

**Rosstulla School**

**Development Plan**

**2015/2018**

**Together Towards Tomorrow**

## **Glossary of Terms**

**ASD-** Autistic Spectrum Disorders

**BMC** – Belfast Metropolitan College

**BoG** – Board of Governors

**CAMHS** – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

**CATs4** – Cognitive Abilities Tests 4

**CASS** – Curriculum and Advisory Support Service

**CEA** –Curriculum, Examination and Assessments

**CCEA** –Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

**Dept. of Ed** – Department of Education

**EI-** Emotional Intelligence

**EA-** Education Authority

**ELB** – Education and Library Board

**ESAGS** – Every School a Good School

**ETI-** Education and Training Inspectorate

**HoD** – Head of Department

**IEP** – Individual Education Plan

**IIP** – Investor in People

**KS** – Key Stage

**MLD** – Moderate Learning Disability

**NER** – North Eastern Region

**NEGC** – Newtownabbey Educational Guidance Centre

**NLC-** Newtownabbey Learning Community

**NQT** – Newly Qualified Teacher

**NRC-**Northern Regional College

**PRSD** - Performance Review and Staff Development

**QUB** – Queen’s University Belfast

**SBCT** – School Based Care Team

**SCMO** – Schools Clinical Medical Officer

**SDP-** School Development plan

**SENCo** – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

**SIMS** – School Information and Management System

**SLD** - Severe Learning Disability

**SLT** – Speech and Language Therapy / Therapist

**TEACCH** – Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children

**VP-** Vice Principal

## Section 1

### School Ethos

We are dedicated to creating a caring, nurturing and supportive environment fostering the holistic development of each individual. We acknowledge that in order to gain the best for our pupils we must effectively engage with the wider educational, health and social care services and business communities as well as society in general. We acknowledge that change occurs and our need to adapt accordingly.

We strive to work as a team. Rosstulla's vision is 'Together Towards Tomorrow'. We realise our vision by providing opportunities to work together with parents, staff, governors and the wider community. We have a strong sense of purpose committed to the wellbeing, needs and development of each pupil.

Our pupils come from a varied socio-economic background with some drawn from areas identified as regions of social deprivation. 51.45% (2014/15) of pupils have free school meals.

Ward	Mossley	Ballyloran Larne	Clipperstown C'fergus	Dunanney	Sunnylands	Northland	Rosstulla
Multiple Deprivation Measure	207	61	138	28	58	37	507
Employment Domain	47	93	251	47	43	54	534
Living Environment Domain	46	43	67	46	52	38	330
Crime and Disorder Domain	195	195	108	195	120	96	100

**Key: Ward Ranks range from 1 (most deprived) to 582 (least deprived). A rank of 89 or less places the area in the top 10% of most deprived areas.**

**Data Source: NI Neighbourhood Information Series (NINIS) July 2010**

The school operates a positive approach to discipline with an emphasis on the continuous development of pupil self esteem, their responsibility towards themselves, others and the environment.

Pastoral Care, Promoting and Sustaining Positive Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies guide the pastoral work of the school and have been written with due regard to current legislation and Dept of Education guidelines.

This overview is supported by the ETI Inspection carried out in January 2015 and Investors in People Post Recognition Review Report June 2014.

## **Section 2**

### **(a) Raising Standards of Attainment for all Pupils through Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

The school development plan identifies the area of foci for the next three years and is based on the report of the inspection carried out in January 2015, self-evaluation using the ESAGS document (Special) and the review of the school development plan (2012-15).

The 2015 inspection identified that 13% of teaching was outstanding, 53% very good, 21% good, 9% was satisfactory and 4% inadequate. Issues had arisen due to the high rate of teacher absenteeism at the time of the inspection. The outcome indicates the need to ensure that substitute teachers are adequately prepared and supported by management at all levels.

Learning area co-ordinators have responsibility for the writing of policy and related development and progression of their areas.

