutor allow each child to receive the care and attention they need to ensure they achieve their potential throughout their time in the College.

Family Works Counselling Services continued with students across the different year groups and is a very widely used support by many students. This is co-ordinated by Mrs Millington and the Pastoral team.

Numerous workshops took place throughout the year to support the ongoing work in the preventative curriculum. These included workshops with Made for More, Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum, PSNI Safer Internet Use, YMCA Mental Health and Neuronimo Online Support. Staff also availed of training in Mental Health Awareness, Child Protection, Restorative Practice and Nurturing Approaches in Schools.

Gary Boyd, Youth Worker has been invaluable in providing support to all students as he seeks to build relationships with students and offer 1:1 support to help students with any issues they are experiencing inside and outside school.

Pastoral calls were made to Primary schools and parents prior to the September 2021 intake. This was followed up with a year 8 induction week at the end of August to bring together the year group and allow them to become familiar with their new surroundings. This was facilitated by Gary Boyd, Youth Worker.

The Pastoral log was also completed, and the Child Protection Annual Survey completed and sent to EA. The ETI Safeguarding proforma was completed and discussed with BOG.

Parental consultations took place at various times through the year and these were delivered via School Cloud instead of face to face contacts. Option Choices for Year 10 were targeted as a key meeting to choose the best pathways with guidance given to both parents and students and again this happened remotely. Parental input as always is crucial at Blackwater to maintain the home school link.

As part of the induction programme for our new intakes the first day of term is always set aside for Year 8 only. This allows the children to settle and form relationships with their teachers and peers; they spend lots of time exploring their new surroundings. The induction process continued through the early weeks at the College within our Personal Development programme and was then reinforced by the Year 8 team building event.

The purpose of induction is to strengthen friendships and build confidence. Year 8 parents also had the opportunity to discuss how their child has settled into the College and to discuss with his or her form tutor any concerns they may have.

Pastoral policies for Anti-Bullying, Positive Behaviour and Child Protection are available on request from the College office.



School Development Planning

The School Development Plan sets out the priorities for the College for the next three years. Our current SDP started in 2019 and ran through to the end of the 2021/22 academic year. Action Plans for each year are managed by members of the Leadership Team across a range of areas and monitored regularly by the Principal. With many areas not being addressed through COVID, DE have issued guidance that allows a one year extension to School Development Plans for schools and this is where we are. The expectation is that evaluations will take place in Summer 2023 and a new plan be in place for the 2023/24 academic year.

At Blackwater we are always actively promoting integration among students with Mrs Lockhart taking the lead in this area with organised events and activities after being appointed Integration Co-ordinator. Our religious balance sits at around 35% Catholic 35% Protestant and 30% other which is excellent in an integrated school. This is something we are very proud of and shows how far we have come since our formation in 2008.

Roles and Responsibilities relating to curriculum matters

The Principal reports to the Board of Governors through the Education Committee on all matters related to the curriculum. Subject Coordinator roles allow some Coordinators to be responsible for more than one subject to allow a more collegiate approach:

- The Vice Principal has responsibility for curriculum matters in the College and provides regular reports to the Board of Governors.
- The Subject Co-ordinators work with the Vice Principal to ensure coherence across different areas of the curriculum.
- Subject Coordinators have responsibility for the curriculum in their subject departments.
- Priorities for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are set down in the School Development Plan and in each department's Action Plans.

Complaints Procedure

In the event of a complaint, parents should in the first instance contact the Principal. The Principal will then seek to bring about a resolution of the matter.

If such a resolution does not emerge, parents should write to the Chair of the Board of Governors who will raise the matter at the next meeting of the Board of Governors.

The Board of Governors will convene a meeting on a date not more than 3 weeks after receipt of the complaint. They will discuss the complaint and notify the appellant in writing within 3 days of the decision.

The parent has a further right of appeal if he/she is not satisfied with this decision referring the matter to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) within six months of the final response from the school.



Accounts 2020/21

Blackwater Integrated College

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2021

| | 2021 £ | 2020 £ |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Turnover | | |
| Department of Education grants | 2,066,330 | 1,978,017 |
| Receipts from other sources | <u>1,192</u> | <u>9,316</u> |
| | 2,067,522 | 1,987,333 |
| Expenditure | | |
| Teaching staff costs | 1,218,385 | 1,104,725 |
| Non-teaching staff costs | 414,661 | 405,239 |
| Other operating costs | <u>401,954</u> | <u>376,447</u> |
| | 2,035,000 | 1,886,411 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Surplus for the financial year | <u>32,522</u> | <u>100,922</u> |

Accounts 2021/2022

Blackwater Integrated College

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2022

| | 2022 £ | 2021 £ |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Turnover | | |
| Department of Education grants | 2,206,293 | 2,066,330 |
| Receipts from other sources | <u>5,000</u> | <u>1,192</u> |
| | 2,211,293 | 2,067,552 |
| Expenditure | | |
| Teaching staff costs | 1,349,393 | 1,218,385 |
| Non-teaching staff costs | 488,376 | 414,661 |
| Other operating costs | <u>440,948</u> | <u>401,954</u> |
| | 2,278,717 | 2,035,000 |
| Surplus/deficit for the financial year | <u>-67,424</u> | <u>32,522</u> |

Annual Parents Meeting 16th March 2023



For the academic year
2021/22