

2023 – 2024 Annual Report



Contents –

2	
3	Chairman's Foreword
4	Board of Governors 2018 - 2023
5	Teaching Staff
6	Non-Teaching Staff
6	Curriculum/Assessment
7	Target Setting
8	Careers Education/School Leavers' Destinations 2022-23
8	School Terms and Holidays
9	The School Day/Parental Involvement
11 - 16	Safeguarding and Child Protection
17	SEN
18	Enrolment/Staff Development Days/ Financial Report 2022-2023
19	Financial Report 2022-23/Gifts/Donations Building Works/Charging and Remissions
21	Subject and Activity Reports

Chairman's Foreword

It is with immense pride and pleasure that I present to you the Annual Report for Lurgan Junior High School for the academic year 2023-24. This year has been marked by outstanding achievements across all areas of school life, reflecting the dedication and hard work of our students, staff, and the wider school community.

Academic Excellence

Our students have once again excelled academically, achieving remarkable results in their examinations. The commitment to high standards of teaching and learning has been evident in the classroom, with numerous students receiving accolades for their academic prowess. The introduction of innovative teaching methods and a focus on individual student support have played a significant role in these successes.

Sporting Achievements

On the sports field, our students have demonstrated exceptional talent and sportsmanship. From winning regional championships in football and netball to individual triumphs in athletics, the spirit of teamwork and perseverance has shone brightly. These achievements are a testament to the hard work of our dedicated coaches and the enthusiasm of our young athletes.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Beyond the classroom and sports field, our students have engaged in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Participation in various clubs and societies has enriched our students' school experience, fostering creativity, leadership, and a sense of community.

Inspection Report

I am also delighted to report that our school received an excellent inspection report in June 2024. The inspectors highlighted the high quality of teaching, the supportive and inclusive school environment, and the strong leadership provided by our staff. This recognition is a reflection of the collective effort and commitment to excellence that defines Lurgan Junior High School.

In conclusion, the 2023-24 academic year has been one of significant achievement and progress. I extend my heartfelt thanks to all members of our school community for their unwavering support and dedication. Together, we continue to strive for excellence in all that we do.

Mr Trevor Enderby
Chairman, Board of Governors

BOARD OF GOVERNORS 2018 – 2023

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
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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).

Teaching Staff (as at September 2023)

Positions and Responsibilities

Mr J McCoy	English	Principal	Mr K Lunn	History	Senior Teacher (Pastoral)
Mrs R Kerr	French & Spanish	Vice-Principal (Pastoral)			/Deputy Designated
Mr M Thompson	History	Vice-Principal (Curriculum)	Miss J Lyness	RE & Music	Teacher for Child Protection
			Miss C McCann		Shared Education Coordinator
Mr M Addley	History	HOD/Year Head			HOD TD, ICT & Literacy Support
Mrs J Alexander	Mathematics	HOD/Attendance Management Coordinator	Mrs M McCorry	SCC	
		HOD Art & Design	Mr M McGreevy	Supported Learning	Year Head
Mrs K Bell	Art	Year Head	Mrs A McCrory	Music	HOD Music/Social Media/Website Co-ordinator
Mrs C Blakely	English & RE	Co-ordinator for Citizenship/School Trips/PD Co-ordinator			
Mr G Black	TD & LLW	Numeracy Co-ordinator/Year Head/Pupil Tracking & Assessment/Reporting and Recording	Mrs R McDermott	Mathematics	
		Teacher Tutor	Mr R McDowell	PE	HOD Boys' PE
Mr J Black	Mathematics		Mr S McFarland	Geography	HOD Geography
			Mr J McMahon	Geography & History	
			Mrs R Miskelly	French & Spanish	HOD Languages
Mrs B Carson	Science		Miss J Nelson	English	
Mrs K Carson	English		Mrs U O'Reilly	French & Spanish	Senior Teacher (Curriculum)/Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection
Mrs J Clements	Art		Miss D Osborne	Mathematics	
Mrs L Cochrane	Science & RE	HOD RE			
Mrs L Dougan	RE & PE				
Mrs A Ferry	Science	HOD HE	Mrs V Patterson	Art	
Mrs Je Graham	Home Economics	Using Communication	Mrs C Patton	Mathematics	
Mrs Ju Graham	English	Co-ordinator	Mrs S Pogue	English & EAL	Newcomer Co-ordinator
			Miss G Robinson	Modern Languages	
Mrs D Gray	Home Economics	Co-ordinator for Transfer at 14/HOD	Mrs N Saunderson	Girls' PE	HOD Girls' PE
Mr J Guy	PE & Mathematics	CEAIG/Employability Coordinator	Mrs G Smith	Drama	HOD Drama
			Mrs E Walker	Home Economics/Geography	
Mrs L Harvey	Mathematics			Geography	
Mrs A Jardine	English	HOD English/Library	Mrs K Walmsley	Home Economics	
Mr M Jess	History/RE/English		Mrs S Wilkinson	French & Spanish	
Mrs F Kennedy	Science	HOD Science			
Mr M Lavery	ICT & LLW	HOD IT			
Mr C Lawther	Science				
Miss S J Loney	Music/RE				

Non-Teaching Staff

Administration	Mrs E Lewis, SEO Mrs L Johnston	Mrs P Thompson Mrs T Whithorn
Building Supervisors	Mr. G. Cassells	Mr. J. Parks
Classroom Assistants	Mrs A Black Miss B Bingham Mrs A Calvert Mrs J Calvert Ms C Grant Mrs J Hamilton Mrs L Hunter Mr N Hylands	Mrs L King (EAL) Mrs D Lunn Ms C Lyness Miss J Mailey Mrs M Muntele Miss N Osborne Mrs E Zukowska
Lunchtime Supervisors	Mrs L Cassells Mrs B Hill	Mrs M Leathem Mr G Cassells Mr J Parks
Technicians	Mrs E Blakely (Home Economics) Mr R Clifford (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. We seek 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 2023-24 we introduced specialised provision for children with autism within our school by setting up a Social Communication Class. This SPiMS provision, together with our Supported Learning teacher and EAL Coordinator have now been brought within one Positive Impact Centre (PIC). This support is coordinated by our Senior Teacher, Curriculum.

To ensure greater equity of opportunity for pupils we extended the teaching of a second language to our 10A9 and 10A10 classes. 10A11 will instead receive additional English, Maths & ICT. This required staffing for additional periods of Spanish & French. The June 2024 ETi report noted that "The curriculum is more inclusive and accessible and is meeting better the needs of more of the pupils."

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 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."

A monthly programme of Teacher Professional Learning which prioritises learning and teaching has been established. Again, ETi report that "Teacher professional learning is a high priority for the school. There has been a significant investment of time and

resources to develop a common approach to learning and teaching, underpinned by a shared understanding of research-informed pedagogy. The emphasis on metacognition, including well-implemented strategies on themes such as retrieval practice, has improved the pupils' levels of independent learning and has resulted in a common and consistent approach to learning and teaching and important improvements in the pupils' learning experiences and outcomes."

Retirement

Our Head of Drama, Mrs Gilbert, retired after a distinguished career and Mrs Smith was appointed as her successor.

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. Year 10 pupils again received a report on their Term 3 progress. 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 (KS) 2 and KS 4 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 KS 3 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 3 points in the year, 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."

Careers Education 2023/24

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.

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 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%

2023/2024 School Terms and Holidays

AUTUMN TERM

Wednesday 30 August – Thursday 21 December

Autumn Half Term

Monday 30 October – Friday 3 November

SPRING TERM

Wednesday 3 January – Friday 5 April

Spring Half Term

Monday 12 February – Friday 16 February

Bank Holiday
Monday 18 March St Patrick's Day

SUMMER TERM

Monday 8 April – Friday 28 June
Bank Holidays
Monday 6 May
Monday 27 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

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%

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 2024, 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 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 2024-25.

An Induction Evening, which we held for the incoming Year 8 parents in June 2024, was extremely well-attended once again.

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, online 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 Downtime Pass, referral to Reach Mentoring (Tuesdays), our Reach Connect worker (four days a week) and referral to our school counsellors.

- 1.1 Number Of Enquiries To Education Authority CPSSS: 15 approx.
- 1.2 Number Of Referrals To Social Services: 1 UNOCINI
- 1.3 Number of Child Protection Complaints Against Staff: 1
- 1.4 Number Of Children On Child Protection Register: 6
- 1.5 Number Of Looked After Children (Children In Care): 4
- 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 and attended by members of our Senior Pastoral Team and/or SEN.

2 Training Attended/Provided

- **Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher**

Mr Lunn and Mrs Kerr completed the ABSiT training programme delivered over eight sessions which started in January 2023 and ended this academic year.

Mrs Kerr attended training in September for the Safer Schools NI App which was rolled out to the whole school community in November during Anti-Bullying week. Safer Schools NI is a digital library of age-appropriate safeguarding resources that you can check out anytime, from your phone to your computer to your classroom and there are three separate versions – one for pupils (age appropriate), one for parents and one for staff.

Mrs Kerr attended a Child Sexual Exploitation awareness webinar in March.