Through evaluation of the School development Plan (2012-15) and reflection upon the ETI inspection the area of student tracking has been identified as requiring development in order to raise pupils' attainments. Pupil attainments in the areas of literacy, numeracy, and pastoral will be more effectively tracked across the school.

ICT schemes have been reviewed and there is a need to write a scheme that is progressive and builds the skills required for pupils to successfully undertake GCSE ICT.

#### **Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

Teaching, learning and assessment policies will be reviewed as part of the school development process.

Through progressive planning and evaluation the curriculum is presented at a level appropriate to the individual. Learning co-ordinators need to ensure that new and substitute staff are fully aware of the expectations for effective teaching and learning across the subject areas. A stimulating teaching environment ensures that pupils enjoy and engage in their learning, are motivated and respond well to one another and to staff.

The timetable is reviewed annually and written to ensure that all pupils have access to an appropriate range of subject areas as identified in the Northern Ireland Curriculum. A skill survey of staff and review of need has ensured that, when opportunities arise, staffing adequately meets the needs of the pupils and the curriculum.

The areas of ICT, communication and using mathematics remain a continuous area of development (see development planners). Pupils in KS4 access GCSE ICT and Essential Skills English and Maths as we acknowledge that these areas are important when seeking access to FE placement or employment.

The primary and secondary numeracy, literacy and ICT co-ordinators liaise to ensure that the areas are consistently progressed across the school.

Pupils are encouraged to be responsible for and to take ownership of their learning with the ultimate goal of developing the skills required for lifelong learning.

The school is an active participant in the Newtownabbey Learning Community(NLC). The careers co-ordinator is involved in the NLC cluster groups (this helps to raise standards due to a fresh insight into current methodology).

Assessment is used to develop the learning path for pupils and to inform the curriculum (particularly in KS4). As previously indicated effective tracking is under review. Staff, pupils, parents and other professionals are involved in a range of formal and informal assessment (policy under review). The school has a self evaluation and monitoring and evaluation policy which informs all interested parties of the role monitoring and evaluation plays in the life of the school. The assessment includes:  
For pupils

- Targets and IEPs (setting and review)
- End of Key Stage Assessment and Q Skills
- Annual Exams
- CATs 4 (Years 8 and 10)
- SIMS (Pastoral Records)
- External Accreditation
- Parental Interviews
- Initial Assessment conducted by class teacher at start of academic year.
- Annual reports
- Multi-disciplinary Reports
- Literacy and Numeracy Tests
- Display of and feedback on learning outcomes
- Student self- assessment (when appropriate)
- Annual Soft Skills Assessment
- Boxall Profiling (specific pupils)

For Staff

- Induction/EPD/PRSD
- Staff development provided by external resources and supported by school
- Feedback from Cluster Groups
- Co-ordinator reviews
- Self evaluation cycle
- Biennial interviews with Principal

We intend to use SIMS to improve our learner tracking.

**(b) Providing for the special, additional or other educational needs of pupils**  
Rosstulla pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need with their primary need identified as a Moderate Learning Disability although many pupils have additional barriers to their learning.

Directed time is allocated to both curricular and pastoral issues as we believe that the two can not be separated. Pastoral issues often impact negatively on attainment. Rosstulla has a School Based Care Team meeting twice termly to address the needs of pupils experiencing extreme difficulties that have moved beyond the expertise of staff. The team has representatives from the Education and Welfare Service, Educational Psychology Service and Educational Guidance Centre. The team meets to discuss the additional needs of the student and identify a route forward.

2014/15 was a particularly difficult year as a small group of pupils struggled to engage meaningfully with their education. Due to this a secondary nurture centre 'The Hub' was developed and opened in September 2015. The Hub caters for pupils who require additional emotional/behavioural support. Development of The Hub is on-going and forms part of the pastoral school development plan.

All pupils have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). IEPs are based on annual targets.

The SENCo meets termly with Dr C Bailey (SCMO) to discuss specific pupils and their needs. Records of meetings can be obtained from the SENCo.

