



**Rowandale Integrated Primary School
& Community Playgroup Parents Council
(Rowandale Parents' Council)**

Trustees Annual Report

for the year April 1st 2023 to March 31st, 2024

Rowandale Parent Council

Rowandale Integrated Primary School & Community Playgroup Parents Council

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Charity No: NI100427

Annual Report for the year ended March 31st 2024

The trustees of Rowandale Integrated Primary School & Community Playgroup Parents Council (Rowandale Parents' Council) are pleased to submit their report and accounts for the period April 1st 2023 to March 31st 2024.

1. Objectives & Activities

a. Objective of Rowandale Parents' Council

All parents, guardians and carers of children at the school or playgroup are automatically considered members of the Parents' Council. This can be extended to include any person over the age of 18 wishing to offer appropriate support or help to the school/playgroup and who is accepted by the Committee as a Member.

The purpose of the Parents' Council is to advance the education of pupils in the school in particular by;

- developing effective relationships between the staff, parents and others associated with the school;
- engaging in activities or providing facilities or equipment which support the school and advance the education of the pupils.

We are governed by our Constitution, and we are legally bound to upload our independently examined accounts and annual reports to The Charity Commissions of Northern Ireland (CCNI).

Our Parents' Council has a committee of seven or eight elected volunteer members (trustees). As a committee, we:

- ensure we have thoroughly and robustly complied with CCNI regulations and legalities.
- ensure we have followed our constitution which is a legally binding document.
- provide a link between parents and the school in terms of helping parents to understand school policies and procedures.
- help parents to articulate and the school to understand practical issues that are important to parents.
- help to build relationships with the local community and help the school to play its role within the local community.
- pursue and support social opportunities for staff and parents to meet.
- raise funds for equipment and services to support the school and advance the education of the children.
- manage the allocation of those funds appropriately. Each decision to spend any funds is voted on with a majority of votes deciding the outcome.
- engage in activities to support the school in building its sustainability in terms of prospective enrolments.
- recruit and support HOPE Reps (Class Reps) to play a key role in all of the above.

2. Activities

i. April to August 2023

In June 2023 we produced a Rowandale PC Fundraising Newsletter, which provided an overview of all our achievements and performance in 2022 / 23. Highlights from the period April to June 2023 were:

- **Stars in their eyes 2023** in which over £7k was raised while providing a fantastic social night bringing our whole Rowandale community of parents, past pupils and families and staff.
- **Style event with Samara Prentice** that raised £800, included local business and brought a wide range of our community together.
- **Intergenerational Tea Party** in which we secured a grant of £120 from Linking Generations Northern Ireland. We brought grandparents and parents together to enjoy a tea party and listen to Rowandale Choir while enjoying treats from The Quirky Bird Social Enterprise.
- **School's Out Discos 2023** – a crazy and fun night for kids and parents alike which provided another opportunity for staff and parents to socialise together.

Check out the newsletter to be reminded of how well we all worked together to meet Parents' Council aims and objectives in 2022 / 2023 period - <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/Rowandalefundraisingsummary2023.html>

ii. September 2023 Tissues & Tears and Teddy Bears Picnic

In September 2023 we came back together again and recommenced two annual Rowandale events that had not been possible to run in previous years due to the pandemic. These were 'Tissues and Tears' in which Parents' Council hosted a tea/coffee morning for new P1 parents and 'Teddy Bears Picnic'.

'Teddy Bears Picnic is an annual event that has long run in Rowandale for our new playgroup and Year 1 children and families to get to know each other. This was the first Teddy Bears Picnic that had been hosted in our very own Logan Forest. Parents' Council funded the school's Forest School Leader, Jordan Galway, to lead the activities for the morning for a small fee. Parents' Council volunteers and school staff worked together to provide and serve refreshments to everyone on the day. Staff, pupils and parents also worked together to spruce up the forest, cutting back overgrowth that was likely to cause safety risks, re-lay paths with sand and woodchip, and create play and reading zones. All refreshments and equipment were donated by volunteers and required no additional spend from Parents' Council.

iii. October 2023 Halloween Costume Exchange & Halloween Discos

In keeping with the Rowandale Community ethos of supporting one another while reusing what we have, our parent volunteers decided to run a Halloween costume swap shop, which was very popular. No money was exchanged, only costumes.

