

Down High School



Annual Report to Parents by the Board of Governors

SEPTEMBER 2015 – AUGUST 2016

THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF DOWN HIGH SCHOOL

The list below identifies the Board of Governors as it appeared at the end of the 2015-16 academic year.

Chair:	<i>Mrs Avril Heenan</i>	<i>EA representative</i>
Vice-Chair:	<i>The Very Rev Henry Hull</i>	<i>EA representative</i>
	<i>Miss Wendy Bell</i>	<i>Staff Governor</i>
	<i>Mr Jonathan Cockroft</i>	<i>Parent Governor</i>
	<i>Mr Roy Creelman</i>	<i>DENI representative</i>
	<i>Mrs Dawn Crosby</i>	<i>EA representative</i>
	<i>Mr Michael Laverick</i>	<i>DENI representative</i>
	<i>Ms Geralyn Mulqueen</i>	<i>Parent Governor</i>

The Headteacher, Mr WP Logan, was Secretary to the Governors during the period to which this report pertains but was a non-voting member of the Board.

The Board of Governors was reconstituted in 2013-14 and will serve until 2018.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Senior School

Total Enrolment in September 2015 (11-18)	974
Total Enrolment in September 2016 (11-18)	
Intake at First Form in September 2015	132
Intake at First Form in September 2016	128
Attendance Rate % 2015-6 (Senior School)	96.1
Attendance Rate % 2015-16 (NI Grammar School average)	95.6

GCE A-Level (2015-16)

Percentage of total examination entries A–E	99%
Average Number of A-Level passes per pupil	2.97
% Gaining 3+ A-Levels at grades A*-C	73%

GCE AS Level (2015-16)

Percentage of total examination entries A-E	97%
Percentage of total examination entries A-C	82%
% Gaining 3+ AS-Levels at grades A-C	75%

GCSE (2015-6)

Percentage of total examination entries A–C	97%
Average Number of GCSE's at A–C level per pupil (pupils sit ten GCSE subjects)	9.7
% Gaining 5+ A*-C	99.2%
% Gaining 7+ A*-C	96.9%
% Gaining 7+ A*-C (incl. English and Mathematics)	96.9%

STAFFING

Teaching Staff

The number of teachers in the school was as follows:

2015-16 Principal + 50 full time + 10 part-time

Changes in staff during 2015-16

Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff

The following joined the staff 2015-16

Mrs S Cooper was appointed to the position of Head of English and Literacy in December 2015 and took up her position on 30 May 2016

Mrs L Henderson was appointed as a full time permanent teacher of Biology and Science wef 30/8/2017

Mr D Gray extended his career break to start 1 September 2015 (2 years)

Mrs K Kher extended her career break to start 1 September 2015 (1 year)

Mr D Robinson extended his career break to 31 December 2015

Resignations/Retirements

Mr D Robinson resigned wef 29 August 2015

Dr S Rees resigned wef 31 August 2016

Mrs McConnell resigned wef 3 January 2016

Mrs D Drury resigned wef 31 December 2015

Mr M Rainey retired from his position of Biology Technician on 30 June 2016

Mr D Norman retired wef 30 August 2016

Dr J Coulter left the school on 30 June 2016 after serving a one-year temporary position

Mr D Donnan retired as the school's Deputy Headteacher wef 31 August 2016

Mr P Logan retired a Headteacher wef 31 August 2016

The Board of Governors wishes all departing colleagues well for the future and pay particular thanks to Mr Donnan and Mr Logan for their outstanding contributions to Down High School over many years.

EXAMINATION RESULTS

A-Level

The expanded Sixth Form saw increased numbers of students sitting a range of traditional A-level subjects, Applied A-Levels and BTEC courses. Year 14 students Hannah Beattie, Sophie Blaney, Dylan Brady, Bronwyn Burtney, Peter Davidson, Heather Dunn, Jack Ellison, Charis Gibson, Mary Harkness, Lindsay Heenan, Tilly Horder, Nadine Keightley, Beth Keown, William Martin, Jack McGivern, James Milligan, Gregory Stewart and Jana Walsh all achieved three or more A* or A grades in their respective subjects. The recently-introduced BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diplomas have enabled many students to access a range of university courses, with nearly three-quarters of awards delivered in conjunction with the South Eastern Regional College being the top Distinction* grade.

At AS level, thirty-three Year 13 students received three or four A grades, making this another very successful year.

