

2024 – 2025 Annual Report



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Chairman's Foreword

It is my distinct privilege to present the 2024–2025 Annual Report for Lurgan Junior High School. This academic year has been defined by significant strategic progress, validated by the positive ETI inspection in June 2024, which specifically commended our robust whole-school approach to target-setting and pupil tracking.

The continued rollout of our knowledge-rich curriculum and the innovative 'Learning to Learn' pilot have successfully empowered our pupils, demonstrably raising attainment and reducing underachievement across our cohorts. Furthermore, our collaboration with partner schools within the Dickson Plan continues to strengthen, ensuring a smooth transition and improved outcomes for our learners.

Our commitment to pastoral care remains the bedrock of our school ethos. I am particularly proud of the opening of 'Oasis', our new Nurture facility within the Positive Impact Centre. This bespoke provision, alongside the ongoing support of Reach Mentoring and our dedicated pastoral team, ensures that pupils facing social, emotional, or anxiety-related barriers receive the holistic support they need to engage fully with school life.

Life outside the classroom has been equally vibrant this year. From the artistic triumph of the seven 'School of Rock' performances and the cultural trip to London, to our sporting teams securing silverware—including the Bann Trophy in Hockey, the Vista League in Netball, and the Mid-Ulster Cup in Football—our pupils have excelled. We also celebrated the tremendous generosity of our community, raising £12,000 at our Christmas Fayre to fund our pupil reward systems.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Principal, Mr. McCoy, and the entire staff for their tireless dedication. I also wish a happy

retirement to our long-serving colleagues, Mrs. Dougan and Mr. Black, thanking them for their years of effective service.

Finally, thank you to the parents and my fellow Governors for your continued partnership in making this year a success.

Mr. Trevor Enderby Chairman, Board of Governors

BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2018 – 2024

Board Representatives

Mr. Trevor Enderby (Chairman)
Ms. Carla Lockhart

Parents' Representatives

Mrs. Nicola McIlwaine (Vice-Chair)
Mrs. Alison Lindsay

Transferors

Mrs. Patricia Black
Mr. Brian Costley
Mrs. Gail Flavell
Dr. Gayle Kennedy
Mrs. Louise McDonald

Teacher

Miss Deborah Osborne
Mr. Keith Lunn

BOARD OF GOVERNORS SUB-COMMITTEES

Safeguarding Committee	Mr. T. Enderby Mrs. N. McIlwaine Mrs. A. Lindsay Mrs. Louise McDonald
Health & Wellbeing/Staff/ Complaints/Premises	Mr. T. Enderby Mrs. N. McIlwaine
Finance	Mr. T. Enderby Dr. G. Kennedy Mrs. G. Flavell Mr B. Costley Mrs. P. Black Mrs. L. McDonald
Recruitment & Selection	Mr. T. Enderby Mrs. N. McIlwaine Ms. C. Lockhart Mrs. A. Lindsay Mrs. G. Flavell Dr. G. Kennedy Mrs. P. Black Mrs. L. McDonald
Teaching & Learning	Mr. T. Enderby Mrs. N. McIlwaine Mrs. A. Lindsay Dr. G. Kennedy Miss D. Osborne
Admissions	Mr. T. Enderby Mrs. N. McIlwaine Miss. D. Osborne Mr. K. Lunn Mr. J. McCoy

PRSD Principal Reviewers

Reviewer 1	Mr. T. Enderby
Reviewer 2	Mrs. A. Lindsay
Reviewer 3	Mr. B. Rolston. (EA external).

RECONSTITUTED BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2024 - 2028

Board Representatives

Mr. Trevor Enderby (Chairman)
 Mrs. Nicola McIlwaine (Vice-Chair)
 Mrs. Gail Flavell
 Mr. Kris McClelland

Parents' Representatives

Mrs. Gail Henderson
 Mrs. Helen Doogan
 Mrs. Lisa Carnahan
 Mr. Matt Turner

Transferors

Mrs. Alison Lindsay

Teacher

Dr. Alanna McCrory
 Mr. Scott McFarland

BOARD OF GOVERNORS SUB-COMMITTEES

Safeguarding Committee	Mr. T. Enderby Mrs. G. Flavell
Health & Wellbeing/Staff/ Complaints/Premises	Mr. T. Enderby Mrs. N. McIlwaine Mrs. G. Flavell Mr. K. McClelland Mr. M. Turner Mrs. A. Lindsay Mrs. G. Henerson Mrs. H. Doogan Mrs. L. Carnahan
Finance	Mr. T. Enderby Mrs. G. Flavell Mr. M. Turner Mr. K. McClelland
Recruitment & Selection	Mr. T. Enderby Mrs. N. McIlwaine All Governors
Teaching & Learning	Mr. T. Enderby Mr. M. Turner Mrs. A. Lindsay Mrs. H. Doogan Mrs. G. Henderson Dr. A. McCrory
Admissions	Mr. T. Enderby Mrs. N. McIlwaine Mrs. G. Henerson Mrs. L. Carnahan Mr. J. McCoy

PRSD Principal Reviewers

Reviewer 1	Mr. T. Enderby
Reviewer 2	Mr. M. Turner
Reviewer 3	Mrs. H. Doogan
Reviewer 4	Mr. B. Rolston. (EA external)

Teaching Staff (as at September 2024)

Positions and Responsibilities

Mr J McCoy	English	Principal	Mr C Lawther	Science	
Mrs R Kerr	French & Spanish	Vice-Principal (Pastoral)	Mrs K Lavery (T)	Social Communication Class	
Mr M Thompson	History	Vice-Principal (Curriculum)	Miss S J Loney	Music/RE	Senior Teacher (Pastoral) /Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection/ Social Media & Website Coordinator
			Mr K Lunn	History	SEN Year Head
Mr M Addley	History	HOD/Year Head	Miss J Lyness	RE & Music	
Mrs J Alexander	Mathematics	HOD/Attendance Management Coordinator	Miss C McCann	HOD TD, ICT & Literacy Support	
Mrs K Bell	Art	HOD Art & Design / Shared Ed Coordinator	Mr M McGreevy	Supported Learning	Year Head
Mrs C Blakely	English & RE	Year Head	Mrs A McCrory	Music	HOD Music/Head of Musical Events
Mr G Black	TD & LLW	Coordinator for Citizenship/School Trips/PD Coordinator	TBC	Mathematics	
Mr J Black	Mathematics	Numeracy Coordinator/ Year Head/Pupil Tracking & Assessment/Reporting and Recording	Mr R McDowell	PE	HOD Boys' PE
		Teacher Tutor	Mr S McFarland	Geography	HOD Geography
Mrs B Carson	Science		Mr J McMahan	Geography & History	
Mrs K Carson	English		Mr J McMahan	French & Spanish	
Mrs J Clements	Art		Mrs R Miskelly	French & Spanish	HOD Languages
Mrs L Cochrane	Science & RE		TBC	English	
Mrs S Cross	Home Economics		Mrs U O'Reilly	French & Spanish	
Mrs L Dougan	RE & PE	HOD RE	Miss D Osborne	Mathematics	Senior Teacher (Curriculum)/Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Positive Impact Centre Manager
Mrs A Ferry	Science				
Mrs Je Graham	Home Economics	HOD HE			
Mrs Ju Graham	English	Using Communication Coordinator / SEN Year Head	Mrs V Patterson	Art	
			Mrs C Patton	Mathematics	Year Head
Mr J Guy	PE & Mathematics	Coordinator for Transfer at 14/HOD	Mrs S Pogue	English & EAL	Newcomer Coordinator
		CEAIG/Employability Coordinator	Mrs J Quinn	TD	SEN Year Head
			Miss G Robinson	Modern Languages	
Mrs L Harvey	Mathematics		Mrs N Saunderson	Girls' PE	HOD Girls' PE
Mrs A Jardine	English	HOD English/Library	Mrs G Smith	Drama	HOD Drama
Mr M Jess	History/RE/English		Mrs E Walker	Home Economics/ Geography	
Mrs F Kennedy	Science	HOD Science	Mrs K Walmsley	Geography	
Mr M Lavery	ICT & LLW	HOD IT	Mrs S Wilkinson	Home Economics	
			Mrs R Wright	French & Spanish	

Non-Teaching Staff

Administration	Mrs E Lewis, SEO	Mrs P Thompson Mrs T Whithorn Miss S Moffitt (T) Mr G McBride (T)
Building Supervisors	Mr. G. Cassells	Mr. J. Parks
Classroom Assistants	Mrs A Black Mrs A Calvert Mrs J Calvert Mrs J Hamilton Miss S Gordon Mrs Z Patterson Mr B Cullen Mr D Barton Miss EJ McCartney Mrs G Parker Mrs S McCullough Mr D Balan Miss E Whithorn Mr J Donaldson Mrs R Walker	Mrs L King (EAL) Ms C Lyness Miss J Mailey Mrs M Muntele Mrs E Zukowska Mrs P Khawar Mrs A Palasz Ms L Robb Ms K Jennett Mrs T McElroy Ms E Wallace Mr S Todd Mrs R Mulligan Mrs V Hunter Mr B Stone
Lunchtime Supervisors	Mrs L Cassells Mrs B Hill	Mrs M Leathem Mr G Cassells Mr J Parks
Technicians	Mrs E Blakely (Home Economics) Mr T Adams (Science) Mrs R Irwin (Art & Design)	Mr D Johnston (ICT) Mrs Todd (Technology & Design)

Curriculum

Lurgan JHS School aims to give its pupils a broad, balanced and relevant education. We seek to offer equal opportunities to all pupils and to ensure that pupils' learning is purposeful, useful and rewarding. The school week is divided into 40 periods, with 35 being 40 minutes long and lunch periods of 35 minutes. Pupils are divided into four broad bands of developed ability based on Primary School data and our own baseline data. Within these streams pupils are placed in Form Classes and are taught in this arrangement for non-practical subjects. In Year 10, the three Science subjects (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) are taught separately, each for two periods a week. Pupils follow a course in Learning for Life and Work comprising elements of Personal Development education in Year 8. In Year 9, pupils continue with one period per week of Employability. In Year 10, pupils follow a course in Citizenship.

In 2024-25 we introduced a Nurture provision alongside the SPiMS class, Supported Learning and EAL support in our unique and bespoke Positive Impact Centre (PIC). All of this support is coordinated by our Senior Teacher, Curriculum. A pilot for a knowledge-rich curriculum and a 'Learning to Learn' programme was introduced for teaching to the Year 8 pupils in September 2023. According to the June 2024 ETi report "The Year 8 pupils who spoke to the inspectors reported that they find the 'Learning to Learn' programme very helpful in supporting them to develop strategies to build on their knowledge and they particularly enjoy retrieval quizzes." This pilot continued into Year 9 and planning for Year 10 has continued. Regular whole school retrieval quiz Assemblies organised by HoDs and led by the Curriculum Team took place throughout the year. The June 2024 ETi report also indicated we need to continue to monitor the quality of provision for the pupils attending the SPiMS class and should continue to increase the opportunities for the pupils to develop their oral skills.

Monitoring of the provision for SPiMS is undertaken by the Curriculum team and planning work for further development of oral skills across the curriculum has begun.

Both the Curriculum (Learning and Teaching) and Assessment & Reporting policies were reviewed and updated this year, before being presented to staff and uploaded to the school website in Term 3 and a Curriculum Handbook was also developed and launched. We have been evaluating the impact of our Literacy and Numeracy intervention programmes used across the curriculum, and our data coordinator is working with the Curriculum team to develop even more robust measures of pupil progress.

The Teacher Professional Learning programme which prioritises learning and teaching was due to have focused on the Research Lesson Study (RLS) approach this year, with departments indicating they would find this beneficial as a way of reflecting on teaching strategies. However, industrial action means this has been postponed until 2025-26. The Curriculum Team meet with HoDs during the year to monitor progress. Almost all HoDs have now taken part in collaboration with partner schools across the Dickson Plan to improve outcomes for pupils and share good practice. Lurgan JHS also successfully hosted a Teachmeet event for staff across the Craigavon in Term 3 and our Year 9 pupils took part in a CALC CEAIG event.

Retirement

Mrs Linda Dougan, Head of RE and PE teacher, along with Mr Geoff Black, TD and LLW teacher, and organiser of many successful trips for pupils, retired at the end of the 2024-25 academic year after long and effective service at Lurgan JHS.

Outcomes for pupils

Lurgan College continues to select a cohort of pupils using their own Rank Order list based on the results from Lurgan JHS

examinations in March/April of Year 10, together with the results from end of Year 9 examinations. The results are split 30% Year 9 and 70% Year 10. Parents and pupils continued to receive reports detailing their progress twice in the year. The regression analysis was carried out after the December and June assessment period. This is a statistical process when a comparison is made of the pupils' attainment compared to their ability. Many of the pupils overachieved and this was celebrated with a certificate in a formal rewards assembly. The June 2024 Inspection report noted that "the school is taking greater account of the progression of its pupils through links with its key stage KS2 and KS4 partner schools. Subject leaders across the junior and senior high schools in the area are collaborating on common goals, such as the development of practical skills and resources, resulting in smoother transition and improved KS3 outcomes." Our Prize Day 'Endeavour' award is now based on the highest score in the regression analysis i.e. the person with the greatest over-achievement.

