

**Downey House
&
Fullerton House**

Preparatory Department



Annual Prospectus

2021-2022

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METHODIST COLLEGE BELFAST PREPARATORY DEPARTMENTS

Methodist College is unique amongst grammar schools in Northern Ireland as within its Preparatory Department it has two distinct schools; Downey House and Fullerton House. Both schools have served the learning needs of children in Belfast and beyond for well over one hundred years. The schools have adapted their teaching and learning strategies regularly to ensure that each successive generation of children have been encouraged to reach their full potential. As a result, our pupils move to their post primary schools confident in their abilities and skills.

Principal	Mr Alan Jennings
Chairman of Board of Governors	Rev Dr J Unsworth
Address	Downey House, Pirrie Park Gardens, Belfast, BT6 0AG Fullerton House, 1 Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 6BY
Contact Details	Downey House:02890286660 Email:downey@methody.org Fullerton House:02890205217 Email:fullerton@methody.org
Type of School	Co-Educational Day Pupils Preparatory Department
Age Range of Pupils	Preparatory Department: 4 - 11
Number of Pupils (2020-21)	Downey House - 107 Fullerton House - 132
Attendance Rate (2019-20)	Downey House 96% Fullerton House 95.4%
Capital Fee and Tuition Fee	Parents/Guardians are responsible for the payment of a Capital Fee of £140.00 per annum. Parents/guardians are also asked to pay an Annual Tuition Fee of £5,350 with discounts offered for additional siblings.
School Hours	Monday to Friday: 8.30am-2.30pm (P1-P3) / 8.30am-3.00pm (P4-P7)
Lunch Arrangements	School lunches are available the Canteen. Packed lunches are eaten in designated classrooms.
School Holidays 2020-21	Autumn Term: 24th August - 18th December Half Term: 26th October - 30th October Spring Term: 4th January - 26th March Half Term: 15th February - 19th February Summer Term: 12th April - 30th June (May Day: 3rd May)

OUR VALUES



OPPORTUNITY

- We believe that children have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment. They deserve quality education in smaller classes.
- We understand that learning is a very broad experience and so we employ specialist teachers in physical education, music, drama and French.
- Classroom learning is supplemented by use of the outside environment in the school grounds, educational visits and overseas residential visits.

DIVERSITY

- We believe that children develop cognitively, emotionally and physically at different speeds depending on a variety of factors.
- In our classroom practice we account for those differences by adopting a range of teaching strategies and practices.
- We welcome children from all religions and non, as well as children from many different countries.

EXCELLENCE

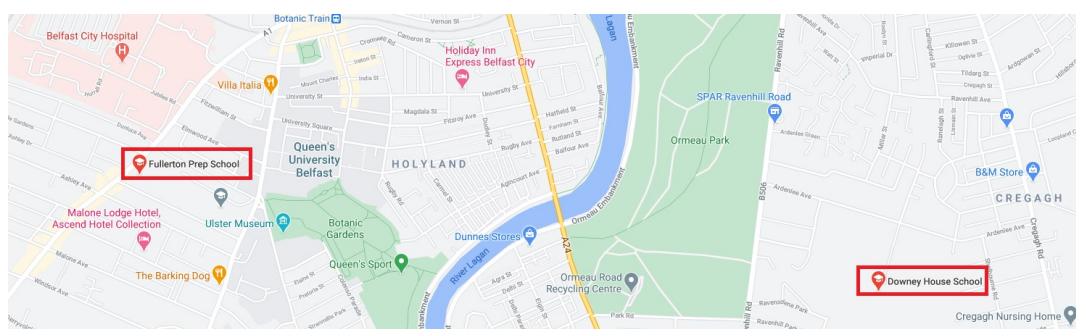
- We believe that every child has the potential to achieve excellent results. For some, this can be measured academically, for others it might be on the stage, in music or in sport.
- For others, excellence is measured in terms of personal progress and development. Today this is referred to as 'value added'.

WHAT MAKES OUR EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY DIFFERENT

CONVENIENT LOCATIONS

Downey House is located in Pirrie Park, Methody's playing fields in East Belfast near the Ravenhill Road. Children attend Downey from the immediate locality and further afield from Hollywood, Bangor, North Down, Newtownards, Ballygowan and Saintfield. Downey House is particularly convenient to the main Belfast arterial routes of Ormeau, Ravenhill, Cregagh and Castlereagh Roads.

Fullerton House is located in the Methody campus, adjacent to the Lisburn Road. Children attend Fullerton from the immediate locality of South Belfast and further afield from Lisburn and Hillborough. Parents who work in the City or Royal Hospitals or Queens University, Belfast find the proximity of Fullerton very useful in combining the school run with their journey to work.



PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST

The Preparatory Department's aim is the preparation of children for Post Primary and life beyond. We are pleased to see so many of our former pupils transfer to Methodist College where we follow their achievements with great interest. Many children transfer to other grammar and non grammar schools nearer to their homes and again we take delight in hearing of their accomplishments. It is a particular source of pride to the school that so many former pupils enrol their own children in Downey House or Fullerton House.

SMALL CLASS SIZES

One of the main attributes of the Preparatory Department is the provision of smaller class sizes. A pupil in a small class size has much more interaction with their teacher, making the learning process more individual and refined to their needs. Pupils in smaller classes often feel much more involved with their education as they are encouraged to engage by asking questions during lessons and to speak confidently to peers and adults. From the teacher's perspective smaller class sizes allow the teaching to be more tailored to suit the individual needs of the children. Classes are currently capped at 24.

BOTH SCHOOLS OFFER

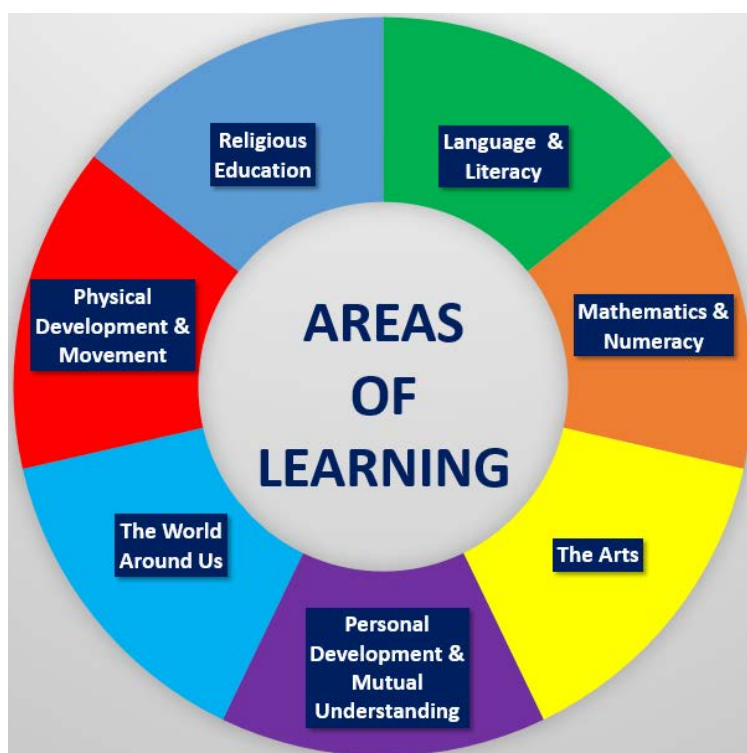
Co-Educational Learning	Specialist Teachers	Excellent Standards	Convenient Locations
Broad Curriculum	Effective Pastoral Care	Afterschool Clubs	Pre Schools on Both Sites

OUR UNIQUE EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY

We implement the NI Curriculum in a way that ensures our standards remain high by combining the proven practices of the past with best modern teaching strategies and techniques.

Our Foundation and Key Stage 1 classes (Preps 1 – 4) use Learning Through Play as a major constituent of their approach. Language and numeracy development is encouraged in a way that the children find enjoyable and practical but which is rigorously planned.

Through delivery of the key 'Areas of Learning' within the Northern Ireland Curriculum we strive to give our pupils the skills, knowledge and understanding that will enable them to be thriving lifelong learners.



SPECIALIST TEACHING

These subjects are taught by dedicated specialists who help their pupils to develop a love of these subjects as well as reach a higher standard of attainment. Tuition in string, piano, brass and other wind instruments is available by private arrangement. The school has its own choir (P5-P7), recorder group (P6-P7) and orchestra (P4-P7).

Music (P1 – P7)	PE (P1 – P7)	Drama (P1 – P7)
Swimming (P3 – P7)	French (P3 – P7)	Games (P4 – P7)

