Annual Report to Parents 2025-2026

2025-2026 Governors

Our school is managed by a Board of Governors who work in conjunction with the Principal. In accordance with our integrated status our Board intentionally aspires to being at least 40% protestant, 40% catholic and 20% other. We also intentionally strive for a gender balance.

The Board of Governors is comprised of sixteen voting members and one non-voting member, the school principal, Ms Howe. There are two Parent Foundation Governors, four Trust Foundation Governors, 4 Department of Education Representatives, two Teacher Representatives and four Parent Governors.

Oakwood is most appreciative of the generous gift of time and expertise governors bring to their role of managing the school. Oakwood's governors undertake their duty to manage the school to the benefit of the whole school community with firm commitment.

GOVERNORS IN OFFICE DURING 2026-2027

Name	Governor Specification
Ms C Howe	Principal
Dr S Hurley (Chairperson)	Trust Foundation Governor
Ms G Banham (Vice-chairperson)	Trust Foundation Governor (NICIE)
Ms F Donnelly (Chair of Finance & General Purposes)	Trust Foundation Governor (NICIE)
Mrs R McCarthy	Trust Foundation Governor
Mr McGarrigle	Parent Foundation Governor
Dr P Hudson	DE
Mr T Logan	DE
Mr M Mulhern	DE
Mr R Colwell	Parent Representative
Mr R Rees	Parent Representative
Mr S Ballard	Parent Representative
Mrs L Shooter	Teacher Representative
Mrs S Joyce	Teacher Representative
Miss L McClure	Co-opted

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION in the PRIMARY SCHOOL

Safeguarding & Child Protection (SG&CP) procedures are reviewed on a half-termly basis to ensure all children are safe. Safeguarding & Child Protection is a standing item on the full Board of Governor meetings.

Ms G Banham is the Designated Governor for SG&CP in the Primary School. Mrs S Joyce is the Designated Teacher (DT) for SG&CP in the Primary School and Miss L McClure is the Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) for SG&CP in the Primary School.

STAFF EMPLOYED AT OAKWOOD IPS IN 2025-2026

Staff Member	Role	Post
Ms C Howe	Principal	Principal
Miss L McClure	Vice-Principal and P5 teacher	Vice-Principal
Mrs L Conn	SENCo	Teacher
Mrs M McKenna	P7 teacher	Teacher
Mrs L Shooter	P6 teacher	Teacher
Miss D Stewart	P4 teacher	Teacher
Mrs P Smith	P3 teacher	Teacher
Mrs S Stewart-Briggs	P2 teacher	Teacher
Mrs S Joyce	P1 teacher	Teacher
Mrs S Lowry	Nursery teacher	Teacher
Mrs B McKibbin	Admin	School Administrator
Mr B Moore	Support	Building Support Staff
Mr E Magee	Support	Building Support Staff
Mrs A McAleenon	Support	Schools Meals Staff
Mrs C Budd	Support	Learning Support
Miss S Gamble	Support	Learning Support
Mr L Gibson	Support	Learning Support
Miss A Goodwin	Support	Learning Support
Mrs S Gray	Support	Learning Support
Mrs K Howie	Support	Learning Support
Miss A Kane	Support	Learning Support
Mrs K Kelly	Support	Learning Support
Mrs C McFadden	Support	Learning Support
Ms J McKnight	Support	Learning Support
Mrs R Webb	Support	Learning Support

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

We welcome a wide variety of visitors to Oakwood each year. A detailed list of visitors to the school can be found in the Visitors Sign In Record Book.

PARENTS (and families)

Parents were encouraged to attend Parents' Council on a monthly basis.

Parents were invited to attend:

- P1 Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM) assessments;
- Nursery Christmas Morning;
- P1/2 & P3/4 Nativities;
- P7 Show;
- P4/7 Integrated Cluster Celebration;
- P3 Shared Education Celebration;
- Combined Nursery and P1 Meet and Greet morning;
- European Languages' Super Learning Day (SLD) and Macmillan Coffee Morning;
- World Book Day (SLD);
- Global Love Day (SLD);
- Annual Book Fair;
- Nursery Graduation;
- P7 Leavers' Assembly.