Target-Setting

Since 2018-19, we have used a more personal method of measuring pupil attainment at Key Stage 3. This involves target-setting across 10 academic subjects. Each Year 8 pupil is given individual targets for each subject which were derived from CAT4 Standardised Testing. These targets allow pupils, teachers, and parents to understand the various levels expected of them in each subject area.

At Christmas and Summer, pupils completed exams/assessments which were designed to assess them against these targets. Following this, parents received a report which showed how well the pupil performed in each subject, relative to their own target. A 'traffic light'–style colour coding system makes this easy to understand. This process has been a highly successful initiative by the Curriculum Team and was recognised as such in the inspection report in June 2024, "the pupils benefit from the whole-school

approach to target-setting and the close monitoring and evaluation of their progress and achievement, using an appropriate range of baseline and internal assessment data”.

Pupils identified as needing help with their learning are supported through a range of tailored interventions to suit their individual need, which includes pastoral and academic mentoring, and timebound withdrawal support in English, mathematics, and science. This can also include Newcomer pupils who need additional support with their language skills.

Data and Assessment

During the 2024–2025 academic year, we continued to strengthen our use of assessment data to monitor pupil progress, identify underachievement, and celebrate overachievement. Our approach combines standardised assessments, statistical analysis, and a knowledge-rich curriculum to ensure every pupil reaches their full potential.

CAT4 Assessments and Target Setting

At the end of Primary 7, pupils completed Cognitive Abilities Tests (CAT4). These assessments identify each pupil’s underlying potential across verbal, non-verbal, quantitative, and spatial domains. Using the CAT4 results, individual subject targets were generated for each pupil. These targets form the baseline for ongoing assessment throughout the academic year. Pupil attainment in formal examinations is compared to these targets using regression analysis, allowing us to evaluate whether each pupil is performing above, below, or in line with their expected potential.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis measures how well a pupil’s exam performance aligns with their predicted ability. Three key statistical indicators are used:

- Standard Residual $> +1$: Overachieving — the pupil has performed significantly above their predicted potential. These pupils receive an Overachievement Certificate in recognition of their outstanding effort and attainment.
- Standard Residual < -1 : Underachieving — the pupil has performed below their predicted potential. These pupils are identified for intervention and support.
- Standard Residual between -1 and $+1$: Achieving potential — performance is consistent with predicted ability.

Whole-School Data Summary

Analysis of June 2025 assessment data revealed the following trends:

- 14.3% of pupils are currently overachieving
- 14.2% are underachieving
- 71.5% are achieving in line with expectations

Correlations with other indicators:

- Average attendance of overachievers: 94.8%
- Average attendance of underachievers: 82.2%
- Average demerits (overachievers): 3.8
- Average demerits (underachievers): 36.8
- Average merits (overachievers): 78.2
- Average merits (underachievers): 40.9

Intervention and Support for Underachieving Pupils

Pupils identified as underachieving are supported through a structured process including parent and pupil meetings with the Form Teacher, personalised intervention plans, withdrawal or after-school support, homework clubs, increased revision and retrieval practice in lessons, regular low-stakes quizzing using Knowledge

Organisers, 'Learning to Learn' strategies, and pastoral initiatives such as REACH and Aspire programmes.

Progress of Underachieving Pupils

Continued tracking of underachieving pupils shows encouraging progress:

- Year 8: 69% improved; 34% are now achieving their potential
- Year 9: 72% improved; 25% are now achieving their potential
- Year 10: 60% improved; 31% are now achieving their potential (a 15% increase from 2024)

Impact of the Knowledge-Rich Curriculum

Year 8 Cohort	Overachieving	Achieving	Underachieving
2022/23	14.4%	70.3%	15.3%
2023/24	14.6%	73.1%	12.3%

Additionally, 45.5% of pupils who were underachieving in December 2023 achieved their potential by June 2024 — a significant improvement on the previous year's 33.3%.

Highlights

The use of CAT4 assessments, regression analysis, and a knowledge-rich curriculum has provided a robust framework for understanding and improving pupil achievement. Overachievers are being recognised and celebrated, while underachievers are supported with targeted, evidence-based interventions. The shift to a knowledge-rich approach has demonstrably raised attainment and reduced underachievement.

Moving forward, we will continue to refine our use of regression analysis, strengthen links between data and teaching, and embed a

culture of continual improvement through data-driven reflection and intervention.

Careers Education

The Careers' Department had another very enjoyable and successful year. In Year 9 Careers classes, pupils had the opportunity to explore their own skills and qualities, set short and long term goals, experience the job application process and discover many areas of work with the relevant qualifications needed in each. The Careers' department would like to thank individual departments for organising numerous subject-specific careers events and careers lessons. This has really helped pupils to see the link between the classroom and the world of work in specific areas. 2025/26 also saw the introduction of Unifrog, our new online careers package. Pupils had opportunities to explore specific careers, researching specific skills and qualities required as well as qualifications. This package will allow them to participate in online work experience.

Online resources were shared with Year 10 through the creation of a Year 10 Transfer Google Classroom. The Careers' department made themselves available throughout the year for any Year 10 pupil who required advice on selecting GCSE options for their next school.

The Careers' Department in Lurgan Junior High School continued to work closely with the Department of the Economy's Careers Advisors and with our senior schools. The Careers Advisors provided online class talks to all Year 10 pupils in November. Mr Guy followed this up with small group careers interviews for those students that required further advice prior to choosing provisional GCSE options. Lurgan JHS Careers' Department has an excellent relationship with, and has liaised closely with its counterparts in Lurgan College, Craigavon Senior High School and various other

schools, in an aim to make a smooth transition for all our pupils both in terms of subject choice and pastoral care.

Year 10 Leavers' Destinations

Percentage of Leavers to:

	Craigavon SHS	Lurgan College	Other
June 2025	37.1%	49.6%	13.3%
June 2024	36.6%	49.2%	14.2%
June 2023	36.9%	47.5%	15.7%
June 2022	41.9%	48.6%	9.5%
June 2021	42.1%	45.6%	12.3%
June 2020	38.8%	54.4%	10.7%
June 2019	40.6%	45%	14.4%
June 2018	43%	45%	12%
June 2017	39%	58%	3%

2024/2025 School Terms and Holidays

AUTUMN TERM

Tuesday 27 August – Friday 20 December

Autumn Half Term

Monday 28 October – Friday 1 November

SPRING TERM

Wednesday 6 January – Friday 11 April

Spring Half Term

Monday 10 February – Friday 14 February

Bank Holiday

Monday 17 March St Patrick's Day

SUMMER TERM

Monday 28 April – Monday 30 June

Bank Holidays

Monday 5 May

Monday 26 May

Please note that all dates were inclusive

The School Day

Registration is from 9.05 – 9.15 am and takes place in Form Rooms. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday there are Assemblies for each Year Group. Period 1 is a class beginning at 9.15 am.

Attendance is recorded in registration and by each class teacher. School ends at 3.20 pm each day.

Registration / Assembly	9.05-9.15
Period 1	9.15-9.55
Period 2	9.55-10.35
Break	10.35-10.55
Period 3	10.55-11.35
Period 4	11.35-12.15
Period 5 (Year 8 Lunch)	12.15-12.50
Period 6 (Year 9 Lunch)	12.50-1.25

Period 7 (Year 10 Lunch)	1.25-2.00
Period 8	2.00-2.40
Period 9	2.40-3.20

and assessments undertaken after the Transfer process was completed.

Parents were also given questionnaires following the examinations. Results were used to refine approaches to teaching, learning and assessment for the incoming academic year 2025-26.

Annual Attendance Rate

(All Pupils)
 2019 – 2020 = 93.8% (up to March 2020)
 2021 – 2022 = 91.9%
 2022 - 2023 = 91.0%
 2023 – 2024 = 91.9%
 2024 – 2025 = 91.6%

An Induction Evening, which we held for the incoming Year 8 parents in June 2025, was extremely well-attended once again.

Thereafter, attendance and engagement was monitored through work of Form Teachers, Year Heads and Senior Pastoral Team.

Parental Involvement

Parent meetings were held via the School Cloud online video call system. Progress review meetings were held in this way with subject teachers for Year 9 and 10 pupils in early January 2024, while Year 8 parents were able to book a School Cloud meeting with subject teachers in April.

We hosted a traditional Open Evening event, which was held for prospective entrants to Year 8 in January 2025, with classrooms open for visitors across the school, along with two addresses to parents by Mr McCoy and a showcase of the successful Drama and Music departments. Substantial numbers of parents and pupils attended and reported high levels of enthusiasm.

Parents of all pupils received reports following examinations in November and in May/June. Parents of pupils in Year 10 again received an additional report in June to reflect the work completed

Safeguarding and Child Protection

DESIGNATED TEACHER'S ANNUAL REPORT TO BOARD OF GOVERNORS ON CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

YEAR ENDED June 2024

Chair of Board of Governors:	Mr Trevor Enderby
Designated Governor for Child Protection:	Mr Trevor Enderby
Principal:	Mr James McCoy
Designated Teacher:	Mrs Rhoda Kerr
Deputy Designated Teacher(s):	Mr Keith Lunn, Mr Michael Thompson, Miss Deborah Osborne

SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING TEAM

CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING ACTIVITY

1 Concerns of Abuse

Over the past year, we have dealt with various types of child protection/safeguarding concerns, for example: actual/suspected neglect, emotional harm, physical harm, sexualised behaviours, child sexual exploitation, self-harm/suicidal thoughts, domestic abuse, on-line safety, indecent images, substance misuse, anti-social behaviours, etc.

We have regularly liaised with the CPSSS to seek advice and guidance as required and are very thankful for their support. Where there was Social Services involvement with a family, our safeguarding team made regular contact with them and also with the family, putting in place additional supports in school when it was deemed necessary or beneficial to the pupil. Examples of these supports are a designated key adult, Downtime Pass, referral to Reach Mentoring (Tuesdays), Reach Connect and referral to our school counsellor.

- 1.1 Number Of Enquiries To Education Authority CPSS: 9 approx.
- 1.2 Number Of Referrals To Social Services: 5 UNOCINIs
- 1.3 Number of Child Protection Complaints Against Staff: 1
- 1.4 Number Of Children On Child Protection Register: 12
- 1.5 Number Of Looked After Children (Children In Care): 8
- 1.6 Number Of Children With Social Services Involvement For Family Support (Not On Child Protection Register): 2
- 1.7 Multi-Agency Meetings

Members of our safeguarding team prepared reports and attended Case Conferences for pupils on the Child Protection Register. Reports for our Looked After Children were prepared for LAC reviews and a safeguarding team member attended these review meetings.

Multi-Disciplinary Meetings were also held for some pupils with BST, EWS and CAMHS or EOTAS where appropriate and attended by members of our Senior Pastoral Team and/or SEN.

Members of our safeguarding team took a total of 18 calls from Operation Encompass over this past year. Conversations were held with pupils involved and relevant staff were informed to keep an eye out for pupils during the school day.

2 Training Attended/Provided

- **Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher**

Mr Lunn and Mrs Kerr attended DT/DDT refresher training in November at Clounagh Teachers Centre.

- **Nurture UK training**

Miss Osborne, Mrs Lunn (Reach Connect worker) & Mrs Kerr attended the three day intensive online training with Nurture UK – two days at the start of October and the final day on 14th November, 2024. This was in preparation for opening our Nurture provision in the PIC and also to disseminate nurture training to the whole school.

- **Whole School**

Awareness training was held for all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching during our August SDDs and reflected updated guidance issued by the Department of Education. This was led by Mrs Kerr (DT).

Nurture training for staff was led by Miss Osborne, Mrs Lunn and Mrs Kerr in our November twilight based on what we had learned from our training with Nurture UK. Following the training, staff spoke with us about how it had helped their understanding and insight into the lives of many pupils.

In September, Mrs Kerr delivered safeguarding assemblies for all three year groups. This included details about our procedures for reporting any concerns and for requesting support, both inside and outside school. Safeguarding messages were also promoted regularly through our Learning for Life and Work curricular

programme, pupil announcements, regular assemblies, etc. in addition to our sessions with the PSNI and Love for Life.

3 Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy Reviews

Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Governors.

4 The Preventative Curriculum

Reach Mentoring carried out 1:1 sessions with 20-25 pupils in our Youth Annexe on Tuesday mornings for support with a variety of issues – social, emotional and behaviour difficulties. Feedback from these pupils indicate that these sessions are highly important to them and they look forward to their time in the Youth Annexe each week. The majority report that it has been a significant benefit to their mental health and confidence.

Aspire also continue to partner with us and worked with up to ten FSM pupils who were underachieving academically. This involved mentoring and support with homework. These pupils reported that it was a very supportive space for them each week.

We continued our liaison with our PSNI Neighbourhood Team delivering elements of the preventative curriculum in individual class sessions to pupils. Once again, our student council, The Pupils' Voice, hosted these sessions with great professionalism, going round the classes with the PSNI team and introducing them. The topics covered were 'One Punch Kills', online safety, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour. Following each session, opportunity was given for pupils to discuss related questions with their Form Teachers. Feedback from the PSNI indicated that these sessions continue to be a positive help in building relationships with our pupils in the community.