Links have been formed with CAMHS, Social Services etc to more fully address issues that pupils may have impacting upon their ability to access the curriculum. Evidence can be obtained in pupil pastoral records.

Speech and language therapy is provided by Homefirst Trust and hosted within the school. The therapist works in collaboration with the teaching staff and parents/carers to plan for the development of skills.

Primary Movement is conducted from years 1-7.

We are concerned that some pupils, for whom traditional methods of teaching reading and language development has failed, require additional support to address the deficit. Assistive technology (iPad and associated apps) has been introduced however further expenditure and development is required to ensure that optimum use is made of this technology.

**(c) Promoting the health, well being, attendance, child protection, good behaviour and discipline of the pupils.**

Pastoral care was rated as outstanding by ETI in January 2015

A new cohort of pupils with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties joined the school in September 2014. These pupils require a different range of support and structures to those of the main body of the school.

Our commitment to developing a healthy lifestyle is reflected in our vision, mission and aims and in all aspects of school life.

The school has a 'Food in Schools' policy in line with Department of Education guidance.

Take Ten is used with a number of pupils. It aims to provide them with and awareness of how they can effectively manage their stress and anxiety levels.

Sporting activities are offered to primary and secondary aged pupils after school. Sessions are well attended by pupils.

We promote positive attitudes to both diet and exercise whilst providing balanced information on alcohol and substance abuse.

E-Safety has become of particular concern as social networking presents personal safety issues for our pupils. The introduction and development of an e-safety group is a priority area for the school development plan.

Rosstulla's Emotional Intelligence (EI) programme extends throughout the school and now embraces CRED. This area is well embedded with the role of EI/CRED coordinator having been identified as a key requirement to ensure that EI/CRED remains a high priority for pupils.

Secondary aged pupils are able to access the counselling service provided by Counselling 4 Youth and funded by the Dept. of Ed. The sessions are very valuable.

Primary aged pupils access Barnardo's Time for Me counselling. The counselling is funded by Extended Schools.

Child Protection has a high priority throughout Rosstulla. All staff are trained in this area. Clear policies and protocols are in place and are in line with Dept. of Ed circulars and guidance. Child protection policies are reviewed and endorsed annually by the governors. The child protection log book is presented to the governors in June (see BoG minutes). Rosstulla has a trained designated and deputy designated teacher and a designated governor for child protection.

In 2014/15 three pupils were on the child protection register. Staff attended case conferences in relation to these pupils.

The work of the pastoral team in promoting and sustaining positive behaviours and in so doing overcoming barriers to learning continues to be a focus of the school development plan. Staff are collaborating, under the guidance of the team, to further develop this important area.

High levels of pupil self-esteem and confidence are actively promoted throughout the school. Pupils are in general respectful of each other and staff. The staff actively encourage pupils to co-operate with one another and to fully engage with the rules and routines of the school. Staff show a high level of respect towards the pupils.

The aim of discipline procedures within Rosstulla is to provide pupils with the skills to become self-regulating in terms of their behaviours. Rewards and sanctions (if required) are a well established part of the school day. The systems vary according to the age, abilities and needs of the pupils. Pupils from Years 1-13 are very clear about the structures in place to reward positive behaviours.

Pupils, as appropriate, are involved in the setting of class rules in September. These are displayed in the classrooms.

Disciplinary sanctions are relevant to the individual.

In 2013 Poppy (dog) was introduced to work with the pupils. The presence of the dog has proven to be highly beneficial particularly when individual pupils have become highly stressed. A piece of research carried out by a QUB student in 2015 into pupils working with Poppy indicated gains for pupils in both communication skills and emotional intelligence.

Year 8 pupils access 'Learning with Horses' run by the British Horse Society (Ireland). The aim of the course is to develop nurturing, behavioural regulation and communication skills.

Pupils may be suspended from school for any of the reasons identified in the suspension procedures.

Details of suspensions are available from the Vice Principal.