HIGH QUALITY PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Our Physical Education and Games programme is extensive and an integral part of school life. We offer a broad range of indoor activities such as gymnastics and dance coupled with sporting opportunities; a carefully nurtured balance between performance and participation.
- All pupils are encouraged and supported to have fun and achieve excellence while almost all of the senior pupils will have an opportunity to represent their school in one sport or another.
- In weekly outdoor sessions, younger pupils are encouraged to play with an extensive range of outdoor equipment.
- Pupils from primary three to primary seven attend weekly swimming lessons throughout most of the year, with an inter-schools gala traditionally held at Queen's University Belfast Physical Education Centre in the spring, an annual highlight for the Preparatory Department.
- Along with the weekly PE class for each class led by our PE specialist teachers, there is also a major weekly games sessions. At these, senior pupils take part in a planning series of lessons which introduces them to a range of basic skills in a variety of sports, while primary one to primary three pupils participate in games as part of the PE Curriculum.
- Training sessions and fixtures for teams are generally held after school.
- Throughout the year the pupils experience some of the following sports (football, hockey, rugby, netball, tennis, cricket, athletics and cross-country), depending on their age and individual circumstances.
- High quality coaching is provided by our qualified PE specialists and other committed teachers who are interested in promoting the enjoyment of sports as well as the acquisition of basic skills.
- Our pupils have access to tremendous facilities at Pirrie Park where there are two gravel hockey pitches, one football pitch, two cricket pitches, eleven tennis courts, six netball courts, one basketball court and six rugby pitches while a large sports hall and swimming pool are provided at the main Methodist College site on the Malone Road.



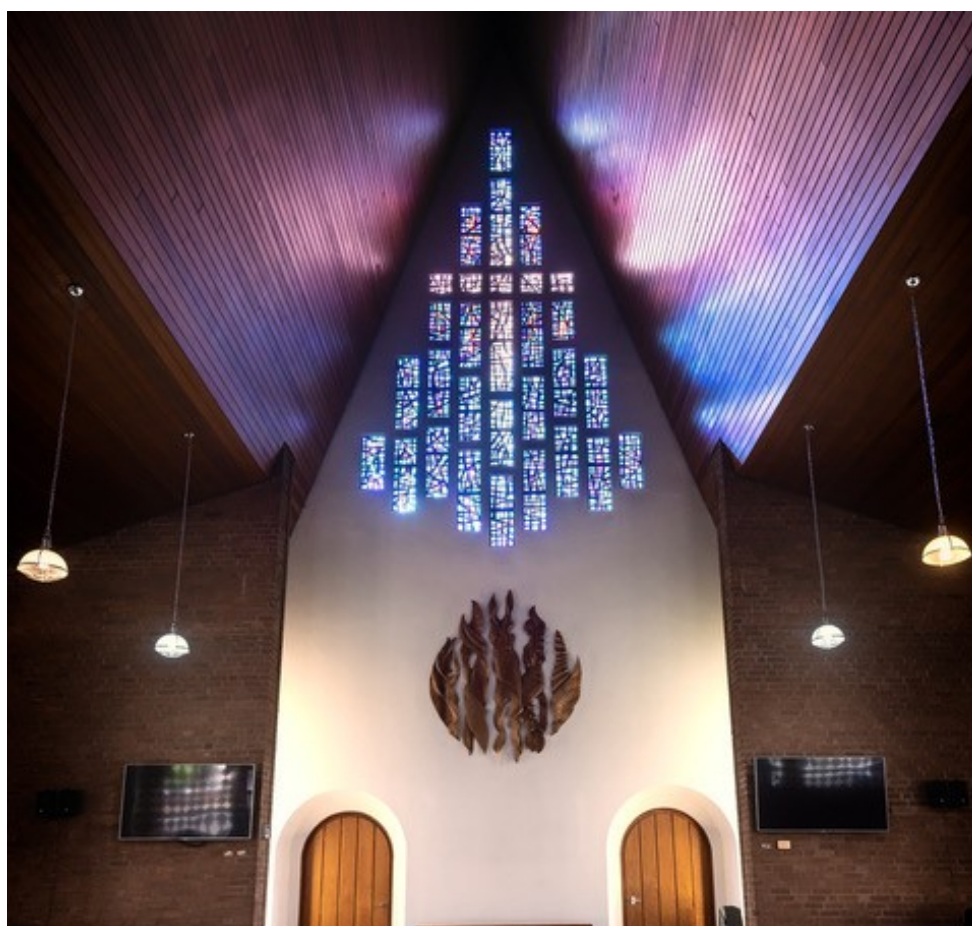
EFFECTIVE PASTORAL CARE

- A strong feeling of community exists within the school. Visitors often comment of its welcoming atmosphere and positive ethos. This provides a personal ambience in which our young people thrive. This is the result of our effective Pastoral Care Policy and is of the utmost importance within both of the Preparatory Departments.
- We believe that the creation and maintenance of a happy, safe and secure learning environment for children and staff is vital for all parts of the school community to learn and function effectively.
- Each school has staff responsible for Child Protection and Pastoral Care issues. The Pastoral Care teacher administers and monitors the anti-bullying and accident books. These are completed by members of staff who either witnessed or have issues reported to them by pupils, parents or other members of staff.
- The Preparatory Department wholeheartedly supports the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum and Anti-Bullying Policies and Practices.
For more information please refer to: www.endbullying.org.uk
- A range of teaching strategies are used by staff to promote positive behaviour, team-work and conflict resolution in classes
- Assemblies are used to support these messages and to address issues which may arise at a whole school level e.g. a serious accident to a pupil, a case of bullying or a bereavement within the schools community.
- Effective supervision is a key area for preventing child protection issues. This is frequently reviewed at meetings of staff at whole school, Key Stage and Senior Management Team levels.



INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

- Methodist College Preparatory Department accepts children from all religions and none.
- We have children enrolled from a range of racial backgrounds, in addition to a relatively high proportion of children who have been educated in different countries but whose parents are settling back to live in the Greater Belfast Area.
- The diversity of our intake is a valued aspect of our social community.
- The term 'broadly Christian' is useful in describing how we approach assemblies and the teaching of religious education throughout the Preparatory Department.
- We celebrate the main Christian Festivals of Christmas and Easter in addition to the four 'home country' Saints' Days. A range of Bible and secular stories and biographies are used to teach the children an variety of moral and ethical concepts appropriate to their age.
- Where possible we facilitate children in their religious observances.
- A number of our children attend classes outside school to allow them to participate in the sacraments of Penance, the Eucharist and Confirmation.
- Our canteens serve Halal meat and provide a choice for those who do not eat pork or beef.



EXTRA CURRICULAR LEARNING

- The Preparatory Department places great emphasis on developing the whole child through participation in enjoyable activities. We encourage the children to take part with enthusiasm in everything they undertake and we believe they are capable of success if they work hard.
- The afterschool programme of clubs and activities is aimed at fostering pupils' confidence, expertise and breadth of interest, both as individuals and within the framework of a team or group. Our pupils are given a wide selection of voluntary activities from which they can choose.
- Most school teams train after school and, depending on the sport, the club may be open to a particular age group, or children may be selected on the basis of their skill.
- While most of the following activities are run by the teaching staff, we also bring in outside expertise when necessary.

CLUBS & ACTIVITIES OFFERED:

Choir	Singing Club	Football
Orchestra	Creative Club	Cricket
Recorder Group	Green Room*	Rugby
Music	Drama Club	Cross-Country
Ballet*	Netball	Judo*
Scripture Union	Hockey	Table Tennis*
Tufty	Athletics	Tennis*

*An extra charge is necessary as outside coaches are employed.



WRAP AROUND CARE



An Afterschool Club facility operates in each school. Each After Schools Club has its own room where children meet and are able to participate in a variety of activities including art and craft, games and simple cooking. The staff team in each school includes a dedicated Afterschool Club supervisor and one or two assistants.

Afterschool Club (Fullerton House & Downey House)	Fees
2.30pm – 4.00pm	£8.50 per day
2.30pm – 5.30pm	£17.00 per day
Breakfast Club (Downey House Only)	Fees
8:00am – 8:30am	£3.00 per day

In addition to the activities in the club rooms, children are able to complete their homeworks in other classrooms. They can also make use of the gym or play outside when the weather is favourable.

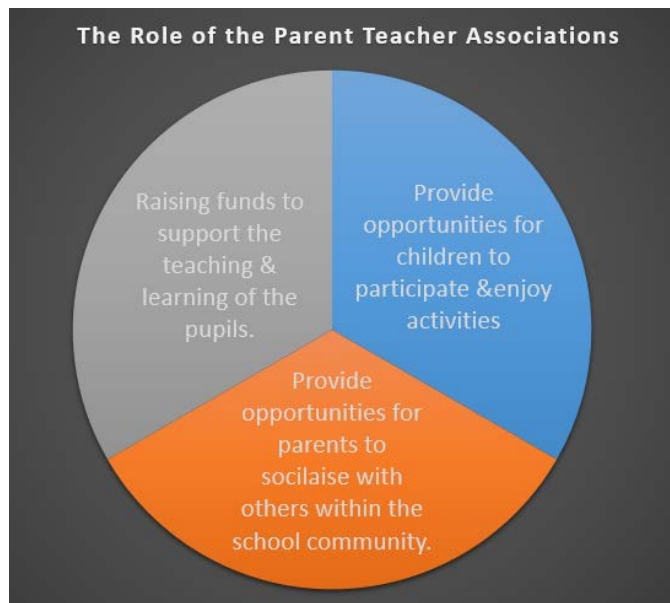
HEALTHY EATING

A healthy and well balanced two course dinner is available under the School Meals Scheme provided by Chartwells Catering at a charge which approximates to the cost of the food only. If parents wish, children may bring a packed lunch which they eat in their classrooms.