At the end of each half term and full term, we had Positive Mental Health & Well-being Days. We collapsed the timetable for one day

and had carousel activities across the whole school which consisted of events such as special assemblies (i.e. harvest, Christmas, Easter), End of Term Show Show, Just Dance, Sponsored Walk, Escape Room, Masked Teacher, Deck the Doors and movies with tuckshop. These days were received very positively by both staff and pupils and provided memorable fun moments for all. A massive thank you to Mr Lunn for all his hard work, incredible energy and creativity in organising and coordinating these days.

We continued with our reward system so that pupils received recognised awards when they achieved certain levels of achievement points on SIMS Behaviour Management. We believe it is important to acknowledge the vast number of pupils who regularly follow school rules, engage in their learning to a high standard and display respect and kindness, responsibility and resilience throughout the course of the school day. In term three, following discussion at SLT, with our Pastoral Team and also with TPV, we piloted a move from using the terms 'achievement' and 'behaviour' points to 'merits' and 'demerits' with the following rationale which we shared with pupils in assemblies:

We want to focus on the positive. The term 'Merit', means the quality of being good, worthy or deserving of praise/reward. We feel that the word 'achievement' is not good enough. Whilst the word 'achievement' can recognise something you have achieved or done, the word 'merit' allows us to recognise something you may have done but also, importantly reward a **specific commendable quality that you have as a person**. This allows us to continue showing the core values of our three 'R's at Lurgan Junior High School.

At times we may fall short of the high standards expected at the Junior High or we may make mistakes (we are human). By changing the word 'behaviour' to 'demerit' we are recognising that on **some occasions**, it may not be the result of bad behaviour, but poor decision making or forgetfulness. It is therefore unfair to categorise **everything** as bad behaviour.

These awards included phone calls home to commend pupils, canteen queue jump passes, bronze (awarded by the Form Teacher), silver (awarded by Year Heads), gold (awarded by Senior Teachers), diamond (awarded by Vice Principals) and platinum certificates (awarded by Mr McCoy). In addition to the certificates, pupil also have a reward for each level starting from silver. Thanks to the money raised through our Christmas Fayre and 12 Days of Christmas Raffle, £12 000, we were able to offer the following rewards free of charge:

	Silver	Gold	Diamond	Platinum
Date	Monday 16 th June	Thursday 19 th June	Tuesday 24 th June	Friday 20 th June
Event	Movie & Ice Cream (Moon Gelato)	Belfast Bounce at LJHS 42 foot assault course Football darts 10 foot Platform Drop Slide Tyre run Hurdles Flipems Balance Beam Barrel Crawl	10 Pen Bowling, McDonald's & Rushmere 11:15 Rushmere 12:00 McDonald's 1:00 Arcade 1:30 10 Pin Bowling 2:45 Pick up	Newcastle Day Trip

Form Teachers were given Data Input afternoons as part of their directed time to collate merits. It is a significant amount of work on the part of all staff. Feedback from staff, pupils and parents indicate that the reward system continues to be positively received and

pupils feel valued and appreciated. Again, a huge thanks to Mr Lunn for organising the above events with help from the Pastoral Team. They were a major highlight for the pupils who achieved these awards and a great incentive for pupils to give their best in all aspects of school life.

Anxiety continues to have a massive impact on a significant number of pupils. Pupils are anxious for a variety of reasons – for example, social anxiety and school based anxiety; attachment issues, not wanting to leave a parent; anxious about having missed out on their learning; anxious about not being able to focus on their learning; anxious about friendships or lack of them. Self harm and suicidal ideation are also more prevalent. Where this was brought to the attention of school, parents were contacted and asked to come into school for a meeting with Mrs Kerr or Mr Lunn along with the pupil. Parents were asked to bring their child to the GP. Several pupils were referred to CAMHS/SHIP as a result. Mrs Kerr and Mr Lunn, along with the Form Teachers and relevant Year Heads, would have regular check-ins with these pupils and parents to monitor how they were coping in the school setting. Some were issued with Downtime Passes so that, when they were starting to feel anxious or overwhelmed, they could leave the classroom and have space to calm down and regulate their emotions with a key adult. Where appropriate, a referral was made to Reach Mentoring/Reach Connect, as an additional support. Feedback from parents and pupils indicated that the support from school was very much appreciated and that, on many occasions, school had gone above and beyond the call of duty.

Given the high levels of anxiety experienced by some pupils, attendance issues have continued to increase and we are thankful for the support of our shared Attendance and Pastoral Officer (with the other three JHS). Katie Cromie (formerly with ASPIRE) joined us in February of this year in this role and Chris Ryan, who had been our Attendance & Pastoral Officer moved on to take up a post in Clounagh JHS. Katie is in school on Tuesday mornings up to midday and Thursday afternoons from 12.30pm. Every fourth

Friday, Katie has a full day at LJHS. Her role is to support school with pupils who are struggling to attend, carry out home visits, engage with the parents and pupils in liaison with our Attendance Officer, Year Heads and EWS and put strategies in place to improve attendance. This role has been a meaningful and much needed support for staff who are overstretched with the increased demands of their roles in school, and both Chris and Katie have been excellent at engaging and fostering positive relationships with pupils and parents and putting interventions in place (i.e. meetings after school when school was quiet, tailored timetable, 1:1 work with the pupil, Supported Learning, Downtime Pass) to successfully support reintegration to school life for some of these pupils.

This year, in addition to Danielle Lunn as a full time Reach Connect Worker, Anna Cumming, also Reach Connect, joined us after the half term in February. The roles of both these ladies is twofold. They offer mentoring support to a number of pupils who have been referred to them by their Form Teacher/Year Head/Senior Pastoral Team from periods 2 – 6 each day. Periods 1, 2, 8 & 9, they delivered our Nurture programme to a small group of pupils who were chosen after a robust selection process which included having knowledge of the pupils' backgrounds; any trauma/ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences); evidence that they are not coping in the school setting and unable to access the curriculum because of these needs; completing a Boxall Profile to give us insight into the pupils' needs. We met with the parents/guardians of the six selected pupils and explained the vision of the nurture programme and did likewise with the pupils. These meetings took place in the Nurture room, named 'Oasis', which transformed a former ICT room into a wonderfully calm and restful setting as per the Nurture UK guidance. Boxall Profiles were completed again on these pupils following their term and a half in Oasis and all of the profiles showed improvement which indicates that they have benefited from the nurture programme.

Support through Links Counselling continued as a valuable resource one day a week in school and, at times, when our waiting list increased to 12 plus, we operated an additional day of counselling sessions. Over the course of the year, 33 pupils were referred for counselling. This also included group sessions which were held over three weeks with a small group of Year 10 girls. The group counselling sessions is a new support with Links and they offer sessions on grief, anger, anxiety and stress, friendships and resilience.

Staff had training in addressing bullying type behaviour legislation during our August staff training days. The majority of staff completed the EA Level One online training during these days and there was also additional training in twilight sessions showing staff how to complete the Bullying Concern Assessment Form. As a Senior Pastoral Team, we have worked on the BCAF to make it more user friendly for staff and supported them, when required, to ensure they are completed as accurately as possible and that pupils involved and parents also feel supported with the process. We have liaised with ABSIT on four occasions where parents have contacted them around bullying type behaviour. In all cases, ABSIT has commended the actions we have taken and the supports we have put in place for both the pupil/s displaying bullying type behaviour and the pupil/s experiencing bullying type behaviour.

We have used restorative practice regularly over the past year with pupils who have had friendships issues, for vaping incidents and physical altercations, with great success.

Our TPV led assemblies for Anti-Bullying Week in November, and clear messages and reminders were shared with all pupils in assemblies and form time throughout the year. We encourage pupils to use 'THINK' – Is it True? Is it Helpful? Is it Inspiring? Is it Necessary? Is it Kind?

Mr McCoy, Mr Lunn and Mrs Kerr attended the ABSIT (Addressing Bullying in Schools Implementation Team) Launch Ceremony in November where LJHS received a certificate to say that we have

successfully contributed to the developmental leadership training programme. Our TPV also completed training as Addressing Bullying Ambassadors in Term Three.

5 Any Other Issues

Signed:	Designated Teacher
Signed:	Principal
Date:	

SEN

The Positive Impact Centre (PIC) continues to serve as the cornerstone of inclusive education at Lurgan Junior High School, providing tailored academic and pastoral support. This year marked a significant milestone with the opening of '**Oasis**', our dedicated Nurture facility. Designed in accordance with Nurture UK guidelines, Oasis supports pupils who have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and require support for social, emotional, and mental development. Following intensive training for staff, the room was fully refurbished with new carpets, painting, and furniture to provide a calm, restful environment.

Our specialist provisions have seen continued growth and success:

- **SEN Register:** As of September 2024, the register includes 141 pupils across all year groups, including those in the Social Communication Class (SCC).
- **Social Communication Class (SCC):** Under the teaching of Mrs. Lavery, the SCC has thrived and expanded to support eight pupils, with two pupils successfully transitioning nearly full-time into mainstream classes.
- **AQA Unit Award Scheme:** We are excited to explore and introduce this scheme this year to provide recognized accreditation for our pupils' achievements in the SCC.
- **EAL Support and Supported Learning Provision:** Mrs Pogue and our EAL team provide essential language integration, whilst Mr McGreevy continues to work with small

groups of children on key literacy skills, including the use of *Sounds Write* phonics and reading/comprehension support for our pupil population.

- **Enhanced Interventions:** Provision now includes small-group support in English, Maths, and Science for pupils low on the regression analysis, alongside 1-1 support for pupils with mobility issues.

The PIC remains committed to a dyslexia-friendly environment, utilising specialised fonts in resources and maintaining clear classroom environments to minimise cognitive overload. Through the dedication of our 29 Classroom Assistants and specialised teaching staff, the PIC ensures every pupil has the tools to engage fully with school life and achieve their potential.

Enrolment

On 5 October 2024 (the official school census date) the Schools' enrolment stood at 739. The number was made up as follows:

Year Group	Pupils	Pupils with SEN Stage 3
8	248	13
9	239	17
10	244	5

By the end of June, the in-year fluctuation of figures reflected the following:

Year Group	Pupils	Pupils with SEN Stage 3
8	248	12 (one removed at annual review at request of parent)
9	237	17
10	251	7

Staff Development Days

BAKER DAYS

Wed - Fri 21st -23rd August 2024

Friday 17th January 2025

Monday 17th February 2025

AUTUMN TERM

Staff Meetings - Inspection Review, School Development Planning, Child Protection updates, Anti Bullying Training, Fire Safety Training, Pastoral Procedures, Action Planning, Numeracy, Literacy whole school targets, ICT training (C2ken updates), Results Analysis, Teaching and Learning overview, Learning to Learn update

- Staff training on Year 2 of knowledge rich curriculum rollout,
- Curriculum Policies review and launch
- KS3/4 collaborations
- Group Meetings/Departmental Time (Research Lesson Study, P6 sampler day preparation, exam preparation)

SPRING TERM

Staff meetings:

- Open Evening review; Year 10 exam preparation
- Regression Analysis, Staff attendance policy, Exam survey review,
- Meetings with pupils requiring intervention in Regression Analysis
- Behaviour Routines & Nurture Update.
- House system review
 - Year 9 Knowledge Organiser review and preparation

SUMMER TERM

Staff meetings:

- Departmental time for assessment and reporting.
- Staff meetings and SEN training
- Outcomes from HOD meetings with the Board of Governors,
- Launch of Curriculum Handbook, Anti-Bullying Update on BCAAF form.

Financial Report

Summary of Accounts

Lurgan Junior High School continues to be in a strong position financially and finished the financial year with a credit. The Finance Committee supported the Principal and staff throughout the year.

The School Financial Plan for (2024-2025) has been approved by the Board of Governors.

Gifts / Donations

School donated £600 Swaziland African Choir, £150 to Water Drops and £511.22 to MacMillan Cancer.
£1200 donated to Reach, £2000 donated to Aspire.
Contributed to Emmanuel Christmas Hamper Appeal.

Building Works/Equipment

New outdoor signage on school grounds has been ordered.
Creation of Nurture Unit – ‘Oasis’.
Various works completed to upkeep the building.
Library repaired after significant storm damage.

Mrs Clements’ room – new floor, chairs and desks.
Science department provided with new microscopes.

Charging and Remissions

School Fund

It is not possible to offer the full range of activities presently available to pupils by relying solely on the resources provided by the Department of Education. The Board of Governors therefore asks parents to make a voluntary contribution of £30 per pupil, £55 per 2 pupils and £65 for 3 or more pupils per annum so that the school may continue to offer as broad a range of educational opportunities as possible. No pupil will be disadvantaged in relation to whether or not his/her parents have made such contributions.

Books and Stationery

All textbooks required by each pupil are provided free of charge. The books remain the property of the school and it is expected that they will be kept in good condition and returned on demand. A charge will be made for books which have to be replaced through being lost, or by neglect, or if they are not returned, when required.

Each pupil will be provided free of charge with a reasonable amount of stationery each year. Additional stationery, if required, may be purchased privately.

This year there was the addition of Knowledge Organisers introduced to the Year 8 and 9 Pupils. These were made externally and students and teachers alike have reaped the benefits of this invaluable resource.

Practical Subjects

The cost of materials for science is met by the school.

A materials charge of £40.00 is levied on pupils in Year 8 as a contribution towards the cost of consumables for Art and Design, Home Economics, Science and Technology. Further small charges are levied as and when necessary, by these departments.