GCSE

At GCSE Level, our pupils achieved very highly and secured excellent grades at all levels. Ben Keown, Jonathan King, Charlotte Martin, Christopher McKenna-Ell, and Jodi Mejury all gained 7A* grades while Daniel Gibson, Anna Hogg and Shwetha Parthasarathy secured 8A*s across their ten subjects. Josephine Douglas and Robin Wilson achieved 9A* grades each, while Anna Rea and Victoria Clarke received A*s across all of their ten subjects. An impressive 50% of all grades gained at GCSE in Down High School were A or A*.

SUBJECT ABBREVIATIONS

Ar = Art and Design	Fr = French	Mu = Music
Bi = Biology	Gg = Geography	PE = Physical Education
B.St = Business Studies	Hec = Home Economics	Ph = Physics
Ch = Chemistry	HS = Health/SocCare	Po = Govt. and Politics
D&T = Technology	Hi = History	RS = Religious Studies
Dr = Drama/Theatre St	FM = Further Mathematics	DA = Double Awd Sci
Eng = English	Ma = Mathematics	Soc = Sociology
Et = Eng. Literature	IT = ICT	Sp = Spanish
Fm = Further Maths	LLW = Learning for Life & Work	MIA = Moving Image Arts

BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary qualifications are currently offered in the following subjects: Business; Engineering; ICT; Sports Studies; Travel & Tourism. These awards have currency in most universities as A-Level equivalents. BTEC subjects are delivered by our colleagues in the South Eastern Regional College.

INDICATOR	DHS RESULTS		DHS TARGET 15-16	NI GRAMMAR SCHOOL DATA				DHS TARGET 14-17	DHS TARGET 16-17	DHS RESULT 15-16
	13-14	14-15		LQ	M	UQ	95 th Pce			
KS3 % ≥ level 5 Communication	100	100	100					100	100	100
KS3 % ≥ level 5 Using Mathematics	100	100	100					100	100	100
GCSE %7+ A*-C	97.6	98.5	98.5	89.1	96.8	98.9	100	97.2	97	96.9
GCSE %7+ A*-C (inc. En and Ma)	97.6	97.7	97.7	93	94.6	97.6	98.1	97.2	97	96.9
GCSE %5+ A*-C	98.4	99.2	99.4	97.4	98.1	99.5	100	100	100	99.2
A-level: %3+ A-C	73.0	72.3	75.9	71.1	72.3	81.2	89	78	81	73
INDICATOR	DHS RESULTS		DHS TARGET 15-16	NI GRAMMAR SCHOOL AVERAGES				DHS TARGET 14-17	DHS TARGET 16-17	DHS RESULT 15-16
	13-14	14-15								
KS3 % ≥ level 5 Communications	100	100	100	Unavailable				100	100	100
KS3 % ≥ level 5 Using Mathematics	100	100	100	Unavailable				100	100	100
GCSE %5+ A*-C	98.4	99.2	100	97.8				100	100	99.2
GCSE %5+ A*-G	100	100	100	99.8				100	100	100
GCSE % NO PASSES	0	0	0	0				0	0	0
GCSE %5+ A*-C (inc. Eng and Ma)	98.4	98.5	98.5	95				100	100	98.4
GCSE % achieving A*-C in English	100	99.2	100	96.7				100	100	99.2
GCSE % achieving A*-G in English	100	100	100	100				100	100	100
GCSE % achieving A*-C in Maths	100	99.2	100	95.7				100	100	100
GCSE % achieving A*-G in Maths	100	100	100	100				100	100	100
A-level % 3+ A*-C	73.0	72.3	75.9	77				78	81	73
A-level % 2+ A-E	100	100	100	99.6				100	100	100
Attendance %	95.9	95.7	96.2	95.6				96.5	96.8	96.1

Down High School

Targets and Three-Year Data

LEAVERS' DESTINATIONS 2015-16

The vast majority (83%) of Year 14 student leavers embarked immediately upon university/further education studies in 2016. This figure excludes students planning to re-apply to their desired courses next year and those taking a gap year.

CAREERS EDUCATION & GUIDANCE

Careers Advice Education Information and Guidance (CAEIG) in Down High School provides students with the opportunity to complete effective research, discuss with tutors any issues relating to career choices and assist them in their decision making throughout the key transition stages during their school years.

A structured programme has been developed to ensure that careers education is fully integrated into the curriculum and meets the needs of all pupils. The 2015-16 academic year continued the development of CAEIG within the context of the Lecale Learning Community (LLC), with good practice being shared between a number of schools in the area.

