Methodist College Belfast

Prospectus 2021



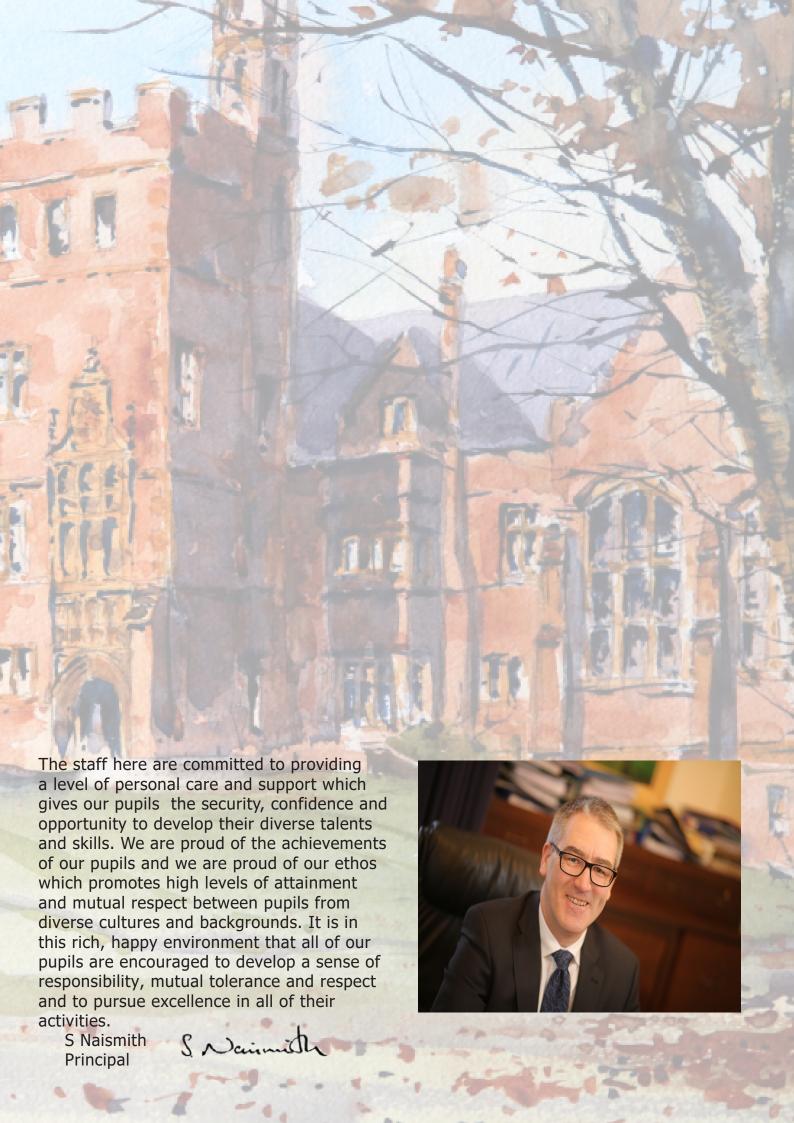


Welcome from the Principal



Thank you for considering Methodist College as the school for your child. The information in this prospectus will give you an indication of what life at Methody is like, but it is difficult in a booklet to communicate fully everything that goes on in the College and, more importantly, the genuine family atmosphere that provides the context for everything we do. Methody is undoubtedly a large community of learners, but it is one where every individual is important and everyone is valued.

Last year we celebrated 150 years of the school providing opportunity, diversity and excellence for all of our pupils. Our vision for the next generation of pupils is simple, and is encapsulated in a line from the school song: Let Methody Flourish. Our 150th year was a time of development as well as celebration as we strive to improve outcomes for all in a changing educational and employment landscape. At Methody your child will be encouraged to be a curious, enthusiastic learner who approaches study with a seriousness of purpose, one who gets involved in the life enhancing opportunities provided by of the College in and out of the classroom. The learning environment at Methody will allow them to develop the character, grit and determination that will help them to think critically, act ethically and dare to be wise; young men and women with "the will to do and the soul to dare."