Clothing

Parents are responsible for the provision of correct school uniform. Protective clothing and equipment required for practical subjects will be provided free of charge by the school. Parents are responsible for the provision of the correct clothing and equipment for Physical Education and Games. A used uniform facility was organised for the summer months and operates sporadically throughout the year as required. In addition, using money raised has enabled school to provide key uniform items for children in need of these for example, emergency shoes, ties or school bags.

Music

A charge will be made in respect of individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument or singing lessons when these are not provided by the Education Authority.

All examination fees connected with individual music tuition will be paid by parents. A charge will also be made for the hire of musical instruments owned by the school.

Damage to Property

When damage is done to School property through carelessness or misbehaviour, the school may charge up to the full cost of replacement or repair, the cost being borne by the parents of the pupils involved.

Subject & Activity Reports

Maths Department & Numeracy

In 2024/25, the Maths Department focused on three key priorities to enhance teaching and learning:

1. Promoting the effective use of knowledge organisers and retrieval practice techniques to raise standards in pupil learning.
2. Developing strategies to support students with additional needs, ensuring inclusive and accessible learning.
3. Preparing for the continued roll-out of a knowledge-rich Maths curriculum for Year 10.
- 4.

To support these aims, the department created tailored knowledge organisers to embed core mathematical concepts. These were complemented by self-quizzing homework tasks linked to MyMaths, allowing students to consolidate their understanding through topic-specific online activities. The dynamic nature of MyMaths—where new questions are generated each time—ensures students have unlimited opportunities for practice. Teachers monitored progress through the platform’s assessment tools, enabling timely feedback and intervention.

Retrieval practice was embedded across lessons using low-stakes quizzes, starter and plenary activities, and interleaved content drawn from the knowledge organisers. Strategies such as whiteboard work and “think, pair, share” discussions were regularly employed to assess and deepen individual understanding.

Additionally, the use of Google Classroom has become fully embedded across the department. Both pupil feedback and teacher professional judgment confirmed its effectiveness in supporting learning—particularly for revision and catching up on missed work. Students reported that the availability of resources online significantly aided their preparation for assessments.

Maths Support

Following an analysis of assessment data, students identified as underperforming (red-flagged) were allocated targeted Maths support for one period per week.

This intervention proved highly effective, with several students improving from red to green between their Year 9 and Year 10 assessments.

In addition to in-class support, after-school Maths sessions were offered to all year groups termly. These sessions were led by two Maths teachers each week and saw strong participation from students seeking extra help ahead of assessments.

Throughout the year, students with additional needs received tailored support through customised booklets and one-to-one assistance from teachers and classroom assistants. Supporting pupils with additional needs remained a standing item on the department meeting agenda, with ongoing collaboration and guidance from the SEN and Newcomer Coordinators.

Numeracy Ninja

Students in the Maths Department continue to participate in the weekly Numeracy Ninjas programme during their Maths lessons. This Key Stage 3 intervention is designed to close gaps in students’ basic mental calculation skills and build the numeracy fluency needed to confidently access GCSE Maths content as they progress into Key Stage 4.

Each term, students who demonstrate the highest achievement or most improvement in their class are recognised with a Black Belt certificate and a black pen. At the end of the academic year, those who earned 10 or more Black Belts are awarded the

prestigious Grand Master Certificate, along with a black pen, in celebration of their consistent effort and progress.

Royal Navy Visit

On the morning of Wednesday, 2nd October, our Year 10 students had the exciting opportunity to engage with the Royal Navy Attract team. Through a series of dynamic and engaging team-building sessions, students were introduced to life in the Royal Navy. The activities were not only informative but also entertaining, allowing students to learn about the Royal Navy in an interactive and enjoyable way. Additionally, students had the chance to ask questions and gain insights directly from the team, making it a truly enriching experience.

Maths Week

Last year in October Mr J Black (Numeracy Coordinator) utilised the school's social media to post challenges that the pupils completed at home. The challenges proved to be very successful as we received over one hundred responses. Prizes were given out following a raffle with all pupils who worked out the correct solution to the challenge. Additionally, pupils took part in numeracy competitions in the canteen and assembly.

IXL

This year, IXL has been utilised by all three-year groups. IXL is an online learning application that offers unlimited, algorithmically generated questions; real-time analytical reports; and dynamic scoring to encourage mastery in Literacy and Numeracy.

UKMT

This year, the school entered 20 Year 10 pupils into the Intermediate UKMT Maths Challenge. This is a maths challenge that attracts entries from schools across the UK. Of all entrants, 40% will receive either a bronze, silver or gold certificate. The intermediate challenge is open for years 12 and below (NI) so the Year 10 pupils were effectively 2 years younger than most entrants for this challenge. Despite their age, they achieved two silver and three bronze certificates. In Year 9, 20 pupils were entered for the Junior challenge, which is for pupils in year 9 and below (NI). They achieved four silver and six bronze certificates. The Maths Department would like to congratulate all of the entrants on being chosen to represent the school at a high level and in particular a special acknowledgement to the certificate winners.

Financial Capabilities

In June, the Maths Department organised a visit from NatWest Bank to deliver their NatWest Thrive self-service pilot MoneySense workshops to our Year 10 students.

These interactive sessions focused on developing financial capability—an increasingly vital skill given the current rise in the cost of living.

The workshops covered a range of important topics including budgeting, an introduction to credit and debit cards, fraud awareness, the dangers of money mules, and the impact of gambling and gaming. All of this was delivered in a fun, engaging, and student-friendly format.

Dickson Plan Collaboration Project

The Maths Dickson Plan collaboration continued successfully over the past year, providing valuable opportunities for Mrs Alexander to

engage with Heads of Maths Departments across the Dickson Plan schools.

Together, they worked to implement the shared priorities agreed for the 2024/25 academic year, making this collaboration both productive and impactful.

One key outcome of the meetings was the decision to adopt a consistent approach to the use of memory aids, aiming to ensure greater continuity in students' learning as they transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. Another focus was the development of calculator skills, beginning in Year 8, with particular emphasis in Year 10. To support this, all schools agreed to standardise the use of Casio calculators for consistency across the system.

In response to these shared goals, the Maths Department has updated its booklets to include the agreed memory aids and calculator guidance. It is hoped that these changes will lead to a positive impact on student outcomes as they progress into senior school in 2025–2026.

Girls in Maths and Physics

On Thursday, 12 June 2025, Mrs Kennedy and Mrs Alexander accompanied a group of 20 Year 10 pupils to the Queen's University Girls in Maths and Physics event—an inspiring and engaging day aimed at encouraging young female students to explore the exciting opportunities within mathematics and physics. The event featured a range of motivational speakers, including professional mathematicians and physicists who shared their career journeys and the real-world impact of their work. Their stories highlighted the importance of resilience, curiosity, and innovation in STEM fields, leaving a strong impression on the students. Participants took part in a variety of interactive workshops and hands-on activities, designed to demonstrate the practical

applications of maths and physics in everyday life and advanced research. These sessions were both educational and fun, sparking enthusiasm and deeper interest in the subjects.

The event also offered valuable opportunities for students to connect with professionals and peers, ask questions, and gain insight into future study and career paths in STEM.

English Department & Communication

The English department progressed well in all areas targeted in the departmental action plan for the 2024-25 school year. Our first area of focus was to develop more effective learning techniques for pupils in English through the promotion of a knowledge-rich English curriculum in Year 8 and 9, and to prepare for the further roll-out of a knowledge-rich English curriculum for Year 10 pupils. Secondly, there was a focus on whole school SEN initiatives, including dyslexia friendly classrooms and resources. Our final area of focus was on KS3/KS4 collaboration with the aim of ensuring KS3 pupils are prepared for starting GCSE reading and writing tasks.

Throughout the year our year 8 and 9 pupils regularly used their knowledge organisers to embed core English knowledge. Reviewing our experiences of this we then worked collaboratively to redraft the Year 8 and 9 knowledge organisers to make them even more effective for the next year, and to produce knowledge organisers for the further roll-out of the knowledge rich curriculum for Year 10 pupils.

All Year 9 booklets and PowerPoints were amended and redrafted to be dyslexia friendly. Year 10 resources will be amended in the next academic year. Also, after analysis of the assessment data, pupils in all year groups flagged red or yellow in their assessments were allocated timebound withdrawal support in English working in small groups with Mrs Jardine, Mrs Pogue or Mrs Graham. This has

been very effective with the majority of pupils involved moving nearer their targets.

Mrs Jardine, as HoD, continued to participate in the Dickson Plan Curriculum Mapping Project, which provided opportunities for subject leaders to meet and collaborate with a view to increasing the outcomes for our students. The areas of focus were editing of written work and familiarising students with key question stems in preparation for GCSE tasks and assessments. This year all Year 9 assessments were amended to include the use of the key question stems, following on from Year 10 assessments last year. This continues to be a valuable opportunity to share good practice and to work towards developing consistent approaches between the junior and senior schools.

We also had a busy year of extra-curricular activities which were designed to promote and enhance our pupils' enjoyment of literature, as well as develop their communication skills.

Throughout this year, our Year 8 pupils from classes 8A1 and 8A10 took part in a successful Shared Education project in collaboration with St Ronan's College with a focus on Art and English. Over two rotations, pupils came together to explore the shared values that underpin our school communities. Through meaningful discussion, teamwork and creativity, pupils developed joint mission statements that reflected a collective vision for respect, inclusion and mutual understanding. This project gave pupils the opportunity to build friendships, broaden perspectives and celebrate shared goals. Book Club, under the guidance of Mrs Carson, continued this year with many members from all year groups attending. The group read and discussed two novels – 'Coraline' by Neil Gaiman and 'The Changing Man' by Tomi Oyemakinde.

In February, two teams of pupils from Book Club travelled with Mrs Carson to Killicomaine JHS to take part in the live National Literacy

Trust's 'Reading Champions Quiz of the Year'. They competed against 21 different teams from schools across Northern Ireland in a regional heat. Our team made it to 4th position which was a fantastic achievement.

Also in February, and following on from our success last year, Mrs Pogue again arranged for pupils to enter the Rotary Young Writer Competition. This competition is designed to support the development of young people's writing skills by encouraging them to write with imagination and creativity. This year's task was to write a piece of poetry or prose on the theme of 'Wonderful Water'. We were delighted to receive the news that four of our pupils were successful in the local level of the competition: Elliot Wilkinson 9A10 (1st place), Zara Kelly 8A2 (2nd place), Anna Kakuru 8A1 (3rd place) and Zariya Kashif 10A3 (4th place). All pupils were presented with a certificate and prize by the stage organiser, Dr N McKee. This was a valuable and exciting experience for all participants, and we look forward to further creative writing opportunities in the next academic year.

Literacy Week took place from Monday, 24th to Friday, 28th March. Mrs J Graham, as literacy co-ordinator, organised several activities to encourage reading throughout the school. Pupils were invited to donate books to our whole school 'Book Swap,' where over 300 books were up for grabs. After careful selection of new 'reads' from each of our year groups, we were left with only 25 books. It was lovely to see so many of our pupils with a love for reading. Challenges also took place in our canteen, online and during form class time throughout the week.

Debating Club commenced in April 2025. Mrs Pierson was pleased to welcome an enthusiastic group of over 15 pupils mixed from Year 8-10. The group had a great term of debating topics relating to society. Pupils worked through many communication activities to improve talking and listening skills and also had sessions learning

about the art of debating. Overall pupils increased their confidence of public speaking, built up research skills and made new friends.

At the end of Term 3, we were pleased to discover that all eight pupils who submitted a poem for the Young Writer's Poetry competition had been selected for publication in a book being released in August of this year. The competition was open to pupils aged 11-18 to write a poem of any style on the theme 'Empowerment'. Our pupils will now be entered into the next stage of the competition to win best poem overall and a top school prize. In conclusion, this was another productive and purposeful year for the English department. We hope to build on the progress made moving into the 2025-2026 academic year.

Art Department

The Art and Design department have developed strategies to enrich our delivery of the knowledge-rich curriculum this year. We have updated a range of exciting and informative knowledge organisers for Years 8 and 9. Our topics effectively prepare our pupils for their future attainment in the transfer assessments and key stage 4 courses. Year 8 study the visual elements which they revisit within their explorational portfolio in Year 11. Year 9 understand historical concepts which will connect to our new Year 10 knowledge organisers based on contemporary concepts. We have extended our exam preparation time to four weeks to allow pupils to connect their understanding and ideas fully to their classwork tasks. This has improved consistency between knowledge organisers, class work power points, google classroom assignments and our teaching delivery.

In March 2024, we were delighted that our Year 10 pupils sat their first Art transfer assessments within our new structure. The format of reporting in Art and Design allows students to revise facts about

artists, develop their opinion about artwork and connect professional practitioners' concepts to their own creative outcomes. The framework awards 40% for a written component and 60% for practical drawing, techniques, and application of media. The process is proving very successful, with results data highlighting that 62% of the year 10 Art pupils achieved the same or improved results from the winter examinations to the March transfer. Out of 41 Year 10 pupils identified as underachieving within our whole school regression analysis, 31 pupils, which is 76%, improved or met their targets in Art. Within the department we continue to standardise marking of examinations to ensure that pupils meet our agreed levels of attainment. We store examples of both written and visual good practice and high-quality outcomes in folders.

We continue to evaluate our Schemes of Work and teaching content timeline. We have created knowledge organisers for Year 10.