The careers library is always open to students who wish to research career pathways or discuss careers related issues. The careers team, consisting of Mr Williamson (HoD) and Mrs K Calvert, a permanent part-time careers adviser, aims to assist all students to find the most appropriate route for them and welcomes contact with parents during this sometimes difficult period.

Significant attention is given to students in Years 13 and 14 as they approach, construct and refine their UCAS applications. The Careers Department continues to prioritise broadening the CAEIG provision for the school's expanding and changing Sixth-Form student base. It is committed to developing the resources and skills base in relation to a wider range of Post-18 pathways (including Apprenticeships, Company Leavers' Programmes, Further Education, CAFRE, Institutes of Technology in the Republic, universities in the USA and continental Europe, business start-ups, and Company Selection Day challenges). The Careers Department is also broadening the range of stakeholders it works with, bringing in more speakers from industry and third level education in its widest sense. Video shorts are being produced, in collaboration with the MIA department, to showcase some of the Post-18 pathways that our students have embarked upon.

Throughout the course of the year, students were invited to attend a range of talks and information sessions provided by a number of institutions and were also given the opportunity to attend university open days. Additional preparation for Oxbridge candidates was organised through Down High School and facilitated by support from the LLC. Additional mock interviews for all students applying for places in nursing, teaching and social work were held throughout the entire Lecale ALC. The services of DE staff have been appreciated at various stages throughout the year – for example, during Parent-Teacher consultation afternoons. The Department also held Careers Presentation Evenings for parents of pupils in all of the key transition Year groups.

As part of the wider Careers provision, all pupils in Years 8-12 participated in an Employability programme as part of Learning for Life and Work. Schemes of work were reviewed by Mr Williamson throughout the year. The Careers Department ran a series of workshops during the course of the year in conjunction with Young Enterprise (NI). These focused on the development of teamwork and the cultivation of entrepreneurial skills, both significant features of the Employability programme. Pupils in Years 10 and 12 received a personal careers interview and were able to request a consultation with a member of the Careers Department. In October 2016, every student secured a three-day work experience placement in the job area that the individual hoped to pursue. Year 13 students also participated in the school's annual mock interview evening in March and this was, once again, a great success. A new development this year was the collaborative planning and delivery of a Lecale Careers Convention for all Year 13 students who attend schools in the Lecale area.

The School Day

Period	1	2	3	4	Break	5	6	7E		7L	8	9	10
	9:15 to 9:45	9:45 to 10:15	10:15 to 10:45	10:45 to 11:15	11:15 to 11:35	11:35 to 12:05	12:05 to 12:35	12:35 to 13:05	13:05 – 13:10 Lunch changeover	13:10 to 13:40	13:40 to 14:10	14:10 to 14:45	14:45 to 15:20

The structure of the school day for 2015-6 is set out above.

Registration Bell will ring at 8.53am

Period 7E: Junior Lunch (Years 8-9)

Period 7L: Senior Lunch (Years 10-14)

CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT PROVISION

CURRICULAR PROVISION

The report of 2012 General Inspection confirmed that: “The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and meets effectively the learning needs of all of the pupils including, by 2013, a curriculum for post-16 pupils which will match well the interests, abilities and career aspirations of the widening intake of pupils to the sixth form.”

The curriculum in Down High School comprises all the learning experiences within the school and includes not only knowledge and skills but the attitudes, beliefs and values which underpin the relationships within the school community. The school aims to ensure that the pupils in all year groups experience a broad, balanced, enriched and relevant curriculum providing opportunities for them to discover and develop their interests and talents. Pupils are encouraged to achieve their full potential during their time here, leaving Down High School equipped with the necessary skills for success in the wider world. To this end increased flexibility has been introduced to the curriculum. In order to broaden the choice of subjects on offer to pupils, a number of both Applied and General Academic subjects have been introduced at GCSE and A-Level and the school has met the requirements of the Entitlement Framework. In 2015-16, a number of pupils in Year 14 completed BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary awards in Engineering, Sport and Travel and Tourism, Business and ICT.

Down High School has always promoted the acquisition of thinking skills and capabilities, and opportunities for these to be developed amongst pupils are included in departmental schemes of work. The importance of knowledge and integrity of academic subjects have been upheld within a curriculum that enables pupils in Down High School to develop personally and serve as contributors to society and the economy and respecters of the environment. The centrality of Learning for Life and Work has been recognised and clear connectivity between LLW and the Learning Areas has been encouraged. To affirm the strong pastoral relationships in the school, form teachers took responsibility in 2015-16 for the delivery of LLW to their form classes. Down High School also believes that pupils should be able to connect their learning and, for this reason, collaboration between subjects is encouraged and facilitated where possible.