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HERITAGE AND VALUES 4

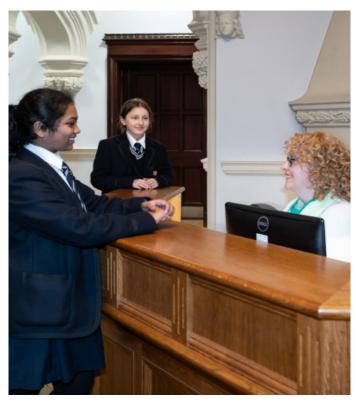
Methodist College, or Methody as it is popularly and affectionately known, is one of Northern Ireland's leading grammar schools. It was founded in 1865 and opened in 1868 by the Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland as a "Public School for Boarders and Day Pupils, irrespective of their denominations."

Situated on the south side of the City in a pleasant suburban setting opposite Queen's University, the College comprises a grammar school of up to 1810 pupils between the ages of 11 and 18 and a Preparatory Department catering for a further 270 pupils aged between 4 and 11 years. One part of the Preparatory Department, Fullerton House, is situated in the College grounds, while Downey House stands in the middle of the extensive College playing fields at Pirrie Park.

The College has an outstanding reputation for academic excellence and also an impressive record of achievement in music, drama, sport and many other extracurricular activities. This allows our pupils to express themselves and develop their talents wherever their interests lie. In all of our activities the school seeks to prepare our pupils to be able to lead a meaningful and purposeful life.

To achieve these aims the College strives to provide a safe and stimulating environment in which the knowledge, abilities, attitudes and aptitudes of our pupils can be developed as fully as possible. Everything we do is carried out in a spirit of respect for the intellectual and moral integrity of the individual.

At Methody, the development of intellectual curiosity, critical debate, active and independent learning, and the pursuit of excellence are all valued.



Our aim is to encourage our pupils to develop into enthusiastic, confident and tolerant young people, who have respect for themselves and for others.

By the time they leave the College the pupils should be ready and able to contribute to society in the spirit of John Wesley's challenge to:

"Do all the good you can, By all the means you can, In all the places you can, At all the times you can, To all the people you can, As long as ever you can."

5 ADMISSIONS

FORM 1

The Governors of Methodist College Belfast apply academic criteria to the applications received and use the score awarded to the pupil by AQE in the Common Entrance Assessment (CEA). The Board of Governors give consideration to those pupils claiming Special Circumstances or Special Provisions.

Choosing the right school takes time and the College's Open Nights, held in January each year, are to assist parents and primary school pupils to make an informed decision.

Parents may have interviews with the Principal of their child's primary school or preparatory department in January/February. At these interviews, parents record their choice of schools on the transfer form in order of preference.

If Methodist College is named as the first preference school the transfer form is received by the Principal in late March. Places are allocated up to the maximum number allowed for Form 1 - 240. The College has established criteria for admission in the event of there being more applicants than places. These criteria are published in the Education Authority booklet on the Transfer Procedure and are also available on our website www.methody.org.

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SUMMARY OF AQE SCORES ADMITTED

2016	100 - 127
2017	95 - 127
2018	95 - 130
2019	100 - 129
2020	100 - 127

In Late May, parents are informed by the school that their child has been allocated a place to.

In June the College holds a Form 1 Induction Evening and parents and pupils who have been accepted by the College are invited to meet a number of key staff including the Head of Junior School, Head and Deputy Head of Form, Form Tutor and Class Tutor. They will also meet the other pupils who will be joining them in next year's Form 1. The year group then comes together in the first term for a team building activity day

More information in relation to the Admissions process for Form 1 is available on the College website including criteria and advice on how to apply for Special Circumstances and Special Provision.



