



# **SULLIVAN UPPER SCHOOL HOLLYWOOD**

## **Report of the Board of Governors on the 2024/2025 School Year**

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# 1 THE CONSTITUTION OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

## 2024/25 School Year

a) **nominated by the church bodies in Holywood which were the original trustees of the school:**

Church of Ireland, Parish of Holywood	Mr Brian Burke
Church of St Philip and St James	Mrs Catherine O'Neill

First Holywood Presbyterian Church, Bangor Road, Holywood	Mr Peter Moran Mr Chris Warnock
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High Street Presbyterian Church, Holywood	Mrs Ann Eves Mrs Audrey Gordon
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First Presbyterian (Non-Subscribing) Church, Holywood	-
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The Methodist Church, Holywood	Mrs Gillian Law
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St Colmcille's Parish, Holywood	Dr Alison Eccles Mrs Maria Pearson
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b) **nominated by the Department of Education**

Mrs Laura Calvin
Ms Louise Campbell
Mr Keith Forster
Mrs Helen Mills

c) **elected by parents of pupils attending the school**

Mr Gareth Boyd
Mr Mark Hamilton

d) **elected by the teaching staff of the school**

Mr Steven Drennan
Mrs Carol Johnston

e) **co-opted by the Board of Governors**

Mr Stuart Hamilton
Mrs Doreen Mathison
Mr Mike McNeill

f) **member ex-officio as Principal of the school**

Mr Craig Mairs
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g) **secretary to the Board of Governors**

Dr Christina Byrnes (Bursar)
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The Board of Governors meets approximately once every 2 months during the school year, with more detailed work being done between the full Board meetings by the committees of the Board.

The **current** office bearers are:

Chairperson of the Board of Governors:	Mrs Laura Calvin
Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Governors:	Mr Mark Hamilton
Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee:	Mr Brian Burke
Chairperson of the Education Policy Committee:	Ms Louise Campbell
Chairperson of the Education Services Committee:	Mr Stuart Hamilton
Chairperson of the Finance Committee:	Mr Gareth Boyd
Chairperson of the Preparatory Department Committee:	Mrs Doreen Mathison
Chairperson of the Safeguarding Team:	Mrs Audrey Gordon

Other sub-committees of the Board include the Salaries Committee, the Salary Appeals Committee, the Transfer Procedure and Admissions Committee, the Health and Safety Committee and the Property Sub-Committee.

Designated Governor for Safeguarding:	Mrs Audrey Gordon
Designated Governor for Special Educational Needs:	Ms Louise Campbell
Designated Governor for Wellbeing:	Mr Gareth Boyd

## 2 THE PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

### **Pupil attendance:**

Attendance of pupils this year was 98.46%. We had one annual audit from our Educational Welfare Officer. There was no concern for any pupil's attendance.

### **Staffing:**

This year, while many staff remained in the same year group, due to Mrs Rowan being on maternity leave and the appointed teacher securing a full-time job in another school, a temporary teacher was brought into Prep 4 and Mrs Patterson moved from Prep 4 into Prep 5. Mrs Rowan returned from maternity leave in October 2024 and her class was covered by Mr Migan and Mrs Ballard. A temporary job-share was approved for Mrs Rowan and Mr Migan. Mrs Ballard covered this teaching role on Monday and Tuesday each week in Term 3.

Mrs Matthews continued in her role as Senior Teacher and Mrs Callen took up the role of Wellbeing Ambassador. A Senior Leadership Team was formed with Mrs Ballard, Mrs Matthews and Mrs Callen. They met weekly to ensure the smooth running of the school and to work strategically on a range of areas. This team continued the use of the ISEF document to work on a self-evaluation of the school and also the use of the new documentation of the 5 core questions provided by Education Training and Inspectorate (ETI).

### **Return to school:**

Pupils returned to school in August with great enthusiasm. Drama festivals and examinations, music festivals, sporting fixtures, trips and visitors took place across all year groups. We have continued to provide the staggered drop off in the mornings from 8.30 am. The early morning reading club, took place on a daily basis led by Mrs Moody and Mrs Moroney and offered reading from 8.15 am-8.30 am. This was used by over 50 pupils on a daily basis.

### **Assembly:**

Assemblies continued with the whole school meeting in the Prep Hall each week. Headteacher awards were presented each week to pupils. Pupils also had weekly singing sessions with Mrs Ballard. Whole school assemblies provided a launch for weeks such as anti-bullying, mental health and the various celebrations across the school year. This year alongside the usual Harvest, Christmas and Easter assemblies, children also received a series of sessions focusing on Child Protection, online safety, positive behaviour and other special events such as Dyslexia awareness week, Neurodiversity week and the catholic sacraments. This year as part of these specialist weeks, each class would share their learning with the rest of the school.

This year, we continued the Prep kindness awards to those children who showed particularly kind acts to others. These were awarded on a half-termly basis.

We were delighted to be able to continue with class assemblies each month for our parents and family members to visit school and share the topic learning from each class. These were very well attended by families across all year groups.

### **SEAG results:**

All 28 Prep pupils sat the SEAG test were successful in securing their choice of school place. 93% of pupils secured a grammar school place. Mrs Matthews provided 2 parental consultations in term 1 for our Prep 7 parents and Mrs Ballard met virtually with all Prep 7 families, once the results had been received. Our Prep 5 and Prep 6 families were invited to attend a SEAG information session virtually in April with Mrs Ballard and then from senior school in term 3.

### **Extracurricular:**

Many teaching staff volunteered and led extracurricular clubs in a range of areas from drama to outdoor learning to hockey club, despite Union action. However, due to other responsibilities for a number of staff, they used the time to develop specific areas of school life. Mrs Callen is leading wellbeing, the Foundation Stage, World Around Us and experiential learning, Mrs Matthews has

been updating the website, leading the installation of new classroom devices, ICT teaching, the implementation of Seesaw, and Forestschool.

Extracurricular activities commenced in September and the Prep provided a range of external led clubs such as coding, multi-sports, clayfulness, dance and basketball. Speech and drama lessons continued as usual both during the school day and also as an extracurricular activity. Extracurricular netball, football, athletics and Spanish club were led by Mrs Hendron. Once again this year, Mrs Wilson led the hockey on a weekly basis and Mrs Kelly (previously Miss Johnson) led the school Key Stage 2 production each week afterschool. Mrs Ballard and, on her return, Mrs Rowan, led the choir through a range of events such as Open day, Christmas, Bangor International choral festival, May Day Maypole singing, the school production (Beauty and the Beast) and various assemblies.

### **Events:**

Our annual Harvest service took place in our local Parish church and all families were invited to attend. A spooky fun night was organised by SUPPA and the children had fun eating BBQ food, dressing up, playing in the dark, face painting and buying a range of fun items.

Our annual, special celebration 'P1 dedication' for our Prep 1 pupils, took place in October. Staff in the Prep organised a special dedication ceremony and welcome to the school for our Prep 1 pupils and their families. This was attended by our Prep Governors to present welcome certificates.

The Prep Nativity continued to be a much-loved event, as the performances from Prep 1 to Prep 4 performed in the senior school hall. This allowed all families to attend these performances. The Upper Prep children (Prep 5-Prep 7) held their Christmas Service, in Hollywood 2<sup>nd</sup> Presbyterian Church and once again all families were welcome to attend. Santa visited the Prep outdoor classroom and there was also some fun Christmas singing in the playground.

The Prep 7 pupils led the school in their production of Beauty and the Beast, produced and directed by Mrs Kelly, in the senior school drama theatre. Children in Prep 5 and Prep 6 performed songs and dances and the choir were led by Mrs Rowan.

Across the school, pupils took part in a range of specialist teaching days for outdoor learning led by the early years team and the World Around Leaders.

Prize day this year took place in the school hall and was run in 2 sessions for Prep 1-Prep 4 (in the morning) and then Prep 5-7 and also showcased our Prep 7 pupils for their leavers' assembly. The Prep 7 children were formally piped out of the hall. Further new awards have been introduced this year to reflect the different talents of our pupils and the adaptations in the curriculum. These include recognition in equestrian skill, eco leadership, best buddy, art and diligence and dedication. SUPPA presented each pupil from Prep 1-Prep 6 with a keepsake book and Prep 7 received their hand-carved USB memory stick, completed by Mr Longmore and donated by SUPPA.

The hockey team had a number of noteworthy matches this year and the boys team got to the final of the hockey blitz. The Prep 7 pupils joined other local primary schools to take part in "Sport changes life" sessions with the final celebration being held in Senior school. They also received community and online safety training.

The senior choir competed in the Bangor International choral competition senior primary school class and the Prep 4 class competed in the under 8 years' section. Once again this year, they came 2<sup>nd</sup> in this competition!

The school took part in Daily Mile Day and a group of Prep 7 pupils attended community sessions for dancing round the Maypole. Our Prep 7 pupils spent 4 days at Greenhill Activity Centre for their annual residential and Prep 6 had one overnight stay at the Scout Centre. Our children entered a number of art and colouring competitions across the year.

### **Teaching and learning:**

The five outcomes of the 2023-26 School Development were shared with all stakeholders:

1. Pupil wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem.
2. Staff wellbeing.
3. Communication.
4. High quality teaching and learning.
5. Outdoor Learning.

Despite Union action continuing, the staff at the Prep worked tirelessly on a number of areas and met regularly to develop professionally. The staff have continued the 'Being Well Doing Well' programme with the EA and completed Bereavement training and Trauma Informed Practice training. Developments in all subject areas continued with clear outcomes-based action plans and meetings continued on a monthly basis. Mrs Ballard and Mrs Callen attended a special presentation assembly at St Dominic's School in June and an action plan has been written for the new academic year 2025-26. The Education Authority advisor support team member was impressed at the work completed by the staff on Wellbeing, specifically the teaching of PDMU and PRSD observations completed by all teaching staff at the Prep.

The Seesaw App is used to communicate with parents on a daily basis, throughout the school, share weekly learning intentions in Literacy and Numeracy for every class and so parents can privately message teachers. A range of photographs are shared of the learning across the school with parents on a weekly basis, for all classes. Prep 7 continue to complete tasks on Google classroom, in preparation for post-primary education. This year, staff began uploading work with verbal feedback each half term to parents, however, this was impacted by action short of strike. All staff continue to use Teams to communicate professionally, share learning and update planning. All documents are now worked on collaboratively by staff – such as policies, reports and action plans.

Pupils completed their annual end of year assessments in May - English, Mathematics and Spelling and due to parental requests, these were shared on the end of year reports in June. The GL parental feedback was shared but parents were informed that staff would not be working on the analysis of data until the new academic year. Prep 4 and Prep 6 completed their CAT tests in May. All classes (Prep 2-Prep 6) undertook the PM benchmarking 1:1 reading assessments in terms 1 and 2. (Prep 1 and Prep 7 completed these in terms 2 and 3). Children in Key Stage 1 (Prep 3) and some newcomer children, completed the dyslexia and dyscalculia screeners and any concerns were discussed with parents. All pupils Prep 3-Prep 7 completed the PASS GL assessment in November and May and this has been used to support the formation of nurture and emotional support for these classes across the school. Mrs Ballard supported the Learning Support Assistants across the academic year with training related to nurture support, sensory, attention and focus and emotional wellbeing and regulation, based on the principles of nurture.

From Term 2 onwards, due to continued industrial action it was exceptionally challenging to have time to meet and train staff. However, staff at the Prep this year have all worked on a range of specific training, awards and professional development as a school. The Prep was nominated for an award for best SEN support and a group of staff attended this ceremony at the Europa Hotel in May, certification for an 'Allergy Aware School' and the 4<sup>th</sup> Eco schools green flag and also an updated 'Fair Active school' certification, were also achieved.

The Chief Executive of the EA visited school in June and was exceptionally impressed with the life of the school and the wonderful outdoor learning he observed.

**Staff also completed:**

Diabetes awareness training, medical team epilepsy and anaphylaxis training, PM Benchmarking training to inform pupil reading behaviours, Numeracy CEA task training, assessment training and data analysis, SEN training on dyslexia and IEP writing and evidencing, World Around Us training on outdoor learning, ICT training, Rolling out of Forestschool to Prep 3, Prep 4 and Prep 7, Marie Curie grief awareness training, Fire Safety for all staff, Critical Incident training and table top exercise with PSNI, factual reporting and anti-bullying training.