- **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). An additional session was delivered at the beginning of October for canteen staff and for any staff who had been absent for the training in August.

Whole staff training on addressing bullying in school was led by Mrs Kerr and Mr Lunn in our August SDDs and also during our twilight sessions. Case studies were used to allow staff to discuss real situations and how they should be addressed according to the legislation. Regular reminders were given about the importance of recording all interventions and actions along with outcomes and keeping parents informed at each stage of the process. Staff reported that they found case studies helpful in understanding how they should work through any bullying behaviour concerns.

The roll out to staff of the Safer Schools App Teacher version took place in our November twilight session.

In September, Mrs Kerr delivered safeguarding assemblies for all three year groups. These 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. At the feedback following our ETi inspection in June, Karen Gray, our District Inspector, reported that all pupils who were spoken to by the inspectors indicated that they felt safe in school and knew who their key adults in school are.

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 25 - 30 pupils in our Youth Annexe on Tuesday mornings for support with a variety of issues – social, emotional and behaviour difficulties. These referrals are made by Year Heads and in agreement with parents/carers.

Aspire also continued to partner with us and worked with ten FSM pupils who were underachieving. These pupils are chosen from our regression analysis – pupils who are in the ‘red’ and underachieving across the board and who are also FSM. Aspire’s role is also in a mentoring capacity as well as support with homework and learning.

Launch of the Safer Schools NI App with our school community took place in November. Our student council, TPV, led the assembly where this was launched to pupils. Pupils were all given access codes and the information was on our whole school Google Classroom. Invitations to parents were sent home via SIMS Parent App and an explanation of Safer Schools App, its uses and benefits.

Other assemblies/sessions over the course of the year promoting the preventative curriculum were delivered for example, Love for Life with Year 8 and Year 10; T.H.I.N.K. assemblies; (Is it True, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary, Kind?) Anti-Bullying Week assemblies led by The Pupils’ Voice; Monthly Year Head assemblies; PSNI sessions – Year 8 substance misuse; Year 9 ‘One Punch Kills’; Year 10 Online Safety; Cancer Research vaping talk for all Year 10 classes; Year 10 Leavers’ Assembly.

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. 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) with additional treats such as bacon baps in the canteen, McFlurries, Easter eggs, Domino’s pizzas, disco and the platinum trip to Newcastle for 31 pupil who achieved 120 conduct points. Form Teachers were given Data Input afternoons as part of their directed time to collate achievement points. Feedback from staff, pupils and parents indicate that the reward system continues to be positively received and pupils feel valued and appreciated.

In addition, a rewards trip to the cinema along with opportunities for shopping took place over three days in December to 'The Boulevard' in Banbridge for all year groups. This was a highlight for our pupils to have a day out together with their peers.

More than two thirds of our Year 10 pupils enjoyed an incredible night at our semi-formal which took place at Grace Hall. This event is talked about by Year 10s as early as term one and is always a night to remember. The committee of pupils and staff involved in the organisation did an amazing job in pulling it all together so professionally and to such a high standard.

At the end of each half term and full term, we had our 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), Christmas Panto – 'Aladlunn' - Just Dance, Beetle Drive, 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.

Sample timetable in term one for Positive Mental Health & Well-being Day to the right.

Year Group	Periods 1 – 2 (9.15-10.35)	Periods 3-4 (10.55-12.15)	Periods 5-7 (12.15-14.00)	Periods 8 – 9 (14.00-15.20)
Year 8	Form Time:Walk a Mile/Escape Room	Beetle Drive (A1,3,5,7,9 and 11 in Mr Guy's Gym)	Normal class Periods 6,7 and lunch as usual Period 5	Let's Dance (Assembly Hall)
		Beetle Drive (A2,4,6,8 and 10 in McDowell's Gym)		
Year 9	Beetle Drive (A1,3,5,7,9 and 11 in Mr Guy's Gym)	Let's Dance (Assembly Hall)	Normal class Periods 5, 7 and lunch as usual Period 6	Form Time:Walk a Mile/Escape Room
	Beetle Drive (A2,4,6,8 and 10 in Mr McDowell's Gym)			
Year 10	Let's Dance (Assembly Hall)	Form Time:Walk a Mile/Escape Room	Normal class Periods 5, 6 and lunch as usual Period 7	Beetle Drive (A1,3,5,7,9 and 11 in Mr Guy's Gym)
				Beetle Drive (A2,4,6,8 and 10 in McDowell's Gym)

Prevalent Issues

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 still adjusting to being back in the school setting; 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. As required, these pupils were also issued with Downtime Passes for school 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. Where appropriate, they were also referred to our Reach Connect worker, 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. A number of pupils struggled to attend school, citing anxiety as the reason. We worked alongside these pupils, parents and any external agencies involved, making reasonable adjustments to support return to school (i.e. meetings after school when school was quiet, tailored timetable, time with our Reach Connect worker, Downtime Pass). For some of these pupils, it enabled them to fully engage with their learning and also participate in extra-curricular activities.

A considerable number of pupils who were school refusing because of high levels of anxiety benefited from time in our Supported

Learning room where Mr McGreevy worked with them in a quiet learning environment to help them readjust to being back in school, with 1:1 academic and pastoral support. We had up to 13 pupils whose attendance was below 60% due to anxiety.

Mrs Duke from Reach Mentoring, who had worked with us since April 2021 as our Reach Connect worker, left us in October 2023. We record our thanks and deep gratitude to Mrs Duke for her dedication to this pastoral role and her support and care of the young people she mentored. This Reach Connect role was then filled by Jamie Hawthorne, who is also to be commended for his heart and passion to serve the young people of LJHS. Jamie's time ended in March 2024 as he took on the Youth Pastor role within his church. Danielle Lunn became our new Reach Connect worker in our third term and continued working with the pupils who were receiving this support. We were delighted that, even though there had been changes in personnel over the course of the year, pupils reported that they were able to engage well with each Reach Connect worker. Parent and pupil feedback on this vital resource has been extremely positive.

Access to Reach Mentoring/Connect is through Year Heads/Senior Pastoral Team where they feel this level of intervention is needed. Over the course of the year, Reach Connect once again supported up to 40 young people. For the majority of pupils referred for this intervention, anxiety was the principle issue. Other reasons for referral were friendship issues, pressures of school work, low mood, anger issues and family circumstances. We deeply value having this resource in school as there is simply no additional time available in the teaching day for Form Teachers and Year Heads to offer the level of support they would like to give, and which is needed, in order for some pupils to engage in their learning. As a

Senior Pastoral Team, we are thankful to the Board of Governors for agreeing that the cost for this much needed support can be borne by school going forward.

Support through Links Counselling continued as a valuable resource two days a week in school and, at times, when our waiting list increased to 12 plus, we operated a third day of counselling sessions. Over the course of the year, 36 pupils were referred for counselling.

This past year, through the James Kennedy Foundation, and in liaison with the three other Junior High Schools in the Dickson Plan, Chris Ryan was employed from December 2023 to work as an Attendance & Pastoral Support Office across all four schools. Mr Ryan is with us on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons and one full Friday every four weeks to support us with pupils where attendance is an issue. Mr Ryan makes contact with the family, carries out home visits where required, engages with the pupils concerned and supports them to return to school. Mr Ryan liaises with our Year Heads and Supported Learning teacher as part of his role in helping pupils reengage in their learning. Parents, pupils and staff feedback indicate that his role has been a massive support for everyone and has resulted in an improvement in attendance and engagement for several pupils.

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. It serves to develop understanding of emotions, actions, reactions and behaviours as well as to build improved relationships between pupils and further develop positive relationships between staff and pupils. Through

the use of restorative practice, the number of repeat incidents with the same pupils has notably reduced.

5 Any Other Issues

Signed:	Designated Teacher
Signed:	Principal
Date:	

Positive Impact Centre

The Positive Impact Centre celebrated its official opening on the 26th September 2023, graciously inaugurated by Mrs A. Lindsay. This momentous event marked the commencement of an exciting academic year at Lurgan Junior High School, particularly notable for introducing the Social Communication Class (SCC) as part of the 2023-2024 SPiMs provision. (Specialist Provision in Mainstream Schools).

This year, the SCC welcomed four boys, each embarking on a new journey filled with potential and promise. The students made an encouraging start to the academic year, with three of the four boys successfully attending mainstream classes for a brief period each week. This integration is a vital aspect of their development, allowing them to socialise and learn alongside their peers. Furthermore, the SCC was proudly represented on the Pupil Voice team, providing these pupils with an opportunity to express their views and contribute to school life.

An end-of-term trip to W5 in June provided a delightful culmination to the term for the pupils, allowing them to engage in a day of both socialising and educational experiences. These activities underscore the Centre's commitment to fostering both academic and social skills.

In parallel, the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Department aimed to create dyslexia-friendly classrooms. This initiative included the introduction of dyslexia-friendly fonts in booklets and online resources, as well as ensuring that classrooms featured clear front walls to minimise cognitive overload. There was also a significant increase in Classroom and General Assistants, rising from six to eleven, which further supports the diverse needs of all pupils.