The department has made excellent progress in showcasing the high standard of pupils' work, by updating both 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional displays in corridors and classrooms. We have regularly posted imagery of competitions, class work and Art club on social media and have added examples of excellence to our power points to inspire high quality outcomes by our talented pupils.

We have continued to embed initiatives to promote the Art and Design department, for example we celebrate success with the annual whole school Christmas card competition. The winning entry was shared with our extended school community showcasing a mature design and skilfully created artwork. The Dickson plan art competition attracted much attention with a computer-aided design winning that showcased all the Dickson plan schools colours and parts of their logos. We were delighted that this logo competition across all Dickson Plan schools was won by a Lurgan JHS pupil.

The department has joined cohort 3 of the Dickson plan collaborate. This promotes GCSE progression and careers within Art by building relationships within the cohort and adjusting curriculum content to ensure consistency across Key Stage 3 and 4 areas of study. We continue to disseminate information about the GCSE courses to pupils to improve awareness of content and expectations.

We celebrated success with our entries in the Lurgan Credit Union competition. One pupil won the Lurgan heat and had her work submitted to the regional final. We received numerous 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes at Lurgan Show in June 2025, resulting in LJHS being awarded the Lurgan Show Cup for the secondary school accumulating the most points. This is the second consecutive year receiving this award.

Our extra-curricular Art club continues to grow in popularity. Pupils worked hard on several projects and competitions throughout the year. They thoroughly enjoyed creating characters in clay for board games, competition entries and mural group work.

Geography

The Geography department has continued to provide our pupils with educational experiences of the highest quality. We have been focused on developing the Geography curriculum, moving towards preparation for GCSE. A key focus has been the ongoing development of resources to allow full access for all ability pupils, namely ensuring all resources are dyslexia friendly and also the development of knowledge organisers for Year 10. In terms of the curriculum, continued emphasis on preparing pupils for the demands of GCSE-level case study extended questions. Teaching resources and guided answers for Years 9 and 10 case studies have been continually updated to reflect this emphasis. In addition, retrieval practice and low-stakes quizzing have been further

embedded into lessons, supporting long-term knowledge retention and pupil confidence. Knowledge organisers for Years 8 and 9 were revised based on staff feedback, ensuring they remain relevant and effective. For the first time, knowledge organisers were also produced for Year 10 and submitted for print, to be rolled out next year, supporting the school's commitment to delivering a knowledge-rich curriculum.

In a strategic move to enhance depth of understanding, the department merged two Year 10 topics into one for this year, instead, teaching the topic of Population as a larger single unit. This change brought the content more closely in line with the CCEA GCSE Geography specification and allowed for more focused teaching, reducing content volume while increasing opportunities for application and deeper learning.

We also designed a new year 8 unit, called 'Investigations', which focused on the essential skills of being a geographer, namely fieldwork skills and data collection. The department decided that for the 2025/26 academic year, this unit would be merged with the current unit 1, allowing for a new unit called 'Introduction to Geography'. This means that all year groups have 3 units of work.

The department was once again pleased to offer enriching experiences beyond the classroom. In May, 78 Year 10 pupils attended the annual educational visit to the Balmoral Show. This trip supports the Farming unit by helping pupils understand how physical and human factors influence local agriculture. Fieldwork also remained a strong component of the curriculum. Year 8 pupils conducted a Litter Survey and later analysed these results using skills learned earlier in the year. Due to timetabling constraints and other school trips, it was not possible to do the Year 9 traffic survey, usually carried out at the end of the year.

ICT continues to play a central role in Geography teaching at Lurgan JHS. Online testing and retrieval resources remain highly effective in motivating and supporting pupils. The department also maintained its use of learning logs—weekly updates by each teacher that record missed work and direct pupils to the relevant teaching slides and booklet pages. These logs have proven valuable for both pupils and staff.

The department continues to contribute to the school's Facebook page, further raising its profile.

Our department continues to benefit from the strong subject knowledge of the staff, which in turn gives a more in-depth, fuller understanding of content for pupils. The department also continued to play an active role in the Curriculum Mapping Project, which brought together Heads of Department from across the Dickson Plan for a 2nd year. This collaboration has strengthened existing relationships and created a shared focus on improving the delivery of geographical skills at Key Stage 3. I look forward to seeing continued development of this collaboration in the 2025/26 year. In conclusion, the 2024–25 academic year has been a successful and productive one for the Geography department. With a strong foundation in place, we look forward to building on this progress in the year ahead.

History Department

In 2024/25 the department's action plan focused on the continuation of the knowledge-rich curriculum in Year 8 and the rollout of the initiative in Year 9. This involved the use of knowledge organisers, involvement in the Learning to Learn programme and retrieval practice in class to help enhance pupil knowledge and understanding. Secondly, there was a focus on preparing for the rollout of the knowledge rich curriculum with Year 10 in the 2025/26 academic year. Finally, the development of dyslexia friendly classrooms and resources remained a focus from last year.

Pupil feedback and teacher professional judgment on the use of knowledge organisers and involvement in the Learning to Learn programme indicated effective delivery across the department.

The development of knowledge organisers for Year 10 in the 2025/2026 academic year was completed with valuable input by all members in the department. Meetings held, focused on the core knowledge to be included with an agreement being reached to trial a new layout. This will allow the department to carry put a robust review of the effectiveness of the trial format compared to the format used in Year 8 and 9 and therefore agree on a format to move forward with.

In addition to the development and use of knowledge organisers, the department created short 'History Hits' quiz booklets for each unit across the year groups that were used as the basis for retrieval in class. The questions included a mix of true/ false, multiple choice and knowledge recall. This ensured that retrieval practice was completed to a consistent level across the department. Finally, teaching resources, such as pupil booklets and slides presentations were updated throughout the year to ensure they are dyslexia friendly.

Dickson Plan Collaboration

The History Department participated in the Dickson Plan Collaboration programme which involved the development of a consistent approach to structuring 16-mark GCSE argument answers across the Dickson Plan. The senior schools highlighted that pupils often struggle with the argument question and often only address one side of the argument. As a result, the schools worked together to agree on a resource that could be used to help pupils develop introductions, detailed two sided arguments along with a conclusion. This resource was included in teaching resources

across the junior schools and will continue to be used in Year 11 and 12 at the senior schools.

This work, along with the previous collaboration on developing GCSE evidence answers, will help ensure that students transferring to GCSE History will feel more comfortable with the assessment techniques required.

Armistice Day

To mark Armistice Day, Mr Jess organised assemblies that were attended by all year groups and was followed by a two-minute silence. A wreath was also organised and laid at the cenotaph by the Head Boy and Girl accompanied by Mr McCoy. Finally, Mr Lunn marked the occasion across the school's social media channels.

VE Day

To mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day, Mr Addley organised for pupils to watch commemorative video clips during form class. A wreath was also organised and laid at the cenotaph by the Head Boy and Girl accompanied by Mrs Kerr. In addition, Mr Lunn marked the occasion by sharing stories, about relatives of pupils and staff who fought in WW2, across the school's social media channels. Finally, the national two-minute silence was observed at 12 noon on Thursday 8th May.

Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council's Heritage Places Project

8A6 were selected to take part in the ABC Council's Heritage Places project in association with the AmmA Centre. Pupils engaged in a digital workshop to edit archive footage from Northern Ireland's Screen's Digital Film Archive into short video clips that showed their understanding of heritage. During this process, pupils worked with others to use storytelling skills to create storyboards and scripts that were used as the basis for their short social media style educational videos. At the end, groups showcased their videos

to the class. 8A6 enjoyed the day whilst engaging in history and developing their cross-curricular skills.

Shared Education

We successfully facilitated a range of projects throughout the academic year. To re-introduce our partnership in 2024/25, Mr McErlane from St. Ronan's College and Mrs Bell from Lurgan Junior High School held assemblies for all pupils outlining the purpose of our Shared Education collaboration. The Pupil Voice delivered these assemblies celebrating our prior success. Our primary aim was to help to strengthen the positive relationships already established through our Shared Education projects and to outline expectations and future aspirations.

Induction sessions

Pupils from both schools thoroughly enjoyed their induction sessions. The participants experienced a balance of problem-solving tasks, icebreaker games, pool, football, and team challenges.

Literacy project

Mrs Pogue (Lurgan JHS) and Mrs Mulhern (St. Ronan's College) facilitated two rotations of literacy inspired projects. Pupils from 8A1 and 8A10 worked with Year 8 pupils from St. Ronan's to create a shared vision statement for Shared Education. The winning statement reads: 'Shared Education inspires us to show resilience, make friendships, practise respect and create a community where everyone feels equal, safe and accepted.'

Art project

Mrs Bell (Lurgan JHS) and Mrs Watters (St. Ronan's College) facilitated two rotations of creative design projects. Pupils from 8A1 and 8A10 worked with year 8 pupils from St. Ronan's to create a

Shared Education logo. The winning crest design illustrated cultural items from the whole community. Items included a beautiful rose, a musical harp, and a Celtic cross. Colours from both school's uniforms featured in the design.

Golf Day

Mr Lavery and Mr Addley (Lurgan JHS) along with Mr McErlane (St. Ronan's College) were accompanied by twenty pupils on a Golf Day at Lurgan Golf Club in June 2025. This was a wonderful social event allowing pupils from both schools to strengthen relationships while enjoying their shared interest in sport.

Home Economics

The Home Economics Department has continued to improve the quality of teaching and learning by updating all units of work and assessments. By referring to the GCSE Food and Nutrition curriculum, we have raised our expectations and provided more in-depth learning, to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding. Creating Google Slides to complement the revised units of work has been completed. However, in the next academic year, we will continue to review and improve presentations, before using them to complement our teaching within the classroom.

Also, the Learning to Learn programme has been embraced by the department. Year 10 knowledge organisers have been created for 2025/2026. Teachers regularly set self-quizzing homework and encouraged pupils to use the 'Purple Pen of Progress' to self-correct.

In addition, the quality of provision for pupils with additional needs, particularly those with dyslexia, were clearly identified. Therefore, we have continued to amend our resources to make them more user friendly and have avoided using unnecessary distractions in our new Google Slides.

Finally, the department has successfully implemented the use of recipe booklets for each cohort. This has been hugely beneficial for all within the school community, as parents have had access to the recipes being prepared in class and have been able to create these dishes at home with their child. In addition, evaluations have been useful, encouraging pupils to reflect on the practical lesson. Mark schemes have also been created for these recipe books, enabling pupils to self-correct their work.

Continuing Professional Development in HE

All departmental teaching staff attended professional training delivered in school, which sought to maximise pupils' benefit from teaching and learning as well as to provide consistent behaviour management throughout the school.

Mrs Cross (Acting HoD) and Mrs Wilkinson have each attended meetings with the Craigavon Area Learning Community. Our area of improvement for this academic year was to further embed and build nutritional knowledge at KS3 and KS4/5, with a particular focus of embedding the nutritional knowledge of macronutrients (fat, protein and carbohydrate). Pupils must understand key concepts of this topic, including sources, functions, deficiency and excess of each nutrient.

To achieve this, the actions taken included:

- The sharing of ideas by Heads of department in a shared Google Drive, which has improved access to an ever-growing bank of high-quality resources.
- The use of the CCEA links to teach this important topic.
- The continued practice of spaced retrieval of key macronutrient concepts across each year group to aid long-term recall.

- The use of past paper questions to improve exam technique.

We believe the CALC meetings have been beneficial for teaching and learning.

Facilities

Two new electric cookers have been installed, one in each classroom, replacing the two previous gas cookers. This has been very beneficial, enabling each group to have their own allocated cooker when completing practical activities. We are very thankful to now have these in place.

Extra-Curricular Activity

The Year 8 Cookery Club was very successful with up to 20 pupils in attendance. Pupils were given the opportunity to develop a range of skills due to the carefully selected practical's, which included cheesy cups, sausage rolls, blueberry muffins and cookies. The pupils' enthusiasm and confidence increased each week. The annual 'Lurgan Junior High School Bake Off!' of 2025 was another great success. We celebrated and congratulated the 9 pupils who participated. Their creativity, enthusiasm, skill and attention to detail were superb! We extended our sincere thanks to Mr Sydney McCormick, the founding owner of The Kosy Bakery in Lurgan and Miss Ally Drennan for their encouragement, generosity and kindness towards our pupils in their ongoing support of this school event. We have many promising bakers at Lurgan Junior High School and we thank all parents/guardians who supported our pupils to give them the resources and confidence to take part.

We had 14 pupils who entered the cookery section of Lurgan Show. It was a great success. Together, along with the Art department, we won the cup for the secondary school that accumulated the most

points this year. We are very proud of all our pupils, as they demonstrated skill and creativity when baking their goods.

Educational Visit

Three Year 10 classes availed of a cooking demonstration from the Livestock Meat Commission. We had the pleasure of observing Wendy Donaldson demonstrating a beef dish. The demonstration provided pupils with an opportunity to sample new ingredients, whilst highlighting the importance of NIFQA beef and lamb, and encouraging them to look for the logo.

Staff

Mrs Cross joined the Home Economics department this academic year. She has thoroughly enjoyed working within such a dedicated, supportive, hardworking, and enthusiastic team. Mrs Mitchell is covering Mrs Graham's period of maternity leave and has settled very well into the department, demonstrating commitment to our pupils. Miss McCartney has been in the role of Home Economics technician since February, covering a period of illness for Mrs Blakely. Miss McCartney has been a valued member of our team, showing initiative, commitment, and enthusiasm for her role. We will miss her but wish her well as she moves to Worcester to complete her PGCE.