Mrs Ballard, Mrs Matthews and Mrs Callen, all attended various training and conferences related to the School Development Plan. These included developments in Foundation Stage learning, Numeracy, Literacy, Play-based Learning, World Around Us, Speech and Language, Pupil voice and the use of AI in education. Mrs Wilson attended Numeracy Leader refresh training and Ms Gordon and Mrs Ballard attended updated Graduated Response Training for SEN.

Mrs Matthews and Mrs Callen are Seesaw Pioneers and Mrs Ballard has retained her Seesaw ambassador status.

Mrs Ballard also attended monthly sessions as part of the EA Leadership forum and worked with other schools as part of the Child Protection and wellbeing group. Each month Mrs Ballard attended the North Down Principals' Group and the Termly Holywood Shared town meetings.

All staff provided face-to-face September curriculum information sessions for parents, Parental interviews in October and March and an end of year written report, which included a number of key aspects related to the curriculum.

Specialist PE sessions continued with Mrs Hendron, for three days each week. Mrs Hendron also ran weekly Spanish sessions for Prep 1-Prep 6 and an Extracurricular Spanish Club for Prep 3-Prep 7 each week. Mrs Matthews has been facilitating French sessions for Prep 7, in preparation for transition.

Music continued each week for all classes with Mrs Leathem, who has formed a most capable music ensemble who have performed at Christmas and held an end-of-year recital.

Peripatetic music lessons took place for all classes from Prep 3 upwards.

#### **SUPPA:**

SUPPA met virtually each term with the parents, Mrs Ballard and Ms Gordon. There was great financial support for the events and also the purchase of Easter eggs for all the children at Easter. We would like to thank SUPPA for their fundraising efforts which raised money for expenditure on a long list of resources which include:

- Spooky fun night;
- a fun day at Christmas;
- Christmas cards and other items designed by the pupils;
- Easter eggs;
- outdoor learning resources to supplement the outdoor classroom;
- a set of 7 new iPads to support pupil learning and Seesaw uploading;
- trip to the Pantomime at The Lyric for Prep 4-Prep 7 and Mr Hullabaloo for Prep 1-Prep 3;
- Athletics for Prep 4-Prep 7 and Numbots online learning for Prep 1-Prep 3;
- also a number of social events for parents;
- finally – the end of year Sundowner.

#### **Community:**

The school council, eco council and wellbeing ambassadors met with Mrs Ballard, Mrs Matthews and Mrs Callen each half term, representing the pupils' voice to bring issues to the school's attention. They presented a range of prizes and rewards as part of mental health week – for both pupils and staff and the Pumpkin competition in October and achieved the 4<sup>th</sup> Green Flag.

The Silver Robin Cafeteria facilitated café style lunches being served to the classrooms on a daily basis – an online ordering system continues to be facilitated. Prep 1 and Prep 2 continue to be supported in the Prep Hall with Mrs Berry.

We continued to place importance on preparing our children for Transition to Year 8. This was able to be facilitated in person by Mrs Matthews, the class teacher and the SU team. This year, once again, we ran our careers week at the Prep for Prep 7. We had many parents and family members sharing information about a wide range of careers across the week.



Entering competitions continued to be important this year to our children to help improve their life skills, practise resilience and display good sportsmanship. Assorted sporting events were entered such as football, hockey tournaments and athletics competitions. Class trips took place across the year with at least one trip to an external venue such as the Titanic Centre, the Zoo, Mountstewart, the Aquarium, Carrickfergus Castle and W5. A range of educational active learning days took place related to areas such as Vikings and World War 2. A number of speech and drama festivals and examinations all took place and yet again the pupils performed exceptionally well at these.

This year, Mrs Ballard met with all parents at September class curriculum sessions and shared the outcomes of the School Development Plan and then the Senior Leadership team – Mrs Ballard, Mrs Matthews and Mrs Callen (through parental choice of time and venue voting) met with parents in November for a parents 'Coffee Catch-up' to share events and take questions regarding developments at the Prep. These events were well attended. Due to the information related to fees increase, parents met with the Board of Governors and leaders of the Prep and the senior school in Term 2. Information packs were provided for parents related to the budget and accounts, admissions and further focus group meetings were held to improve the offer of the school and develop marketing and advertising, meetings then followed with a team from a marketing company and plans were made for updating the website, admissions, open day events and connections with the senior school. Since this event, the Board of Governors have looked at admissions criteria for senior school, filming has begun for the website and open day promotions, updates have begun on the website and further visits, use of facilities and teaching has taken place at senior school in sport, drama, science, languages, with new activities such as peer mentors planned for the new term.

Our choir performed at St Anne's Community Christmas singing in the Parish Church with other local primary schools in December.

#### **Safeguarding:**

Updated training was received by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection through the Education Authority's South Education Region (SER). The Designated Teacher in the Prep also attended whole-school meetings about safeguarding and appropriate information was shared each term with the Preparatory Committee of the Board of Governors. There were also termly meetings with the designated Board of Governor for Child Protection for the Prep. All staff received detailed EA Child Protection training in August. The Prep continues to be an Operation Encompass school.

There are 2 staff trained in First Aid at the Prep and all staff have received anaphylaxis training for a number of children with severe allergies. Staff have received updated basic Diabetic training and 2 assistants have received further training from the diabetic nursing team.

All classroom assistants have updated Fire Safety Warden training and all teaching staff have completed fire safety training. All teachers completed the online EA training on risk assessments and the Team trips folder has updated to reflect this when planning trips.

#### **Special Educational Needs:**

Close liaison continued with Education Authority's SER Psychology Department as well as with RISE, who continue to support a pupil. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) have continued to be updated in line with the new PLP (Pupil Learning Profile) and staff have received updated training on. Pupil and parental comments are included on IEPs and parents of pupils with SEN have the opportunity to meet twice a year with Ms Gordon – in January and June. The school is currently awaiting for our newly appointed SEN EA liaison.

#### **Positive Behaviour:**

All staff used daily visuals for the daily timetable and each teacher used a set of neck visuals to support the children. Social stories were used by all staff to support changes in routine, trips, events, etc.

Buddy systems between Prep 1 and Prep 7 have continued across the academic year and they read, completed a range of tasks and even had a fun pirate day!

The 5 golden rules were introduced in assembly and the staff promoted this across the school day. The pupil focus groups have now developed these rules to be more inclusive for all. The classroom assistants completed a workshop session to create the outdoor/playground 5 rules. All staff continue to develop behaviour support. Nurture and sensory session support is in place for all pupils. Mrs Ballard has disseminated the restorative practices training run by the Restorative justice team to the whole staff and incorporated this into the draft Behaviour Policy.

### **Subject/Learning Area Reports:**

#### Assessment –

Leaders: A Patterson and W Ballard

#### What have we done?

1. Data analysis of standardised tests completed in May 2025 by all staff, tracking each individual pupil's progress to enable appropriate provision to be devised.
2. All staff work collaboratively to identify and plan for those children requiring SEN provision, focus group support and gifted and talented, using the stanine bands. The Literacy and Numeracy leaders work with the assessment team and identify areas of weakness in these areas. September (2024)
3. Planning in place across Prep 2-7 for focus groups (September 2024), based on data and class teacher observations/classwork, for focus groups based on PTM and PTE data from May 2024 for the pupils in academic year 2024-25.
4. All teaching staff access GL CDS data from assessments on Teams.
5. Data shared annually with parents: GL assessment data personalised sheets in PTM and PTE distributed to parents, including SAS scores alongside updated information and explanations of standardised scores, October 2024 and June 2025.
6. All data from GL CDS testing in May 2024 transferred to SIMS for all pupils, Prep 3-Prep 7. Tracked against attendance.
7. Assessment Policy reviewed and updated.
8. PASS completed by Prep 3-Prep 7 annually and used to support pupils and form nurture groups in each class. Prep 1 and Prep 2 groups based on teacher observations.
9. Assessment team share PASS data and provide training with all staff in school to ensure everyone is informed about how children are feeling about school and self.

#### BWDW (Being Well, Doing well)

Leaders: W Ballard and K Callen

#### What have we done?

1. A draft Behaviour Policy is in place which reflects all the work and training completed on restorative practices, positive behaviour, wellbeing, SEN, sensory, trauma and highlights the importance of school environment. However, this has not yet been approved by the Governors and has not yet been fully disseminated to parents.
2. The Prep is now a 'Take 5' school which promotes wellbeing, mental health and a positive work environment for pupils and staff.
3. The Prep provides Clear feedback for parents on the school through termly meetings, on the class through Seesaw feedback and individual work feedback.
4. Sullivan prep has developed Intergenerational activities across the school to develop community connection, wellbeing, social understanding and sharing of skills – training has been completed by 100% of staff.
5. All classes have PDMU planning for the academic year using the updated planning format. All teaching staff have successfully completed PRSD observations on PDMU lesson by Mrs Ballard and Mrs Callen.
6. The Prep has been awarded the 'Being Well Doing Well' plaque for the whole-school approach to emotional health and Wellbeing. Audits and Actions Plans have all been quality assured by the Education Authority.

## ICT

Leaders: J Matthews and C Rowan

### What have we done?

- The Prep Department has replaced and updated computer hardware; purchased 2 new interactive screens, one for Dromkeen House and one for Loughhead House in Prep 1 and in Prep 4.
- Staff in Prep 1, Prep 4 and Prep 7 have begun initial training in the use of these interactive screens.
- With the support of SUPPA the Prep has also purchased a second set of iPads which will be used to support classroom teaching and learning.
- Sullivan Prep continues to use Mathletics, Numbots and Read Theory apps and websites. Key Stage 1 classes both use J2Easy software for ICT for coding, data handling, desktop publishing, spelling and number facts practice.
- Mrs Matthews represented Prep at the Bett Conference in London this year and has been introducing the use of Adobe Express across the school.
- Due to ASOS, training for staff, pupils and parents in how to log in and upload work using QR codes has not yet occurred, and this will be moved as a priority to the new academic year.
- All staff have completed updated training in the use of Seesaw, Teams and Word.

## Literacy:

Leaders: N Kelly and W Ballard

### What have we done?

A detailed overview of spelling provision and progression from Prep 1-Prep 4 was devised, considering the blend between synthetic and linguistic, as well as what stage orthographic diversity is explicitly taught.

- A clear overview of writing genres covered across the school was written and is accessible to all staff on Teams. This includes the specific features behind each genre (grammar, structure...). We were pleased that a good range was covered with no glaring gaps in exposure.
- Due to ASOS, all colleagues' planning could not be observed to consider how Literacy lessons were being evaluated and under-/over-achieving pupils flagged.
- The majority of teachers are uploading their termly and weekly Literacy planning to the Teams channel.

## Numeracy

Leaders: K Wilson and W Ballard

### What have we done?

- Analysis completed on the PTM data from May 2024 and 2025 - evaluated what was going well and what our area of focus needed to be. (Mental Mathematics)
- Renewed the Mathletics subscription for Prep 4-Prep 7 by SUPPA - Numbots subscription was also renewed for Prep 1-Prep 3.
- All staff have shared their mental mathematics teaching strategies and use of resources, workbooks and or exercise books for collection of evidence of learning.
- Class teachers have weekly WALT and WILF for numeracy documented on display in classroom/highlighted in weekly planners and shared with parents via Seesaw. Further confirmation and observations required due to ASOS.
- Leader of Numeracy completed coordinator training in May 2025, related to the role and new action planning format-based on outcomes. This has already been in place at the Prep since 2021/22.

## PBL (Prep 1/Prep 2) /ABL(Prep 3-Prep 7) Play based/activity Based Learning

Leader: K Callen/J Lockhart (Foundation Stage)

### What have we done?

Outdoor play planners for Autumn and Winter have been updated using 'The CCEA Learning Outdoors' in Foundation Stage document (2022).

- Prep 1 and Prep 2 have continued to enjoy outdoor play together in the magic garden.