Baseline testing along with retesting for PTE and PTM demonstrated promising results, with 78.9% of Statemented pupils achieving expected standards or higher in PTE, and 89.5% doing the same in PTM. Additionally, the introduction of a Homework Club

after school provided vital support for pupils, enhancing their learning experience.

The EAL (English as an Additional Language) department is well-established, supporting small groups of students with 18 pupils receiving one-to-one assistance. A retesting exercise planned for June 2024 is anticipated to show positive progress, with 63% of pupils moving up at least one level from their initial benchmarking scores.

The Supported Learning class had its first full year implementing the 'Sounds Write' phonics programme and also introduced reading support, equipping pupils with essential literacy skills. This year is set to be a transformative one, laying the groundwork for future success for all students at the Positive Impact Centre.

Enrolment

On 5 October 2023 (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	245	3
9	250	5
10	244	8

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

Year Group	Pupils	Pupils with SEN Stage 3
8	248	18
9	239	5
10	252	6

Staff Development Days

BAKER DAYS

Thursday 24th, Friday 25th and Tuesday 29 August 2023

Friday 12th January 2024

Monday 15th January 2024

AUTUMN TERM

Staff Meetings - School Development Planning, Child Protection updates, Action Planning, Numeracy, Literacy whole school targets, ICT training, Results Analysis, Teaching and Learning overview

- Staff training on Introduction of knowledge rich curriculum.
- Action Plans
- Celebrating Success
- KS3/4 collaborations
- Cognitive Load Theory; Practising Explaining
- Group Meetings/Departmental Time (P6 sampler day preparation)

SPRING TERM

Staff meetings:

- Open Evening review; Year 10 exam preparation
- Regression Analysis, Staff attendance policy, Exam survey review, Cognitive Load Theory
- Meetings with pupils requiring intervention in Regression Analysis
- Staff training on Walkthrus - scaffolding; consistency in Google Classroom & class resources
 - Review of updated Curriculum and Assessment and Reporting Policies
 - Knowledge Organiser review and preparation

SUMMER TERM

Staff meetings:

- Departmental time for assessment and reporting.
- Staff meetings and Behaviour case studies.

- Outcomes from HOD meetings with the Board of Governors,
- Developing a common language around pedagogy
- Inspection preparation

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) is to be approved by the Board of Governors at the next Financial Meeting.

Gifts / Donations

No give or donations were made to/from school during the 2023/24 academic year.

Building Works/Equipment

New signage throughout the school.
 Creation of Positive Impact Centre completed.
 Commencement of new facilities for SEN Year Group Co-ord.
 Various works completed to upkeep the building.
 Mrs Dougan and Miss Loney's room painted and new carpet.
 New carpet in reception office.
 Flooring fixed outside Mr Addley's room.
 New intruder alarm fitted.
 Creation of PIC office completed.
 Creation of Nurture room commenced.

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 Pupils. These were made in-house 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.

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

Curriculum Update

In 2023/24 the department's focus was to promote the effective use of knowledge organisers and retrieval practice techniques in Maths to promote high standards of pupil learning. Secondly, there was a focus on continuing to develop strategies to support students with additional needs. Finally, there was a focus to prepare for further roll-out of a knowledge-rich Maths curriculum for Year 9.

Knowledge organisers embedding pupil's core knowledge in Maths were created by the Maths department. Pupils completed the MyMaths online task connected with the topic being quizzed for the pupils self-quizzing homework. This has worked very well as Maths teachers monitor pupils' progress online through MyMaths assessments: with new questions generated each time pupils launch their homework, pupils will never run out of practice. Pupils regularly experience Retrieval Practice with interleaving, through low stake quizzes in their booklets, starters and plenaries based on their Maths knowledge organisers. The Department uses whiteboards and think, pair, share activities – these learning strategies help to assess individual understanding.

Pupil feedback and teacher professional judgment both show that the use of Google Classroom to support pupil learning has been fully embedded across the Maths Department. There was strong feedback from pupils that they used the resources when revising for their assessments or completing work that they missed when they were off school.

Maths Support

After analysis of the Assessment data, pupils red-flagged in their assessments were allocated Maths support of one period per week.

This has been an excellent resource for the Maths department with some pupils moving from red to green from their Year 9 assessment to Year 10. During the year, Maths Support after school was also held for all years on Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday by three Maths teachers per week, with great uptake from pupils requiring extra assistance before assessments.

Throughout the year, pupils with additional needs received subject-specific support through tailored booklets and one-to-one support from teachers and classroom assistants.

Numeracy Ninjas

In the department, pupils continued to take part in Numeracy Ninjas each week in their Maths Class. Numeracy Ninja is a Key Stage 3 intervention designed to fill gaps in students' basic mental calculation strategies and to empower them with the numeracy skills and fluency required to fully access GCSE Maths concepts when they move to Key Stage 4 study. Once per term, the highest achieving and the most improved students in each class were awarded **Black belt** certificates and a black pen. At the end of the year, pupils who achieved 10 or more black belts were awarded a **Grand Master Certificate** and a black pen.

Maths Week

In October, Mr J Black (Numeracy Coordinator) utilised the school's social media platforms 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 distributed 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 one gold, one silver and four 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 six silver and seven 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

The Maths department arranged for Danske Bank to present to our Year 10s the 'Money Smart Programme' which included financial capability training. This is always an important topic for young people, but significantly more so now, due to the rise in the cost of living. The talk covered topics such as budgeting, introduction to credit and debit cards, fraud, money mules, gambling and gaming – all in a fun and interactive way!

Dickson Plan Collaboration Project

Last year saw the continuation of the Maths Dickson Plan collaboration which provided opportunities for Mrs Alexander to meet with Maths HODs from across our Dickson Plan and implement the areas of focus agreed in 2022/23 by the Dickson Plan Heads of Department. This has been a very beneficial collaboration. During the Maths HOD meetings, it was decided to have a common approach to the use of memory aids with the aim to improve consistency moving from KS3 to KS4. It was also decided to develop the skill of using the calculator from Year 8, but with particular focus in Year 10 and that the brand of Casio Calculators is to be used in all schools for consistency. Our booklets have been adapted to include the memory aids and hopefully, the Senior Schools will see a positive impact in 2024-2025.

Mrs Alexander HOD/Mr J Black Numeracy Coordinator

English Department & Communication

The English department progressed well in all areas targeted in the departmental action plan for the 2023-24 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, with staff and pupils becoming familiar with using knowledge organisers as a learning tool, and to prepare for the further roll-out of a knowledge-rich English curriculum for Year 9 and 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 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 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 9 pupils.

All Year 8 booklets and PowerPoints were amended and redrafted to be dyslexia friendly. Year 9 resources will be amended in the next academic year. Also, after analysis of the assessment data, pupils flagged red or yellow in their assessments were allocated timebound withdrawal support in English working in small groups with Mrs Jardine, Mrs Blakely or Mrs Graham. This has been very effective with almost all pupils involved moving nearer their targets, and some pupils moving from red to green from their Year 9 assessment to Year 10.

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 10 assessments were amended to include the use of the key question stems, with assessments for other year groups to be amended in coming years. This continues to be a valuable opportunity to share good practice and to work towards developing consistent approaches between the junior and senior schools.

In June, the English department was assessed by ETI and we were very pleased to see our hard work and progress from the previous inspection acknowledged in 2016. English is deemed effective, and the inspectorate commented that “in English standardised medium and long-term planning ensures all pupils engage critically with

stimulating texts which allow for a range of good quality oral and written responses”.

We also had a busy year of extra-curricular activities which were designed to promote and enhance our pupils’ enjoyment of literature.

Mrs Carson’s Book Club ran for another successful year with many members from all year groups attending. The group read and discussed two novels – ‘Northern Lights’, by Philip Pullman and ‘Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children’ by Ransom Riggs.

In November, we were pleased to host children’s author Joffre White for the first time to speak to all of Year 9 about what it means to be a hero, the power of words and his latest book ‘Aura Boy’. After his talk, a group of 30 pupils enjoyed a workshop with Mr White where he discussed his job as an author and gave advice about remaining resilient and never giving up on your dreams.

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 11 different teams from schools across Northern Ireland in a regional heat. Unfortunately, our team did not place, but were given the accolade of Best Newcomer Team.

Literacy Week took place from Monday, 26th February to Friday, 1st March. Mrs J Graham, as Literacy Co-ordinator, organised several activities to encourage reading throughout the school. Pupils were invited to enter a whole school competition based on an ‘Escape Room,’ filled with many book-based brainteasers. Challenges took place in our canteen, online and during form class time throughout the week.

Literacy Week coincided with the official opening of our newly refurbished ‘Ferris Library’, allowing pupils access to a wide range

of brand new books. Members of Book Club worked together to create a fantastic promotional video for the library's reopening. Several pupil librarians were appointed and trained to operate the school library which, as well as being available for subject teachers to timetable sessions for their classes, is also available for each year group to use independently at break time 3 days per week.