There is a good relationship between school personnel and the Education and Welfare Service with both parties working together to encourage good attendance. Attendance falling beneath 85% is referred to the EWO.

Parents are discouraged from taking their son/daughter out of school during term time for holidays (other than in exceptional circumstances as per Dept. of Ed guidance). If a parent does not adhere to school policy the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

#### **(d) Providing for the professional development of staff**

Staff Development is overseen by the VP and a member of MT.

The promotion of adequate staff development remains a high priority within Rosstulla as staff development is crucial to raising standards. 2014/15 has proven to be a difficult year in terms of funding therefore opportunities for staff have significantly reduced.

Funding from the budget is augmented when required by school fund to ensure that essential training needs are met.

A staff development policy is in place. Expenditure is in line with the SDP and initiatives that are externally driven e.g. by CCEA.

Staff development is timetabled throughout the academic year. Teaching staff work together in cluster groups to further their work. Staff Development Days are used for staff to train together. All staff eligible work collaboratively on PRSD targets.

Training is provided by School Staff, colleagues from other schools and other providers e.g. National Autistic Society, Middletown Centre etc.

The benefits of staff development are evident throughout the school and reflected in staff confidence, the ever evolving curriculum and pupil attainments.

The commitment that the school has to the development of staff and the quality provided is reflected by the achievement of the Post Recognition Investor in People status in May 2014.

A record of professional development is available from the VP and recorded on SIMS.

During IIP assessment staff acknowledged that 'changes are met with appropriate training..... there is a link'. IIP Assessment Report June 2014.

**(e) Managing the Attendance and promoting the health and well being of staff**  
The health and well being of staff is considered exceptionally important. Staff are acknowledged for their contribution to the school.

Governors are aware of their responsibilities in ensuring a positive work force. Consideration is given to applications for a change in working pattern. A number of staff are now working as job shares.

Staff are empowered and consulted to ensure that their needs are, if possible met, and that they have a sense of well being and ownership in relation to their working life.

Rosstulla adheres to the managing attendance at work procedures and policy issued by the EA (North Eastern Region).

Upon return to school following a period of prolonged absence staff are expected to present to the principal for a brief return to work interview. The purpose of the interview is to ensure staff are aware of any issues that may have arisen during their period of absence and to establish if the staff member requires further support in school.

If a member of staff is absent from the work place for a period of four weeks and there appears to be no imminent return to work the principal, in consultation with chair of governors, refers the staff member to the EA occupational health.

Staff attendance raised concerns during the 2014/15 academic year. Staff absenteeism will continue to be closely monitored at governors meetings.

All staff are aware of the counselling service Carecall that is provided free of charge by Staff Care.

**(f) Promoting links with the parents of pupils at the school and the local community, including other schools, the business community and voluntary and statutory bodies**

**Parental Links**

The wide catchment area of the school and difficulties with direct public transport links impacts on parental involvement.

Parents are invited in biennially to discuss targets and IEPs. Annual Review and Transition provide the formal opportunity for school staff and parent/carer to discuss the appropriateness of provision.

Parents and carers are offered opportunities to attend school functions e.g. Prize Day, School Shows etc.

Parents may make an appointment (with an appropriate member of staff) to discuss an issue that may have arisen their child.

Great progress has been made in relation to engaging parents by the LSAs in Key Stage 2 through their development of Family Learning. This now needs to be built upon and extended into Key Stages 1 and 3. The initiative was nominated by a parent for a NI Kids award.

The focus on the community as part of the previous school development planning cycle was very positive. Pupils benefited from the breadth of experience that external providers are able to offer.

Rosstulla has a small but willing group of parents who form The Parents and Friends of Rosstulla. The group meets monthly.

**School/Further Education Links**

As previously identified in section 2(a) Rosstulla has positive links with post primary schools in the Newtownabbey area and FE provision in BMC and NRC. The school is an active participant in the Newtownabbey Learning Community. The Community assists in the delivery of the range of courses required due to the implementation of the Entitlement Framework.