- PBL observations have been adapted by using the traffic light format (the same as our parent/teacher interview write ups) and based on Clare Devlin Observation training. Factual observations have been kept and are in the handover file.
- Outdoor resources have been replenished. Foundation Stage staff shared resources wish list for each zone and the vision was shared with new parents. Parents donated crates, wooden resources and pallets. New resources were purchased by SUPPA and Duke of Edinburgh large equipment. A new buddy wooden tent, a sensory area, water area and mud kitchen have been bought.
- ABL - Prep 3-Prep 7 staff have planned rotation activities for each half term topic and are using Chat GPT, Twinkl and Pinterest for ideas/lessons.
- Topics are clearly agreed across the whole Prep (Prep 1-Prep 7) and reflect the areas required in the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

#### SEN (Special Educational Needs)

Leaders: LSC K Gordon, HoD W Ballard

- All pupils now provide pupil voice and this is shared with staff and parents.
- All parents are given the option to complete comments in the IEP process - 3/18 were returned to LSC.
- Continued work on IEP paperwork to include SMART targets which are achievable will be needed in the new academic year. Evidence gathered to illustrate IEP targets achieved
- All classroom assistants have received updated training regarding PASS data/ Nurture groups and behaviour support .
- All classroom assistants complete a daily log book.
- Feedback format of teaching from LSC updated to reflect factual observations and next steps.
- RISE training log updated by LSC after staff completed training questionnaire.
- HoD and LSC have both completed Graduated Response training 2025.

#### WAU (World Around Us)

Leaders: K Callen and J Matthews

What have we done?

- An audit of current WAU topics and topic webs for each Key Stage was completed with all staff and we now ensure coverage of all strands in this area of learning.
- Foundation Stage teachers have updated the knowledge, understanding and skills in Interdependence, Place, Movement and Energy and Change Over Time into planners with some altered topics in Prep 1 and Prep 2 to incorporate more science.
- Weekly ABL sessions are operated by Prep 3-Prep 7 staff with planned rotation of activities for each half term topic – staff using Chat GPT, Twinkl and Pinterest for gathering of ideas with photo evidence gathered.
- Staff at the Prep have also completed intergenerational training and understand the rationale; intergeneration activity was paused due to ASOS but will be carried forward into 2025/26 planning.

### 3 THE SECONDARY DEPARTMENT

#### (i) Introduction

The Governors' Annual Report to parents represents one of the principal ways that the school communicates the details of its major activities for the year just ended. It contains a great deal of information, much of it prescribed and stipulated in regulation issued by the Department of Education. However, over and above all the facts and figures, it is hoped that there is also some indication of the vibrant, dynamic and successful school at the heart of it all. Above all we hope it reflects our pupils' pride in their school and enjoyment of school life. Just how successful the school is can be judged in many ways and a number of the indicators are included in this publication.

The Board of Governors and staff of Sullivan Upper School are committed to maintaining and improving the high standards for which the school is known. We continue to achieve excellent academic results; provide a rich diet of extracurricular activities which helps build the pupils' character, and we continue to prioritise their wellbeing through supporting our pupils with strong pastoral and careers structures. We are working towards realising our vision that the school becomes known throughout both North Down and Northern Ireland for being the best at treating people as individuals: our pupils, staff, parents and visitors to the school.

#### (ii) Curriculum

At KS3 pupils have access to a wide-range of subjects in line with the statutory requirements. Learning for Life and Work has dedicated periods and the cross-curricular skills are monitored and developed. The Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators play a vital role, not only at this Key Stage but throughout the school. The tasks for Using ICT have been developed and embedded over a number of years and, while they are assessed, the results are not reported in levels.

The school wishes to keep the breadth of the curriculum at KS4. Consequently, in addition to the core subjects of English, English Literature, Mathematics and Religious Studies, all pupils are required to study at least one subject from the categories of Science and Modern Languages. We returned to directing pupils to choose at least one subject from Geography, History or Home Economics this year but are reviewing the process of subject choice at GCSE for 2026/27. Learning for Life is available as a GCSE subject, but all pupils also have one period per week to follow a Pastoral and Work programme. The school, at present, offers 25 GCSE subjects.

Pupils are required to select three or four subjects to study at KS5. Many pupils begin with four AS Levels and reduce these to three A2 subjects in Year 14. To date, the school has offered pupils a free choice of A Level subjects and then has worked to timetable the combinations. In a small number of cases the combination of subjects requested by the pupil cannot be accommodated or cannot be accommodated without clashes on the timetable. Despite this small number of disappointments, the school has resisted returning to the system, used by many schools, of having blocks from which the pupils must make their choices as this greatly restricts the pupils' options. As financial constraints continue, it is to be hoped the present system can remain in place. Health and Social Care and Digital Technology have been successfully added to the KS5 curriculum and will continue into A2 Level. We also saw a return to pupils choosing German AS and a timetabled class will be running for the next academic year. At present 24 subjects are offered at KS5 within Sullivan.

The Entitlement Framework continues to be part of government educational policy. The rationale behind it is to provide access to a wide-range of courses for students. GCSE pupils should be able to choose from at least 21 subjects with at least one third being classified as "general" and one third "applied". Similarly, at Sixth Form, students should have access to at least 21 courses with the same one third stipulation for general and applied subjects. In terms of subjects offered to pupils we more than comply with this target. However, occasionally a few classes do not run because of the very small number of pupils selecting them.

Regrettably, school budgets continue to be under considerable strain. Sullivan has been able, to date, to offer and deliver a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum for its pupils. Although this has resulted in larger class sizes at times, the high quality of teaching and learning continues, enabling the young people of Sullivan to fulfil their potential.



Self-evaluation procedures are in place which are used to enable Departments to evaluate and adjust schemes of work at all Key Stages as required. Heads of Department, in response to external examination results, the School Development Plan and other current issues draw up, in collaboration with their colleagues, a Departmental Development Plan which is evaluated at the end of the year.

The timetable was drawn up in the summer term for implementation in the 2025/26 academic year.

In August 2024, Mr Heaney and Mrs Anderson outlined their approaches for whole-school Literacy and Numeracy development. Departments were asked to submit their Literacy and Numeracy targets included in their Departmental Plans. It was hoped that these core skills would be highlighted more effectively, and subject teachers would find it easier to focus on their department targets more consistently. In more practical subjects a focus on sequencing was suggested. In August 2024, Mrs Anderson held a workshop for the teachers of subjects with a high numeracy content. Numerical questions in relevant GCSE papers were discussed and the approach used to teach the content. This was coupled with how to use the new calculator that most pupils in Year 8 would be using.

Departments submitted Action Plans to Mrs Anderson and Mr Heaney, clearly defining their focus for 2024/25.

The focus for Literacy in 2024/25 was to improve pupil oracy within their subject groups and across all Key Stages. In Numeracy, the priority was to support the Year 11 cohort in Mathematics and across other subject areas. This particular cohort entered Sullivan without selection based on AQE scores, resulting in a greater need for differentiated teaching and increased support. Mathematics teachers observed that, throughout Key Stage 3, many pupils in this group struggled to retain knowledge. Consequently, it was agreed that, for this year only, all Year 11 pupils would sit a GCSE module (with those in Further Mathematics classes sitting two modules as usual). The aim was to help pupils reach their full potential. To facilitate this, and building on the success of banding in Year 10, Year 11 pupils were allocated to classes based on their likely module entry. This allowed teachers to deliver content at an appropriate level and pace. The results in August 2025 suggest that this strategy was highly effective: of the 88 pupils taking one module, 52% achieved an A grade, 93% achieved at least a C\*, and 99% achieved a C or higher. In a survey of the pupils post their module results the majority indicated they had achieved a grade higher than they expected. A small cohort of pupils who are not taking English Literature, took one module in English Language. A specialist member of English Department, Ms C Bowman-Kinnear was assigned to the class only studying English Language. The department adopted a differentiated approach, developed bespoke resources and created specific schemes of work and assessment plans to support the learning of this cohort of pupils.

All Heads of Departments are encouraged to approach Mr Heaney and Mrs Anderson for help in researching strategies and finding resources to improve literacy standards in their subjects. Literacy and Numeracy remains a fixed item on every Head of Departments meeting agenda.

Both the English Department and the Mathematics Department compiled a list, distributed in October, of pupils in the Years 8-12 group who experience difficulties when applying and using Mathematics and, where practical, offer ideas and strategies to help teachers. Mrs Anderson and Mr Heaney also used information gained from GL Progress Tests in Mathematics and English (taken by Year 8 pupils in the Autumn term) to highlight individual pupil needs and inform staff of perceived issues or difficulties. Pupils in Year 10 also sat the pilot of CCEA Adaptive tests in English and Mathematics to provide further diagnostic data.

Accelerated Reader continues to be a very successful resource which monitors the reading progress of the KS3 pupils, provides useful tracking data on their reading and motivates the pupils to read more. Pupils are provided with a Reading age three times a year and this can be shared with Heads of Department in other subjects to inform them of literacy standards. The English Department uses this data to track reading progress, and the reading ages are shared with parents. The English Department also continues to provide all departments with a list of pupils in every year group who require support in Literacy and possible remediation strategies are also given.

The English Department appreciates the importance of its contribution to whole-school Literacy standards and attempts to encourage better Literacy through annual competitions in short story writing and poetry. The annual school Poetry Competition continues to be conducted by Mrs Graham. Through the Creative Writing Club, the Librarian and Mr Heaney support pupils to prepare for and enter external competitions.

The Debating Society continued to meet regularly in the Autumn and Spring Terms and enabled a range of students from across several year groups to meet and develop their confidence in speaking in front of each other. The Concern Schools Debate competition enables students to develop sophisticated listening skills as they respond to intricate arguments about sustainable development issues and a team of students once again participated in the League Phase of this competition. Senior Students were again tested at the QUB Literific Schools event in March, where they debated motions about Brexit, and wider politics with students from St Columb's, Methodist College Belfast, Portadown High School and others.

The Mathematics Department actively encourages pupils to participate in events and competitions beyond the classroom. This year, the Maths Club for Key Stage 3 pupils adopted a new format, with students working in teams to tackle problems that extended beyond the standard curriculum. Teams earned points for correct answers, and prizes were awarded at various points throughout the year. This new approach proved successful, resulting in increased pupil participation.

A large number of pupils also took part in the UKMT Maths Challenges at Senior, Intermediate, and Junior levels. Additionally, a team of four pupils - two from Year 10 and two from Year 9 - represented the school in the Junior Team Challenge held at St Malachy's College, Belfast against teams from across Northern Ireland. They competed in rounds such as the group round, cross-number, shuttle round, and an exciting relay.

The Mathematics Department ran their now traditional Pi-Day competition on 14 March where pupils recall pi to as many decimal places as they can remember. It was encouraging to have pupils across all age groups taking part. The eventual winner recited pi to 1415 decimal places!

Sparx Maths is now firmly embedded in our Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 provision. Its intelligent algorithms generate personalised homework for each pupil, ensuring that tasks are tailored to individual learning needs. In addition to homework, Sparx also supports the development of pupils' times tables and allows staff to monitor pupils in this important skill. Throughout the year, pupils are encouraged to go beyond their compulsory homework by completing additional tasks on the Sparx platform. To motivate and reward this extra effort, we award achievement points for extra work and 'levelling up'. We also hold a prize draw at the end of each half-term for pupils who have completed extra work. These incentives have proven effective in encouraging greater engagement and independent learning.

**(iii) Examination Results**

See Appendices 8-14.

**(iv) The Public Examinations System**

The administration of the public examinations system by the school has increased in range and complexity over the years. Last year the Examinations Officer entered over five hundred students for a variety of GCSE, AS Level and A2 Level examinations. In addition this year, all Year 11 pupils were entered for one Module of GCSE Mathematics, and sixteen Year 11 pupils were entered for their GCSE English Unit 1 module.

GCSE and GCE returned to full specifications with enhanced grading being available for pupils entering their terminal year in the 2025 series set at a completion amount of 40%.

Results for A2, AS and GCSE were issued in August, and services for Reviews of Marking and Access to scripts were offered this year by all awarding bodies and processed in line with pre-pandemics guidance and service levels.



**(v) Pastoral**

The school continues to operate a clearly defined and active system for pastoral care with a team of teachers operating agreed policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated. The Vice-Principal with responsibility for pastoral matters leads a team made up of Year Heads, Form Teachers, SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) all of whom discharge significant pastoral functions. The School Nurse also holds a pivotal role in the pastoral care system.