Good levels of Literacy allow pupils in all year groups to access the full curriculum and all teachers have a responsibility to develop pupils’ capacities for reading, writing, talking and listening. In order to support a number of pupils in this area, Literacy Support was offered across all year groups. Furthermore, the promotion of pupils’ competence in numbers and measures will allow them to acquire the financial capabilities needed for adult life. Committees exist in the School to promote the importance Literacy and Numeracy across all key stages and the Heads of English and Mathematics are coordinators for Literacy and Numeracy respectively. Pupils in Down High School are assessed using the Levels of Progression in Communication, Using Mathematics.

Down High School aims to be inclusive in all aspects of its work and pupils’ individual needs and learning styles will be accommodated in the classroom. Differentiated strategies should be used to allow pupils with individual needs to learn most effectively and the School’s SEN policy and guidelines will be implemented in classrooms to allow pupils to reach their full potential. The school’s Learning and Teaching Policy provides the basis for effective classroom practice and accentuates the importance of the pupils as curious, participative learners who are challenged using a range of classroom methodologies, including ICT.

Key Stage 3

In Years 8-10 all pupils follow a programme in line with the Northern Ireland (Revised) Curriculum. At present pupils in Year 8 study Mathematics, English, French, Religious Studies, Physical Education, Science, History, Geography, Art, Home Economics, Music, Technology, ICT, Drama, Learning for Life and Work and Games. They also spend an induction period with their Form Teacher. Year 9 pupils study the same subjects but with the addition of Spanish. In Year 10, pupils learn Science in separate Physics, Chemistry and Biology classes and also benefit from the provision of a Careers period. Drama featured on the Year 10 curriculum (but not in Year 9) in 2015-16.

Key Stage 4

Pupils in Years 11 and 12 study ten subjects at GCSE. All pupils take the core subjects of English with English Literature, Mathematics, French or Spanish, Religious Studies and non-exam lessons in Physical Education, Games and Learning for Life and Work.

All pupils also study either Double Award Science or at least one Science as a single subject. They are then free to choose the remainder of their subjects from Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Computing, Drama, Geography, History, Home Economics, ICT, LLW, Moving Image Arts, Music, Physical Education, Physics, Spanish and Technology.

Sixth Form

The majority of pupils study four subjects at AS level in Year 13 and three subjects at A2 level in Year 14. The following subjects were offered to Year 13 in 2015-16:

Art & Design	Government & Politics	Music	Technology & Design
Biology	Health & Social Care	Physical Education	Theatre Studies
Business Studies	History	Physics	BTEC Engineering
Chemistry	Home Economics	Religious Studies	BTEC Sport
English Literature	Mathematics	Sociology	BTEC ICT
French	Further Mathematics	Software Systems Development	BTEC Business
Geography	Moving Image Arts	Spanish	BTEC Travel & Tourism

In addition, there is a non-exam Games provision for all pupils in both years and Enrichment and Careers in Year 13.

A feature of the Sixth Form programme in recent years has been the introduction of BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary courses, in collaboration with the South Eastern Regional College. The outcomes in Years 13 and 14 have been most encouraging and the strength of the BTEC qualification has enabled pupils to access university courses across the UK.

ASSESSMENT IN DOWN HIGH SCHOOL

Down High School regards the formative process of assessment as an essential part of learning and teaching, enabling teachers and pupils to make judgements on the effectiveness of learning. Each teacher seeks to provide positive feedback to pupils, identifying their strengths and areas for development. Assessment for Learning techniques are an established part of classroom practice and pupils are encouraged to review their learning and suggest strategies for improvement. Down High School has a separate Assessment for Learning Policy and all departments have policies for their subject areas.

Summative assessment: Pupils in Years 8-11 sit twice-yearly written and practical examinations. A short report, consisting of a pupil's % mark, year average and effort grade is compiled in December and sent home to parents. Parents receive a full report (with comments) in June. Students in Years 12-14 undertake full examinations in November/December and full reports and comments are sent to parents at this stage. Departments employ additional common tests throughout the school year and all teachers use summative assessment to assess pupils' understanding of a topic. Each subject's scheme of work illustrates the nature of the assessment techniques used. As part of the 2015-16 Learning and Teaching Action Plan, all departments were required to produce a Marking for Improvement Policy to prioritise effective written and verbal feedback to pupils

Pupils in Year 8 were again assessed using the Cognitive Abilities Test in the first term and the outcomes were published for Senior Leaders, Heads of Year and Form Teachers. In the light of examination performance, pupils whose outcomes differed most significantly from their baseline scores met with the Year Head to discuss progress, study techniques and their learning skills. This was followed up during pupil self-evaluation days.