FORMS 2-5

The Board of Governors of Methodist College have approved criteria for admitting pupils to Forms 2 to 5. The application of the criteria is delegated to an Admissions Panel consisting of the Principal, the Vice Principal (Admissions) and one other member of the Senior Leadership Team. Consideration will be given to any medical or other problem that may have temporarily affected a student's academic performance.

The decision of the Admissions Panel will be based on the following evidence of academic ability:

- -The two most recent school reports;
- -An assessment set by the College;
- -Any other appropriate evidence of academic ability and/or potential.





SIXTH FORM

The Sixth Form experience at Methody provides our students with an excellent preparation for the transistion to study, life and work beyond school. Every year we welcome a significant number of new pupils into Lower Sixth and we provide a specific induction programme to help them settle in and make the most of their time at Methody. The current requirements for Lower Sixth are as follows:

A minimum of 6 GCSE passes at Grade 'C' or above (all taken by the end of Form 5);

Students are expected to take three subjects to A level. This means that for the majority of students, entry to lower Sixth will require them to have achieved a minimum of 3 B grades and 3 C grades at GCSE including English and Mathematics.

A grade 'B' or above in each of the subjects to be taken at A level (or in a related subject if the AS subject is first available at that level) unless otherwise stated in the subject choice booklet.

Pupils coming from an education system which does not use GCSE / IGCSE will have to provide evidence of having achieved at an equivalent standard. They may also have to complete entrance assessments.

Priority for entry to Sixth Form and to Sixth Form courses will be given to pupils already enrolled at Methodist College.

Please note that only in exceptional circumstances will new students be admitted to Upper Sixth.

7 LEARNING AT METHODY



OUR ETHOS

Academic work is the core of the daily life of the school and the College offers a diverse range of subjects that provide opportunities for our pupils to maximise their potential. The teachers work closely with our pupils, encouraging them to formulate and express their ideas, use their knowledge, and develop the skills and confidence to learn for themselves.

At Methody we believe that the experience of learning should be enjoyable, challenging, stimulating, rewarding and confidence-building. It is the policy of the College to provide an enriched curriculum to all pupils offering not only optional subjects as appropriate but also a wide range of extra curricular activities.

Valuable learning experiences can take place outside the classroom and educational trips and visits which support and enhance pupils' learning are encouraged. The College is committed to meeting the needs of all learners as effectively as possible. The Curriculum Policy and SEN Policy give details of our approaches to promoting achievement and overcoming barriers to learning so that every pupil can achieve their full potential.

THE PUPIL CHALLENGE

Approach your studies and approach your learning with a seriousness of purpose; that will give you the focus and the drive to sustain your work over a period of time.

Believe in what you are doing; you have to care deeply about something to make a success of it.

Be resilient – resilience is the greatest predictor of academic success. It is how we deal with challenges and set backs that strengthens our character and develops our abilities.

Think critically. The capacity to discern what is worthwhile and what is nonsense in our information rich society will give you a grasp of knowledge that is truly worthwhile. It will enable you to stand out from the crowd.

Act ethically. Dare to be wise.

Commit to living and working with passion, integrity, dedication and humility.

Have "the will to do, the soul to dare."

JUNIOR SCHOOL | FORMS 1-3

In the Junior School all pupils study the same broad range of subjects: Art, Biology, Chemistry, Drama, English, French, Geography, History, Food & Nutrition, Information and Communication Technology, Latin, Mathematics, Music, Physics, Religious Education and Technology. All have classes in Physical Education and Games. Our teaching approaches ensure that our pupils develop their thinking skills, personal capabilities and creativity within the context of these subjects.

In line with the revised curriculum in Northern Ireland, all of our pupils in the Junior School have classes which address citizenship, personal and social development, health education, employability and careers. In the second year pupils have the opportunity to start a second modern language (selecting from German, Russian or Spanish) or study Latin or Classical Civilisation.