A programme of personal development, citizenship and employability, as well as other relevant topics is provided as part of Learning for Life and Work to each year group. All pupils participate in Anti-Bullying week in November when fun and educational activities are organised to promote awareness and emphasise the need to look after one another.

The School Council meets monthly to address issues raised by the pupils. Council members also provided input for the updated Mobile Phone Policy, whole-school attendance focus, anti-bullying survey and forward suggestions for SUPA on how funding could be best utilised.

Pupil emotional health and well

being continues to remain a priority. Wellbeing events are scheduled throughout the year and each month there is a specific focus on one of the 5 Steps to Wellbeing (Connect, Be Active, Learn, Give, and Take Notice).

Whole school attendance increased from 94.3% in 2023-2024 to 95.3% in 2024-2025 as there was an emphasis on this throughout the year. Pupils were encouraged to sign up for the SIMS Student App to monitor their own attendance. % attendance was provided for each pupil on a half-termly basis and DE attendance guidance was highlighted to parents on reports.

The Independent Counselling Service, Familyworks, has continued to provide valuable support on a weekly basis to pupils of all ages throughout the school. The demand for counselling continues to remain high so an additional counsellor is provided to meet the needs of the pupils.

The Peer Mentor system has been further developed through a programme of activities for Year 8 to Year 11 in Form Class on Friday mornings led by the class mentors and coordinated by the Deputy Head Girl and Deputy Head Boy. Several younger pupils benefit from the guidance of the Year 14 Peer Mentors on an individual basis.

Under the supervision of the Adult Assistants the Learning Support Resource Room continues to be used on a one-to-one basis by pupils as a conducive place to learn. Within the room there is a sensory area, resourced with equipment relevant to the needs of the pupils. Here pupils can have quiet time out when feeling overwhelmed or anxious.

The Bereavement Policy, Intimate Care Policy, Child Protection Policy and Mobile Phone Policy have been reviewed. The Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teachers and School Nurse provide good support for pupils when required. The Safeguarding Team meets twice during the year, chaired by the Designated Governor for Child Protection (Mrs A Gordon).

**(vi) Special Educational Needs (SEN) Provision**

Sullivan Upper School welcomes applications from all sections of the community, regardless of race, religion, gender, or disability. Parents of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) are encouraged to attend the school's Open Day, where the SENCO will be available for individual appointments to discuss their child's specific needs. A copy of the school's Special Educational Needs policy is available upon request.

**Implementation of the SEND Act (2016)**

The school continues to implement the updated Code of Practice in line with the SEND Act (2016), with guidance from the Education Authority (EA) SEND team. A significant number of pupils remain on the SEN Code of Practice at Stages 1, 2, and 3. For pupils who have transitioned from the Code,

the use of pupil passports - developed in collaboration with Form Teachers - has proven effective in maintaining continuity of support and incorporating pupil voice.

### **Access to the Curriculum**

The SENCO and Assistant SENCO work diligently to ensure that pupils with Statements and those at other stages of the Code of Practice have full access to the Northern Ireland Curriculum. This is achieved through the development of Personal Learning Plans (PLPs), created in partnership with staff, parents, and relevant external agencies. Each PLP outlines expected outcomes and strategies, which are discussed directly with the pupil to ensure their engagement and understanding.

### **Annual Review Process**

The annual review for pupils with Statements of SEN involves all stakeholders in decisions regarding educational provision, curriculum choices and transition planning. This includes input from the EA Transition Service and the Northern Ireland Careers Service. EA Connect is now used to facilitate contributions from all parties, including pupil voice.

### **Use of Technology**

Technology plays a vital role in supporting pupils with SEN. Both the adult assistant team and pupils make extensive use of digital tools. There has been a notable increase in the use of apps and iPads to support pupils with specific learning difficulties and organisational challenges. Wireless keyboards have also helped develop typing skills and promote independence.

### **External Support and Collaboration**

The SENCO oversees educational provision for pupils with SEN, liaising with external agencies and maintaining communication with parents. During the 2024–25 academic year, support was sought from the following services:

- Autism Advisory and Intervention Service (AAIS);
- Educational Psychology;
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS);
- Northern Ireland Careers Service (NICS);
- Exceptional Teaching Arrangements Service (ETA).

### **Staff Training and Development**

The SENCO and Assistant SENCO continue to engage in regular professional development and have actively implemented the revised Code of Practice. Training is shared with staff to ensure a consistent approach across the school. Funding from the EA supported this initiative.

In addition, both SENCOs participated in training related to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) access arrangements, which informed the assessment of a growing number of pupils with specific learning difficulties (SpLD). Other staff training included:

- Emotional School-Based Non-Attendance

### **(vii) Extracurricular**

The summer holiday is often a busy time for Sullivan pupils, and they were involved in an impressive range of activities prior to the start of term in August 2024.

Nine of our pupils sang with the National Youth Choirs (two with the prestigious Senior Choir) following a residential at Campbell College, whilst two Sullivan pupils performed with the Ulster Youth Orchestra.

A group of Sullivan sixth formers took part in an expedition to Tanzania with a charity called Go Make a Difference, where there were involved in various social action projects, including building goat sheds and wells.

In terms of summer representative honours, ten male Sullivan rugby players played in various Ulster representative teams over the holiday period, with a Year 14 pupil captaining the Ulster U18 team to

their inter-provincial title. He later represented Ireland against England. A Year 14 girl played for the Ulster U18s rugby team against Connacht. Four Sullivan hockey players represented Ulster successfully at the UK Schools games in the summer, with two on the gold medal winning team. Eleven girls represented various Northern Cricket Union cricket teams at U17, U15 and U13 level in the interprovincial competitions.

There was also considerable success in individual sporting competitions over the summer. A Year 11 pupil represented Ireland at the Isle of Man International Table Tennis competition and the Prague International Open. Two Sullivan sisters in Years 11 and 12 won the Irish National Sailing championships, placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the UK Championships and 25<sup>th</sup> in the World Championships. Two Sullivan athletes were part of the U17 4x400m relay team which won gold at the Irish championships for their club. A Sullivan swimmer qualified for 10 separate events at the Irish Youth and Senior National Championships in Dublin. Meanwhile a Sullivan Irish dancer was placed 8<sup>th</sup> in the National American Championships in Dallas in July.

The summer is also a busy time for the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award pupils, and they successfully completed their Gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition in the Wicklow mountains in August.

The school places a high value on the extracurricular success of the pupils. In October we held two special Achievement Assemblies in school. Trophies, school honours and Silver Robins were distributed to pupils who had achieved highly in a huge range of non-academic areas of school life. Our guest, former Ireland hockey player Stephen Redpath, gave an inspiring address to pupils, talking to them about his career in hockey and encouraging them to pursue their dreams and to persevere in their endeavours.

We have aimed to embed this recognition as a routine part of school life with the Monthly Newsletter celebrating achievements and through the weekly Deserving Pupils sessions. During the academic year, 338 pupils were nominated by 47 different staff. This gives the Principal opportunity to talk to a wide range of pupils and it is pleasing that this is being supported by staff and appreciated by the pupils. Parents are notified that their children have been nominated by a card sent home. Pupils are nominated for academic excellence or effort, extracurricular success or for demonstrating the school motto.

It was a busy year for school sport. The school has established itself as a top 6 rugby school and are regularly competitive with those schools traditionally associated as strong in their area, eg Sullivan have enjoyed four consecutive wins against Methodist College Belfast. For the 1<sup>st</sup>XV the Schools Cup run came to an end in a thrilling home quarter final against Belfast Royal Academy in a very close game. The team had earlier enjoyed a trip to the Kingspan Stadium for a win against Banbridge as a curtain raiser to an Ulster home game. The Medallion XV defeated Larne Grammar School in the quarter final of the Medallion Shield before drawing 12-12 with Friends School Lisburn in the semi-final. Unfortunately, they lost the replay 8-7.

Girls rugby continues to develop and we hosted a girls rugby blitz at which we had U12, U14, U16 and U18 teams. A Year 14 was named the Danske Bank Girls' School Rugby Player of the Year for 2023-2024 and two additional pupils played for Ulster representative teams.

We have now successfully bid for funding from Ulster rugby to support the appointment of a Director of Rugby on a temporary basis.

Our hockey teams also enjoyed considerable success. The girls 1<sup>st</sup>XI exited the Schools Cup at the quarter final stage, and the 4<sup>th</sup>XI reached the final of their cup before suffering a narrow 1-0 defeat to Methodist College Belfast. However the 3<sup>rd</sup>XI won the Gibson Plate with a fine 4-1 win against Regent House School in the final, whilst the U14s won the Junior Shield defeating Lurgan Junior High School in run-ins in the final. In terms of representative honours, two players represented Ulster U16s at an interprovincial 7s tournament and a Year 14 represented the U18 team.

The boys 1<sup>st</sup>XI hockey team qualified for the Irish Schools competition and enjoyed a successful finals with two wins in their group. They then suffered a narrow defeat in the semi-final of the Herbie

Sharman trophy. The 1<sup>st</sup>XI also reached the Burney Cup semi-final after wins against Methodist College Belfast and Bangor Grammar School. In the semi-final they lost 2-0 to a strong Royal Belfast Academical Institute side. Three senior players represented Ireland v England, and four Sullivan players helped Ulster win the U18 boys interprovincial title.

2025 saw the school's most successful cricket season for many years. Pride of place goes to the Girls 1stXI who won the Schools Cup for the first time, the day after term broke up with a comfortable victory over Methodist College Belfast in the final, played at Campbell College Belfast. The boys 1stXI also reached the final after good victories against Cambell College Belfast and Regent House School. However Royal Belfast Academical Institute proved too strong in the final. Meanwhile the Year 9 girls won their cup competition defeating Strathearn School in the final, the Year 11 boys won the Plate, and the Year 8 boys reached the Plate final.

Two of our U17 girls represented Ireland in their summer tour and two of our male players went on an exciting tour with the NCU team to India.

Netball continues to develop at Sullivan with the senior team winning their Blitz at Downpatrick defeating Grosvenor, Down High and Shimna High School and our minor girls team narrowly losing their Shield final to Ballymena Academy.

At the Ulster Schools Cross-Country championships the Junior Girls team placed 2<sup>nd</sup> overall.

Sullivan athletes enjoyed an excellent weekend at the Ulster Combined Events Championships, winning Golds in the U13 and U17 girls pentathlon events and Bronze in the U15 girls event. Five Sullivan athletes competed at the All-Ireland Combined Athletics Events finals in Dublin. A Year 10 finished 5<sup>th</sup>.

Sullivan pupils enjoyed great success at the Ulster Athletics finals with 8 qualifying for the All-Ireland finals across 9 events, including a Year 12 breaking a long jump record which had stood since 2014. A Year 10 boy came 3<sup>rd</sup> in the high jump. Two of our athletes represented Ulster at the Tailteann Games. The school's own annual Sports Day was a highly competitive event held at Bangor Sportsplex.

In swimming a Year 11 pupil won the Joe Fitzpatrick trophy for the most promising female swimmer in Ulster at the Ulster Championships, and there was also a Silver medal for the 15-16 Girls' Freestyle Relay. A Year 8 represented Sullivan at the Irish Minor Schools Gala in Dublin. A Year 13 boy travelled to London with 33 members of the Swim Ulster Regional Squad to compete in the Wycombe Premier Meet. He won Silver in the 200m breaststroke and Bronze in the 100m breaststroke. Meanwhile a Year 12 was selected to train at the Olympic pool in London following the Ulster Schools competition.

There has also been pleasing success in racquet sports with five Sullivan teams qualifying for the Ulster Schools Badminton finals. Two Sullivan pupils won the U12 and U14 National Tennis competitions in Dublin. The Year 8 pupil also won a European Under 12 Tennis title and is the current national ranked number one player in Ireland in both singles and doubles. The Senior Girls won the Senior Schools Cup beating Victoria in the final. The Junior Boys team also won their Cup, defeating Methodist College Belfast in the final. Meanwhile, the Minor boys won the Minor Shield.

Meanwhile in table tennis there was a Gold medal for Sullivan at U12 and U17 boys and Bronze medals at U14 girls, U16 boys and U19 girls at the Ulster Championships. A Year 9 girl retained her Irish National title. During the Easter holiday a Year 11 competed with the Ireland table tennis team at a competition in Germany.