Pupil self-evaluation is conducted twice-yearly, whereby students identify academic objectives which encourage them to set high expectations for themselves. Pupils discuss with their form teachers the strategies through which they can improve. These include adopting appropriate study techniques and learning skills/behaviours. Pupils reflect on the extent to which targets are achieved and diagnose areas of strength and weakness before agreeing new targets.

2016 Sustaining Improvement Inspection

In March 2016, the Education and Training Inspectorate returned to Down High School to confirm that the standard of "Very Good" achieved in the 2012 Inspection was being sustained. The Inspectors observed a series of lessons and were shown a range of initiatives launched since the previous Inspection with a view to improvement. The thorough one-day review was an endorsement of the school's journey in self-evaluation and improvement. The report, which can be accessed on the school website, records that "Down High School continues to demonstrate a high level of capacity for sustained self-improvement in the interests of the pupils." The report added, "All of the lessons observed during the inspection were effective, with a majority of them being very effective (very good or outstanding)." The report noted that a robust culture of self-evaluation has been established across the school. Recent investment in i-pad devices, training and support was endorsed by the Inspectorate: "A well-thought-out strategic approach to the use of ICT to enhance the pupils' learning is being implemented. The evidence is clear that the pupils are using ICT confidently and competently to extend their learning."

EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROVISION 2015-16

The school provides a wide and varied range of extra-curricular activities that offer pupils the opportunities to find interests beyond the classroom which are both enjoyable and contributory to their development as young people.

Clubs and Societies

Army Cadets	Programming Club	Show Jumping	Tennis
Biological Society	Junior Scripture Union	Senior Debating	Athletics
Current Affairs Society	Senior Scripture Union	Badminton	Cricket
Chemistry Club	Book Club and Creative Writing Club	Choir & Chamber Choir	Hockey
Climbing Club	Netball	Squash	Rugby
Cookery Club	Making A Difference Group	Concert Band	Zoology
Eco-Club	Magazine Committee	Orchestra	

SCHOOL TRIPS

Pupils at Down High School avail of a number of opportunities to further their development through participation in a range of school trips that are curricular and extra-curricular in nature. A number of departments organise site visits and trips. There are also several residential experiences during the course of any school year. Residential trips during the 2015-16 academic year included:

- Saphara Trip to India
- Cultra Residential (Year 8)
- Junior Rugby and Hockey Tours
- Spanish-Geography trip to Barcelona and the Ebro Delta
- Scripture Union weekend
- Ski Trip to Folgaria
- Politics trip to Stormont and to London
- History trip to Berlin-Krakow

OTHER POLICIES

The delivery of the curriculum in Down High is achieved with reference to a number of important policies and documents which set out the expectations and experiences that are appropriate for the pupils who attend the school.

- Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policies
- Assessment for Learning Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Homework Policy
- Learning and Teaching Policy
- Literacy Policy
- Bring Your Own Device Policy (6th Form)

The curriculum offered in Down High School is reviewed regularly to ensure that it is appropriate, relevant and implemented effectively. Reviews are conducted with reference to Governors, outside agencies, senior leaders, teachers, pupils and parents.

HEALTH & SAFETY AND SECURITY

The Board of Governors continues to be very cognisant of its responsibility for the safety of pupils and staff and the need to provide secure premises. CCTV operates within the School grounds and a Senior Teacher (in conjunction with the Building Supervisors) reports regularly to the Senior Leadership Team on the safety and security of the school site. A Governor, designated as a Health and Safety representative, reviewed and reported on issues relating to the school site.

Emergency procedures, including fire drills, were followed on a regular basis during the school year. The School alarm system is fully operative and effective. These safety procedures were reviewed throughout the year and modifications made where appropriate. Colleagues were informed of any significant changes in the operation of evacuation procedures. The Senior Teacher with responsibility for Health and Safety conducted whole-staff training in September 2015 and advised teaching and non-teaching staff on the appropriateness of their working environment in H/S terms. Full risk assessments are conducted and approved in advance of trips and visits. New and temporary staff are provided with initial training on health, safety and risk.