MIDDLE SCHOOL | FORMS 4-5

Before the end of the third year pupils choose a package of subjects for GCSE. All pupils study English Language and Literature, Mathematics, at least one Science subject, Religious Education and at least one of the modern or classical languages on offer (French, German, Russian, Spanish and Latin). Optional subjects are chosen from those already studied in the Junior School, and new subjects. These include Further Mathematics, Business Studies, Classical Civilisation, Drama, Economics, Geology, Digital Technology, Learning for Life and Work, Motor Vehicle Road User Studies, Moving Image Art, Physical Education and Politics. All pupils continue to have classes in Music, Physical Education and Games.





SIXTH FORM

For the Sixth Form there is provision for private study, computer assisted learning, recreational activities and tutorial teaching. The Sixth Form Centre covers four floors and contains study and computer facilities, sixth form teaching rooms, a recreation area and coffee bar. There is a generous provision of lockers. Management is in the hands of a committee of students and staff and the Centre is presided over by a Warden and an assistant. A Study Supervisor also ensures that a good study atmosphere prevails. It aims to be a place where senior pupils can assume greater responsibility for their own work so that they make the transition from school to university life more easily.

Entry to the Sixth Form is dependent on obtaining good grades in six or more subjects at GCSE. A number of students join the College at this stage to avail themselves of the wide combination of subjects offered, currently almost thirty, as well as the various enrichment activities. Religious and Physical Education, Music and Games are also available to Sixth Form pupils. Students are prepared for universities locally and globally, for colleges of education and for other forms of professional and vocational training.

9 EXAMINATION SUCCESS



Value added for the Class of 2020

Our **A Level** pupils exceeded their predicated grades by a significant margin, with a quarter of the year group achieving 3+A*A grades, over half 3A*B and over four fifths 3+A*C. The table below shows % of presentations.

A2	A*	A*A	A*B	A*C
UK	14.4	38.6	66.1	87.9
NI	14.9	45.3	77.4	95
МСВ	24	56.9	80.8	96.5

At **GCSE** over half the year group achieved 7A*A grades or better. The introduction of the C* grade and the raising of the standard for a B grade helped to highlight the high achievement of our GCSE pupils. The table below shows % of presentations

GCSE	A*	A*A	A*B	A*C*	A*C
UK		26.2			76.3
NI	8.1	31.4	51.4	67.6	89.8
MCB	27.9	64.5	81.0	94.6	99.2

CAREERS 10

The Careers education, information, advice and guidance delivered at Methody aims to provide the pupils with opportunities to develop the skills and acquire the knowledge necessary to make considered, well-informed decisions at key transition points in their school career.

Before making GCSE choices in third year pupils are encouraged to reflect on their individual skills and dispositions. They are provided with up to date information about the local and global education and employment markets before chosing their subjects.

This introductory programme is extended throughout 4th and 5th form, with pupils carrying out more self-evaluation exercises augmented by input from trained careers staff and external speakers from a range of professions. . hey are also provided with information about the new and familiar subjects at A level, before making their provisional subject choices.

The support and guidance provided in 6th form is extensive and sophisticated. They are exposed to more representatives from the worlds of academia, business, media and a range of professions. Our careers staff are always on hand to discuss each pupil's career goals; offering honest and informed opinions that enable pupils to make up their own mind about their future.

Each year the College holds a Law Conference, Medical Symposium and Engineering Conference. We also stage a bi-annual careers fair in the College, which middle and senior school pupils attend. Through the 6th form enrichment programme there are additional opportunities for pupils to gain experience of the world of work through our excellent contacts with companies such as Catalyst Inc and Citibank. All Lower 6th pupils also complete a weeks work shadowing after their summer exams.







11 EXTRA CURRICULAR LIFE

SPORT AND GAMES

The College has an enviable reputation for success in sports with teams competing in regional and national finals, and many excellent young sportswomen and men come from the school population. There are, however, opportunities for everyone to find a sport which they can enjoy and participate in at an appropriate level.