ICT

The ICT department has continued to strengthen its delivery of diverse topics within the broad field of ICT. Pupils across all year groups demonstrated commendable dedication and produced impressive outcomes, which we proudly acknowledge and celebrate as part of their ongoing success in the subject. We have placed a strong emphasis on informing pupils about the wide-ranging career opportunities linked to qualifications in Computer Science. This initiative has been successfully supported through our partnership with Lurgan College's ICT Department.

Safer Internet Day took place on Tuesday 11th February and the following week the ICT Department delivered lessons that addressed topics ranging from cyberbullying to using social networking safely.

On Monday 16th December had the opportunity to take 20 pupils to an interactive workshop designed by Liberty IT that took place at the Ulster Museum. The purpose of the workshop is to upskill students in coding and enable them to design, code and create their own arcade game inspired by the museum's collections.

We introduced our first E-Sports club between February and April, providing pupils with hands-on experience in console gaming, exposure to the rapidly growing gaming sector, and opportunities to acquire new technical and collaborative skills.

Modern Languages

Term 1 started with two new members of staff joining the department. Mr McMahon as a permanent teacher of French and Spanish who has become a very welcome addition to the department with his creativity, enthusiasm, and support for extra

curricular activities. We also welcomed back Mrs Cunningham to cover Mrs Wright's maternity leave and are so grateful for her professionalism, passion for teaching and hard work providing pastoral and academic support to all her classes.

On 30th September Mrs Miskelly, Head of Modern Languages, attended a TPL course at Methodist College Belfast given by the renowned Language Teacher Dr Gianfranco Conti. The course covered the key components of curriculum design; the principles underpinning effective short, medium, and long-term planning; the procedures involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of a course; acquisition-enhancing strategies (e.g. recycling, interleaving, universals, fluency training) and their application to curriculum design; the role of assessment as a means to advance learning and how to embed it in the curriculum. This course has helped the Modern Languages Department develop our teaching and learning strategies and resources to ensure we are meeting the needs of our pupils.

Mrs Miskelly also attended two meetings in Terms 1 and 2 as part of the Dickson Collaboration project Cohort 2. This year we focused on implementing the standardised speaking assessments at Key Stage 3 which means pupils in all 4 Junior High schools follow the same format when completing their speaking assessments with a standardised mark scheme. These assessments have been agreed under the guidance of Craigavon Senior High and Portadown College to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the challenges of speaking at Key Stage 3 and GCSE. We look forward to continuing this highly valuable collaboration in 2025-26 as we really do see how it supports pupils prepare for the challenges of studying languages at GCSE and beyond.

In Term 2 on Friday 21st February we welcomed the return of Onatti Theatre productions. Year 8 and 9 pupils were given the opportunity to attend the performance of the French play 'Prendre Sa

Revanche'. Staff and pupils alike so enjoyed Antoine & Juliette's performance of the play, feedback was it was our best experience to date as the pupils engaged so well the French actors and special mention needs to be made to the pupils who got up and took part, dressing up and speaking in French, we were all so proud of your performances. We look forward to welcoming Onatti Theatre productions back in February 2026 as it is always a great way for pupils to experience authentic interactions with native French speakers.

In Term 3 the focus of the department has been on preparing pupils for their Term 3 exams in which all four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are assessed equally. We have been pleased to see the hard work of so many pupils pay off in their results. There is clear evidence that many pupils have implemented the strategies they have been shown in the Learning to Learn programme to help them prepare for their assessments. We have been particularly pleased to see so many pupils make progress in their speaking. There is, however, room for improvement in many pupils to ensure that they are meeting their targets specifically in speaking and writing in French and Spanish and this will be a focus for us in 2025-26.

P.E. Department

Girls' Report

GIRLS' HOCKEY 2024/25

It has been another exciting and rewarding year for Girls' Hockey in Lurgan Junior High School. The U13A team and the U14A team competed in Mid-Ulster League and Cup competitions with the U13A winning the Bann Trophy, beating Royal School Armagh, Killicomaine JHS, and Banbridge Academy to make the final. The U14 squad were Stevenson Bowl winners, winning their group and

then defeating Foyle College and Cookstown High School to make the final. In the final, the girls beat Dromore High School in run ins. The U14 team was also Junior Shield runners up, narrowly losing 3-2 to Sullivan Upper in run-ins, in the final. The U14 team beat Ballymena Academy, Lagan College and Wallace High School enroute to the final. The enthusiastic U12A and U12B teams enjoyed their first experience of competitive hockey recording wins against Dromore High School, Clounagh JHS and narrowly missing out to Banbridge Academy. They also drew 0-0 against Royal School Armagh.

Hockey practices commenced for all three age groups in early September. On Tuesdays, the 13A and 14A girls trained with Mrs Saunderson, Sophie Gordon and Lee Wilson. A talented group of Year 8 girls attended after school practice under the guidance of Miss McCann, Stephanie Moffitt, Sophie Gordon and Lee Wilson and both 'A' and 'B' teams were fielded in league competitions with both teams competing with great success.

The Saturday morning Hockey programme commences on the last Saturday in August and offers our girls the opportunity to compete with the Hockey playing schools from across the province. We appreciate the enthusiasm and commitment given by our girls and parents and the support of LJHS Staff who help with Saturday morning supervision.

Four Year 9 pupils and one Year 8 pupil attended the Ulster TDP trials, and two pupils, Maddie Magee and Lucy Wilson, were selected to represent the Ulster U13 at the Beeston Tournament during the summer.

Thanks to Sophie Gordon, Miss McCann and Lee Wilson who supported Mrs Saunderson in the hockey programme this year.

NETBALL CLUB 2024/25

This has been one of the most successful and exciting netball seasons in recent years. The girls have won trophies and each team has been presented with medals which has been very rewarding for the girls, who have trained and played with such loyalty and dedication.

All girls were given the opportunity to try out for team selection in separate year groups. The A squads trained every Thursday and the B teams worked on development of skills with a more social focus on selected dates. All year 9 and 10 teams were entered in the NI B League and in the Craigavon Area 'Vista' League and Cup. Netball NI changed the league to blitz days format and placing in the initial blitz determined which division teams were entered into for the season ahead.

The Year 10 team had a fantastic day of netball in the NI B blitz. They played at South Lakes against Fivemiletown College, St Mary's, Newry, Dean Maguirc College and Dromore High School. It was a very close competition with Lurgan and Dromore ending on equal points, but as Lurgan had conceded more goals we were unfortunate to finish in 2nd place. The next round was scheduled to be played at The Wallace High School in January but unfortunately, we were unable to attend.

The Year 10 team had also been entered into the NI Shield and were drawn against Mt. Lourdes in the first round. The opposition was strong, and they broke into the lead in the third quarter and despite playing with great determination, Lurgan were defeated 8-13. The team then played in the NI Bowl competition and were up against a talented Wallace team. The girls fought hard especially in the third quarter, but could not catch up the score and unfortunately lost. Overall, it was very good experience for the girls playing in the NI competitions as it helped to raise their standard of play. Many

thanks to the Gordon Group for supplying beautiful netball dresses for the girls to complete in, which provided a very professional team appearance.

Not to be deterred, the girls continued to work hard and achieved success in the Vista League with four fabulous wins out of their five matches, being beaten only by Killicomaine JHS. They finished the league in a very fitting second place and each received silver medals.

The Year 10 Vista cup was played in February as a tournament day to conclude the season, could they get the gold this time? The girls played fantastic netball as a cohesive team and won comfortably against Clounagh JHS, Brownlow Integrated and Killicomaine JHS, losing only against St John the Baptist College. At the conclusion of the competition, three schools were equal in points and Lurgan were placed second again on goal difference. They were presented with silver medals as runners up. Congratulations to this team on their success this season and representing our school so fantastically over their three years.

The Year 9 team showed promise from Year 8 and they quickly gelled together and also had an amazing season. In the NI B league blitz, they played Banbridge Academy, Friends and Wallace High School and finished in fourth position. In February, they played in the B Div 4 blitz and had a fantastic day of netball. They won all their matches and were overall winners of the tournament. They were presented with gold medals as winners. Many congratulations to the team!

In the Vista League, the Year 9 team performed equally well, with consistent performances against all five schools, losing only to Tandragee JHS in their first match. They finished the League on equal points with Clounagh JHS and were joint winners sharing the

Vista Shield and were presented with individual gold medals. Very well-done girls!

The Year 9 Vista Cup was played as a tournament day in March and the girls enjoyed a super day of netball with outstanding performances in every game. They won all their matches comfortably and by the end of the competition were outright winners. They proudly received the Vista cup trophy and individual gold medals each. Many thanks to several talented Year 8 players who joined the team to boost their performance in both defence and attack and gained playing experience.

The Year 8 Netball commenced in September and there was great interest with over 40 registering to train. As a result, the girls were split into two groups attending on alternate weeks. The girls were coached by Miss Lyness, assisted by Mrs Quinn and LJHS parent, Mrs Ardis, and focused on developing skills along with game play. The girls proved to be very talented and Miss Lyness entered them into two NI Tournaments. In these competitions they played schools from further away such as Victoria College, Dominican College, Our Lady's, Newry and also teams from local schools such as Tandragree JHS and Brownlow Integrated, but they stood out as the exceptional side, winning both tournaments and were presented with gold medals. Amazing achievement for the team. Could they keep up this performance for the Vista Year 8 tournament in March?

The girls displayed a brilliant standard at this tournament showing quick accurate passing, good footwork and the ability to communicate and support each other during play. They won every match and scored a total of 42 goals. Congratulations to all the players on such an outstanding performance. They were presented with the Year 8 Cup and gold medals. Special congratulations to player, Sienna Ardis, who received joint player of the tournament. Watch out for this team next year!

All the teams have been a pleasure to coach this year and have been a credit to themselves and to our school. Congratulations to all the girls on their hard work and determined effort together, to achieve such fantastic success throughout the season. The skills they learn playing as part of a team will hopefully carry on into all aspects of life in the future.

GIRLS' FOOTBALL 2024/25

The 2024/25 season has been a truly memorable one for our girls' football teams, marked by outstanding performances, team spirit, and dedication.

Our U14 girls had a fantastic season, crowned Mid Ulster League champions after a decisive 4-1 victory over Integrated College Dungannon in the league play-off. They also made it to the final of the U14 Mid-Ulster Cup, narrowly missing out on the title in a close 3-2 defeat to Killicomaine Junior High School.

The U13 team also had an excellent run, reaching the final of the U13 NISFA Cup. They showed great determination and skill throughout the competition before facing a strong Holy Cross, Strabane, side in the final. Despite their best efforts, they were defeated 5-1, but their journey to the final remains a significant achievement.

Our Year 8 girls competed in a tournament at Lurgan Town Arena, where they emerged victorious. A standout performance by Grace Magee earned her the Player of the Tournament award.

The success of our girls is a testament to their hard work and determination, as well as the outstanding guidance of our coach, Phil McKinley, whose dedication and leadership have been invaluable throughout the season. Thank you also to Mrs Patton for

all her hard work in organising fixtures and looking after the girls throughout the season.

We are incredibly proud of all the girls for their achievements, teamwork, and sportsmanship this year. With such a talented and committed group of players, we are excited to see what next season will bring.

VOLLEYBALL 2024/25

Volleyball continues to be a programme we are growing through the curriculum and in the community with the help of Paul McIlwaine. We entered three Year 8 teams, three Year 9 teams and four Year 10 teams in an interschool Volleyball tournament at the South Lakes Leisure centre in April. All girls played lots of matches to help develop their skills and our Year 9 girls won silver medals finishing runners up in the plate. We hope to continue to grow our school volleyball every year. Thanks to Paul for his support throughout the year.

CROSS COUNTRY 2025

Year 8, 9 and 10 girls competed in the District Cross Country Championships at The Gordon Playing Fields Lurgan. The Year 8 girls team won team silver medals with Lucia McMullan coming 1st, Bella McMullan finishing 8th, Rachel Holland 13th and Eden Greer 24th to secure the team medals. Lucia McMullan won individual gold. The Year 10 girls won Gold as a team with Lydia Neill finishing 6th, Lucy Steele 8th, Emily Silva Shaw 19th and Sophie Harrison 25th to secure the team medals. 14 girls qualified for the Ulster Cross Country Championships and the Year 8 girls won team bronze finishing third out of 15 teams competing. Individually Lucia McMullen won a silver medal placing her second in all of Ulster.

District Athletics Championships and Ulster Athletics Championships 2025

We had 20 girls' awarded medals at the District Athletics Championships.