Eight Sullivan pupils competed at the British gymnastics championships with distinction, with two winning a Silver medal in the U19 Mixed Pair.

Our fencers continue to enjoy success with a Year 14 winning the Women's Foil at the Derry Open. At the first NI Foil Series event Sullivan fencers won 11 medals, including 2 gold. At the second

series of the year, they won 8 medals including one gold. They also competed with distinction at the Irish Open. It is pleasing to see a new crop of fencers coming through. In terms of representative honours two pupils are competing at UK level, one of whom who was chosen to represent Ireland at an international competition in Riga. Three fencers recently represented Northern Ireland at the British Youth Championships, and at the recent Irish Youth Open three Sullivan fencers achieved impressive Bronze medals at U12, U14 and U16 level.

Sullivan's sailors won the Royal Yacht Association Northern Ireland Sailing Championships Schools Cup. The competition saw all classes of boats from across Northern Ireland compete at Strangford Lough Sailing Club. Two Sullivan sisters won the Lady Champions Cup. This pair won the Ards and North Down Borough Under 18 Sports Team of 2024 Award for Sailing. The award was to celebrate achievement across the breadth of sports within the Borough. They have also won the Royal Yacht Association Northern Ireland Young Female Sailor of the Year Award for 2025.

In golf a Year 11 pupil won the Ulster 16 Golf Championships at Lurgan Golf Club, and a Year 10 finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Golf Ireland event in Connaught and won a Justin Rose qualifying event at the Lough Eyrne course.

There have been other impressive individual successes in sports not offered directly by the school by our pupils. Two Sullivan pupils have secured representative honours in football, with a Year 13 being selected for the Canadian U17 team, and a Year 11 selected for the Northern Ireland football team to take part in a UEFA development tournament in Cyprus.

Meanwhile a Year 11 boy won a gold medal at the GB Weightlifting Championships and competed for Ireland at the European Championships. He is now Irish Age Grade Champion in the U15 71kg category too and current British Number 1 in the U15 67kg category.

A Year 9 attended Dance Excellence in Los Angeles after being selected to represent Northern Ireland as part of Elite Team NI.

Music and the arts also continued to flourish during the year. The highlight of the first term in Drama were the two innovative performances of Peter Pan in the Drama Theatre. This played to packed audiences and, in keeping with the school's vision, all who auditioned were able to perform. The audiences were very impressed with the talents of our Babysharkz Theatre Company.

In Music there was a superb Charity Concert at Orangefield Presbyterian Church in November. This was an excellent evening of music making with engaging performances from many of the school's instrumental groups as well as soloists. Once again St Philip and St James Parish Church was packed for the school's Annual Christmas Carol Service which saw atmospheric performances from the school's choirs and some instrumentalists, as well as impressive readings of the traditional Nine Lessons format.

As ever, the House Music event was very enthusiastically participated in and received. This was won this year by Speers.

The musical highlight of the year was the stunning Spring Concert with over 300 Sullivan musicians performing a wide range of high-quality music in the Ulster Hall, across many different genres. This was a very fitting way to mark the impending retirements of Mrs Montgomery and Mrs Hartin and a testament to the impact they have had on Sullivan Music.

Sullivan pupils enjoyed considerable success across many categories in the Hollywood and Lagan Festivals.

A Year 8 has featured prominently in the second series of "Pickle Storm" alongside some well-known local and British actors including Donna Preston, Justin Fletcher, Michael Condron. It has aired on Children's BBC/BBC iPlayer. Four Sullivan pupils were chosen to perform in 'Alice in Wonderland' at The Youth Lyric.



Sullivan has a flourishing cadet contingent, the biggest ACF contingent in Northern Ireland. Our Cadet contingent enjoy a wide range of exciting activities including adventurous training. Over Easter they won the Cadet Calcutta Cup competing against 7 other contingents. They also retained their First Aid trophy. A Year 12 won the Champion of Arms.

Beyond the curriculum, there continues to be extensive academic enrichment activities.

Sullivan Upper has been successful in achieving the International Eco-School's Green Flag this year. The theme of the Eco-Club has been, "There is no Planet B" and we were awarded the Green Flag for our work on this theme which has included the weekly Eco-Club, curricular programme and the creation of the Outdoor Classroom.

A Level Chemists took part in the International Chemistry Olympiad with 2 gaining Gold awards, 3 Silver and 3 Bronze. A Year 14 gained the highest mark achieved at Sullivan since the competition was introduced. A team of Sullivan pupils took part in the Top of the Bench competition, organised by the Royal Society of Chemistry which involved an experiment, a written test and quiz.

In March, a team of Senior Students went to Queen's University Belfast to compete in their annual Literific Debating Schools Competition, the first time for Sullivan.

Two Sullivan teams competed in the National Reading Quiz competition in Portadown, one of which placed 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 26 teams. Meanwhile the school Librarian organised a series of activities for World Book Day and has been running the Carnegie Medal Shadowing Book Club.

Our Geography World Wise Quiz Team came remarkably close to successfully defending their title from last year, coming runners up this year by one point!

The Moving Image Arts Department continue to enjoy significant success in the annual CCEA showcase awards with our pupils winning GCSE and A2 Best Film categories.

Our Concern Debate team continues to enjoy competing against other schools and developing their public speaking skills.

In Languages, a number of pupils entered the Anthea Bell Young Translators competition, with three Sullivan pupils winning their categories.

The Food and Nutrition Department organised another very successful Bake-Off Competition with the theme being "Sustainable Gastronomy".

The school is seeking to broaden its extracurricular offer to our pupils and find something for everyone. The most significant development this year has been the introduction of a new Dance Club/Team(s) at Sullivan. We have been grateful for financial support of SUPA in this. They have enjoyed tremendous success winning both the Junior and Senior Gold medals at the prestigious NICMAC competition, as well as a further 3 Gold, 2 Silvers and Bronze in individual and duet events.

During the year, the school piloted the SistersIn leadership programme to our Year 13 girls with pupils undertaking worthwhile leadership projects.

The academic year also saw the introduction of a new Crochet Club began with pupils in Year 11-Year 14 meeting weekly to enjoy learning this new skill.

Charity work remains an important part of the school's culture and there has been extensive charitable work undertaken by the pupils during the academic year with highlights including Children in Need being celebrated with events including a penalty shoot-out competition and a Pudsey flashmob. Meanwhile significant numbers of our pupils and staff again ran the Bangor 10K in memory of Mrs Merriman and in support of Cancer Focus NI. Time to Talk day was again well supported and the Year 14 Charity Week raised £880 for Storehouse along with a large donation of coats and trainers and £1887 for Marie Curie. The school again supported the East Belfast Mission Christmas

Hamper Appeal. School prefects also assisted with the highly successful Sullivan Gala Ball in May organised by Sullivan Connect and SUPA.

The school continues to run a full programme of educational trips and visits, both relating to the curriculum and extracurricular activities.

The first residential visit of the academic year was with nine Year 13 pupils who enjoyed a visit to Brasenose College, Oxford for their Open Day. The visit was part-funded by Brasenose. It is hoped that this link will increase our success with Oxbridge applications in the future.

42 Senior Hockey players enjoyed a successful tour to Valencia which combined 4 matches with sampling local culture and a visit to Europe's largest aquarium. Meanwhile the U14s celebrated the end of their Junior hockey at Sullivan with an action-packed mini tour to Dublin. The girls played matches v Alexandra College, enjoyed dinner at Nando's, a little bit of shopping and finished with a visit to Jump Zone.

This year the ski trip visited Ehrwald in Austria which was thoroughly enjoyed by a large party of Year 13 and staff. They experienced excellent skiing conditions and made impressive progress throughout the week.

27 GCSE Music students completed a three-day trip to London which included a tour of the London College of Contemporary Music and a performance of Les Misérables.

Over the summer the Christian Union enjoyed a week-long residential during the summer where outward bound activities were combined with Bible study at Gartan in Co. Donegal.

In terms of more local curriculum enhancement, Year 13 English Literature students enjoyed a visit to Seamus Heaney's homeplace, and AS Geographers enjoyed a day at Murlough beach before Easter. They collected data on the sand dune ecosystem, working efficiently in their teams. Year 11 geographers were able to join an archaeological dig at Moira Demesne Community.

Meanwhile Food and Nutrition students enjoyed a trip to Ulster University's Academic restaurant. Pupil voice is important, and our School Councillors enjoyed a trip to meet the NI Children's Commissioner to add their voices to issues of concern in education.

Several special events were held during the year. We were delighted to host our first Careers Fair in conjunction with Sullivan Connect in October and pupils in Years 10-14 found this to be a highly informative and useful day. Our Year 14s have also benefitted from an interview skills event.

There was a busy series of events for Anti-bullying week. The pupils created a respect wall and odd socks day was popular. World Mental Health Day was observed with the pupils wearing yellow accessories and the creation of a collaborative worry tree.

The end of the winter sports season was celebrated in style with presentation awards nights for Boys Rugby, Girls Hockey/Netball and Boys Hockey at the Clayton Hotel in Belfast.

Various seasonal wellbeing activities took place including the traditional Twelve Days of Christmas led by Year 14, an Easter Egg hunt and a successful Sullivan Fest (supported by SUPA) to close the academic year.

Part of school development plan has been to seek to develop the school's House competition. This year's highlights included a University Challenge Competition (with the Principal as quiz master) and a House Chess competition. The overall results of the House competitions were:

Sports Winner: Praeger  
Music Winner: Speers  
House Minor Competitions Winner: Grant  
Achievement Points Winner: Speers



The overall final result was: 1<sup>st</sup> Praeger, 2<sup>nd</sup> Speers, 3<sup>rd</sup> McAlester, 4<sup>th</sup> Grant.

The school has also been seeking to review the school's Honours system during the year and a proposal to make this system more inclusive has been discussed with the School Council, staff and Governors. A parental survey on the issue in the summer term received a positive response.

**(viii) Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance**

Sullivan Upper School runs an active Careers and Guidance programme from Key Stage 3 to Sixth Form and beyond. Currently four members of staff are responsible for coordinating and delivering the programme. Opportunities are sought for the involvement of outside organisations and individuals to participate in the provision of careers guidance. The Careers Department uses the expertise of the Northern Ireland Careers Service, local universities, local business, parents, and past pupils, to enrich the Careers Programme. Unifrog, the careers platform, is utilised to support all pupils as individuals with their educational and career choices. Pupils in Years 10-14 also attend a Sullivan Careers Fair. There will also be a Higher-Level Apprenticeship Fair for Years 12-14.

The provision includes:

**Key Stage 3**

- Input into the Employability element of the Learning for Life and Work programme.
- Input into the pastoral programme.
- Guidance interviews for pupils and parents for GCSE choices.

**Key Stage 4**

- Input into the pastoral programme for Years 11 and 12.
- The provision and delivery of a weekly period of Careers Education in Year 12.
- Parental support and advice regarding choices at 16+.
- Guidance interviews for pupils and parents for choices at 16+.
- Outside speakers informing pupils about career paths.
- Promotion of career-related opportunities.
- Consultations with the Northern Ireland Careers Service for all pupils.

**Sixth Form**

- A taught Careers programme in Year 13.
- A week of work shadowing in Year 13.
- A 3-day CEIAG enrichment programme for Year 13 pupils on UCAS Hub and Apply and a personal statement workshop.
- Organisation of Higher Education (HE) applications (UCAS).
- Consultations for pupils prior to their HE applications.
- Various outside speakers and opportunities to attend Open Days and conferences.
- Interview skills and practice for Year 14 pupils.
- Practice interviews and preparation for Oxbridge candidates.
- Promotion of career-related opportunities

**After Care**

- A reference writing service for former pupils.
- The facilitation of HE applications for former pupils.

**(ix) Staffing**

In terms of staffing, there have been significant changes during the year to the staff team at Sullivan.

It is that team that realises the school vision. The Governors would like to record their thanks to the staff for all their efforts over the last academic year, both teaching and non-teaching. The last few years have not been an easy period in schools and the issues surrounding underfunding in the education system remain, but their commitment to our pupils has not wavered.