The road widening scheme at McKinstry crossroads has finally been completed.

INTEGRATION IN PRACTICE
Religious Education

P3, P4 and P7 pupils made their Sacraments supported by family and friends and the extended Oakwood family.

Sharing Good Practice

Oakwood IPS & NU deemed HIGHLY EFFECTIVE across all 5 AREAS in our outstanding Education Training Inspectorate (ETI) inspection in November 2024.
https://www.etini.gov.uk/files/etini/publications/report-of-a-primary-inspection-oakwood-integrated-primary-school-406-6611.pdf

As a result, Oakwood has been contacted by a variety of schools and colleagues to share best practice and to request assistance regarding pending ETI inspections.

Oakwood also facilitated a visit from Ms Garland and Ms Nicholl (ETI) in June 2026 in relation to the school's views on the Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) Fund, the school's use of the funding and its impact to date. Ms Garland was very appreciative of the whole staff team's willingness to engage in the process and to share their views at such short notice and so late in the school year. The visit included classroom observations alongside professional dialogue with the principal, teaching and non-teaching staff teams/individuals and pupils.

Integrated Education Clusters

The Primary 4 and Primary 7 Integrated Clusters (Oakwood IPS, Cranmore IPS and Cliftonville IPS) enjoyed six, highly successful, integrated education sessions yet again this year, exploring our traditions and visiting various places of worship.

Shared Education Clusters

The Primary 3 Shared Education Cluster (Oakwood IPS, Christ The Redeemer PS and Pond Park PS) has been highlighted as an exemplar of best practice. The six planned P3 shared education sessions were highly successful, yet again, this year.

All clusters culminated in highly successful celebratory events attended by parents from across all cluster classes and schools.

Charities

Pupil Council and Parents' Council continued to support South-West Belfast Foodbank this academic year. Oakwood families very generously donated food items on a monthly basis as part of 'Treat and Toy Day.' Oakwood also fundraised for Macmillan Cancer, the Integrated Education Fund, Children in Need, Cash for Clobber and Habitat for Humanity this year.

Parents' Council Report

Parents' Council meet on an almost monthly basis on a Monday morning from 9-10am. Mrs G McClenaghan continued as Chairperson and Mrs L Whinnery continued as Secretary. Mrs D McCrory is Treasurer.

Parents' Council organised a variety of events in 2025-2026, including:

- Sponsored Walk;
- Halloween/Christmas/Easter colouring competitions;
- Nativity Raffles;
- Christmas Ballot and,
- Two Jumping Jacks Takeover events – Term 1 and Term 3.

Huge thanks go to the small, dedicated group of parents who organised the fundraising events of 2025-2026 and to the wider parent body and Oakwood family for their generous support of these events. All monies raised continue to fund the purchase of classroom resources and IT equipment.

Growing A Community of Learning

ETI recognized best practice at Oakwood stating:

there is a highly effective and strategic approach to, and rationale for, the wide range of well-considered internal and external collaborative networks that empower the school to realise its vision. Across the provision for learning, there are professional learning opportunities with external providers that are enhancing the staff's knowledge and skills and enabling them to provide positive learning experiences for the children. These include, for example, the Shared and Integrated Education clusters, the OLEVI Teaching and Learning School (TLS) Northern Ireland programmes, and the Forest School experiences. Local businesses are involved in programmes such as, Time to Read, Time to Count, and a number of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) initiatives. The parents/carers are invited to engage regularly with the school community through, for example, participating in stay-and-play sessions and the super learning days. The active parents' council works along with the children on the school council to support a local foodbank.

Curriculum

Oakwood provides an exciting, creative, broad and balanced curriculum which is age and stage appropriate to the individual needs of each child. In Oakwood's happy, caring, inclusive and child-centred environment, children are nurtured and respected without discrimination, enabling them to achieve success in a wide variety of academic and social contexts.