In Term 3, Mrs Pogue 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 'rebuilding'. We were delighted to receive the news that two of our pupils were successful in the local level of the competition: Connor Garvin 9A1 was awarded first place and Elliot Wilkinson 8A10 was awarded runner-up. Both 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.

In conclusion, this was another productive and purposeful year for the English department. We hope to build on the progress made moving into the 2024/2025 academic year.

Art Department

The Art and Design department has enjoyed several changes within the last year. In line with the knowledge-rich curriculum, we have implemented a range of exciting and informative knowledge organisers for Year 8. Our topics effectively prepare our students for their future attainment in the transfer assessments and Key Stage 4 courses.

In November 2023, we were delighted to begin planning towards Art being included in future transfer assessments. The new structure of reporting in Art & Design allows pupils to revise facts about artists, develop their opinion about artwork and connect professional practitioners' concepts to their own artistic outcomes. We have developed a framework where we award 40% for a written component and 60% for practical drawing, techniques and application of media. We standardise marking of examinations to ensure agreed standards and store examples of both written and visual good practice and high-quality outcomes in folders.

We continue to evaluate our schemes of work and have created knowledge organisers for Year 9 which teach facts and encourage creative skills.

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

We have continued to embed initiatives to promote the Art & Design department, for example the whole school Christmas card competition in November 2023 was a great success. The winning entry was shared with our extended school community showcasing a mature design and skilfully created artwork.

The department promoted careers within Art and disseminated information about the GCSE course to develop pupils' awareness of the creative industries.

We enjoyed a very successful Art club trip in June 2024 to Lurgan Park. Pupils completed studies of nature. It was lovely to see pupils engaging in practical work beyond the classroom.

We celebrated success with our entries in the Lurgan Credit Union competition. We received numerous 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes at Lurgan Show in June 2024 resulting in LJHS being awarded the Lurgan Show Cup for the school accumulating the most points.

Our extra-curricular Art club has grown in popularity, resulting in a fortnightly rotation to accommodate rising numbers of students attending. Pupils worked hard on several projects and competitions throughout the year. They thoroughly enjoyed contributing to group artwork for the 'Go Fly your Kite' festival. Their colourful painted boards of carnival horses were showcased in the local community for several weeks. Miss Young joined our team temporarily, making valuable contributions to both curriculum content and extra-curricular ideas.

Drama

Within the Drama Department for the academic year 2023/24, Mrs Smith was appointed as the new Head of Department. Alongside this role there was a change to the curriculum, leading to a completely new curriculum created for Year 8 and Year 9. To complement this, the new knowledge organisers were also created in September.

In the Year 8 curriculum, a focus was placed on building confidence in Drama. Pupils were taught how to use the core skills of Drama effectively through a range of activities from games to theory-based lessons and practical Drama lessons.

In Year 9, there was a shift from a practical heavy curriculum to balance of theory and practical. The aim of this was to prepare

pupils with adequate knowledge that would link to GCSE Drama, should they wish to pursue this avenue in their next school. A new topic was introduced which focused on Costume and Set Design, which was then assessed through the first written exam within the department.

In Term One, the department embarked on two trips. One trip was to Lurgan College to watch their production of 'Calamity Jane'; the second was to Dublin to watch the production of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. Both trips were a success and allowed pupils across the year groups to witness Drama on the stage, from older peers as well as from professionals.

In Term Two, we saw the introduction of extra-curricular Drama, with approximately 40-50 pupils attending Drama club each week. This was led by the Drama Prefects and allowed pupils to have a fun and safe space to explore Drama outside of the normal classroom setting.

The beginning of Term 3 saw the Music and Drama department collaborate on a Spring Concert, 'ABBA and the 80s'. This featured songs and scenes from 'Mamma Mia', ABBA and many other famous hits from the 80s in a very successful two performances. The Drama department assisted in this, by helping out in rehearsals, costumes, and selected drama scenes.

The year ended with all Year 8 and 9 pupils completing a practical assessment in class which gave them their final report grade. As a whole, pupils performed well and demonstrated a sound understanding of the Drama skills taught throughout the year.

Throughout the year, the department continued to liaise with the Music Department as we planned the upcoming school production in January 2025. The final decision was made in June 2024 and the rights were purchased for Andrew Lloyd Webber's 'School of Rock'. Auditions took place in June 2024 with scripts given out prior to the summer holidays for pupils to begin rehearsing at home.

Prospective Year 8 pupils from feeder primary schools also took part in the auditioning process.

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 case study extended questions. We have updated our resources and guided answers for Year 9 and 10 case studies. In addition, retrieval practice and low stakes quizzing continues to be built into lessons as teaching resources have been updated.

We have updated our Year 8 knowledge organisers based on staff feedback. We also produced knowledge organisers for Year 9, to be used for this current academic year as the school continues to embed the delivery of a knowledge-rich curriculum.

We were pleased once again to be able to enhance the teaching of the Farming unit of work with our annual educational visit to the Balmoral show in May. The purpose of this trip is to support the teaching of how physical and human factors influence our local farmers. As with each trip, it is evident that the pupils thoroughly enjoyed this event. Mr McFarland, Mrs Walmsley, Mr McMahon and Mrs Walker accompanied 80 Year 10 pupils to this event; this was an increase of 30 compared with 2023.

Pupils have also had the opportunity to be out of the classroom investigating the local area and developing fieldwork skills, giving them a solid foundation for GCSE field work. Year 8 pupils carried out a Litter Survey and, back in class, were taught to present and analyse the data collected. Year 9 carried out 2 Traffic Surveys and analysed their findings as part of their study of climate change.

ICT continues to be a focus for Geography at Lurgan JHS. Online testing and retrieval resources continue to be created and are highly effective in motivating and supporting our pupils' learning. We have continued the use of learning logs, a weekly log updated by each teacher, with details of the work missed, including signposting to the slides required from the teaching slides and booklet page numbers. This allows pupils to see what work they have missed and allows for catch up if absent. It can also be used by teachers in the PIC to help shape the support for pupils in their care.

The Geography department continued to use its own Instagram page. With 604 followers, including parents, this offered a chance to further showcase our school. This has proven a useful way to communicate with our pupils and to build interest and enthusiasm for our subject in addition to our contributions to the school Facebook page.

We were delighted to welcome Mr McMahon as a permanent member of the department following his successful interview. This sets the department in a strong position for the continued delivery of subject knowledge and understanding.

Much of the staff personal planning time in Term 3 was spent updating booklets, including retyping most of the content in preparation for the 2024/25 academic year. The department decided that it would be best to merge two of the Year 10 topics into one. The purpose of this was to update our teaching content and bring the content closer in line with the CCEA GCSE Geography specification. This has also reduced the amount of content covered. This was an active decision, as it allows for us to ensure deeper understanding and application of content, rather than quantity of content.

Furthermore, the department was involved in the Curriculum Mapping Project which provided opportunities for Heads of Departments across the Dickson Plan to meet and strengthen the excellent work and collaboration that already exists. This proved to be very beneficial as we now have stronger links with all Geography departments across the Dickson Plan, and a clear focus to improve and strengthen the delivery of all Geographical skills at KS3 to better prepare pupils for progression to KS4. It should be noted that while some KS4/5 schools noted a lack of ability in the application of essential skills for GCSE and A-Level, for example, 6 figure grid references, one of our main KS4/5 schools observed that pupils from Lurgan JHS displayed clear ability in this area, and stated that it was a credit to the teaching provided here at Lurgan JHS. This was positive and encouraging feedback for our department to receive.

In conclusion, it has been a successful year in the department. We look forward to the 2024/25 academic year.

History Department

Curriculum Update

In 2023/24 the department's focus was on the roll-out of the knowledge-rich curriculum in Year 8 which included the use of knowledge organisers and involvement in the Learning to Learn programme. Secondly, there was a focus on preparing for the roll-out of the knowledge-rich curriculum with Year 9 in the 2024/25 academic year. Finally, the development of dyslexia friendly classrooms and resources was also a focus.

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.

Pupil feedback included comments on ease of use and the impact of knowledge development.

The development of knowledge organisers for Year 9 in the 2024/2025 academic was completed with valuable input by all staff in the department. Meetings held, focused on the core knowledge and keywords to be included and an appropriate layout for the knowledge organisers.

By the end of the 2023/24 academic year, all rooms within the History Department met the standard for a dyslexia friendly classroom. Teaching resources were updated throughout the year to meet the criteria for dyslexia friendly and this will continue to be a focus in the 2024/2025 academic year.

Finally, the History Department participated in the Dickson Plan Collaboration programme which involved the development of a consistent approach for answering GCSE style evidence questions across the Dickson Plan. Such questions were included in all Year 10 resources and assessments at Lurgan Junior High School, with this work being showcased on 6th June at Brownlow House.

Remembrance Day

To mark Armistice Day, the History Department organised a short Remembrance Day assembly which was attended by all year groups and was followed by a two-minute silence.