All visitors must report to the Reception desk in the Reception Office and sign the Visitor's Book. At the completion of their visit they sign out at the appropriate time.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The 2015-16 academic year saw the continued development of the School Council, a representative student body, encompassing all year groups and giving pupils an opportunity to express opinions and air concerns. An ETI District Inspection in March 2010 indicated that the School Council was a significant strength in Down High School, adding an appropriate level of the “pupil voice” into the operation of the School. The Standard Inspection Report in 2012 noted that: “Effective use is made of pupil consultation through the school council to enhance the learning experiences for all pupils.”

SAFEGUARDING

Child Protection is a major element of the school’s pastoral responsibility. It is our aim that each child will learn in a secure environment and receive the support required to best develop his or her diverse talents. In 2015-16, Mr Donnan was the Designated Teacher for Child Protection issues and Miss Bell the Deputy Designated Teacher; they worked closely with the Headteacher and the rest of the Pastoral Team to deal with any issues which arise. With the retirements of Mr Logan and Mr Donnan, the new safeguarding hierarchy is Mrs Perry, Mr McKillen (Vice-Principal, Pastoral) as the Designated Teacher and Miss Bell as the Deputy Designated Teacher.

In 2015-16 all staff in school were provided with Safeguarding training. During the year the school has been able to offer counselling support to pupils wishing to avail of the service. The Board of Governors is informed of the School’s Child Protection status at every meeting, in line with statutory regulations.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Down High School is committed to supporting pupils with special educational needs. The Special Education Needs/Inclusion Policy is updated to take account of the Special Education Needs and Disability Order 2005 (SENDO) and the subsequent supplement to the Code of Practice. A copy of the policy is available from the school on request.

The School’s aims in relation to Special Educational Needs are:

- To ensure that the medical, emotional and educational needs of pupils with special needs are acknowledged and acted upon by way of individual action plans that are specific to the needs of each child.
- To provide learning and pastoral support for pupils with defined special educational needs
- To work with parents, the Education Authority and outside agencies to ensure that support for the individual child is central to our deliberations

Down High School has assigned three teachers to direct the Special Needs programme. Most classrooms within the school have access *via* ramps and there is a lift in the main building which gives access to the first floor. Specialist rooms such as Technology and Home Economics have been adapted to give all students access to all parts of the curriculum. Timetabling arrangements are reviewed to ensure that children with particular needs are accommodated in classrooms that are appropriate. Emphasis on SEN has been a consistent

feature of the School Development Plan and considerable progress made in the development of Special Needs provision in Down High.

Individual Education Plans are in place for all pupils at Stages 2-5 on the SEN register. Annual Review meetings allowed parents, pupils, teachers and classroom assistants to evaluate the progress of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Additional professional development during 2016 enabled the SEN team to be conversant with the changes introduced to access arrangements and the ways of testing pupils to assess the extent of their individual needs. Specialist literacy support is provided for a number of pupils in the school, including some of those with identified special needs.

The Standard Inspection Report, published in 2012, deemed the SEN provision in the school to be very good: “The teachers and the co-ordinators support the pupils very well in their holistic development and their educational achievement through assessment, which informs their planning, and the use of an appropriately wide range of learning and teaching approaches. These pupils benefit from effective arrangements to support them in individual subjects, in careers advice and through pastoral care.”

SCHOOL YEAR 2016-2017

Holiday dates (inclusive) and other closings

DATE(S)	DETAILS
Tuesday 23 rd August – Thursday 25 th August	Baker Days
Monday 29 th August	BANK HOLIDAY
Tuesday 30 th August	Year 13 in school
Wednesday 31 st August	Years 8 and 13 in school
Thursday 1 st September	Whole school returns
Monday 31 st October – Friday 4 th November	HALF-TERM HOLIDAY
Thursday 17 th November	School Development Day
Tuesday 20 th December	Last day of term (half day)
Wednesday 21 st December – Monday 2 nd January	CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY
Tuesday 3 rd January	Baker Day (Departmental Development Day)
Monday 13 th February	Baker Day (Departmental Development Day)
Tuesday 14 th - Friday 17 th February	HALF-TERM HOLIDAY
Friday 17 th March	BANK HOLIDAY
Wednesday 12 th April	School Development Day
Thursday 13 th - Friday 21 st April	EASTER HOLIDAY
Monday 1 st May	BANK HOLIDAY
Friday 19 th May	School Development Day
Monday 29 th May	School Development Day
Wednesday 14 th June	School Development Day
Friday 30 th June	Last day of term (half day)

STAFF TRAINING 2015-16

Down High School availed fully of the training and development time that was available for schools during the 2015-16 year. Baker Days and School Improvement Days were used to update staff on pastoral and curricular issues and allow time for school leaders to consult and identify priorities for the final year of the three-year School Development Plan 2014-17. Departments were given time to plan, monitor and evaluate their action plans. A summary of the training and professional development programme is set out below.