The Education Training Inspectorate (ETI) stated in our ETI Inspection Report, November 2024 that:

• Whole-school strategic planning for improvement is underpinned by a collegial and robust process of self-evaluation which identifies relevant priorities for improvement and informs a bespoke and innovative programme of staff professional learning.

• There is a consistent and shared understanding among all staff of what constitutes high quality learning and teaching which is impacting very positively on practice and on the children's holistic development, learning experiences and outcomes.

• Whole-class inclusive and adaptive teaching approaches and highly impactful small group interventions, enable all children to experience success and make progress from their individual starting points.

• The children are inquisitive and confident. They engage enthusiastically in their learning and have well-developed communication and leadership skills that enable them to contribute meaningfully to wider experiences and decisions across the school.

• There is a highly effective and strategic approach to, and rationale for, the wide range of well-considered internal and external collaborative networks that are empowering the school to realise its vision and live out its five key values of inclusion, high quality learning and teaching, leadership, partnerships and achievement.

Work and Play

Personal development, self-confidence, independence, creativity and self-discipline are the building blocks for developing a strong self-esteem. At Oakwood the opportunities we offer children help them grow in self-worth.

Citizenship and taking personal responsibility for the choices they make are nurtured in our children from an early age through our extensive Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Programme. Our tailor-made programme has been recognised as exemplary.

At Oakwood, children learn to work both independently and as members of small groups or teams, putting their thinking skills to good use. We plan work using themes which interest children and link all subject areas. We listen when children tell us what they want to learn. Our plans take account of the different ways children like to learn and acknowledge their range of interests, talents and abilities.

Our children are actively encouraged to participate in the planning, monitoring and evaluating processes. All children are encouraged to strive for the highest individual achievement in every curriculum area. They leave Oakwood with a sound foundation for lifelong learning.

Our curriculum rationale is as follows:-

Language and Literacy

At the heart of every area of the curriculum, language and literacy is taught as a core subject which supports every aspect of work and ensures that tour children become excellent communicators. Our literacy standards have been recognised as 'Outstanding,' by the Education Training Inspectorate (ETI).

Mathematics and Numeracy

In every area of mathematics, including numeracy, practical activities support children to become confident and successful mathematicians who use thinking strategies and problem-solving skills.

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

Children are encouraged to value their own particular tradition and to develop a respect for common culture and unique identity. Positive membership of a pluralist society is explored, providing opportunities for friendship by maintaining close links between the home, the school and the community at large. Children are encouraged to make sensible and healthy choices about what they eat and drink, their activities and about the environment they share. Our Healthy Eating Policies and Provision have been recognised as exemplary by the ETI.

The World Around Us (Science, Technology, History and Geography)

Children are challenged to ask questions about their own world and to seek answers using a wide range of resources. In this way they come to understand the wonders of the natural and physical world and how people, past and present, influence the way it is today. They are helped to understand their role in making the world a better and safer place through working together positively and looking after their environment. ETI requested that we work with them (along with three partner schools) on a pilot project, incorporating elements of WAU and ICT.

Physical Development and Movement

Physical Education supports the physical development, health and wellbeing of our children. They learn a wide range of games skills, dance, athletics, swimming and aspects of gymnastics. An exciting range of resources inside and out makes developing fitness fun. The children make extensive use of our outdoor classroom and we employ a teaching member of staff with coaching qualifications to deliver bespoke PE sessions in-house.

ETI stated that the provision for the physical education (PE) area of learning has been successfully developed very effectively across the school by the creative use of individual staff expertise. Planning for progression is in place across all aspects of the PE curriculum and the children in Years 4 to 7 also benefit from swimming lessons. Opportunities for teachers to deliver PE lessons together has developed the capacity of all staff to deliver the full breadth of the PE curriculum, ensuring that children are developing their skills, confidence and competence and experiencing a sense of enjoyment and challenge as they progress through the school. During PE lessons children are encouraged to be creative and imaginative and their learning is linked to other curricular areas such as mathematics and numeracy and language and literacy.