Halloween discos were once again a highlight for us all. Parents' Council hired St. Patrick's & St. Ronan's parish hall in Magheralin, we bought a truck load of sweets and supplies, got all our volunteers on board, made hundreds of 'pick n mix' bags and ensured that the main

man of the night, DJ Ade Sands was available to get the party going. After hall hire and tuck shop supplies were accounted for, we raised almost £400. Thank you once again goes to the army of volunteers of parents and school staff who give up their evening to supervise the children. The biggest thanks however must go to DJ & Parent Volunteer Ade Sands who is now in his 13th year of volunteering his services for our twice-yearly discos.

iv November 2023 Quiz Night

Rowandale Annual Quiz Night was due to go ahead end of November 2023, generously hosted by The Fat Gherkin. Unfortunately due to low ticket sales we were forced to cancel this event. All ticket holders were fully refunded. From discussions with others we feel it may have been due to the time of year, we would therefore recommend that future committees look at a different time of year, early Autumn and Spring have been suggested. The Fat Gherkin are keen to host this fundraising social evening for our Rowandale community for 2024 / 25 alongside parent volunteer and skilled Quiz Master Marty Hammill, who we extend our thanks to.

v December 2023 Christmas Raffle / My Child's Art / Santa Letters

Annual Christmas activities kept us all busy and on our toes! The Christmas raffle alone raised nearly £2,200. Our community showed incredible generosity, with local businesses and parents donating prizes and families digging deep into their pockets to buy tickets. We are thankful for the efforts of all those involved, particularly Charlene Turkington.

We continued to raise funds over the Christmas period by providing services to our Rowandale community. Elaine Graham and Ursula McTaggart led on ensuring parents were able to buy their children's talented creations and receive creative letters from the Big Man!

vii February 2024 Bingo Night

This was our second Bingo night at the Quirky Bird. Again, it proved to be a night of fun, fun and more fun! We are so thankful to the owners of The Quirky Bird, the Coulters who also happen to be Rowandale parents as well as to staff Roy and Andrea for their incredible generosity and hosting skills. Parents' Council committee members again worked hard to ensure that it was a night in which everyone felt welcome and included. This focus of this night is always about bringing people together, but we still managed to raise nearly £400.

viii April 2024 Stars in their Eyes 2024

Stars in their Eyes 2024 was an enormous success. Everyone got behind this fundraiser supporting the brave and courageous acts who took to the stage. A huge gratitude to all the acts for their fundraising efforts and to Aisling and Charlene for leading the event, raising a whopping £10k. Once again the Rowandale community came out in force with involvement from staff, past pupils, parents, extended family and local businesses. There were so many people involved working together behind the scenes and on the stage to make this night a reality and something to remember.

x May 2024

Tournaments / medals / awards

May was a busy month of sports days and sports tournaments. Parents' Council funded and sourced medals for every child for Sports Days and for 2 x sports tournaments. It was suggested that next year a recyclable medal is considered for a more economical and greener option. Parents; council also funded £250 for accelerated reading prizes and the purchase of 500 branded bee bugs for spelling bee finalists.

xi June 2024

Leavers Hoodies / Event / Discos

Parents' Council co-ordinated the design and purchase of Year 7 Leavers' hoodies with parents funding upfront before the order was placed. Parents' Council have also worked in partnership with the school to fund a Year 7 Leavers event that will provide them with a memento to remember their time at Rowandale. We look forward to our upcoming End of Year Discos in the Moira Presbyterian Church Hall on Wednesday 26 June.

3. Achievements & Performance

Reusing / Recycling and looking after each other

Parent volunteers Angie Leeman and Lesley-Anne Carroll continued to provide families with several events throughout the year to purchase preloved uniforms. They ensured that each garment was in the best condition possible, eager to help anyone in need of a new uniform. We were sad to see Angie leave us for sunshine in Australia but would like to thank her for her contribution to our pre-loved initiative over the last few years. Lesley-Anne and committee are eager to see this service continue in Rowandale next year alongside the successful Christmas Jumper swap and Halloween costume swap.