With dedicated teaching staff and excellent facilities we are able to offer an extensive number of options within sport and games. All of our pupils are encouraged to enjoy an activity outside work which they can continue to participate in beyond school.

A spacious Sports Hall, together with a swimming pool and the existing gymnasium provide facilities for indoor physical education and games. The College has extensive playing fields at Pirrie Park, which is just over a mile away from the main campus. This facility caters for rugby, hockey, cricket, tennis, athletics and other sports. The College also has an artificial hockey pitch at Deramore Park.

We also have our own boathouse down at the Lagan, with rowing being a popular games option in middle and senior school.





















CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

Methody is very well known for the exceptionally high quality of its music and drama productions. However, these are only two activities out of the many clubs and societies open to our young people.

Groups include:

Afro-Caribbean Society Arabic Club (Junior) Art Club (Junior) Bar Mock Trial **Biology Society** Birdwatching Society **Book Club** Chapel Choir Chess Club Christian Union Christians in Sport Classics Society Computing Club CAD Club Cookery Club **Debating Society Dramatic Society** Eco Club **Electronics Club Entertainments Group**

Equestrian Club
Environment Society
Film Club
French Club
Geography Society
Geology Society
Girls' Choir
Hewitt Society

India Society
Jazz Band
Junior Choir
Junior Orchestra

Junior Singers
LGBTQ+ Society
MCB News Team
MUN
Moneybox
Politics Society
Robotics Club
Romania Society
Politics Society
Russian Club
Science Club
Senior Choir
Senior Orchestra
Sewing Club

Sporting

Athletics
Badminton
Basketball
Cricket
Cross-country

Dance Team Football Golf Hockey Netball Rowing Rugby Squash Swimming Tennis Water Polo

Community Service Group Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme Inter-schools Creative Writing Club Irish Traditional Group Sentinus Research & Design







There are Junior and Senior orchestras, a band, a recorder group, a brass group, a jazz group, an Irish traditional group and other small ensembles. Five choirs meet and practise regularly for various performances. These include the Junior Choir, the Senior Choir and the Girl's Choir which has built up a considerable reputation through concerts inside and outside the College and performances on radio and television. We also have a smaller, selective Chapel Choir which, in addition to the same range of activities as the Senior Choir, has also sung in several English Cathedrals, in Oxford and Cambridge Colleges, at Westminster Abbey and, most recently, at Carnegie Hall in New York.











PASTORAL CARE

The College has a long tradition of commitment to effective pastoral care and places great emphasis on the moral, emotional and social development of our pupils as well as their intellectual, physical and cultural needs. The staff are aware of the concerns that may come from attending a large school and so everything possible is done to create a family atmosphere.

There is a close working relationship between the academic structure of the College and the members of staff involved in pastoral care as we believe that effective pupil support is dependent on the contribution of all members of staff. A Vice-Principal is responsible for pastoral care together with a Head of Pastoral Care and a team of teaching staff involved in the Form System.

Around 60 Tutor Groups meet each morning, providing pupils and staff with the opportunity to establish positive relationships. This allows Tutors to gauge the general welfare and demeanour of the pupils, discuss the progress, activities and achievements of individuals, and offer guidance and encouragement and this helps to build a sense of community within the College. Our Sixth Formers also provide pastoral support by acting as academic and pastoral mentors under the guidance of staff.

Our Learning Support Department caters for pupils with special needs through Individual Educational Plans which are created, monitored and evaluated by specially trained staff. This process involves close cooperation between the pupils, their teachers and parents. Support is also available, when necessary, through Classroom and General Assistants. A school nurse is on site to assist with pupils' medical issues.