DATE	SUMMARY OF CONTENT	FACILITATED BY	VENUE
20 August 2015	Training in the school's VLE Fronter	Mr Noble	U7A, U7, U8
25 August 2015	PRSD; School Development Plan; Pastoral care; Safeguarding; Attendance; i-pad traing and e-safety update	Mr Logan, Mr Donnan, Mr Dawson, Miss Bell, Mr McKillen, Mr Noble	Margaret Curry Library
26 August 2015	Special Educational Needs training i-Pad training LLW briefings Focus Group feedback	Miss Bell, Mrs Weir, Dr Napier Mr Noble Mr Gunson, Mr Williamson, Mrs Adams Mr Dawson	Margaret Curry Library
18 November 2015	Suicide Prevention training provided i-pad training Review of the Learning & Teaching Policy	Allstate "Anibody" Mr Noble Mr Dawson	U7, U8
2 February 2016	Building Resilience Pupils' engagement in lessons	Joanna Brown (Belfast HSC Trust) Mr Logan	Assembly Hall
19 February 2016	The day was set aside for departments to implement and monitor departmental action plans	HoDs	
23 March	The day was set aside for departments to implement and monitor departmental action plans	HoDs	
19 May 2016	ICT Survey Marking for Improvement Policy A-Level specifiactions Pastoral Meetings	Mr Noble Mr Dawson HoDs Mr Donnan	Margaret Curry Library
30 May 2016	PRSD RSE Policy launch LLW briefings Review of departmental action plans	Mr Dawson Mr Donnan/Mrs Emerson Mr Gunson, Mr Williamson, Mrs Adams HoDs	Margaret Curry Library
14 June 2016	School Development Plan and Departmental planning		The Margaret Curry Library

LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Down High School maintained healthy links with a range of external agencies as part of its continuing community emphasis during 2015-16. The school's rural location and extensive catchment area means that Down High liaises regularly with the large number of primary schools which send pupils to us in Year 8. The Headteacher and other staff visited primary schools prior to transfer interviews to talk to pupils and staff about the opportunities provided, and pastoral staff visited local primary schools in the summer term to make the transition to post-primary school as smooth as possible. Both Down High and the primary schools valued this important aspect of our liaison. During the second term, visits were arranged to local 11-16 schools to meet pupils interested in pursuing Sixth Form studies in Down High School. An Open Afternoon was held on the 8 March 2016 for pupils, teachers and parents to visit the school and tour departments.

The Open Evening and P6 Days were very well attended by pupils and staff from feeder primaries and there was an emphasis on stimulating the curiosity of learners who visit. Reviews of these occasions reveal a very high level of enjoyment by our visitors, all of whom were impressed both by the warmth of the welcome extended to them and their glimpse of the curricular and extra-curricular activities on offer.

The Careers Department has long-established links with business organisations close to the School and further afield. Examples of these associations are the annual Interview Evening (during which local providers serve on panels that relate closely to the career aspirations of the students) and the very successful Work Experience programme. Visits by our students to local universities, alongside presentations by a number of colleges to the pupils on this site, create excellent opportunities for Down High pupils to access both information and key personnel in the months before they proceed to third level study. The activities led by Young Enterprise NI to all pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 contributed significantly to the Employability programme in 2015-16 and enabled pupils to develop further the learning behaviours and skills that will help them to participate in an ever-changing world of work. The School also values its close relationship with the Department of Employment and Learning and its contribution during parent interview evenings when subject choices are being discussed in the key transition years. The Head of Careers, Mr Williamson, was active in seeking collaborative careers-related events as part of the Lecale Learning Community.

Our pupils are encouraged to be active participants in the community, and the Charity Support Group liaised closely with groups such as HomeStart and St Vincent de Paul to offer help to vulnerable sections of society. The Community Action Programme enabled Sixth Form students to take up placements with local charities, nursing homes and schools. Evaluation feedback from students and placement providers revealed that this initiative was very successful.

The Home Economics Department maintained a strong community profile during 2015-16, working closely both with local restaurants such as Balloo House and agencies such as the Milk Marketing Board, the Livestock and Meat Commission, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, The Equality Commission and Mindwise. The Geography Department continued its successful link with Christian Aid and Fair Trade on issues relating to sustainability.