Battlefields Tour

In June 2024, Mr Addley, Mr Thompson, Mr Lunn, Mrs Wilkinson, Mrs Smith and Mrs Blakely led a group of 55 students to Belgium and France to visit various World War One battlefields and memorials. The tour consisted of visits to Thiepval Memorial, the Ulster Tower, Tyne Cot Cemetery, Passchendaele Museum etc. The highlight of the tour was the involvement in the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate by Head Boy, Charlie McBride and Ella Uprichard.

On June 6, Mr Addley accompanied pupils to the cenotaph to lay a wreath on behalf of our school community on the anniversary of the D-Day landings.

Shared Education

This year, despite the funding provided for Shared Education being significantly reduced, we successfully facilitated five projects throughout the academic year. To re-introduce our partnership in 2023-24, Mr McErlane from St. Ronan's College and Miss Lyness from Lurgan JHS created a video outlining the purpose of our Shared Education Partnership to be shown in assembly to all pupils, with the aim of continuing to strengthen the successful links built prior to Covid.

Game of Three Halves Initiative

In September, 60 pupils from Lurgan Junior High and St Ronan's College participated in the '*Game of Three Halves*' initiative. This was an enjoyable opportunity, led and facilitated by Ulster Rugby, NIFA and Ulster GAA, which gave some of our pupils the opportunity to learn a new sport, develop new skills and form new connections and friendships through playing rugby, football and gaelic football.

Cinemagic Project

In January, 16 Year 9 students from Lurgan Junior High and St Ronan's College attended a '*Costume Design Workshop*', facilitated by Cinemagic and supported by Screenskills. This was a continuation of the Cinemagic Project that this group of pupils began in Year 8.

Peer Support Transition Project

After successfully being granted funding, our Shared Education Partnership was selected to take part in the '*Peer Support*

Transition' project with St Ronan's College. This project was designed to facilitate a smooth and inclusive transition for Primary 7 pupils, with the aim to empower our Year 8 pupils with social-emotional skills to effectively support and mentor the incoming Primary 7 students. Additionally, the programme promoted cross-cultural understanding and empathy among Year 8 students from Lurgan Junior High School and St Ronan's College, with the goal of facilitating positive relationships and interactions among students from diverse backgrounds. A total of 16 Year 8 pupils completed their peer mentoring training and visited two feeder primary schools to deliver the project.

Cuchulainn Initiative

From January to April 2024, Ulster GAA delivered the '*Cuchulainn Initiative*' to a group of 60 girls (across Years 10-12) from Lurgan Junior High, St Ronan's College and Brownlow Integrated College. The programme was a cross-community initiative with the aim of bringing together young people from different community backgrounds through gaelic games. In February, 12 girls (4 from each participating school) were selected to progress in the programme and train for the Cuchulainn Cup. Despite being a newly established team with no prior experience of playing gaelic football, they defeated 5 teams at the Cuchulainn Blitz and won the Cuchulainn Cup. This opportunity enabled the teams to create lifetime memories and we are grateful to Ulster GAA who organised and facilitated the programme and to Coach Eunan, who encouraged and supported the girls from the beginning.

Theatre of Witness Workshop

In April 2024, we were delighted to partake in the '*Theatre of Witness Workshop*' with St Ronan's College, facilitated by Derry Playhouse. This was an excellent opportunity, designed to cultivate positive relationships and interactions among students across communities within Northern Ireland. The workshop involved 30 students from St Ronan's College and 30 students from Lurgan JHS. The participants who led the workshop represented ex-police, ex-combatants, victims, survivors and young

people who have been affected by transgenerational trauma and those affected by the conflict in Northern Ireland. Additionally, the programme promoted cross-cultural understanding and empathy and linked very closely to the GCSE History specifications studied at KS4.

Home Economics

Curriculum Update

The Home Economics Department has improved 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 is ongoing.

Also, the Learning to Learn programme has been embraced by the department. We have revised the Year 8 knowledge organisers and created Year 9 knowledge organisers for 2024/25. 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 and resources were amended to be more user friendly. In addition, front walls of classrooms were significantly reduced of notices/posters.

Finally, the department have created recipe booklets for each cohort for 2024-25. The booklets contain food preparation and cooking methods, as well as evaluations to accompany each practical/recipe. This will help pupil organisation and will increase pupils' knowledge of the skills used in each practical.

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 Graham (HoD) is involved with the Craigavon Area Learning Community Forum and this has informed our department greatly. Our area of improvement 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). The actions we made to achieve this are as follows:

- Reviewed and refined learning and teaching resources/strategies.
- Embed key terminology/command words.
- Continued to practise spaced retrieval of key macronutrient concepts across each year group to aid long-term recall.

To establish if any value had been added by our improvements, in May/June 2023, KS3 schools completed a Google Quiz. In May/June 2024, the KS4 schools completed the same quiz. The quiz results indicated that 10% value had been added between Year 10 and Year 11. Also, gaps in knowledge were identified e.g. carbohydrates and protein.

Furthermore, impacts of interventions are evident in the classroom. Teachers report more interest and engagement in lessons and perceive better learning taking place. Also, we now have access to an ever-growing bank of high quality resources and are focusing more on strategies to aid long-term recall. These outcomes are very pleasing, showing the benefits and effectiveness of the collaboration.

Facilities

Both classrooms' safety has been further improved with the installation of carbon monoxide systems. Also, a new store fridge has been installed and a new cooker.

Maintenance to mend broken taps and leaks was carried out and this is much appreciated.

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 practicals which included cheesy cups, sausage rolls, fruit skewers, chicken goujons and butterfly cakes. The pupils' enthusiasm and confidence increased each week.

The annual 'Lurgan Junior High School Bake Off!' of 2023 was another great success. We celebrated and congratulated the 15 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.

Educational Visit

Three Year 10 classes availed of a cooking demonstration from the Livestock Meat Commission. We had the pleasure of observing

Margaret Anderson demonstrating a beef dish. The demonstration provided pupils with an opportunity to sample new ingredients while highlighting the importance of NIFQA beef and lamb, and encouraging them to look for the logo.

Staff

At the end of the 2023/24 academic year, Mrs Debby Gray retired. She has worked in the Department for over 25 years and consistently had a very hard-working, enthusiastic attitude to the job. She will be greatly missed. We do look forward to working with Mrs Cross, the next Home Economics teacher who takes this position.

ICT

In October 2023, the ICT Department said goodbye to Head of Department Miss Quinn as she moved to Belfast Royal Academy. Mr Lavery joined us in November 2023 as our new Head of Department having come from Cambridge House Grammar School. The ICT department has continued to build on the successful teaching of several Computer Science topics including Website Development and Python Programming. We were encouraged by the effort and results produced from students in each year group and continue to celebrate their success in the subject.

With a new Head of Department in place, GCSE style Controlled Assessment practices are being embedded throughout the practical elements for each year group. One focus has been on the planning by pupils for their projects which forms a key part of GCSE Computer Science, Digital Technology and BTEC ICT.

Safer Internet Day took place on Tuesday 6th February and that week the ICT Department delivered lessons that addressed topics ranging from cyberbullying to using social networking safely.

In June, we had the opportunity to take 30 pupils to a careers conference at Stranmillis University College organised by Digital Schoolhouse in association with EA Sports. Pupils enjoyed interactive workshops, talks and games. The conference showcased a range of careers available in the video games industry.

Modern Languages

This year we focused on teaching our Year 8 pupils how to use their knowledge organisers in conjunction with the Language Gym website to self-quiz and complete retrieval practice exercises to help them build their confidence in written and spoken French. We used the Language Gym consistently with all year groups to support them in the learning of the required vocabulary and structures. Pupils who engaged in self-quizzing benefited as evidenced in homework checks and assessment results. We reviewed the knowledge organisers we produced for Year 8 throughout the year and have distilled the content down to the essential for 2024/25. We have also adopted a new format which will be continued in Year 9 with the knowledge organisers we have developed for Year 9 French and Spanish for 2024/25.

As a department, we worked to make ourselves dyslexia friendly by removing distractions from front walls of classrooms as well as the removal of unnecessary graphics in resources produced.

As a department we continued our commitment to encouraging every pupil to have a positive learning experience in Modern

Languages. We analysed assessment results to ensure pupils met individual targets, class targets, looking at which skills they performed well in. Pupils scores in reading & listening continued to be higher than in speaking and writing. We have developed resources which model good answers in speaking and writing tasks and this is narrowing the gap with those pupils who engage with these resources both in class and on Google Classroom. We achieved a greater level of consistency of teaching and learning across the department as we are now all using the same resources produced and uploaded onto Google Classroom. We were extremely grateful to Ms Debast and Mrs Moorehead for supporting pupils in their learning as they covered the teacher vacancy for the year and we are delighted to welcome Mr McMahon as the new permanent teacher from August 2024.

We were delighted to participate in the Dickson Plan collaboration this year, meeting with Modern Languages' teachers from the various Junior Highs, Craigavon Senior High and Portadown College. We agreed to standardise speaking assessments across Key Stage 3 to help prepare pupils for the demands of the speaking assessment at GCSE level when they transfer to Key Stage 4, as all schools involved reported that this has been a skill that has particularly suffered as a result of Covid-19 and all of the restrictions it placed on teaching and learning. We look forward to continuing this work in the next academic year and hope to see the benefit it will have on the pupils in terms of confidence and performance.