The primary curriculum co-ordinator has become involved in a cluster group of principals that has developed through NLC.

**Community Links**

Pupils are well involved with community e.g.

- work experience
- local festivals
- sporting events
- leisure facilities
- visiting speakers e.g. Dairy Council, Chinese Community, etc.
- Elisabeth Svensden Trust (Donkey Sanctuary)
- British Horse Society (Ireland)

We have strong and effective links with statutory organisations.

There is regular staff attendance at LAC reviews, Social Service meetings, Child Protection Conferences, School Based Care Team meetings. There are also meetings with:

- SCMO
- Education Psychology
- SLT
- Children's Challenging Behaviours Team

**(g) Promoting the effective use of ICT, including its use to support learning and teaching, continuing professional development and school leadership and management.**

Much progress has been made when using ICT effectively to support learning and teaching. This was acknowledged in the 2015 Inspection Report

iMacs, iPads, tablets and associated Apps. are used to enhance student learning.

Pupils undertake GCSE ICT and get very good results. 2015 results ranged from grades B to E

SIMS continues to be used to monitor attendance, the budget etc. Timetables, pupil information etc are retained on the system and password protected. SIMS is being further extended to track pupil progress.

The school website is used to share information with parents and to promote the school.

CASPA was purchased to track pupil progress. CASPA is specifically designed for pupils with special educational needs and compares outcomes against the national average. CASPA usage was discontinued in 2014 in favour of SIMS.

### **Section 3**

**An assessment of:**

**(a) the school's current financial position and the use of its financial and other resources**

Rosstulla has a partially delegated budget. The governors have responsibility for agreeing expenditure and ensuring that the school remains within budget.

The overall budget is managed by the principal and the day to day management of the budget conducted by the executive officer. Funding (other than for utilities, rates and maintenance) is linked to the School Development Plan. Co-ordinators can bid for funding for their learning area.

The school receives funding for the Entitlement Framework. This funding is used to facilitate the running of the NLC and Rosstulla's participation/access to it. Funding is inadequate and may lead to reduced opportunities for pupils in the future.

Extended Schools funding is linked to the School Development Plan and provides pupils and parents with a breadth of activities.

**(b) the planned use of the school's projected resources during the period covered by the plan in support of actions to bring about improvements in standards**

Submissions made by co-ordinators and in the planners for the SDP are fully costed with financial projections being used for budgetary guidance. The submissions are based on the self evaluation process undertaken to raise standards.

**Section 4**

**An assessment of the extent to which the school has met its key targets, or the progress that has been made towards these key targets in any school development plan which a school development plan supersedes or revises.**

**Review of Key Targets 2012-2015:**

**Literacy**

CEA assessment was implemented.

Jolly phonics work and new schemes were completed in primary. Word of the week was introduced and developed successfully within the secondary department.

iPads were indicated as part of the implementation of literacy in 55% of planning (primary). The use of iPads in the secondary department was sporadic. During the 2015/18 school development cycle further work is required to develop effective use across key stages. This will be progressed by the ICT development team.

As indicated previously the use of CASPA was discontinued therefore recording of student communication and literacy was not carried through using this recording system. The use of SIMS will be developed to record and track pupil progress during the next school development cycle.

The raising of achievement in literacy within the secondary department was unquantifiable as insufficient baseline data was available to effectively track pupil progress.

**Numeracy**

Assessment tasks were written and passed by CEA.

Financial capability (KS1-3) was introduced however this was not sustained into 2014/15. Links with the community to support the development of financial capability were not made. Due to lack of parental interest the proposed information sessions for parents did not take place.

Tracking of pupil progress within mathematics is lacking. This was supported by the Inspection Report January 2015.

A tracking development group has been established to further work on the tracking of pupil progress and the effective use of data in both numeracy and literacy.

### **Pastoral**

Raising standards by addressing barriers to learning was a focus of the team. Through tracking pupil behaviours appropriate support e.g. EWO, CAMHS, Social Services would be accessed to further support the pupil in overcoming issues.