A key item on current plan was the restructuring of Senior Management positions at Sullivan. This exercise was carried out during the academic year and the new Senior Management Team has been created. The vision is to:

- create capacity for a more strategic focus;
- build capacity into our pastoral structures;
- build a more distributed leadership model with greater flexibility;
- provide opportunities for staff development.

A key part of this change is enhancing our pastoral structures with the creation of three Heads of Key Stage roles. These new roles have joined the Principal, Bursar and Vice-Principals in the new Senior Management Team. They each also have whole school areas of responsibility. The new appointments are:

Key Stage 3: **Jacqueline Kelly** (Assessment & Reporting; Staff Cover)

Key Stage 4: **Chris Heaney** (Director of E-Learning, School Events)

Key Stage 5: **Steven Drennan** (Staff Welfare and Development, Use of Data)

There have been some notable departures from the staff team during the year.

Good non-teaching staff are the very heartbeat of a school; a school's success is dependent upon them. No-one could this be said of more than Sam Graham, who served Sullivan Upper School as the Facilities Manager since 1989. During this time Sam has cared for the fabric of the school as if it was his own home. He has worked tirelessly to ensure that the school is safe, secure and presentable. In doing so he has worked with a wide-range of colleagues, from teachers to contractors and other outside agencies. His commitment has extended far beyond the hours any job description could describe. He has overseen many significant material changes to the site, skilfully project managing these changes including the building of the impressive new pavilion. His time at the school has seen much change in the areas of legislation around health and safety and statutory requirements, and he has effectively guided other senior leaders in this regard. He has a great eye for detail and has been innovative and skilful in his use of the resources he has had available. He has led his team with energy and determination, always leading from the front. His care for Sullivan will be very difficult to replace.

Linda Montgomery joined Sullivan in 1990 from Banbridge Academy as Director of Music. Her contribution to the life of the school has been immense over 35 years, both inside and outside of the classroom. Under her leadership school music has become a cornerstone of the life of the school and it is a significant factor in many families choosing Sullivan for their children. The range and quality of school music have been very impressive. This has taken considerable care, energy and dedication. There have been many successes over the years: not least the UTV Choir of the Year in 1997. Linda has made Sullivan music known throughout the country and it is the stunning performances of our choirs which has seen her finest work. Her influence on Music in Northern Ireland has extended far beyond this with her senior role at CCEA. Within school too she has made a much wider contribution to school life and in driving better performance. In September 2012 Linda was appointed Senior Manager (Assessment & Reporting) and, in this role, has worked tirelessly to try to improve the quality of assessment and strive for consistency. She has also led many trips with great efficiency. We wish her a long and happy retirement.

Victoria McCaughey was also appointed by John Young, in 1991. All who have worked with her will know is a conscientious, meticulous teacher, devoted to providing the best for her pupils. She taught in two mobile classrooms before graduating to Room A. She has made a very valuable contribution to the wider life of the school, accompanying trips to Germany and more recently to Northern France. Victoria is highly skilled and adaptable having taught French, German and Spanish (the only member of the department able to teach all 3 Languages to A Level.) She also worked in the Careers being appointed to that position in 1996 and taking responsibility for work shadowing and organising employers interview skills days for our pupils which was much appreciated by them. In 2000 she was promoted by John Stevenson as Head of Sixth form for boys. In 2019 Chris Peel appointed Victoria

as Acting Joint Head of Languages. Therefore, she was promoted by three consecutive Heads; they clearly recognised her qualities – her skill, but also her care for the pupils.

Gillian Hartin wrote back to John Young accepting a position at Sullivan in May 1992. In 2010 she made history here being part of our first job share with Gillian Pitt – an arrangement that they always made work. Gillian has been involved in a huge range of areas of school life. In 2014 she took on the role of Charities Coordinator a reflection of her heart for the wider community. That is a fun role, but it requires great energy and sometimes tact in managing the ideas of the sixth form committee. There has also been countless trip eg to Austria and London. In the last year of her employment her pastoral skills were also to the fore in acting as temporary Head of Year. It is of course in Music that Gillian has made the biggest impact. The range and quality of music that our young people have produced under her direction has been superb. We know that pupils and parents are very grateful. Gillian enthusiasm is infectious, and she have passed this onto many generations.

Jane Stewart worked as a technician in the Food and Nutrition Department at Sullivan Upper School for 13 Years, initially job-sharing, before carrying on in the role autonomously for the last 7 years. Jane was a very valued member of the team, supportive of her colleagues and always willing to support pupils, particularly in her role as a first aid responder. Her attention to detail and organisational ability has been a key component of the success of the department. She will be much missed by colleagues who have appreciated here dedication, skill and hospitality.

New staff were welcomed to the school in the following non-teaching posts during the 2024/25 academic year: Secondary Department: Diana Boyd (Facilities Manager), Jack Duncan (Classroom Assistant), Lauren Greeves (Technician: Art and Moving Image Arts), Andrea McCullough (Technician: Biology), Harry Morris (Classroom Assistant), Matthew Morris (Classroom Assistant) Rory Robinson (Classroom Assistant); Preparatory Department: Jessica Burrows (Classroom Assistant).

By the end of 2024/25 on the non-teaching side, we had said farewell to the following staff: Secondary Department: Erin Anderson (Classroom Assistant), Annette Brown (Technician: Biology), Natasha Black (Catering Assistant), John Crossan (Groundsperson), Jack Duncan (Classroom Assistant), Sam Graham (Facilities Manager), Abbie Lawlor (Technician: Art and Moving Image Arts), Stacey Lowry (Catering Assistant), Harry Morris (Classroom Assistant), Matthew Morris (Classroom Assistant), Conor Rankin (Classroom Assistant), Rory Robinson (Classroom Assistant), Mr Charlie Shannon (Classroom Assistant), Stephen Skimin (Catering Assistant), Colin Smyth (Lunchtime Supervisor), Jane Stewart (Technician: Food and Nutrition); Preparatory Department: Claire Cronin (Classroom Assistant) and Philip Eager (Classroom Assistant).

#### **(x) School Security and Safety**

The Health and Safety Committee is chaired by a member of the Board of Governors and with representatives from many parts of the school's activities, continued to oversee this important aspect of school life. The programme of refresher training continued during the year including AED training for the qualified first aiders and the Board gratefully acknowledges the valuable commitment of this team. The school invested in additional software, Medical Tracker, to improve efficiency and communication with parents in connection with health management and this is proving to be highly effective.

The school is committed to providing a secure and safe environment for our pupils – a door access system is fully operational across both the preparatory and secondary school sites; this has been a welcome improvement to security within the school site with controlled access to all school buildings. The school operates a VPASS visitor management system across both preparatory and secondary sites; visitors, contractors and school staff are required to sign in electronically upon arrival and to sign out when leaving; they are also required to wear their official ID badge when on the school site.

As part of ongoing works, the Board of Governors undertook expenditure of £11k during 2024/25, funded by the school, in relation to the school's fire risk assessment plan and procedures.

**(xi) Buildings and Facilities**

As detailed in section 4 “Financial Statement”, the school continued to invest in its facilities despite the increasing pressure on revenue with capital expenditure of £232k in 2024/25 and associated grants of £54k from the Department of Education. This expenditure related to: fire risk assessment works; replacement of equipment in the Silver Robin; replacement of guttering and fascia boards in one section of the school and the fees relating to the continued progression of future capital projects such as the School Enhancement Programme (Second Call). The school has also continued its programme of investment in ICT resources with expenditure in 2024/25 of £52k. In the Preparatory Department, the school funded the replacement of boilers and also purchased outdoor play equipment with the support of funding from the department.

## 4 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### Financial Report for the Year ended 31 March 2025

The Board of Governors is pleased to present its report for Sullivan Upper School for the above year.

The deficit in the Revenue Account for the year ended 31 March 2025 was £141,821 (2024: deficit £216,296).

The position may be summarised as follows (further details are available at Appendices 16 and 17):

	2025 £	2024 £
Secondary Department	(94,400)	(156,826)
Preparatory Department	973	(19,002)
Silver Robin Restaurant	(48,394)	(40,468)
	<u>(141,821)</u>	<u>(216,296)</u>

### Financial Reporting

The Governors confirm that they comply with the requirements of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

### Sullivan Upper School Charity No: XN45715

Sullivan Upper School is a registered charity established for the purpose of the advancement of education achieved through the school's extensive programme of curricular and extracurricular activities. The school received voluntary contributions from parents of £212k (2024: £205k) and Gift Aid of £48k (2024: £50k) was received in relation to these contributions. Parents are invited to support their child/children's education through these voluntary donations to the School Fund. These funds are used to maintain and enhance the quality and breadth of educational provision in the school and to support classroom resources. They support for example: classroom resources; additional staffing; ICT equipment; specialist sports coaching; specialist music tuition; provision of transport; and hire of external facilities.

### Public Benefit and Operational Performance of the School/Achievements

The school provides the following demonstrable benefits all of which flow from the school's charitable purpose of advancing education:

1. The school provides a high quality education to all of its pupils.
2. The high quality of the academic education provided in the secondary department is demonstrated by the excellent results achieved in the public examinations, both at GCSE, AS and Advanced Level and by the number of leavers who progressed to further education as follows:

### Academic Achievements

In 2024 134 (90%) (2023 131 (90%)) of our leavers immediately progressed to Higher or Further Education with 10 pupils (7%) (2023 10 (7%)) electing to undertake a gap year.

### Advanced Level Examinations (A Level)

In the 2024 examination year 152 (2023 144) pupils were entered for the A Level examinations. 95% of pupils achieved a minimum of 3 C's (89% in 2023). These excellent results enable our pupils to progress to tertiary level education at the university of their choice.

### General Certificate of Secondary Education Examinations (GCSE)

152 (2023 158) pupils were entered for the GCSE examinations in 2024. Of those entered, 99% (2023 99%) achieved A\* to C in 7 or more subjects including English and Mathematics.



### **Extracurricular Activities**

It is the school's practice to provide a wide-range of extracurricular activities through which pupils can develop independence, confidence and a range of skills. These include a wide-range of clubs and societies as well as many sporting activities with the aim for every pupil to derive enjoyment and satisfaction from achieving their best, at whatever level. The school is very grateful to the school staff team who continue to provide such opportunities for the pupils, especially during a period of industrial action.

### **School Trips**

School trips and educational visits are seen as an integral part of the education offered by the school. This year's trips included theatre visits; hockey tours; rugby training camp; Duke of Edinburgh expeditions; and ski trip to Austria.

### **Music and Drama**

2024/25 was a very busy year for the Music and Drama Departments, with pupils performing at prize day, the carol service, Open Day, Autumn Charity Concert, the Junior Drama Production of "Midsummer Night's Dream", school functions and the annual spring concert in the Ulster Hall. The school was well represented in the Ulster Youth Choir, Orchestra and Jazz Orchestra.

### **Community Involvement**

Sullivan Upper School plays an important role in the local community. The school continues to be actively involved in the training of teachers, providing student-teacher placements and mentoring support. The annual charity fund-raising activities also continued this year within the school and the school raised significant sums of money for distribution to a range of local, regional, national and international charitable causes.

### **Financial Results**

Pupil enrolment has remained constant in both the Secondary and Preparatory Departments. In 2024/25 our total LMS funding increased by £820k or 15% compared with the previous year. Additional grant funding decreased in total by £104k or 9% in 2024/25 – this included provision of £134k in relation to the recent pay settlement for teachers dating back to 1 September 2024 (prior year included provision of £440k in relation to funding of the pay settlement recently confirmed for teachers dating back to 1 September 2021 - actual funding received in 2024/25 was £575k). Additional funding of £127k (PY £117k) was also received from DE to cover the costs of the payscale arrears for non-teaching staff in 2024/25, the costs of the first stage of the pay and grading review for non-teaching staff and the contractual pay progression for non-teaching staff. Overall, grant funding and other income increased by £772k or 10%.