Policies

Parents' Council Committee are committed to ensuring that all those who volunteer or work with the Parents' Council understand their role, feel valued and have clear expectations. We therefore worked on the following policies to support full accountability. These documents will be uploaded to Parent Council section of the school website.

- General Code of conduct
- WhatsApp Code of Conduct
- HOPE Reps Guidelines
- Risk management policy

As trustees of the charity we exercised our right to make a slight amendment to our Constitution that included the rule trustees can only serve 4 years in total on the committee.

Newsletter

Parents' Council Committee began the process of producing a monthly newsletter in 2022. Ursula McTaggart was the powerhouse behind these jam-packed newsletters. The purpose

of the newsletter was to regularly inform all our stakeholders of Parents' Council activities and achievements and celebrate the success of our children both in and out of school by working closely and collaboratively with all school staff. As a committee we felt that although the newsletter has been a clear success, it was not something that could be sustained within the voluntary capacity that is the Parents' Council. Due to the success of the close collaboration with the school, they have agreed to take it over, so the newsletter continues to thrive and report both school and Parents' Council achievements.

Saturday Clubs for Pre-schoolers

Saturday sessions have continued throughout 2023 / 24, offering a range of activities to local families with preschool aged children. Parents have remarked on the value they place on these activities and the opportunity to meet each other and use the school facilities. Special thanks to the core team of Maria Gibson, Deborah Malcolmson, Sian Smyth, Elaine Graham, Danny Sinclair and Michaela Johnsnton and to those others that they rope in from time to time! Saturday sessions source all equipment and resources independently and must be applauded for volunteers' creativity and resourcefulness.

Grants Sub-Committee

Grants sub-committee continued in September 2023 with some new members including parents and staff. Parents' Council funded the 2023/24 yearly membership of £100 to become a member of NICVA, the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action. NICVA is a membership and representative umbrella body for the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland. Membership ensured we gained access to the Grants Tracker, an online database of grants available in Northern Ireland.

We would recommend that this sub-committee continues in 2024/25 as there is much scope for parents and staff to work together to secure funding to meet our shared objectives. See the example below in relation to sports development in Rowandale.

Sports equipment / kit and working with staff to develop sports in Rowandale

2023/24 saw Parents' Council work closely with Mr. Evans to support the development of PE and sports at the school. Through a funding request advertised on the school's social media channels, we were delighted to secure sponsorship from St Michael's GAC in Magheralin and Daily Fresh (a family business linked to our school community). This funding was used to purchase a new Gaelic kit and equipment. We worked with Playr-fit (a local sports clothing company in Armagh) to design a new kit, with the school and sponsor logos visible. We also worked with the O'Neill's Sports Schools team, and we were able to purchase 40 footballs to be used for training sessions in school, at a special discounted educational price, they also kindly donated five £10 vouchers to be used as raffle prizes at the recent Inaugural Rowandale Gaelic Competition.

It is important to Parents Council that we support local businesses. We were delighted to work with Décor Sports Trophies in Lurgan to purchase approx. 700 medals for each participant at the recent Rowandale Football Tournament in Lurgan Town Football Club, the Gaelic Tournament and School Sports Days. Colin was incredibly helpful, he sorted us with a great discount and even hand-delivered the medals to the school. This year also saw us

partner with Tesco in Lurgan, Edel Foy the Community Champion in the store kindly donated healthy fruit snacks for our two sports events, no mean feat when there were over 100 children at each event! Edel is very keen to continue to support the school and events next academic year. We were very grateful to a band of volunteers from Parents' Council who were on hand at each of the tournaments to help with setting up pitches, organising matches, manning the tuck shop and driving kids to and from the events.

We feel at this point that it would be beneficial to our stakeholders to read the perspective of Mr Evans in relation to working jointly and collaboratively with the Parents' Council and how this partnership has supported the development and education of our children.