The pastoral field option on SIMS was utilised to track issues and behaviours. SIMS was used well by some teaching staff but not by others leading in some cases to an incomplete record of the pupil. The data was not effectively used to target support. This area will be included on the 2015-18 plans.

A positive behaviour reward scheme was developed. Whilst initially this proved popular with pupils it became evident that the pupils in Key Stage 4 were disenchanted with the system. The system has been reviewed and new rewards for KS4 introduced for the academic year 2015/16.

Access arrangements for additional exam support were put in place however these need to be further reviewed to meet guidance.

Primary counselling has been introduced and is funded through extended schools monies.

### **ICT**

Hardware was extended and Apple products introduced. Further work is required to ensure that the available equipment is used effectively.

CEA assessment in ICT was not introduced as the requirement was postponed.

The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning within ICT established the need for a coherent scheme and the development of teachers' skills. This will be the focus of the 2015/18 plan.

An e- safety group was formed however a meeting was not convened. This will be a priority area for 2015/18.

### **Community Links**

Community links were well established within the area of Expressive Arts. GCSE results were excellent. The links formed enhanced the high quality teaching in this area of the curriculum. This work will continue during 2015-18 providing the budget can facilitate the cost.

The proposed links within GCSE Motor Vehicle Road User Studies did not develop fully. Pupils accessed a car showroom to research a topic area and considered that it aided their understanding of the chosen topic.

The STEM bus was invited to attend the school on two occasions. Greater use could have been made of the resource and the opportunities it provides linked better to subject areas.

In primary a new class was introduced. Part of the remit was to engage parents more in the education of their children. This proved highly successful. Over the year 100% of the parents attended school activities. The programme (co-ordinated and developed by LSAs) will continue to extend into Key Stages 1 and 3. The setting up of a parents centre in a mobile classroom is exceptionally useful.

The proposed introduction of Achievement4All did not happen as the awarding body had difficulty with the Department of Education supporting the introduction of the award in Northern Ireland.

## **Section 5**

### **An Assessment of the Challenges and Opportunities Facing the School**

#### **Opportunities**

**School/Community Links-** Continued development of links with the learning community, wider community and the development of links with post primary schools.

**Staff Development-** The focus on assessment and the development of skills and training on SIMS and Apple technology will assist in raising standards across learning areas.

**Extended School Funding-** Additional resourcing to support areas of development and to enhance opportunities for both pupils and staff.

#### **Challenges**

**Finance** – financial restraints may have an impact on the implementation in full of the school development plan.

**Time/Union Action** Lack of time and the impact upon available time by Union action can present as a challenge. Union action also makes it difficult to effectively carry out effective monitoring and evaluation.

**Behavioural Issues** – Severely challenging behaviours became a very big issue during the academic year 2014/15. The behaviours need to be addressed and appropriate structures put in place to effectively manage pupils for whom this is an issue.

## **Opportunity or Challenge**

### **EA**

The introduction of the EA may provide an opportunity for the school to develop further due to the erosion of traditional ELB boundaries. EA may also prove a challenge as priorities for special education may change.

### **The Review of Special Education**

Whilst the review may mean change for the structure and remit of our school it may bring positive benefits for the pupils.

### **6 The arrangements made by the Board of Governors to consult and take account of the views of pupils, parents and staff and other persons or bodies in the preparation of the plan.**

Staff met on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015 and during cluster sessions to review the 2012/15 development plan and to assist in the preparation of the 2015/18 plan.

Governors discussed and agreed the plan on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

Parents, pupils and other relevant parties will be consulted through use of the school website, questionnaire and student council.

### **7 (e) The arrangements for the Board of Governors, in consultation with the principal, to monitor, review and evaluate progress made against the School Development Plan**

The Board of Governors will attend biennially to review the plan with teaching staff and evaluate the progress of the plan. Meetings will take place in the autumn and summer terms.