"The pupils and staff have a strong sense of loyalty and pride in their school. The pupils' behaviour is excellent. There is an inclusive ethos and relationships among the pupils are collegial, caring and respectful"

ETI March 2014

SCHOOL AND FORM COUNCILS

The School Council and Form Councils play a very important part in the life of the College. In the last few years they have represented the views of their peers in making vital contributions to the Development Plan and in putting a set of proposals to the Principal and Board of Governors on how to improve the current school environment and on ideas for the future major re-development of the campus.

The very successful drop-in centre for Form 1 pupils, held in a classroom at lunchtime and staffed mainly by sixth form assistant prefects, originated in an idea put forward in a School Council meeting by a senior pupil.

In many ways the Councils have ensured that the voice of pupils is not just listened to but acted on where appropriate and possible. Each Tutor group in Forms 1-5 elects two representatives on to the Form Council for that year group. This Form Council will meet several times a term and will elect three representatives to sit on the School Council. The School Council meets two or three times a year. Sixth Formers (L6 and U6) elect representatives on to the Sixth Form Forum, headed by an executive. The Forum and Executive help to run the Worrall Centre, containing a recreation floor, coffee bar, study floor, computer room and classrooms solely for the Sixth Form of almost 600 pupils. The Forum elects three representatives from each of L6 and U6 on to the School Council, which is chaired by the Head Girl and Head Boy. The School Council meetings are attended by the Principal and other senior staff.







MCGRATH LIBRARY



The McGrath Library is situated in the newly renovated McArthur Hall building and is a major learning and research facility for all pupils and staff. As well as providing a substantial amount of reference material and a wide range of information sources for students and staff alike, the Library also offers a pleasant and relaxing environment for the school community to enjoy. The stunning architecture of the building helps create a studious atmosphere which encourages our pupils to use the facilities for their important school work and research. However, there are also soft seating areas which allow them to make the most of those enjoyable times they can spend in the Library reading for pleasure.

The Library is open from 8.30am each morning and can be used throughout the day by Sixth Form pupils during their Study Periods. It is available to other pupils before school begins, at Breaktime, at Lunchtime and after classes finish.

The following resources are available: Fiction or Story Books, Non-Fiction or Information Books, Graphic Novels and Cartoon Books, Manga Books, Newspapers, Magazines, Internet, DVDs.

There is an extensive collection of Fiction books. These range from "quick reads" and graphic novels for those who are looking for a lighter read to a selection of challenging classic and modern fiction to stretch the more accomplished readers.

The Fiction stock includes a wide range of genres - thrillers, crime novels, science fiction, fantasy, romances and general fiction - and many of these are suitable for our junior school readers. However, there are also more senior contemporary and classic novels which are regularly borrowed by older pupils and by teachers and support staff.

While most of the stock reflects the demands of the College's curriculum, there are also books on many non-academic subjects which our pupils may enjoy. E.g. TV tie-ins, travel guides, biographies, sports books, cookery books, fashion and music books.

Library Activities during the school year include:

World Book Day Events, Author Visits Competitions and Quizzes

BURSARIES AND SCHOLARSHIPS 18

PRINCIPAL'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Support is available from the College to help pupils from financially disadvantaged backgrounds participate in the life and work of the College. This Discretionary Fund is disbursed by the Principal and financed by annual contributions from the MCB Former Pupils' Association.

Examples of Assistance:

- Purchase of essential items of school uniform,
- Travel and residential costs incurred when representing the College as an individual, as part of a group or as part of a team,
- School Trips, visits and tours,
- University visits,
- Additional examination administration.

IAN ROSS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SCIENCE

A former pupil of the College, Ian Ross, has very generously provided funding to assist deserving pupils intending to study a Science degree their university costs. Mr Ross has had an interesting, successful and fulfilling career. He is aware of the rising costs associated with studying at university and he wants to help the current generation of Methody pupils to access their first choice course of study without cost being a barrier. To that end, awards of £2,500, £2,000, £1,000 and £750 will be made for each subject; potentially benefiting 16 pupils from his donation.