District Athletics

Year 8 - Mini girls

High Jump - Lucia McMullen Gold

800M - Lucia McMullen - Gold

Long Jump - Bella McMullen Bronze

Year 9 - Minor Girls

100M – Sophia Bushe- Bronze

Shot - Lucy Wilson-Gold, Lucia Derby Bronze

Relay - Bronze - Lucy Wilson, Sophia Bushe, Maddie Magee, Noura Faila

Discus - Lucy Wilson Bronze

Year 10 - Junior Girls

100M-Kacey Dillon Silver

Relay – Silver - Emilee White, Kacey Dillon, Lucy Brown and Emily Silva Shaw

High Jump - Kara Houston Gold

Long Jump - Emily Silva Shaw Gold

Shot Putt - Claudia Dunlop Gold

1500m - Lucy Steele Bronze

Ulster Athletics Championships

Bella McMullen -Silver Long Jump

Sports' Day June 2025

The highlight of our Athletics' Sporting calendar in school are, our Sports days, and this year was no exception. Pupils displayed some outstanding performances in a highly competitive field. The results were as follows:

Year 8 Girls

100m - Chloe Wilson

200m - Chloe Wilson

800m - Lucia McMullen

Long Jump - Bella McMullen

High Jump - Lucia McMullen

Shot Putt - Connie Kinkaid

Year 8 Best Athlete - Lucia McMullen

Year 8 runners up - Bella McMullen

Year 9 Girls

100m - Sophia Bushe

200m - Noura Faila

800m - Mia Gault

Long Jump - Sophia Bushe

High Jump - Mia Gault

Shot Putt - Lucy Wilson

Year 9 Best Athlete - Sophia Bushe

Year 9 Runners up - Mia Gault

Year 10 Girls

100m - Kacey Dillon

200m - Kacey Dillon

800m - Lucy Steele

Long Jump - Emily Silva Shaw

High Jump - Kara Houston

Shot Putt - Claudia Dunlop

Year 10 Best Athlete - Kacey Dillon

Year 10 Runners up - Emily Silva Shaw

'This Girl Can' Project

Eight Year 9 girls took part in the ABC Councils 'This Girl Can' lead project, becoming physical activity leaders for the school. The girls organised to speak to Year 8 about their project and how they will promote physical activity in the school in the new term. The girls were a shining example for the school.

Boys' Report Rugby Report

U14 Rugby

The U14 Rugby team co-captained by Archie Doogan and Micah McMullan began their season at a Sevens Tournament at Portadown RFC, winning 3 of their 4 matches. Their opening game of the season against RBAI would prove to be an indicator of how much work lay ahead as the boys were well beaten by an organised and physical RBAI side. Another loss would follow against Banbridge Academy (29-12) before the boys would return to winning ways in the High Schools' Cup with a win over Priory College (42-5). Further wins would follow over Clounagh JHS (43-7) and Killicomaine JHS (36-21) and see the boys' top their group and progress to the round of 16. Another excellent result away from home would see the team defeat Ballyclare Secondary School (22-5) to set up a quarter-final against Markethill High School. Having fallen behind early in the game (7-5) the boys would rally back to win 31-7 and set up a semi-final away to Clounagh JHS. In what would prove to be their final game of the season, the team took an 11-0 lead into half-time but would go down narrowly 19-16 to a determined Clounagh side with their dream of retaining the High Schools' Cup over.

The Annual Ulster High Schools' Sevens Tournament at Meadowbank Sports' Arena which the boys had won the previous season would see the team get off to a winning start against Glastry College (17-7) and Devenish College (29-0) but defeat would follow to eventual winners St Pat's, Keady (15-10) with the boys also losing the Plate final to Bangor Academy (12-10). It was definitely a season of learning for everyone involved with plenty of lessons to take into their future rugby careers.

U13 Rugby

The opening game of the season against RBAI would see the Theo Martin captained side lose narrowly 33-24 in a tight contest which could have gone either way until the final whistle. Many of the players would also feature for the U14 'B' team against RBAI which would see them defeated 31-17. The team would then go on to win an epic encounter against Clounagh JHS 26-25 having trailed 20-5 at half-time, with Theo Martin showing nerves of steel to kick the winning conversion in the last minute of the game. Further games against Tandragee JHS (12-0) and an end of season re-match against Clounagh (12-12) would see the boys bring the curtain down on a short but eventful season with many of the boys also playing up a year for the U14s.

U12 Rugby

The U12 rugby team Co-captained by Lewis Kinkead, Fletcher Doogan and Tommy Lavery would attend numerous 'Blitz' Tournaments at Portadown RFC over the course of the season with results as follows:

Blitz 1 – Won 5, Draw 1

Blitz 2 – Won 3, Lost 1

Blitz 3 – Won 2, Draw 2

Blitz 4 – Won 3, Draw 1

The High Schools' Cup which the boys had won in the previous two seasons was not played leaving the team with a record of 13 wins, 4 draws and 1 loss for the season.

Cross-country Report

District Championships

Mini Boys' Team – GOLD MEDALS

Eli Wade, Scott Watson, Noah Myers, Zack McCombe, George Kirkwood, Jonah Emerson, Noah Parks, Zak Hegarty.

Minor Boys': Bobby Gardiner – 4th Place Individual.

Junior Boys': Luke Wells – 13th, Olivier Osmanowski – 14th.

All the boys mentioned above would qualify for the Ulster Schools' Finals at Mallusk where the Mini Boys' Team would finish in 10th Place with Bobby and Olivier also successfully completing the course.

Athletics Report

District D Athletics Results:

Mini Boys' Results

4x100m Relay – GOLD – Zack McCombe, James King, Elijah Preston, Harry Downey
Long Jump – SILVER – Zack McCombe
Shot Putt – SILVER – Jonah Emerson

Minor Boys' Results

4x100m Relay – GOLD – Mark Cormier, Theo Martin, Will Uprichard, Joe Dowds
100m – GOLD – Mark Cormier
800m – BRONZE – Theo Martin

High Jump – SILVER – Olly Foster, BRONZE – Cohen Keenan
Long Jump – BRONZE – Theo Martin

Junior Boys' Results

Shot Putt – BRONZE – Jack Metcalfe
Long Jump – SILVER – Ross Beattie
Javelin – GOLD – Olivier Osmanowski
200m – BRONZE – Noah Roderick

Ulster Schools' Athletics Results

Shot Putt – BRONZE – Jonah Emerson
4 x 100m Relay – 4th – Zack McCombe, Jonah Emerson, Elijah Preston, Harry Downey
Long Jump – 5th – Zack McCombe

Volleyball Report – Ulster Schools' Volleyball Championships

The U12 team of Charlie Neish (Captain), Lewis Kinkead, Dako Nedyalkov, Kayleb Tee, Ali Ben Dellaha and Reuben Ruddell won the Ulster Schools' Championships defeating teams from Clounagh JHS, Killicomaine JHS, Dalriada and Campbell College in the final (25-21).

The U13 team of Cody Greszta, Theo Martin, Jack Savage and Sam Quinn would finish as runners-up to Dalriada (15-10).
The U14 team of Jack McGrath, Olivier Osmanowski, Jack Metcalfe, Archie Doogan and Bailey Magee would also finish as runners-up to Campbell College (25-21).

Football

Our U14 football team have retained their Mid-Ulster Cup trophy for the 3rd year in a row following wins in year 8 & 9. In what was their toughest final yet, Lurgan defeated local rivals Killicomaine 2-1.

Corey Hamilton opened the scoring in injury time in the first half following a defensive error from Killicomaine JHS. Lurgan fought bravely the whole 2nd half in what was a feisty affair and got their reward again in injury time through Oliver Osmanowski. Killicomaine JHS got one back in the 8th minute of injury time but Lurgan held out to take the trophy. Many players deserved credit during the final, with special mention to centre back Taylor Hamilton who was a man mountain in defence. The U14s also had an excellent run in the Northern Ireland Cup progressing through 4 rounds before being defeated by the eventual winners Our Lady and St Pats.

The U12s were also very successful this year finishing joint top of the Mid-Ulster League and runners up in the Northern Ireland Plate. They battled through 4 rounds of the Northern Ireland Plate, and in dramatic fashion made the final after defeating St Joseph's Belfast. St Joseph's took the lead in the first half of the semi-final clash and were the better team in the 1st half. Lurgan upped their game in the 2nd half but couldn't score. St Joseph's also had their chances but with some good saves from Jonah Emerson and some squandered chances it stayed 1-0 as the final whistle loomed. Finally, 2 minutes into injury time, winger Elijah Preston got on the end of a through ball and slotted home the equaliser to bring the game to extra time. No further goals were scored and we entered the dreaded penalties. Both teams scored their first 5 penalties and Lurgan went on to win 7-6 with Will Russell hitting the winning penalty. However, in front of a large crowd it just wasn't to be in the final! Despite dominating the first half, the game was 0-0 at the break. Lurgan started the 2nd half brightly and scored through Noah Logan. Ashfield bounced back quickly and scored twice before Oscar Philson levelled the game with a great free kick. The match was poised for extra time, but Ashfield broke Lurgan hearts with a last-minute winner.

Cricket

The U12 cricket team have had an excellent season finishing runners up in the Wesley Ferris Cup after losing by 43 runs to Limavady GS. It all started so well for Lurgan as opening bowlers Fletcher Doogan and Zac Stokes had Limavady only 10 runs for 4 wickets. Limavady rallied well to set a total of 110 from their 20 overs. Fletcher finished with 3 wickets for 18 runs and Zac with 2 for 23. In reply, Lurgan could only make 67 with Charlie Neish top scoring on 15.

On their way to the final, Lurgan saw off Wallace B by 8 wickets, Parkhall College by 10 wickets, Campbell JS and Grosvenor GS by 8 wickets. There were some special performances throughout the season, especially from the bowlers.

v. Wallace HS B

Zac Stokes 2 wickets for 8 runs off 4 overs

Will Russell 2 wickets for 16 runs off 4 overs

v. Parkhall College

Zac Stokes 3 wickets for 4 runs off 4 overs

Lucia Derby 4 wickets for 1 run off 4 overs (including 2 double wicket maidens)

v. Grosvenor GS

Fletcher Doogan 2 wickets for 10 runs off 4 overs

Lucia Derby 4 wickets for 5 runs off 4 overs (including a triple wicket maiden and a wicket maiden in her first 2 overs)

Charlie Neish 3 wickets for 5 runs off 3.2 overs (including a double wicket maiden)

v. Limavady GS

Zac Stokes 2 wickets for 23 runs off 4 overs

Fletcher Doogan 3 wickets for 18 runs off 4 overs

The U14 cricket team had a mixed season, with a strong win over Killicomaine JHS but defeats to Banbridge Academy and Royal School Armagh. The match against Banbridge in particular featured some high-quality, hard-fought cricket from both sides, with Banbridge winning by 64 runs. Killicomaine JHS were defeated by 7 wickets, and Armagh won by 3 wickets.

v. Banbridge Academy
Penny Speer 34 not out

v. Killicomaine JHS
Sulaiman Arfan Chaudhry 5 wickets for 7 runs off 4 overs
Lucia Derby 2 wickets for 7 runs off 4 overs

v. RS Armagh
Sulaiman Arfan Chaudhry 3 wickets for 9 runs off 3 overs

Religious Education

The RE department has had a productive year and worked together as a team to deliver the RE curriculum effectively. Staffing within the RE department at the start of the school year has become settled especially as Mr Jess had been appointed as a permanent teacher. Mrs Smith also joined us to assist with the delivery of the Year 9 curriculum.

Our focus this year was to continue to promote the knowledge-rich curriculum through the use of Knowledge Organisers and development of retrieval practices, with particular focus on Year 9. Self-quizzing tasks were set as homework through Google classrooms following the set timetable and checked by subject teachers. Pupils were encouraged to use the various 'Learning to

Learn' technique retrieval practices and retrieval methods were also built into lessons to help embed knowledge and promote understanding.

Furthermore, we have been supporting our SEN and EAL pupils through the whole school SEN initiative of dyslexia friendly classrooms and resources. Positioning of these pupils at the front of classrooms was detailed in all seating plans, and all wall displays at the front of classrooms were removed to minimise distractions. As a department we have been updating all resources to the required Ariel font with focus on Year 9. Next year we plan to continue this with the Year 8 group. RE resources were also provided for the Positive Impact Centre.

All staff have worked collaboratively to produce high quality Knowledge organiser resources for Year 10 to continue our roll out of the Knowledge-rich curriculum. Mrs Dougan would like to thank the department for all their hard work and the professional way they completed this task.

In January, Miss Lyness organised a special presentation on the Tabernacle to assist with our Year 10 curriculum. Mr Gilliland brought in a model of the tabernacle and gave an informed talk on its structure and importance as a place where God could meet and dwell with the Israelites. Pupils had an opportunity to view the model and to ask and answer questions. This really helped our pupils to embed their knowledge of the Exodus story and understand the rituals of worship at that time.

Members of the Department delivered assemblies throughout the year, covering topics such as 'Christians in Sport' and the 'Holocaust'.

Pupils who attend Scripture Union presented our Harvest assembly and local youth leaders and Mr Robbie Norton from Emmanuel was

invited back this time to deliver our special Christmas Assembly. Mr Matthew Winning from High Street Presbyterian led our Easter Assembly celebration. Pupils were selected from each year group to deliver readings and musical items were provided by our pupils in conjunction with the music department. We thank Dr McCrory and Miss Loney for their valuable collaboration.

In Term 2, we welcomed Miss Withers as a placement student from Stranmillis College for ten weeks. She was given a range of Year 8 and 9 classes and delivered excellent lessons on Corrie Ten Boom and Child Exploitation, displaying good knowledge and ICT skills. In addition, she got involved in school life, attending Open Evening and supporting the Shared Education programme. She was an asset to the department during her time with us.