"The biggest (achievement this year) must be hosting the inaugural Rowandale Integrated Football Cup and Rowandale Integrated Gaelic Cup. The tournaments brought together 250 local school children from all backgrounds for a fun day of playing sport. The events were attended by Deputy First Minister Emma-Little Pengelly, Junior Minister Aisling Reilly, and David Honeyford MLA. It highlighted the work that we are trying to do in our local community to increase participation in ALL sports.

The fact we fielded a cricket team for the first time ever, started up the rugby team again, created a new netball team, played our first small-sided Gaelic matches for a few years, and ordered a brand-new Gaelic kit deserves a mention too.

Most of the things I have mentioned above could not have happened or would not have run as smoothly without the support of the PC. As passionate and determined as I am to grow PE and sport in Rowandale, I cannot do it alone. This year has shown me how vital the support the PC has been to growing sport in school. I must give an extra special mention to Laura, Ursula, Michaela, Cat and Tiona for their ongoing support this year.

The PC had a huge impact on these events from Michaela supporting with PR, to Cat becoming the reporter and graphic designer and to Ursula organising sponsorships, ordering kits and being a huge help with everything I have done.

They have been fantastic to work with as they have been so approachable and generous with their time. My top tip would be to see it as a two-way street and to be ready to have me pestering them with queries and questions next year! I recognise that all these people work full time, have multiple responsibilities and are going above and beyond for Rowandale. They recognised that a lot of the work I have done this year has been in my own time at home because I want the school to be shown in the best light possible to our local community and further afield.

I'd love for anyone who is considering helping PC next year to say hello. Next year will be my fourth year at Rowandale and I am starting to get to know a lot of names and faces, but I don't know everyone. It will help me if I know your face as it won't make me feel as bad when I am calling at 5pm on a Thursday night asking for something!

I have a few targets for next year that I would really like help with from the Parents' Council. I will need the help and support of the PC to hit my targets, so a good team of PC helpers would be fantastic. My targets / goals are:

- 1. To increase the provision of sporting opportunities for girls in sports at Rowandale. This will require some support with coaching.*
- 2. To order a new sports kit. We have our football and Gaelic kits. I would love to try and get a generic kit that we can use for all our other sports (rugby, cricket, netball, hockey, and any others that I think we could try).*
- 3. To create a Rowandale hockey team and a Rowandale handball team.*
- 4. To introduce new sports to the PE curriculum at Rowandale. These include hurling, camogie, handball, and volleyball.*
- 5. To continue to grow the sports tournaments to turn them into annual community events.*

3. Financial Review

Income generated for the year ended 31 March 2024 was **£15,306.00** in total, and expenses paid out were £13,847.00 generating a surplus of £1,459.00. Trustees have agreed to move £10,000.00 into the reserves account to ring-fence funds for new outdoor play equipment for the new school.

4. Reserves Policy

As per The Charity Commissions NI (CCNI) guidance, our charity holds a separate reserve bank account which holds £1,000 at all times. At present we do not have a written 'Reserves Policy' but this will be a priority going forward as per CCNI guidance 'Developing a reserves policy'.

5. Risk management

As per CCNI guidance, we continually monitor and assess risk. We have created risk policies for individual events to support us to identify risks and take appropriate action which was then communicated to relevant parties.

6. Investment Policy

We do not have an investment policy as we do not require it.

7. Plans for the future

We will support school to transition into the new school next year which is sure to be an unsettling but exciting time for all. It will be time of considerable opportunity for Parents' Council as we will have an increased level of on-site storage for our stock and resources as well as on-site space to host and events and activities. The school has accommodated us enormously over the years and

shared the limited space available in the current school. It has been a challenge and a balancing act to continue to operate as normal but it has also forced us to evaluate and prioritise needs and think creatively.

We will continue to grow and strengthen the systems and processes of the charity to ensure the overall direction and effectiveness of the organisation. We will continue to develop and create new and existing policies and procedures to ensure a high standard of governance and accountability continues.

We will continue to work with school and playgroup staff to document their vision and identified needs within the school. We will work together to try to secure funding to meet these joint objectives and goals to enhance our children’s educational experiences.

We will continue to monitor and scope the needs of our membership within Parents’ Council, providing financial assistance, support and schemes to all our members. We are committed to supporting all our members to feel valued, represented, involved and part of the Rowandale community. We encourage all members of the Parents’ Council to come forward with any ideas and suggestions to help us develop our community together.

