

History of Fullerton House

There has been a Preparatory Department in the main buildings of the College since it opened in 1868. The name "Fullerton House" was officially established by the unveiling of a commemorative plaque on 29th November, 1951. This was to commemorate the long and distinguished services to the Methodist College of the Late W.M. Fullerton, Esq., D.L., a Governor of the College from 1930 and the Chairman of the Board from 1934 until 1951. This plaque, now amended, was transferred in 1975 to the present Fullerton House at the Lisburn Road end of the Methodist College campus.

The first position however, was in the vestibule of 11 College Gardens, Belfast, where, in the summer of 1951, the Methodist College Preparatory School classes had been given a home of their own.

From that time onwards Fullerton House School took its rightful position along with Downey House, the other Preparatory Department of Methodist College. Downey House School had had an entity of its own from its inception in the Pirrie Park sports complex in 1933. The Preparatory and Kindergarten Departments at the College itself, though dating from 1868, only gained an independent entity much later.

Nevertheless, though it won its entity later, the real history of Fullerton House is much earlier than Downey House for it dates back to the very beginning of Methodist College itself.

Fullerton House took its part in the 1968 Centenary Celebrations of Methodist College. After all it was the centenary of the Preparatory and Kindergarten classes also. The centenary year saw the erection and opening of a school chapel, the Chapel of Unity. Since then on a rota basis Fullerton House has its regular turn with the various forms and sections of the main school in holding a morning assembly there.

One of the most significant stages of this process was when the Governors of the College acquired the premises at 11 College Gardens (the proposal was first made at a committee meeting on 7th September, 1950). Another was their subsequent decision to give the name "Fullerton House" to the Preparatory Department as established there.

In June, 1971 Mr Worrall reported to the Property Committee of the Board of Governors that floors and toilets in 11 College Gardens were in urgent need of repair and even replacement. It was decided to make an approach to the Ministry for a grant towards this.

Negotiations proceeded. Revisions were suggested. Eventually approval was given for a two-storey building, closing the courtyard between the Biology building and the Main Gymnasium at the Lisburn Road end of the College grounds. Work commenced in the summer of 1973 and the scheme took some fifteen months to complete.

Fullerton moved to its present location in the grounds of the College in 1975 when the School took possession of this magnificent new block in the grounds of the College facing the Lisburn Road.

Extracts from: "The Story of Fullerton House School", by Mr. Frederick Jeffery