Total teaching costs increased by £371k or 7% and include a provision of £181k for the 2024 teaching pay settlement (prior year provision was £716k for teaching payscale arrears from September 2021). Non-teaching staff costs (secondary and preparatory) increased by £212k or 17% compared to the prior year. New pay scales effective from 1 April 2024 were implemented during the year for non-teaching staff following completion of the pay remit approval process with increases of 2.5% to 5.8% dependent on payscale position. The pay and grading review carried out by the Education Authority was also implemented during the 2024/25 year for non-teaching staff with total additional costs of £73k (6% increase); funding of £67k was received to offset these costs. Staffing costs in total therefore have increased by £583k (9%) during the year in the secondary and preparatory departments. Curriculum and property costs both increased by £21k or 6% and £65k or 9% respectively.

Total expenditure in the secondary and preparatory revenue accounts for the year increased by £690k or 9%.

The Silver Robin canteen has been significantly challenged by the significant increases in costs with food over recent years; nationally agreed payscale increases and the implementation of the Pay and Grading Review for canteen staff have also seen significant increases in labour costs with an increase in staffing costs in 2024/25 of £26k or 12%. No financial assistance has been provided by

the Department of Education to support these increases in staff costs. There has also been no increase in grant funding for school canteens or for the provision of free school meals. An overall increase in income of £34k or 10% was offset by an increase in expenditure of £41k or 11%. The Silver Robin has reported a deficit of £48k and has once again been unable to set aside funds of £nil (PY £nil) for reinvestment in the Silver Robin facilities. The Board appreciated the financial support from the Department of Education of £8k to replace essential items of equipment at a cost of £9k. However the Board notes with concern the challenges for the Silver Robin with operational and labour costs remaining high in the absence of additional recurrent funding from the Department of Education.

### **Funding (Secondary Department)**

The secondary department reports a deficit this year of £94k (2024: deficit £157k). The income and expenditure account includes revenue and costs associated with curricular and extracurricular activities and reflects the complete educational programme offered by Sullivan Upper School.

### **Facilities**

The school continues to invest in its facilities despite the increasing pressure on revenue with capital expenditure of £232k in 2024/25 and associated grants of £54k from the Department of Education. Capital projects financed by the school included those relating to health and safety (£11k), the replacement of guttering in a section of the secondary department (£62k) and the installation of new boilers in the preparatory department and additional work on boilers throughout the school (£37k). The school continued to progress capital projects which had been approved for funding by the Department of Education; the bulk of these are still at planning stage and regrettably the Department's budget for capital expenditure was severely impacted by financial pressures in 2024/25. The school continued to invest in ICT resources with expenditure in 2024 of £52k.

It is a concern that this year the school been unable to set aside fees in the preparatory department to provide funding for future capital development – this reflects the provision for significant costs of the recent pay settlement which would only attract funding of 20% in the preparatory department.

### **Plans for Future Periods**

In January 2017, the Minister for Education announced a second call under the School Enhancement Programme (SEP) aimed at meeting immediate and pressing capital investment needs in schools. The School Enhancement Programme makes available funding of between £500,000 and £4,000,000 for projects which refurbish or extend the existing school provision. The school has submitted an application for capital works to be carried out under this scheme and is delighted that it has received confirmation that the school's application has been selected in the third tranche of schools to move forward in planning. This project continued in the design stage during 2024/25.

Whilst funding has been made available from the Department of Education's capital budget for the building works previously mentioned, the Governors highlight their concerns at the uncertainty in recurrent (revenue) funding in the face of inescapable cost pressures (eg nationally agreed pay scales, national insurance and pension costs) and particularly at this time when costs continue to increase, albeit at a slower rate. Revenue funding is a separate source of funding which is allocated to schools by the Department of Education based on pupil numbers and school size and is used to finance the daily operation of the schools. Schools are not permitted to use capital funding for expenditure other than on approved building projects.

Governors also are concerned that the continued pressure on funding in education would lead to a consecutive year of moratorium on capital works by the Department of Education. It is essential that the Department continues to invest in the schools estate to ensure that buildings are fit for purpose and meet the educational demands of this generation of pupils.

Despite these funding pressures, Sullivan Upper School will continue to deliver a varied programme of both curricular and extracurricular activities for all its pupils. The Board remains committed to preserving the high standard of educational provision to all its pupils both inside the classroom and through its extensive programme of extracurricular activities.



During the academic year 2024/25 the Principal and Governors have carried out a restructuring of the school's Senior Leadership team. This followed a review of the current arrangements and consultation with staff. This has resulted in the creation of three new Senior Management Roles which are Heads of Key Stage and have whole-school responsibilities. The new team will have more of a strategic focus and will help the school achieve its ambitious vision. The change will also build capacity into the pastoral system and create further development opportunities for other colleagues.

### **Fundraising – Sullivan Connect**

The Board of Governors of Sullivan Upper School launched a major fundraising campaign in 2016 to connect together all of the members of the Sullivan family. The purpose of the "Sustaining Sullivan's Future" Campaign was to reach out to all the many "Friends of Sullivan" who are alumni, students, teachers, staff, parents, governors past and present and also to those in the local community who wish to join to assist the ongoing development of the school. The Board recognises that major capital investment is needed to keep the school's estate up to modern educational standards and the Board is determined that the school's facilities are maintained at the highest possible quality.

This campaign has evolved over the past number of years and the Governors are pleased to report on the development of "Sullivan Connect". The aims and objectives of Sullivan Connect are to connect, network and support ie to connect the Sullivan Community, provide social and networking opportunities and to support the school through various initiatives, including fundraising. As at 31 March 2025, Sullivan Connect recorded income of £12k against expenditure of £13k.

### **SUPA and SUPPA**

The Board of Governors is grateful for the ongoing support of the parents' associations in both the secondary and preparatory departments (SUPA and SUPPA respectively). These associations raise funds to assist the school and these are typically used to contribute towards the purchase of equipment and learning resources. The Board of Governors are delighted that SUPA have allocated funds specifically to support the important area of pupil wellbeing and mental health.

### **Professor H R J Walters PhD CPhys MRSA FInstP**

During 2023/24, the school was honoured to receive funding bequeathed by former pupil, Professor James Walters to promote academic excellence at Sullivan Upper School. The school has worked with his executors and trustees to agree how these funds can be most appropriately utilised to fulfil his request; in the interim period these funds have been placed on long-term deposit.

Professor James Walters attended Sullivan Upper School from 1951 to 1963, initially having started his education in the preparatory department. During his school career, his interests included the debating society, the French Circle and hockey. He subsequently won a scholarship to study at Trinity College, Cambridge where he completed his PhD. Professor Walters was appointed Professor of Theoretical Physics at Queen's University early in the 1990s and played a key role in the university for nearly 5 decades, contributing significantly to the building up of Queen's reputation as a centre of excellence for Theoretical and Computational Atomic Physics, and the training of generations of researchers active in this field.

The Professor James Walters Fund has been established by a legacy from Professor Walters. It was his wish to offer 3 bursaries from this fund for a student taking up a place at Cambridge and for students who would be taking up places to study Mathematics or a science related subject. These bursaries continue to be offered in 2024/25.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

The Board of Governors is proud of the pupils and their achievements and will continue to build on the solid foundations of the school's history and ethos. The Governors acknowledge that a school's greatest resource is its staff and thank them all for their commitment to the pupils. They recognise the challenges posed by the funding of schools and another year partly affected by industrial action but remain committed to meeting the challenges ahead in delivering the highest educational experience of our pupils, both inside and outside of the classroom. We are determined that our pupils be confident, resilient and enthusiastic learners.

## **APPENDICES**

The information provided in these appendices is that which the Department of Education requires the Board of Governors to give parents in annual reports.

### **APPENDIX 1: Information about Pupil Numbers**

In the 2024/2025 school year, at the time of the school census the total number of pupils enrolled in the school was 1250. Of these, 170 were in the Preparatory Department and 1080 in the Secondary Department with 156 in Year 12, 157 in Year 13 and 144 in Year 14. The number of pupils who were in receipt of a Statement of Special Educational Needs in the school was 24, of whom 20 were in the Secondary Department and 5 in the Preparatory Department.

### **APPENDIX 2: Attendance Rates**

The annual attendance rate for 2024/2025, calculated in the manner set down by the Department of Education, was 95.3% (2023/24: 94.3%) in the Secondary Department and 96.9% (2023/24: 96.4%) in the Preparatory Department.

### **APPENDIX 3: (a) Admissions and Enrolment Numbers**

The school admissions number for 2024/2025 was (as usual) 150. The school's total enrolment number was 1060 for the Secondary Department (excludes Statemented pupils who are supernumerary).

### **APPENDIX 3: (b) School Fees**

For the 2024/25 school year the annual capital fee for parents was set at £140 per child per annum and the voluntary fee requested by the Board of Governors was £280 per annum. A full statement of the Governors' Charges and Remissions Policy is available on the school's website or upon request.

## APPENDIX 4: Courses of Study Available

The following subjects were available for study at GCSE level.

Art & Design	Food & Nutrition	Music
Biology	French	Physical Education
Business Studies	Further Mathematics	Physics
Chemistry	Geography	Religious Studies (GCSE)
Computer Science	German	Religious Studies (Short Course)
Digital Technology	History	Spanish
Drama	Learning for Life & Work	Technology & Design
English Language	Mathematics	
English Literature	Moving Image Arts	

The following subjects were available for study at GCE Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary level

Art & Design	French	Moving Image Arts
Biology	Further Mathematics	Music
Business Studies	Geography	Nutrition & Food Science
Chemistry	German	Physical Education
Computer Science	Government & Politics	Physics
Design & Technology	Health & Social Care	Religious Studies
Drama & Theatre Studies	History	Spanish
English Literature	Mathematics	

## APPENDIX 5: Information about Extracurricular Activities

The main activities available for pupils were:

Army Cadet Force	Cricket	Lego Club
Athletics	Debating/Public Speaking	Maths Club
Badminton	Drama	Musical Groups**
Book Club	Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme	Netball
Chemistry Club	Fencing	Politics Society
Christian Union	Golf (Boys and Girls)	Rugby (Boys and Girls)
Christians in Sport	Hockey (Boys and Girls)	Saphara
Cookery Club	Inter-school quizzes eg	Skiing
Community Service	Worldwise Quiz	Tennis
Creative Writing	Library Team	Young Enterprise
Cross Country		

\*\* includes Sullivan Singers, Senior Girls Singers, Junior Singers, Junior Choir, Orchestra, Band, Jazz Group, Percussion Ensemble, Brass Group, Traditional Group, Rock Group, Funk Band, String Ensembles, Woodwind Ensembles.

## APPENDIX 6: School Leavers

As the following table shows 157 pupils left the school by the end of the 2024/2025 school year. The vast majority of these were students who completed their A Levels and went on to study at degree courses at Higher Education institutions.

LEAVERS	Year 12		Year 13		Year 14	
	Number	Percentage Year Group	Number	Percentage Year Group	Number	Percentage Year Group
Transferring to another school	3	1.9	1	0.6	0	0
Apprenticeship Training Courses	0	0	2	1.3	0	0
Entering Further Education	5	3.2	0	0	0	0
Entering Higher Education	0	0	0	0	121	84
In Full-Time Employment	2	1.3	0	0	7	4.9
Other (Gap Year)	0	0	0	0	16	11.1
Seeking Employment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>

## APPENDIX 7: End of Key Stage 3 Levels of Progression

ENGLISH (Communication)		% ACHIEVING LEVEL 5 AND ABOVE		% ACHIEVING LEVEL 6 AND ABOVE		% ACHIEVING LEVEL 7 AND ABOVE	
		Sullivan	NI Schools	Sullivan	NI Schools	Sullivan	NI Schools
	Teacher Assessment						

USING MATHEMATICS		% ACHIEVING LEVEL 5 AND ABOVE		% ACHIEVING LEVEL 6 AND ABOVE		% ACHIEVING LEVEL 7 AND ABOVE	
		Sullivan	NI Schools	Sullivan	NI Schools	Sullivan	NI Schools
	Teacher Assessment						

**Please note:** Interim measures have been put in place for Key Stage 3 Levels of Progressive and a new system of assessment will be in place for 2025/26

**APPENDIX 8: Examination Results: GCSE/Year 12**

Number in Year 12	156
% entered for 7+ GCSE's	99.4%
% entered for 5+ GCSE's	100%
% achieving 7+ GCSE's Grades A* - C	97.4%
% achieving 5+ GCSE's Grades A* - C	98.7%
% entered for other examinations	0%
% achieving none of the qualifications listed	0%

**APPENDIX 9: Examination Results: (i) A2 Level**

Number in final year of A level (Year 14)	142
% achieving 3+ A level Grades A* - C	88
% achieving 2+ A level Grades A* - E	100

**APPENDIX 9: Examination Results: (ii) AS Level**

Number in Year 13	146
% achieving 3+ AS Grades A-C	81
% achieving 2+ AS Grades A-E	100

\*Not including results for pupils taking linear subjects (Computer Science, Drama)



## APPENDIX 10: Examination Results: Trend Data

Performance Indicator	2020/2021		2021/2022		2022/2023		2023/2024		2024/2025	
	Sullivan	NI Grammar School Average	Sullivan	NI Grammar School Average	Sullivan	NI Grammar School Average	Sullivan	NI Grammar School Average	Sullivan	NI Grammar School Average
% Achieving 5+ GCSEs at Grades A* - C	100	N/A	100	N/A	99.4	N/A	99.4	N/A	99	N/A
% Achieving 7+ GCSEs at Grades A* – C	98	N/A	100	N/A	99.4	N/A	99.4	N/A	93	N/A
% Achieving 3+ A levels at Grades A* – C	91	NA	92.25	NA	88.9	N/A	94.7	NA	88	NA
% Achieving 2+ A levels at Grades A* – E	100	N/A	100	N/A	100	N/A	100	NA	100	NA

Please note no data is available for the periods 2020/2021 to 2023/2024 as the Minister of Education has agreed that the Summary of Annual Examination Results (SAER) process should be suspended, there was no SAER statistical bulletin released for the 2020/2021 to 2023/2024 academic years.