P.E. Department

Girls' Report

Girls' Hockey 2023/24

It has been another exciting and rewarding year for Girls' Hockey in Lurgan JHS. The Under U13A team and the U14A team competed in Mid-Ulster League and Cup competitions with the U13As winning the Bann Trophy. The U14 squad were semi-finalists in the new Superleague competition, narrowly losing 1-0 to Cookstown HS. The enthusiastic U12A and U12B teams enjoyed their first experience of competitive hockey and also had the opportunity to play a number of Saturday morning friendly games towards the end of the season. The Year 8s were silver medalists in the Cup.

Trials were held mid-September and a number of our talented players were selected to take part in the Ulster Hockey Talent Development Programme. This programme takes place over a twelve-week period and requires much commitment on the part of players and parents. A huge congratulations to Camryn Wilson who was selected for the Ulster U16 squad.

Hockey practices commenced for all three age groups in early September. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the U13A and U14A girls trained with Mrs Saunderson and Lee Wilson on a Tuesday, and Miss McCann and Lee Wilson on a Thursday. A talented group of Year 8 girls attended after-school practice under the guidance of Mrs Cochrane and Mrs Ferry 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 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. A huge thank you is also extended to Mrs Cochrane and Miss McCann for their regular assistance with Saturday mornings umpiring and coaching.

Thanks to Mrs Cochrane, Mrs Ferry, Miss McCann, Miss Bell and Mrs Saunderson along with Lee Wilson from Lurgan Ladies Hockey Club who helped coach our U12, U13 and U14 hockey teams.

Netball Club 2023/24

It has been a very successful and exciting netball season this year. 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 introduced league blitz days as a new initiative and final placing in these tournaments determined which division teams were entered into for the season ahead.

The Year 10 team were placed third in the NI B blitz playing Wallace, St Ronan's, and St Mary's, Newry. They met a strong Strathearn side in the next round and were unfortunately beaten. Not to be deterred, they continued to work hard and achieved success in the Vista League with four fabulous wins out of their five matches. This was sufficient to win the Vista league and it was very well deserved and a fitting end to their three years. The girls received gold medals and the Vista Shield.

The Year 10 Vista cup was played in February as a tournament day to conclude the season. Could they do the double and win again? The girls played fantastic netball and narrowly lost out to winners Killicomaine by only one goal and one point. They were presented with silver medals as runners-up.

The Year 9 team quickly gelled together and had an amazing season. In the NI B blitz, they won two matches and lost two, drawing with Killicomaine for second place. They met St Mark's HS in the next round and won comfortably 14-8. After a bye in the following round, they played Sullivan in the semi-final and with a controlled and determined performance, won 16-6. The team had now reached the final which was an exciting match against St. Joseph's, played in Dungannon. The game was very close in the first quarter, but Lurgan gained a good lead in the second quarter and St Joseph's were not able to catch up; final score was 14-12 to Lurgan. This was an amazing performance and achievement for the team. They were presented with gold medals as winners.

In the Vista League, the Year 9 team performed equally well, with consistent performances against all five schools, scoring a total of 140 goals and only conceding 22 goals making them outstanding winners. They were presented with gold medals and the Vista Shield.

The Year 9 Vista Cup was played as a tournament day in March and the girls enjoyed a super day of Netball. They won all their matches and had one draw. At the end of the competition, they equalled in points, scored 42 goals, and had 7 goals against; the same as Killicomaine. The Vista cup trophy was shared as joint winners and the girls also receiving a gold medal each.

The Year 8 Netball commenced in October and there were up to 30 girls attending each week. They were coached by Miss Lyness, assisted by Mrs Quinn and focused on developing skills with game play. A team was selected to play in the Vista Year 8 tournament in

March. They performed well, finishing in second place and received silver medals: a promising beginning to build upon next year.

All the teams have been a pleasure to coach this year and have been a credit to themselves and to school. Congratulations to all the girls on their hard work and determined effort together to achieve such fantastic success throughout the season.

Girls' Football 2023/24

This year, Phil McKinley and Mrs Patton took our Girls' Football Club. The Year 8 had a very successful year winning the Electric Ireland Cup. They beat Edmond Rice College 4-0, Clounagh 2-1, St Louise's 8-1, Fivemiletown College 2-1, Thornhill College 5-4 to become finalists playing Assumption Grammar which they won, 2-1. The U14 team finished runners-up in the Mid-Ulster League and were semi-finalists in the Mid-Ulster Cup.

Volleyball 2023-24

Volleyball was offered as an extra-curricular activity and there was a keen interest both in class and after school. The coaching sessions were a huge success with over thirty girls from Years 8, 9 and 10 and staying every Wednesday after school. The Club training was taken by Craigavon Aztecs coach, Paul McIlwaine. We hope the Volleyball club will continue to grow on this year's success. 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 10 girls won Bronze in the cup and Silver in the Plate and Trophy.

Cross-Country 2024

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 a team silver medal with Maddie Magee, Mia Gault, and Lucy Wilson finishing 6th, 8th and 9th to help secure the silver medal. Our Year 9 girls' team also won silver, with Lydia Neill winning an individual bronze; Emilee White finishing 10th and Kacey Dillon finishing 23rd to secure the silver medal. The Year 10 girls finished 4th, with Cadence Hamilton winning the race and receiving a Gold medal. 17 girls qualified for the Ulster Championships.

District Athletics' Championships and Ulster Athletics' Championships 2024

We had girls awarded medals at the District Athletics' Championships. Details are given below:

Year 8 - Mini Girls

100m

Sophie Bushe - Silver

Lucy Wilson - Bronze

Relay

Lucy Wilson, Maddie Magee, Noura Faila, Sophia Bushe - Gold

Long-Jump

Ruby Addis - Gold

Sophie Bushe-Silver

Shot Putt

Lucy Wilson - Gold

800m

Maddie Magee - Silver

Year 9 - Minor Girls

100m

Kacey Dillon - Silver

Relay

Kacey Dillon, Emilee White, Clare Bailey, Lucy Brown - Gold

Long-Jump

Kacey Dillon - Silver

Emily Silva Shaw - Bronze

High-Jump

Kara Houston - Gold

Year 10 - Junior Girls

100m

Abi Fitzsimmons - Gold

Camryn Wilson - Bronze

200m

Millie Dowds - Silver

Relay

Daisy Stokes, Camryn Wilson, Millie Dowds and Abi Fitzsimmons - Gold

High-Jump

Daisy Stokes – Gold

Olivia Heasley – Bronze.

Long-Jump

Daisy Stokes - Bronze

Shot Putt

Camryn Wilson - Gold

Eve Adair - Silver

Ulster Athletics' Championships**Shot Putt Junior Girls**

Camryn Wilson - Gold

Eve Adair - Bronze

Shot Putt Mini Girls

Lucy Wilson

Sports' Day, June 2024

The highlight of our Athletics' Sporting calendar in school is our Sports days, and this year was no exception. Pupils displayed some outstanding performances in a highly competitive field of events

with 4 of our pupils breaking school records, some of which had been set for twenty years. The results were as follows:

Year 8 Winners in the Girls' events**100m**

Sophia Bushe

200m

Lucy Wilson

800m

Mia Gault

Long-Jump

Ruby Addis

Shot Putt

Lucy Wilson

High-Jump

Mia Gault

Cricket ball throw

Lucia Derby

Relay

1st Dunluce, 2nd Carrick, 3rd Shane and 4th Gosford.

Year 9 Winners in the Girls' events

100m

Kacey Dillon - New school record with a time of 13.08

200m

Kacey Dillon

800m

Lydia Neill

Long-Jump

Emily Silva Shaw

High-Jump

Kara Houston

Shot Putt

Dilma Sa Gomes

Relay

1st Gosford, 2nd Shane, 3rd Carrick, 4th Dunluce.

Year 10 Winners in the Girls' events

100m

Abi Fitzsimmons - New school record with a time of 12.87

200m

Abi Fitzsimmons

800m

Cadence Hamilton - New school record with a time of 2.41.61

Long-Jump

Millie Dowds

High-Jump

Daisy Stokes

Shot Putt

Camryn Wilson - New school record with a throw of 10m 33.

Relay

1st Gosford, 2nd Shane, 3rd Carrick and 4th Dunluce.

Results of the Girls' Inter-house Competitions

Inter-house Hockey - Carrick

Inter-house Netball - Shane

Inter-house Volleyball - Gosford

Inter-house Rounders - Gosford

Boys' Report

Rugby Report

U12s

The U12A and U12B rugby teams co-captained by Theo Martin and Olly Gardiner, and Isaac Neville and Josh Tyrell began their seasons with a 'Blitz' tournament at Portadown RFC which served as a wake-up call for players and coaches alike. Wins over Banbridge High, Clounagh JHS and Tandragee JHS were mixed with defeats against Killicomaine JHS and Rathfriland High School.

The squad then travelled to Fivemiletown HS and recorded an excellent win before further 'Blitz' tournaments at Dromore RFC and Banbridge RFC which would see steady improvement both individually and collectively.