No pupil is permitted to leave the school premises during the lunch hour unless parents make a prior arrangement.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We are fortunate that vibrant and active Parent Teacher Associations exist in both schools. The Parent Teacher Association has raised an immense amount of money over the years to provide valuable extra equipment to benefit their own and future generations of pupils. The PTA organise an excellent variety of events and welcome any help from any source.



The committee is also happy to assist new parents with any queries. Great importance is attached to the need for parents to be involved in the education of their children. There is no doubt that children make faster progress if parents take an active interest and support the work of the school.

Parents are invited to discuss their children's progress with staff once a year. However parents may make an appointment at any time to see the class teacher if a concern arises. It is also vital that parents inform the school of any circumstances which may be affecting the child's performance in school.



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

KEY STAGE 1	LEVEL 1		LEVEL 2		LEVEL 3	
	NORTHERN IRELAND AVERAGE	FULLERTON HOUSE & DOWNEY HOUSE	NORTHERN IRELAND AVERAGE	FULLERTON HOUSE & DOWNEY HOUSE	NORTHERN IRELAND AVERAGE	FULLERTON HOUSE & DOWNEY HOUSE
COMMUNICATIONS	11.56%	6.5%	71.79%	82.61%	14.63%	10.87%
MATHEMATICS	10.24%	2.17%	72.39%	84.78%	15.77%	13.04%

KEY STAGE 2	LEVEL 3		LEVEL 4		LEVEL 5	
	NORTHERN IRELAND AVERAGE	FULLERTON HOUSE & DOWNEY HOUSE	NORTHERN IRELAND AVERAGE	FULLERTON HOUSE & DOWNEY HOUSE	NORTHERN IRELAND AVERAGE	FULLERTON HOUSE & DOWNEY HOUSE
COMMUNICATIONS	17.55%	14.29%	61.32%	61.22%	17.41%	22.45%
MATHEMATICS	16.37%	8.16%	57.17%	51.02%	21.80%	38.78%

SCHOOLS 2019/2020 P7 PUPILS NOW ATTENDING		
SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF P7 PUPILS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL P7 PUPILS
METHODIST COLLEGE BELFAST	29	93.5%
GROSVENOR GRAMMAR	1	3.2%
ROCKPORT SCHOOL	1	3.2%
TOTAL	31	100%

AQE SCORES			
	ALL AQE SCORES	FULLERTON HOUSE	DOWNEY HOUSE
AVERAGE	116.4	117.9	114.2
MEDIAN	116	118	113.5
MAXIMUM	127		
MINIMUM	100		
RANGE	27		

"100% of our 2019/20 Primary 7 pupils were successful in securing their first preference for Grammar School"

ADMISSIONS TO THE PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

New pupils begin school each September.

Entry into Prep 1 is normally for those who reach the age of 5 years within the current school year (before 1st July of the year they come to school).

Applications should be made by September, for entry in September the following year.

Entry for older pupils depends on a suitable vacancy being available, and on the pupil having reached the same academic standard as the year concerned.

A parent or guardian who wishes to withdraw a child must give at least one full term's notice in writing, otherwise fees for one term in lieu of notice will be charged.

The Board of Governors requires the withdrawal of any pupil for whom fees are not paid, following due consideration by the College Principal.

PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT FEES, CHARGES & CONTRIBUTIONS

Capital Fee	£140
Tuition Fee	£5,350
Discount From Tuition Fee for Second Sibling	less 5%
Discount From Tuition Fee for Third Sibling	less 10%
Discount From Tuition Fee for Fourth and Successive Siblings	less 25%
After School Club	
3pm-4pm	£8.50
3pm-5.30pm	£17.00

Payment options for fees and other costs incurred can be provided upon request by contacting the School Secretary:

Downey House Preparatory Department: Mrs Susan Hampton (02890286660)

Fullerton House Preparatory Department: Mrs Ruth Forsythe (02890205217)

METHODIST COLLEGE BELFAST PREPARATORY UNIFORM

School uniform plays a valuable role by:

- Encouraging identification with and support for the school ethos; ensuring pupils of all religions, races and backgrounds feel welcome.
- Protecting children from social pressures to dress in a particular way.
- Promoting positive behaviour and a sense of pride in the school.
- Engendering a feeling of community and belonging.

Our uniform supplier is Warnocks located at: 791-793 Lisburn Road, Belfast, BT9 7GX.