In sport, extensive links continued with local rugby (especially the Ulster Branch and Ballynahinch RFC), hockey and cricket clubs. The Equestrian staff and pupils work regularly

with local pony clubs and venues to give our pupils the best experience in show-jumping and inter-school competition.

Cross-community Links

Down High School has, for a great many years, had a well-deserved reputation for being an inclusive school which actively welcomes children from all denominations and none. That it attracts a significant number of applications from every section of the community is, no doubt, due in part to its tolerant and respectful ethos, which is well supported by the cross-community links which include an annual joint-trip for Sixth Formers to India, undertaken with Assumption Grammar School, Ballynahinch and St Patrick's Grammar. Cross-community links that have come about through the Lecale Area Learning Community include collaboration with St Patrick's Grammar School and St Mary's High School through the CRED Programme. Visits to all of the local churches were organised and guest speakers were invited to address RS students in Down High and other local schools.

Liaison with Agencies Linked to Pastoral Care Provision

Down High School's commitment to the welfare of its pupils has meant that it has maintained excellent relationships with agencies such as Allstate, the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, Counselling 4 Youth, Love For Life and the PSNI. The School has also worked alongside ASCERT to communicate to students the dangers of substance abuse.

CHARITIES

Fostering awareness amongst our pupils of those who are less fortunate is an important part of the school's aims and ethos and a number of charities benefited from the generosity of the pupils and staff in 2015-16. The Making a Difference and Charity Support Groups, led by Mrs McGuire, play a leading role in raising understanding about poverty and injustice, both globally and closer to home. Proceeds from the collections lifted during the Annual Carol Services were donated to charity. The list below identifies some of the groups receiving support in 2015-16, with nearly £12,000 being donated overall.

Alzheimers Society	£363.50
NICFC	£1,025.30
Children in Crossfire	£265.85
ChildreninNeed	£780.00
ChristianAid	£184.00
CHS	£685.00
Gambia	£657.46
Knockevin	£831.00
MarieCurie	£685.00
New Beginnings	£100.00
Positive Futures	£400.00
Saphara	£5,078.52
Tiny Life	£703.00

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Significant progress was made in the second implementation year of the 2014-17 School Development Plan. The Senior Leadership Team and governing body monitored the achievement of the main priorities in Learning & Teaching and ICT during 2015-16. A copy of the 2014-17 School Development Plan is available by contacting the Principal's Personal Assistant. It was also placed on the school website. Considerable planning and consultation went into the compilation of the 2014-17 three-year Development Plan.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION

Capitation Fees are levied annually to meet additional costs in the running of the school, including those arising from extra-curricular activities. Parents are asked to pay an annual Voluntary Contribution. During 2015-16 the figures were set as follows:

One Child	£75
Two Children	£125
Three Children	£150
More than Three Children	£150

APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS

	APPLICATIONS			ADMISSIONS		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
Total	181	163	163	128	128	128

LMS financial summary year ended 31/03/2016				
Receipts			Payments	
SEELB	£4,273,864.00		Teaching Staff	£3,095,760.00
Prep Fees	£49,896.00		Non Teaching Staff	£378,344.00
Letting of Facilities	£1,450.00		Premises	£156,228.00
Other income			Books, Equipment, Facilities, Examinations	£243,735.00
			Contract Cleaning	£108,258.00
			Travel	£18,247.00
			Administration	£27,959.00
			Sundries	£2,174.00
			Carry forward	£294,505.00
Totals	£4,325,210.00			£4,325,210.00
School Accounts for the year ended 30/06/2016				
Receipts			Payments	
Departments	£9,791.00		Departments	£11,323.00
DHS Societies	£15,115.00		DHS Societies	£19,532.00
Capitation	£57,605.00		Trips	£183,666.00
Trips	£194,137.00		School Concerts / Shows	£1,950.00
Exams	£13,132.00		Exams	£2,716.00
School Concerts / Shows	£2,596.00		Extra-Curricular Activity Costs	£45,534.00
Charities	£12,294.00		Charities	£11,889.00
Music Tuition	£18,483.00		Music Tuition	£16,382.00
Commissions received	£860.00		School Events	£16,322.00
Other income	£15,048.00		School publications and promotion	£8,060.00
			Minibus expenses	£2,398.00
			Insurance and professional fees	£7,081.00
			Other expenditure	£13,026.00
Totals	£339,061.00			£339,879.00