Further wins against Clounagh JHS for the A and B teams would prepare the team well for their High Schools' Cup journey which would begin at Banbridge RFC on another wet and windy day. The boys would win all five of their qualifying games against Banbridge High (4-1), Killicomaine JHS (4-2), Shimna Integrated (5-0), Rathfriland High (2-1) and Tandragee JHS (3-0) and progress to the finals day at Lisburn RFC.

The High Schools' Cup Final 'Blitz' would see the boys win their three group games over St. Mary's Grammar School (2-1), Breda Academy (6-1) and Limavady High School (6-1) to progress to the semi-final against Banbridge High School. Early nerves would see a tight contest at 2-2 until late in the game when the team settled and ran out winners by 5-2.

The final would see a very tight game against Castlederg High School with the teams well matched in attack and defence. Captain and player of the tournament, Theo Martin, opened the scoring to leave the half-time score 1-0. With tiredness and fatigue beginning to

show, the boys dug deep and centre, Mark Cromie, raced away from his own goal line to extend the lead to 2-0. However, Castlederg came back strongly with a score of their own to set up a tense final few minutes with the score at 2-1. The sound of the final whistle was greeted with relief and a few tears, and the knowledge that the boys had retained the High Schools' Cup for the second year in a row – an outstanding achievement!

U13s

The U13A team, co-captained by Micah McMullan and Archie Doogan, enjoyed some early season wins over RBAI B (35-19), Banbridge Academy (50-7) and Clounagh JHS (35-34). Another win against Fivemiletown High School (46-10) would follow with some members of the team then stepping up to the U14 squad for their Cup Campaign. The team will take encouragement from the fact that they improved game on game which hopefully they can build on for next season's High Schools' Cup.

U14s

The U14 team, captained by Seth Martin, started their season strongly with wins over Fivemiletown HS (40-14) and RBAI B (27-24) thanks to a last minute penalty kick. Their High Schools' Cup campaign would start with encouraging wins against Killicomaine (33-0) and St. Patrick's Keady (40-5) before a reality check against a strong Friends' School team where the A team (0-17) and B team (5-19) would both suffer defeat.

The boys would discover their winning ways against Tandragee JHS (40-0) in the High Schools' cup and defeat Carrick Academy (40-5) in the quarter final stage.

The semi-final would see the team take on last season's cup winners, Ballymoney High School. Playing with a strong wind in the first half, the boys would take a commanding lead (20-5) into the second half. Ballymoney would score first in the second half but thanks to tries

from Seth Martin and his vice-captain Max Blair, the boys would run out winners 34-10 and set up a final with local rivals Killicomaine JHS.

Banbridge RFC would host the final where the boys were cheered on by their Year 10 peers, Year 8 and 9 rugby players and their parents and teachers. An early penalty from Patryk Jedrol settled the nerves with tries following from Seth Martin (2) and centre Lorcan Mantell, to leave the score 18-3 at half time. Further second-half tries from Archie Doogan, James Matthews, Lorcan Mantell and 3 conversions from winger Patryk Jedrol ensured the trophy would go to Lurgan JHS.

Following their High Schools' Cup success, the team would go on to finish their season in style by winning the inaugural High Schools' Cup Sevens Competition at a wet and windy Rainey RFC. Group wins over Sperrin Integrated (38-0), Ashfield Boys' (31-0) and St Patrick's, Dungiven (36-0) took the team through to the semi-final against St Mary's Grammar School. Despite falling behind 7-5 the team would rally back to win 26-21.

The final against St Patrick's, Keady, would prove to be an extremely tight affair with LJHS taking the lead before St Patrick's levelled at 5-5. Captain, Seth Martin, then scored again to take the score to 10-5 and the defence held out to see the team complete a memorable double and a season that will last long in the memory of all the players. Well done boys!

Athletics

District Athletics' Championships

The boys' athletics teams would collect an impressive 12 Gold, 4 Silver and 10 Bronze medals at the District Athletics' Championships at Clones and Antrim Forum:

Year 8 - Mini Boys

100m

Mark Cromie - Gold

800m

Mark Cromie - Gold

4X100m Relay

Mark Cromie, Will Uprichard, Theo Martin, Jacob Hetherington-Gold

Long-Jump

Will Uprichard - Silver

Long-Jump

Theo Martin - Bronze

High-Jump

Corey Shivers - Bronze

Shot Putt

Bobby Gardiner - Bronze

Year 9 Minor Boys

High-Jump

Josh Bingham - Gold

4X100m Relay

Tom Kerr, Luke Wells, Archie Doogan,

Josh Bingham - Gold

Long-Jump

Ross Beattie - Gold

Long-Jump

Micah McMullan - Bronze

Shot Putt

Archie Doogan - Bronze

Year 10 Junior Boys**Long-Jump**

Patryk Jedrol - Gold

High-Jump

Charlie McBride - Gold

Shot Putt

James Matthews - Gold

Discus

Alfie Givan - Gold

Javelin

Oscar Black - Gold

1500m

Tyler Black - Gold

Discus

Oscar Black- Silver

4 X 100m Relay

Charlie McBride, Lewis Irwin, Michael Emerson, Austen Gault - Silver

800m

Austen Gault - Silver

200m

Michael Emerson - Bronze

1500m

Jacob Neill - Bronze

Long-Jump

Charlie McBride - Bronze

High-Jump

Austen Gault - Bronze

Javelin

Danielius Vitkus - Bronze

Ulster Schools' Athletics Championships

The Boys' athletics team would collect a further two individual medals at the Ulster Schools' Championships at The Mary Peters Track with Charlie McBride winning Bronze in the Junior Boys' Long-Jump and Ross Beattie collecting Bronze in the Minor Boys' Long-Jump. The Mini Boys' Relay Team of Jacob Hetherington, Will Uprichard, Theo Martin and Mark Cromie would also win Bronze Medals.

Volleyball Report

The Year 8 Boys' Volleyball team of Cody Greszta (Capt), Theo Martin, Olly Gardiner and Alex Fitzsimmons would defeat teams from Campbell College, Tandragee JHS and Lurgan JHS en route to winning silver medals in the N. Ireland Schools' Cup at South Lakes Leisure Centre – the final would see the team lose narrowly 11-8 to Killicomaine JHS.

The Year 9 Volleyball teams would both reach the semi-final stage of the main tournament but lose out to Campbell College and Tandragee JHS.

The Year 10 Boys' team of Patryk Jedrol (Capt), Austen Gault, Alfie Givan and Seth Martin would win all 5 of their games in the qualifying stages against teams from Larne Grammar, Killicomaine JHS, Campbell College and Tandragee JHS before defeating LJHS C in the quarter finals and Dalriada in the semi-final. In the final, the boys would defeat Tandragee JHS 25-21 to be crowned N.Ireland Champions.

Cross-Country Report

The Mini Boys' team of Theo Martin (4th), Mark Cromie, Matthew McClure, Cody Greszta, David Borc, Alex Fitzsimmons, Jacob

Ormerod and Riley Topping would win team silver medals in the District Championships and qualify for the Ulster Schools' Finals at Mallusk.

The Minor Boys' race would see Tom Kerr finish a creditable 5th and qualify as an individual for the Ulster Schools' Championships.

The Junior Boys' team of Austen Gault (2nd), Sam Green (5th), Tyler Black (6th), Michael Emerson (8th), Jacob Neill, Josiah Ormerod, Alfie Givan and Andrew Dowdeswell would win team gold medals in the District Championships and qualify for the Ulster Schools' Finals at Mallusk where the team would finish a creditable 4th in Ulster.

Football

Lurgan JHS had another extremely successful season last year bringing home 4 trophies across the 3 year groups. With much talent throughout the school, the U14 team in the end was the most successful and even represented Northern Ireland at the Allen McKinstrey British Championships in Cardiff. They were unbeaten in Mid-Ulster securing the Mid-Ulster Cup and Mid-Ulster League. A successful Northern Ireland Cup campaign was ended by a penalty shootout defeat by the eventual winners St Malachy's. The U13 team also had a good season, winning the Mid-Ulster Cup and reaching the semi-finals of the Northern Ireland Cup. Our U13B team had a great year, winning the Mid-Ulster Small Schools League competing regularly against A teams from smaller schools in the Mid-Ulster area. Our U12s also had a good year winning many matches and reaching the quarter-finals of the Northern Ireland Cup and the semi-finals of the Mid-Ulster Cup. Numbers at training were excellent all year and exceeded 100 each week across the 3 year groups.

Cricket

Lurgan JHS had a very encouraging cricket season. Numbers at training were excellent across the 3 year groups, and Lurgan JHS would like to thank Lurgan and Donacloney Mill CC for the use of their facilities and in providing coaches every Tuesday afternoon.

The U14s were drawn against Killicomaine JHS and Royal School Armagh in the group stages of the Derriaghy Cup. After a successful 31-run victory against Killicomaine, the team was defeated by the RSA team. This saw the U14s enter the plate competition and, drawn against a very strong Campbell College, were defeated by 66 runs. The season ended on a high as they once again defeated Killicomaine in the inaugural Dickson Plan Cup.