FORMER PUPILS' ASSOCIATION TRAVEL BURSARY

MCB Former Pupils' Association make discretionary awards of a minimum of £500 each year to fifth or sixth form students of the College who propose to undertake a period of travel during the current or following academic year. The following criteria apply:

- The proposed travel should relate directly to the Applicant's studies at the College; proposed studies at University or other third level institution; or extra-curricular activity which is being pursued at the College.
- The award will be made to the Applicant who, in the opinion of the Council of MCBFPA, most deserves the award either by reason of the nature of the travel project being undertaken or the personal needs of the Applicant.

RANK FOUNDATION LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Rank Foundation School Leadership Award recognizes "outstanding leadership potential" in candidates requiring some financial support to complete their education. It was created in order to invest in "the seed corn of the future and the leaders of tomorrow" on the initiative of Robin Cowen, Lord Rank's son-in-law and successor as Chairman of the Rank Foundation. In order to qualify for the Award, pupils must be at a participating independent or state school, be in need of financial support to complete school or university and be judged by to possess outstanding leadership potential.



19 COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

Those pupils involved in the range of charitable works of the school learn the value and impact of service to others. They use communication skills to convince others to donate to their cause and then give of their time to visit and support projects in Belfast, India and Romania. They learn about overcoming adversity, the importance of perseverance and they learn how to put their own problems into perspective.

Moneybox is a charity group within the college which organises a range of different events throughout the year, from which all proceeds go to various charities chosen by the Moneybox Committee.

The Entertainments Group is open to any budding performers – dancers, singers, actors, musicians etc. in the College. The group stages concerts at the end of each term in day centres.

The Community Service Group is a timetabled option for pupils in Sixth Form who can choose it in lieu of doing Games on a Wednesday afternoon.

At Methody we aim to
"work for the benefit of
the school and the local
community, while recognising
the concept of service to all
communities, national and
international"

Pupils are placed in various locations. Examples of work undertaken by pupils include:

- Helping with Cubs and Brownies in a local special school;
- Helping in classrooms with special needs pupils in a local special school;
- Helping with old people receiving day care in a Belfast day centre;
- Assisting in charity shops and offices around this area;

Salters Sterling Outreach Project

The College is involved with RBAI and Victoria College in an outreach project with three Primary Schools in the Sandy Row/ Village area, initiated by Dr Salters Sterling and Senator Martin McAleese. The aim is to promote an appreciation of the value of education and its role in enhancing opportunity. By growing community selfconfidence, extending the range of life-time options for individuals and encouraging community leaders to continue the journey away from violence, through peace, to reconciliation, it will hopefully bring cultural and economic benefits to the area. In 2013 the College was awarded the Aisling Award for outstanding educational achievement for our work in this area.

Parent Teacher Association

The PTA in Methodist College exists to encourage parents and guardians to engage fully with the life of the School through social and educational events. The annual Heritage Tour of the College provides an opportunity for parents new to Methody to meet other parents and to find out more about the history of the College. The PTA also supports the work of the College in and out of the classroom through its' fundraising and awareness raising activities.

Romania Society

Methody has been involved in a project with the charity School Aid Romania from 1990 and each year a group of students and staff from the College go to Romania to visit some of the projects. These include orphanages, an Old Peoples' home, TB hospital, a school for the deaf and care homes for children with disabilities. This is a cross-community project and we work closely with St Patrick's College in Maghera and Ballyclare High School.



Each Year Methody raises money to help the ASHA Slum Project in Delhi. The Society meets on Thursdays at lunchtime in K4. Main activities include:

- Planning fundraising for ASHA
- Making cards using designs provided by the women in the slums
- Finding out more about India and the work of ASHA in the slums.

Every 18 months a group of students and teachers go to India to help with the Project.





At Methody we aim to "work together to develop an understanding of the importance of forgiveness, reconciliation, recognition and renewal in order that individuals, communities and society may flourish"