Prior to Year 10 exams, pupils who had not meeting their target grade were identified and invited to attend additional revision classes. These were provided by Miss Lyness, Miss Loney and Mrs Dougan with the aim of consolidating subject knowledge, developing confidence and to encourage improvement in academic performance. Approximately 10 pupils attended the sessions, and the results were very encouraging, as 40% improved their marks and moved up one target grade and one pupil moved up two target grades. Overall, this was very beneficial and could be extended to other year groups to achieve similar improvements. Thanks to Miss Lyness for providing the revision resources.

RE was the final cohort to participate in the KS3/4 Curriculum Collaboration this year. The collaborative action plan was to improve marks in RE at GCSE by introducing more opinion-based questions at KS3 as these represent 40% of marks at GCSE. The HOD was able to present a sample evaluative question at the collaboration meeting in Brownlow House and showcase how Lurgan JHS has already built these into our lessons and assessments in all year groups.

In Term 3, a new initiative 'Youth Alpha' was introduced for all Year 10 classes. It was delivered one period per week by youth leaders from Emmanuel Church co-ordinated by the Youth Pastor Mr Robbie Norton. Pupils watched short video clips on various faith questions e.g. What is the Holy Spirit? This was followed by small group discussion allowing the sharing of views and opinions. The six-week course finished with a round up event with all classes sharing doughnuts and cookies and listened to a short summative talk from Mr Norton. Pupils were provided with a survey through Google Classroom to gain some feedback for future planning and improvements. Overall, our students really engaged in this course, and it would be considered beneficial to run again next year.

Mrs Dougan provided a report to the Board of Governors in Term 3 summarising progress of the RE action plan over the last few years.

The year ended with Mrs Dougan resignation and retirement from teaching after 33 years' service in Lurgan Junior High. She has enjoyed her teaching career and considered it a privilege to lead the department as HOD for 6 years. Hopefully, the RE department will continue to develop and deliver the RE Curriculum in a dynamic way in the future, for the benefit of all our pupils.

Science Department

The Science Department experienced a challenging but successful 2024-25 academic year.

We continued to teach General Science to Years 8 and 9, as well as the 10A11 class, while teaching Biology, Chemistry and Physics separately to 10A1-10, who are all taught and examined on the same material, giving every pupil an equal chance to attain the results needed to gain a place on their chosen science courses for GCSE.

Once again, all pupils in every year group were provided with all the lessons and revision material on Google Classroom to help them keep up with work they may have missed and to give them support material as examinations approached. Many pupils made effective use of these resources.

With the roll out of Knowledge Organisers to our Year 9 pupils, the Science Department was one of the first two departments to provide video material to our 'Learning to Learn' programme, with encouragement to use colour-coded flash cards (and a few Smarties...) to help remember facts about acids and alkalis. Our previous revision sheets have been updated and adapted to form new Knowledge Organiser pages for Biology, Chemistry, Physics and General Science for the Year 10 classes and we anticipate that these pages will be effectively used.

We have continued to update our resources – both booklets and slide presentations – in keeping with the school's dyslexia-friendly section of the Action Plan and this task is now complete. Mrs Kennedy was delighted to be assigned timetabled classes with pupils from our Social Communication Class, and these pupils engaged thoroughly and made excellent progress in Science throughout the year, with those capable of undertaking written examinations scoring in excess of 90% in both their summer examination papers.

Following the Winter examination period, our Year 10 Biology classes were visited, for a second year, by Naomi Thompson from Cancer Focus NI. She shared information with pupils regarding the potential dangers of vaping and smoking, both very addictive and harmful activities, and showed the damage that long-term cigarette smoking can do to lungs. This initiative not only brings our 'Breathing and Respiration' topic to life, but feeds into the students' pastoral care as they learn to make informed decisions regarding

their own lifestyle choices. We hope to continue to run this session in future years.

Having attended a training course on chemical safety, our technician, Mr Adams, carried out a full audit of the chemicals stored within the department, arranged for the safe disposal of chemicals which were not needed or out-of-date. We are grateful to Mr McCoy for allowing for the purchase of a new flammables cupboard and to the Education Authority for the timely installation of a new fan in the chemical storage area.

Some of the apparatus in the Science department has been in operation for many years now and is beginning to show signs of overuse. We were delighted, with Mr McCoy's help, to be able to replenish our laboratories with three class sets of new student microscopes, which will certainly be put to good use.

In May, we enjoyed the excitement of participating for a third time in the The Big ALMAC Science Quiz, organised among local schools for KS3 pupils. For the previous two years our teams had been placed second, but this year, with a strong and focused Year 10 team comprising Mohamed, Eden, Luke and Zariya, LJHS achieved first place – the excitement within the Science Department was palpable! We extend our thanks particularly to Mrs Cochrane for preparing the team and accompanying them to the event. Lurgan Junior High School now has the honour of hosting this inter-schools quiz in 2026.

In early June, jointly with the Mathematics Department, Mrs Kennedy and Mrs Alexander took a group of 20 female students to a 'Girls in Maths and Physics' event at Queen's University, Belfast. They heard from current and former students about their career paths and projects, as well as gaining hands-on experience with some experimental work. This was most worthwhile in helping pupils to examine future careers options within STEM subjects.

Continuing Professional Development

All Science Department staff present attended whole-school professional training, ensuring we all approach our teaching in a consistent manner, in both academic and behavioural terms.

Our newly appointed technician, Mr T Adams, as well as receiving some training from experienced teachers within the department, attended specific technician training during the year, as well as participating in courses on chemical safety and general laboratory safety.

Mr McGrann, who covered Mrs Ferry's Science classes throughout most of the year, attended a STEM training course for non-specialists at the STEM Centre in York. This residential course gave Mr McGrann extra training in experimental work and laboratory safety, enabling him, under the guidance of the Head of Department to carry out and facilitate a range of practical work in Science.

Mrs Kennedy continued to attend the Dickson Plan Collaboration group for Science teachers within the Craigavon Area Learning Community. This year, the group focused upon producing a common Science marksheet for individual pupils, enabling teachers in the senior schools to see all their Science results and targets clearly, and to help pupils in choosing appropriate scientific study pathways at GCSE. This project is ongoing.

Staffing Changes

This has been a challenging year in terms of staffing within the department and has highlighted an urgent need to train more teachers of STEM subjects in Northern Ireland. 2024-25 began with two of our valued and experienced department members, Mrs Cochrane and Mrs Ferry on maternity leave, and we

were delighted to wish them well with their new arrivals! Mrs Kennedy, Mrs Carson and Mr Lawther were happy to welcome back Mr McLaughlin, who had already covered the initial stage of Mrs Cochrane's maternity leave, along with Mrs Downard. Mr McGrann covered for Mrs Ferry's leave and, with a little extra training to enable to carry out laboratory work safely with classes, made a most enthusiastic and capable teacher. We would like to express our thanks to those temporary teachers who quickly became part of the Science 'family' during the school year.

Sadly, in November, Mr Lawther had to take leave, and we are indebted to the professional substitute teachers who ensured his classes were taught the science curriculum. This was made possible due to the range of online resources the Science Department has developed over the past several years, and the flexibility of our existing staff in helping to ensure that classes had Science practical experience whenever possible.

We were delighted to see Mrs Cochrane return in late Spring and Mrs Ferry during June. Mrs Kennedy plans to relinquish her role as department head and, all being well, a new HOD will be appointed to take up position early in the new academic year. Mrs Kennedy intends to reduce her teaching hours and, all being well, we should go forward with a full complement of Science staff next year. Again, we would like to extend our thanks to those who have made a great contribution to Science teaching at LJHS in 2024-25, and to Mr Thompson (VP) who ensured that classes had staff in place throughout the year.

Technology & Design

Technology and Design continues to be a dynamic, practical-based subject that equips pupils with essential knowledge, skills, and values to problem solve and think creatively. Pupils remain highly engaged in their workshop lessons, experiencing a strong sense of fulfilment and pride in the projects they manufacture. These hands-on activities help build confidence in using a wide range of tools and machinery, fostering independence and resilience.

Over the past academic year, the department has seen several positive developments. Our curriculum booklets were further refined to maintain the department's strong foundation of good practice while continuing to promote a knowledge-rich approach. These updates ensure pupils are well-prepared for further study at GCSE level. To complement the new booklets, PowerPoint presentations were created to support teaching and learning, helping to deliver content in a clear, engaging, and structured way. Assessments have also evolved, incorporating GCSE-style questions to provide appropriate challenge and support progression. Knowledge Organisers for Year 9 were introduced to complement those already in use for Year 8, and have been embedded into teaching and learning to reinforce key concepts and terminology.

Miss McCann continues to represent the department in the Dickson Plan Collaboration. This collaboration has strengthened links across TD departments within the Dickson Plan and led to a shared focus on improving practical skills at Key Stage 3 and 4. As a result, pupils are now encouraged to convert units of measurement, estimate lengths, and accurately mark out their work independently. These skills are vital for success at GCSE level and are being embedded through both practical tasks and written assessments.

New projects were introduced across all three year groups to further enhance pupil engagement and skill development:

- **Year 8:** Bird Feeder Project
- **Year 9:** Steady Hand Game
- **Year 10:** Desk Lamp Project

The new Year 8 and Year 10 projects specifically require pupils to mark out their own components, rather than being provided with pre-cut parts. This shift is a direct outcome of the Dickson Plan collaboration and reflects our commitment to developing independent, skilled learners.

Additionally, targeted support was again offered to Year 10 pupils identified as underachieving ahead of their transfer examinations. After-school revision sessions were held and proved successful, with plans to continue this initiative in future exam periods. The number of pupils opting to study Technology & Design at GCSE level continues to rise and remains at a very healthy level. This is a testament to the strength of the department and the enthusiasm of our pupils.

A significant change this year was the departure of Mr Black, a long-standing and esteemed member of the Technology & Design team. His contribution to the department over the years has been deeply valued, and he will be greatly missed.

Music

This year has been both productive and enjoyable for the Music Department, with pupils engaging in a wide variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities. We have sought to provide meaningful opportunities for performance, creativity, and collaboration, while continuing to strengthen the core knowledge and skills required in music.

In our curriculum, pupils made strong progress, as reflected in the results of our baseline testing. 90% of students increased their score from Year 8 to Year 9. Of this group, 34% improved by 1–10%, 46% improved by 11–20%, 11% improved by 21–30%, and 2% improved by 31–40%. These findings were very encouraging for the department and highlight the positive impact of our teaching and learning strategies. Pupils who achieved more than 80% in Year 9 were identified as Gifted and Talented, and differentiated tasks were provided to stretch and challenge them appropriately.

Examination data also reflected steady progress. In Year 9, 74% of pupils achieved either Green or Amber in both the winter and summer examinations, while 26% were identified as Red. Encouragingly, of the winter 26%, 7% improved to move out of the Red category by the summer assessment. In Year 10, 83% of pupils achieved Green or Amber in both the winter and summer examinations, with 17% recorded as Red. From this group, 12% improved to move out of Red by the summer assessment. These outcomes demonstrate consistent achievement overall and highlight the progress made by a number of pupils between assessments.

To consolidate knowledge and build long-term retention, we placed a strong emphasis on retrieval practice across all year groups. A variety of approaches were used, including Daily Review Starter Quizzes, Speak Like an Expert tasks, Show Me Boards, Only Connect quizzes, Challenge Grids, Brain Dumps, Flashcard Pairs, Picture Prompt Sheets, and Google Forms for homework quizzes. In addition, pupils engaged with Quiz Masters activities and practised with past paper questions. These strategies supported pupils in revisiting key content regularly and developing confidence in applying their knowledge to new contexts.

At the beginning of the year, we prepared for the Harvest and Remembrance assemblies. These occasions gave pupils the chance to contribute thoughtfully to the life of the school and to gain

valuable experience in performance. We also rehearsed for Prize Day, ensuring that music played an important role in this significant celebration.

In December, we supported the Christmas Fayre by providing three hours of live music. This was a particularly enjoyable event, as a wide range of pupils performed, creating a festive atmosphere and demonstrating their commitment and talent.

As the year progressed, we were involved in further community and outreach opportunities. During Open Night, we performed for prospective pupils, while visits to local primary schools allowed our pupils to share their enthusiasm for music with younger children.

One of the most notable achievements of the year was the creation of a live band, which went on to perform in seven *School of Rock* shows. This project brought together pupils from different year groups and was the result of many hours of rehearsal and collaboration.

We were also fortunate to welcome the Ulster Orchestra Quartet, who delivered an engaging workshop directly linked to our curriculum. This provided pupils with valuable insights into professional performance and enriched their understanding of key musical concepts.

In addition, we enjoyed a joint trip with the Drama Department to London. Pupils had the opportunity to see *Michael Jackson the Musical* and *Back to the Future the Musical*, as well as visit Madame Tussauds, the London Dungeons, take a cruise on the Thames, spend a day at Thorpe Park, and enjoy shopping at Westfield. The trip was thoroughly enjoyed by all and gave pupils a memorable cultural experience.

Our extra-curricular programme has remained strong. The choir, orchestra, and ukulele club all rehearsed regularly and performed at a variety of school events. These groups continue to provide pupils with opportunities to develop their musical skills and to contribute positively to the wider school community.

We are grateful to our pupils for their commitment and enthusiasm throughout the year and to parents and colleagues for their continued support. We look forward to building on this year's achievements as we plan ahead.