The U12s had a fantastic season reaching the final of the Wesley Ferris Cup. Their run started with a 9 wicket victory against Inchmarlo in the first round, followed by an extremely tight game with Grosveror GS in Round 2 which saw Lurgan win by 4 wickets. The U12s then also defeated Killicomaine by 68 runs in the Dickson Plan Cup, before setting their eyes once again on the Wesley Ferris competition. A convincing 87 run victory against Belfast HS in the semi-final set up an exciting final versus Lisneal College in Londonderry. The final was the tightest and most entertaining game of the season, but unfortunately, Lisneal were crowned champions after a 6 run victory.

Mr Guy and Mr Jess were extremely proud of all the effort that the boys and girls put in throughout the short season.

Religious Education

We began the school year by again welcoming two new members of staff to the RE teaching team to deliver the curriculum. Miss Loney, also teaching Music, as a permanent teacher and Mr Jess combining History and English as a temporary teacher.

We introduced more challenge to the introductory Year 8 topic of 'The Bible' to include the key theories such as Evolution, to study alongside the biblical belief on creation of the world and humanity. This has provided students with the opportunity to develop opinions and provide evaluative answers within our Christian context.

In October, 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 students to embed their knowledge of the Exodus story and understand the rituals of Old Testament worship.

Members of the Department delivered assemblies throughout the year, covering topics such as 'Positivity', 'Being Unique' and 'The Holocaust'.

Pupils who attend Scripture Union presented our Harvest assembly and local youth leaders Mr Mark Hand from High Street Methodist and Mr Robbie Norton from Emmanuel were invited to deliver our special Christmas and Easter Assemblies. 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 Two, Mr Jess organised a class visit to view a 'World Development and Relief' photographic display in High Street. Methodist. This highlighted the work of the church in areas of poverty and the pupils found this both interesting and informative.

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

Prior to Year 10 exams, additional revision classes were provided by Miss Lyness and Mr Jess for pupils who were identified as not meeting their targets, to develop confidence and encourage improvement in academic performance.

The year ended with Mr Jess being appointed as a permanent teacher and now, as a department we are looking forward to maintaining the strong provision of RE that we have in Lurgan JHS.

Science Department

The Science Department enjoyed a busy and productive 2023-24 academic year.

The department continued to teach General Science to Years 8, 9 and 10 A11 classes, while providing subject expertise in the three scientific disciplines to 10A1-10, who continued to learn and be examined on the same material. Once again, pupils from across a range of Year 10 classes achieved encouraging examination results and were able to access their chosen science courses at their senior school.

Throughout the school year, the Science Department provided a full range of lesson and revision materials on Google Classroom for all year groups. Most pupils made effective use of the resources provided, especially for revision purposes, ensuring that all pupils

had equal access to support materials as examinations approached.

Our department embraced the use of the Year 8 Knowledge Organisers introduced at the beginning of the school year, and also participated in the 'Learning to Learn' programme for Year 8 students. While our examination results remained similar to the previous year's, we did notice that pupils appeared more self-motivated when preparing for tests. Our department members produced further Knowledge Organiser pages for this cohort as they progress to Year 9.

In keeping with the whole-school action plan, the Science Department has sought to make the classroom environment and resources more dyslexia-friendly.

Mrs Kennedy and Mrs Carson both welcomed pupils from the Social Communication Class into their laboratories to engage in practical activities on several occasions – a rewarding experience for all concerned.

We were delighted to welcome visitors into the department to enhance our pupils' experience. In December, Naomi Thompson from Cancer Focus spoke to our Year 10 Biology classes as part of the 'Breathing and Respiration' topic. She explained how both smoking and vaping can affect young people's bodies and developing brains – a most relevant talk for this age-group.

Amber Breen from Belfast Zoo visited LJHS, along with some small animals, in April, to speak to Year 8 pupils as part of the 'Living Things' topic. In June, representatives from NI Water led sessions with Year 10 Chemistry classes, discussing water purification as part of their 'Separating Mixtures' unit. These visiting speakers have all brought an added dimension to our science teaching and have been enthusiastically enjoyed by both staff and pupils. Thanks go to Mrs Cochrane for arranging the speakers from Cancer Focus NI and NI Water.

Continuing Professional Development

All departmental teaching staff attended whole-school professional training, and this has paid dividends both in maximising the standard of teaching and learning and in ensuring consistent behaviour management.

Mrs Kennedy represented the department in the Craigavon Area Learning Community Forum, building on the positive work of the previous year. Teachers from the Junior High schools shared teaching resources and, along with science teachers from the senior schools, compared Year 10 transfer examination papers from all the schools involved. These papers, although not identical, were of a similar standard and deemed suitable as a test of pupils' ability to progress to GCSE Sciences.

From October to May, Mrs Kennedy undertook the NEBOSH General Certificate in Health and Safety, attending a course organised by Southern Regional College, Newry Campus.

Mrs Ferry attended a two-day course on teaching pedagogy in science and was able to share several useful teaching and revision techniques with others in the department.

Our Science Technician, Mr Clifford, continued to attend Health and Safety Committee meetings through NIPSA and ICTU, which was helpful in ensuring the department was following the most updated health and safety guidance.

Staffing Changes

We began the year with our full complement of teaching staff: Mrs Kennedy (HOD); Mrs Carson; Mrs Cochrane; Mrs Ferry; Mr Lawther, supported by our technician, Mr Clifford.

Teaching student, Sarah Smyth, a first-year student at Stranmillis College, successfully delivered lessons to a Year 8 Science class from January to March, under the mentorship of Mrs Cochrane, as part of her teaching practice.

In April, we were sad to say goodbye to Mr Roger Clifford, who served as an outstanding technician for almost a decade at LJHS. We cannot thank Mr Clifford enough for his calm and competent manner, as well as his expertise and experience, and we wish him a long and happy retirement.

Mrs Cochrane began maternity leave in May and we were delighted to learn of the safe arrival of her baby daughter a few weeks later. We were very happy to welcome Mr Dermot McLaughlin, an experienced science teacher, to teach her classes for the remainder of the term.

Mrs Ferry also took temporary leave of her post at the end of the summer term as she awaited the arrival of her baby boy.

We were pleased to welcome Mr Trevor Adams as our new technician in mid-June and wish him every success as he settles into the department.

Educational Visits

At the beginning of June, two teams from Lurgan Junior High School were entered into 'The Big Science Quiz', organised this year by Killicomaine Junior High School. Team B (Millie, Olivia, Sophie and Ellie) constructed the most impressive tower in the engineering round, while Team A (Lara, Daisy, Abbie and Andrew) were placed second overall in the quiz. Once again, all proved to be great representatives of Lurgan JHS.

Technology & Design

Technology and Design is a practical based subject, equipping pupils with knowledge, skills and values that will help them to problem solve and think creatively. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed their practical lessons in the workshop last year and experienced a sense of fulfilment and pride in projects they manufactured. Engagement with practical activities provided pupils the opportunity to become increasingly confident using various tools and machinery in the workshop.

The Technology & Design department has undertaken many changes within the last year. We updated our booklets, blending the previous good practice within the department, whilst providing a knowledge-rich curriculum that prepares pupils for further study at GCSE level. In addition, assessments continued to be updated with GCSE style questions incorporated to ensure an appropriate level of challenge for pupils. Knowledge Organisers were created for key subject areas within the Technology & Design Curriculum for Year 8 and were utilised throughout the year, again promoting a knowledge-rich approach. Year 9 knowledge organisers were also created at the end of the academic year, to complement teaching and learning this incoming year. A Health and Safety Policy was also created and sent to the Board of Governors for ratification and approval.

Two after-school revision support sessions were offered to Year 10 pupils who were identified to be underachieving below their TD target ahead of their transfer examinations. They proved to be a success and will continue in the future ahead of exam periods.

The planning room adjoining Mrs Quinn's room was turned into a computer room for the TD department after we were allocated 20

additional computers, allowing computer access for all TD classes, which is amazing. The computers are a great asset to teaching and learning within the subject, providing pupils with the opportunity to programme circuits and learn Computer Aided Design. This will be of great benefit to our students who go on to study GCSE TD, as we are able to replicate elements of the subject's coursework and prepare them for this.

Furthermore, Miss McCann was involved in the Craigavon Area Learning Community Forum which provided opportunities for Heads of Departments across the Dickson Plan to meet and strengthen the excellent work and collaboration that already exists. This proved to be very beneficial as we now have stronger links with all TD departments across the Dickson Plan. Each school was able to identify a common area of weakness and gap in pupil knowledge at GCSE. As a result, we had clear focus to improve and strengthen the practical skills at Key Stage 3. Therefore, we are encouraging pupils to convert measurements, estimate lengths, and accurately mark out their work independently at KS3 this year. Extended writing questions have also been integrated into lessons and examinations to encourage critical thinking whilst promoting high levels of written communication. Through this, pupils can recognise the importance of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum and in addition KS3 teachers were able to share good practice at KS3 with their KS4 counterparts.