Our football team participated in various inter-school competitions this year and enjoyed varying levels of success. The team reached the semi-finals of the Rowandale Integrated cup. P4-P6 players participated in the Small Schools Cup which provided great experience for the younger boys. We had a total of 35+ players try out for each tournament across P4-P7 including twelve girls, which bodes well for a girls' football team going forwards.

The Arts

Music, Drama, Art and Design enrich and extend our children's experience of each area of the curriculum.

We are privileged to have teaching members of staff with music, drama, art and design specialisms who share their love and passion for these areas of the curriculum.

Every year the children have opportunities to showcase their acting skills through school nativities and musical productions. The Nursery Christmas morning and the P1/P2 and P3/P4 Nativities were superb and so well supported by the school community. The P7 production of 'Beauty and the Beast,' showcased the talents of our P7 cast members, our scenery, sound and lighting crew and our P5/6 choir members.

Individual piano tuition was provided yet again this year, alongside group guitar sessions.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

Every child has access to technology and the networked computer system which links every classroom. Interactive whiteboards, iPads, Surface Pros, floor robots, bee bots and pro bots, digital cameras and digital microphones are all used to enhance learning and develop high level skills. Each class is encouraged to contribute to the school website.

ETI stated that the bespoke, detailed whole-school planning for digital skills, includes: clear skills development and progression; a balanced allocation of resources across the school; and a comprehensive system for monitoring and recording the children's progression. As a result, the children make good progress through the school and are developing well their Information and Communications Technology skills and competencies using a variety of platforms, which promotes effectively their readiness for the next stage of their learning, including transfer to post-primary level.

Keeping Safe

A culture of keeping safe is evident across the school. The health and wellbeing of the children is carefully considered in curriculum planning and the children's experiences in school places a strong emphasis on developing healthy lifestyle habits, for example, encouraging them to take part in the Daily Mile initiative. Specialist interventions are used effectively to support small groups of children with their emotional health and wellbeing and sensory needs.

Eco

Oakwood's Eco Committee, supported by the entire school community gained its 11th Eco School Green Flag Award in June 2026.

Afternoon Timetable

In April 2023, Governors approved a proposal to change the school day to a 3pm finish for all pupils from P1-P7 Monday to Thursday and a 2pm finish on Fridays, effective from September 2023. This enabled the afternoon timetable to run from 1.30pm-3pm schoolwide to facilitate best practice arising out of lessons learned from covid, with a wide variety of fabulously creative, expressive opportunities offered to all our primary pupils. Our afternoon sessions include bespoke PE, forest school, art & design, music, STEAM, Eco and uICT lessons which are exemplary and recognised as such by ETI who stated:

The aspect of practice which should be shared more widely is:

- the strategic and flexible approaches to utilising staff expertise, and the creative use of curriculum time, to build capacity across the school and ensure all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that is responsive to their individual needs.

Attendance
The attendance rate for the 2025/2026 was 93.39%.

Security
The school is surrounded by fencing on all sides and the entire building has been fitted with an electronic alarm system. CCTV is operational.

Pupils are always supervised by adults at playtime and exit gates from the playground are monitored.

Due to the open nature of the site, all visitors (including parents), are required to report to the office at the main entrance to the school during the day.

All staff engage in statutory EA Fire Safety training annually.

The burglar and fire alarm systems were updated in 2025/2026.

Transfer to Post-Primary Schools

Oakwood Integrated Primary School enjoys excellent working relationships with post-primary schools throughout Lisburn and the Greater Belfast area. In June 2026 pupils of transfer age will transition to the following schools:

Hunterhouse College
Lagan College
Laurelhill Community College
Malone Integrated College
Methodist College
Rathmore Grammar School
St Dominic's High School
St Genevieve's High School
St Louise's Comprehensive College
St Patrick's Academy
Victoria College
Wallace High School