**APPENDIX 11: GCSE Results by Subject and Grade: Summer 2025**

Subject	Number Entered	PERCENTAGE ACHIEVING EACH GRADE									
		A*	A	B	C*	C	D	E	F	G	U
Art & Design	17	35.3	35.3	11.8	5.8	11.8	0	0	0	0	0
Biology	130	26.2	33.8	26.9	7.7	3.8	0.8	0.8	0	0	0
Business Studies	59	10.2	35.6	30.5	1.7	16.9	3.4	1.7	0	0	0
Chemistry	72	43.1	38.9	12.5	4.2	1.3	0	0	0	0	0
Digital Technology	16	37.5	25	25	12.5	0	0	0	0	0	0
English Language	156	33.3	44.2	16	5.2	1.3	0	0	0	0	0
English Literature	154	24.7	44.2	18.8	8.4	2.6	1.3	0	0	0	0
Food & Nutrition	44	25	40.9	20.4	9.1	2.3	0	2.3	0	0	0
French	76	17.1	23.7	21.1	10.4	21.1	5.3	1.3	0	0	0
Geography	63	23.8	49.2	19	4.8	3.2	0	0	0	0	0
German	24	4.2	25	20.8	29.1	16.7	4.2	0	0	0	0
History	88	28.4	40.9	13.6	10.3	5.7	1.1	0	0	0	0
Mathematics	155	44.5	41.9	12.3	1.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mathematics Further	75	53.3	33.4	12	0	0	0	0	1.3	0	0
MIA	28	25	53.6	10.7	7.1	3.6	0	0	0	0	0
Music	18	66.7	27.7	5.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Physics	83	34.9	32.5	20.6	7.2	3.6	1.2	0	0	0	0
Religious Studies (SC)	153	37.9	24.2	13.1	9.1	8.5	5.2	2	0	0	0
Spanish	58	15.5	31	19	20.7	8.6	5.2	0	0	0	0

Subject	Number Entered	English Examination Boards Grading System									
		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
Drama	17	17.6	11.8	35.3	23.5	5.9	5.9	0	0	0	0
Computer Science	32	15.6	31.3	25	12.5	9.4	3.1	3.1	0	0	0
Design and Technology	43	11.6	18.6	9.3	27.9	16.3	9.3	4.7	2.3	0	0
Physical Education	61	8.2	23	26.2	36.1	6.5	0	0	0	0	0

**APPENDIX 12: AS Level Results by Subject and Grade: Summer 2025**

Subject	Number Entered	PERCENTAGE ACHIEVING EACH GRADE					
		A	B	C	D	E	U
Art & Design	5	80	20	0	0	0	0
Biology	76	40.8	27.6	15.8	9.2	2.7	3.9
Business Studies	34	32.4	38.2	14.7	14.7	0	0
Chemistry	54	63	20.4	13	3.6	0	0
Computer Science	21	28.6	19	23.8	19	9.6	0
Design & Technology	9	11.1	33.3	33.3	22.3	0	0
English Literature	28	39.3	28.6	32.1	0	0	0
French	9	22.2	44.4	22.2	11.2	0	0
Geography	27	55.6	37	7.4	0	0	0
Government & Politics	13	46.2	15.4	38.4	0	0	0
Health & Social Care	15	66.7	33.3	0	0	0	0
History	27	81.5	14.8	3.7	0	0	0
MIA	8	62.5	25	12.5	0	0	0
Mathematics	85	81.2	12.8	2.4	1.2	2.4	0
Nutrition & FS	12	91.7	0	8.3	0	0	0
Music	8	75	12.5	12.5	0	0	0
Physics	41	41.5	26.8	14.6	7.3	4.9	4.9
Spanish	10	10	40	50	0	0	0
Sports Studies	12	50	16.7	25	8.3	0	0

**APPENDIX 13: A2 Level Results by Subject and Grade: Summer 2025**

Subject	Number Entered	PERCENTAGE ACHIEVING EACH GRADE						
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
Art & Design	3	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Biology	68	19.1	25	35.3	8.8	11.8	0	0
Business Studies	29	3.4	24.1	41.4	20.7	10.4	0	0
Chemistry	52	28.8	23.1	36.5	7.7	3.9	0	0
Computer Science	8	12.5	0	12.5	50	25	0	0
Design & Technology	8	0	62.5	12.5	25	0	0	0
Drama	2	0	50	50	0	0	0	0
English Literature	20	30	15	45	10	0	0	0
French	5	60	20	0	20	0	0	0
Geography	33	12.1	48.5	24.2	15.2	0	0	0
German	1	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Government & Politics	12	8.3	16.7	50	25	0	0	0
History	25	8	28	52	12	0	0	0
Home Economics	12	25	33.3	16.7	16.7	8.3	0	0
MIA	11	27.3	45.5	9.1	18.1	0	0	0
Mathematics	49	14.3	46.9	22.4	12.2	4.2	0	0
Mathematics Further	16	62.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	0	0	0
Music	6	50	0	50	0	0	0	0
Physics	23	13	17.4	39.2	21.8	4.3	4.3	0
Religious Studies	14	21.4	57.1	21.5	0	0	0	0
Spanish	9	11.1	22.2	22.2	44.5	0	0	0
Sports Studies	26	23.1	50	19.2	7.7	0	0	0

**APPENDIX 14: Other Examination Results**

	<b>Examination</b>	<b>Number Entered</b>	<b>Pass Rate</b>
All Years	Associated Board of Royal Schools of Music	73	97%
All Years	Rock School Examinations	8	100%
All Years	London College of Music	37	100%
All Years	Trinity College of Music	14	100%



## APPENDIX 15: Key Dates for 2024/25

## KEY DATES FOR 2024-2025

Baker Days	Thursday 15 August 2024 – Wednesday 21 August 2024
<b>Autumn Term</b>	<b>Thursday 22 August 2024 – Friday 20 December 2024 (inclusive)</b>
Pupil Induction Day [10.00 am-1.00 pm]	Thursday 22 August 2024 [Year 11 only]
Pupil Induction Day [9.00 am-12.30 pm]	Friday 23 August 2024 [Year 8 only]
<b>Bank Holiday</b>	<b>Monday 26 August 2024 (school closed)</b>
Pupil Induction Days [9.00 am-12.30 pm]	Tuesday 27 August 2024 [Year 14 only] Wednesday 28 August 2024 [Year 13 only] Thursday 29 August 2024 [Years 8-10 & Year 12 only]
All Pupils in School	Friday 30 August 2024
School Development Day 1	Friday 11 October 2024 ( <i>pupils do not attend</i> )
<b>Half Term</b>	<b>Monday 28 October 2024 – Friday 1 November 2024 (inclusive)</b>
School Development Day 2	Wednesday 20 November 2024 ( <i>pupils do not attend</i> )
Autumn Term Ends	Friday 20 December 2024 at 12.00 noon
<b>Christmas Holiday</b>	<b>Monday 23 December 2024 – Friday 3 January 2025 (inclusive)</b>
<b>Spring Term</b>	<b>Monday 6 January 2025 – Friday 11 April 2025 (inclusive)</b>
School Development Day 3	Monday 6 January 2025 ( <i>pupils do not attend</i> )
All Pupils in School	Tuesday 7 January 2025
<b>Half Term</b>	<b>Monday 10 February 2025 – Friday 14 February 2025 (inclusive)</b>
School Development Day 4	Monday 17 March 2025 ( <i>pupils do not attend</i> )
Spring Term Ends	Friday 11 April 2025 at 12.00 noon
<b>Easter Holiday</b>	<b>Monday 14 April 2025 – Friday 25 April 2025 (inclusive)</b>
<b>Summer Term</b>	<b>Monday 28 April 2025 – Friday 27 June 2025 inclusive)</b>
Summer Term Begins	Monday 28 April 2025
<b>May Day Holiday</b>	<b>Monday 5 May 2025</b>
School Development Day 5	Monday 26 May 2025 ( <i>pupils do not attend</i> )
Summer Terms Ends	Friday 27 June 2025 at 12.00 noon

## APPENDIX 16: Financial Statements: Revenue Account for the Year ended 31 March 2025

### Financial Statements

#### Revenue Account for the Year ended 31 March 2025

	2024/25	%	2023/24	
	£	Income	£	% Income
<b>INCOME</b>				
Fees	830,965	9.76	788,454	10.19
LMS Delegated Budget	6,456,622	75.85	5,636,480	72.82
Additional Grant Funding	1,115,661	13.11	1,219,384	15.75
Other Income	109,195	1.28	96,113	1.24
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<u>8,512,443</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>7,740,431</u>	<u>100.00</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Teaching Salary Costs	5,742,467	67.46	5,371,518	69.40
Non-Teaching Salary Costs	1,467,263	17.24	1,255,241	16.21
<b>Total Salary Costs</b>	<u>7,209,730</u>	<u>84.70</u>	<u>6,626,759</u>	<u>85.61</u>
<b>Other Costs</b>				
Curriculum	379,485	4.45	358,414	4.63
Property	765,056	8.99	699,997	9.04
Administration	251,599	2.96	231,089	2.99
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>8,605,870</u>	<u>101.10</u>	<u>7,916,259</u>	<u>102.27</u>
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus for the year</b>	(93,427)	<u>(1.10)</u>	(175,828)	<u>(2.27)</u>
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus for Silver Robin Restaurant</b>	(48,394)		(40,468)	
<b>Net (decrease)/increase in revenue reserves</b>	<u>(141,821)</u>		<u>(216,296)</u>	

**APPENDIX 17: Financial Statements: Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025****Financial Statements****Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025**

	<b>As at 31 March 2025</b>	<b>As at 31 March 2024</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	13,252,513	13,083,612
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Stock	23,269	20,051
Debtors	252,851	679,546
Bank Current Account	574,755	549,800
Bank Treasury Deposit	747,224	715,923
Specified Bank Account	813,327	776,229
Cash on Hand	300	300
	<u>2,411,726</u>	<u>2,741,849</u>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Creditors	(574,190)	(508,068)
	<u>(574,190)</u>	<u>(508,068)</u>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	1,837,536	2,233,781
<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>	15,090,049	15,317,393
<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>		
Finance Loans	(-)	(1,629)
Provisions for Liabilities	(181,365)	(715,505)
<b>Net Assets</b>	<u>14,908,684</u>	<u>14,600,259</u>
<b>Represented By</b>		
<b>Unrestricted Reserves</b>	13,908,241	13,612,750
<b>Designated Funds</b>	5,982	5,692
<b>Restricted Reserves</b>	66,395	87,968
<b>Endowed Funds</b>	928,066	893,849
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<u>14,908,684</u>	<u>14,600,259</u>