We are fully committed to working together with our local organisations, businesses, schools, churches, sports clubs etc. We will continue to seek and encourage opportunities for which to grow our partnerships within our local community for the benefit of everyone.

8. Organisational Structure, Governance & management

In relation to public benefit, the Trustees have complied with the duty to have regard to the guidance issued by the Commission under section 4(b) of the Charities Act.

Our examined and published accounts are currently based on an accounting period of 1 April – 31 March. Our finances have been independently examined by a qualified parent volunteer, Elaine Dolan. We would like to take this opportunity to extend our enormous gratitude to Elaine for her patience, knowledge and guidance.

Our trustees are responsible for ensuring that our PC operates safely, that we enhance the reputation of the school and playgroup, and that we prioritise activities that help us achieve our purpose, over any others. The list of trustees are as follows:

June 2022 – March 2023	June 2023 – to date
Chair - Laura Gordon	Chair - Laura Gordon
Vice Chair - Ursula McTaggart	Vice Chair - Ursula McTaggart
Secretary - Elaine Graham	Secretary - Elaine Graham
Treasurer - Emma McGreevy	Co- Treasurer Eoin O’Brien
PR / Media - Charlene Turkington	Co-Treasurer Aidan Malone
Volunteer Support Lead - Nicole Bell	Co Volunteer Lead - Bronagh Kelly
Fundraising Coordinator - Ciara Payne	Co Volunteer Lead - Michaela Johnston
	PR / Media - Charlene Turkington

9. Gratitude

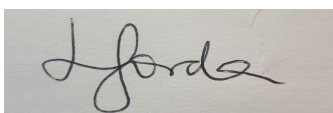
We would like to extend our huge gratitude to all of the school and playgroup staff. We are very lucky to have such a committed and proactive staff who are open to working with us. We would especially like to thank Mrs Hughes and Fiona Maree Ryan for their continuous guidance, support

and friendship. Our thanks also goes to Philly Bayston and Laura Richards for their kindness and generosity helping us with every admin and financial task. We are thankful to the Board of Governors for their support also.

We recognise the contribution of every member of the Parents' Council and that together we can make a sizeable impact. There are too many individual names to acknowledge, such is the enormous scope of the Rowandale Parents' Council volunteer army.

There are so many who volunteer in the school and playgroup on a daily and weekly basis such as our Kiss & Go Volunteers and Reading Partnership volunteers and those who succumb to Fiona's promises of tea & biscuits in lieu of covering hundreds of books! There are those who continually support events such as the School Talent Shows and Year 7 Leavers shows, these are the volunteers who provide videography, lighting, stage props, stage design, costume sourcing and design. There are those who roll up their sleeves and get stuck in cleaning and tidying up The Logan Forest, painting fences, building picnic benches, washing preloved uniforms, collecting preloved costumes and Christmas jumpers. There are those who ensure everyone is fed and watered at events with hot drinks and biscuits, that our children get their turn to order their own sweets at the disco tuck shops and are always the ones stacking chairs, sweeping floors and taking stage sets apart late into the night. There are our HOPE Reps who have been a great support to the trustees with their unwavering support and advice. There are those who take care to capture precious moments and events and who can create posters and media campaigns to galvanise action in the rest of us. There are those who create enormous events for the whole community to enjoy, there are those who take to the stage and fundraise for their efforts. There are those who watch and buy tickets cheering everyone on. There are those who quietly work away in the background championing and encouraging everyone's endeavours and helping to build our Rowandale community.

The trustees are extremely grateful to each and every person who has volunteered their time, money and expertise to support our children's' learning and happiness.

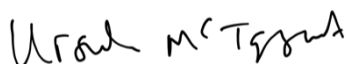


10.06.2024

Signed on behalf of Rowandale Parents' Council

Date

Laura Gordon, Chair, Rowandale Parents Council 2023/24.



10-06-24

Signed on behalf of Rowandale Parents' Council

Date

Ursula McTaggart, Vice Chair, Rowandale Parents Council 2023/24.

