



DOWNEY HOUSE SCHOOL INFORMATION

2021/2022

Opportunity, Diversity, Excellence

DOWNEY HOUSE PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

Dear Parents

I am pleased to present the latest Downey House Information Booklet for the 2021/2022 school year which includes important information on a wide range of areas influencing the life of Downey House, including holidays. Please read it carefully and keep it for reference.

We will continue to use the School Gateway App parent communication system to send you relevant information by alerts. In order to work effectively please ensure we have up-to-date email addresses and mobile phone numbers.



I would like to draw your attention to the section concerning traffic within the school grounds and the importance of abiding with the set speed limit and parking arrangements. This is for the benefit of not only the children but for all who enter and leave the area.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch:

02890 286660

info@downeyhouseprep.org

Please also follow our social media accounts for updates; Twitter @mcbdowney, Facebook mcbdowney.

I hope you find this information beneficial and look forward to welcoming you to a new academic year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Jennings'.

Alan Jennings, Head of Downey House
June 2021

DOWNEY HOUSE PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

School Day

AUTUMN TERM

The Autumn term begins **Thursday 26th August at 8.45 am for P2 - P7 and 9.30 am for P1.** Each class will be with their class teacher all morning and school will end for the day at 12 noon. P1 children should be collected at 11.50 am on the first day at the Infant door. All pupils should line up in the top playground. New pupils should report to the school office.

From Friday 27th August the normal class hours are as follows:

- P1 - P3 8.45am – 2.30pm
Please note that all P1 children will go home at 1pm until Friday 17th September.
- P4 – P7 8.45am – 3pm

Please ensure that your child is collected promptly each day.

SCHOOL START AND LINE UP

Breakfast club begins at 8am each morning. Children should make their way to the French/After school room via the main entrance. Playground supervision begins at 8.15am but when the weather is poor this will be held in the downstairs gym. Places can be booked through the School Gateway App.

Line-up is at 8.30am. Teachers collect their classes from the main playground and will escort them into the school. Parents/carers should leave their children at 8.30am and not accompany them into the school. Registration takes place between 8.30am and 8.45am. Teachers can be informed of minor issues at line-up time but they are not available for consultations as they have to escort and supervise their own classes. If a consultation is required, then please contact the school to make an appointment.

Children arriving after 8.30am should access the school via the main entrance at the school office. They will be familiar with the school and should not be accompanied by parents/carers. If a message needs to be left, then please do so at the office.

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PUNCTUALITY

Registration finishes when lessons start at 8.45am. Children arriving after 8.45am are considered late and will be registered as such. The school has an extensive curriculum and teachers begin working with their classes very promptly so even a few minutes late can be disruptive for latecomers, their classmates and the teacher.

ABSENCE

In cases of illness causing absence, please notify the school by telephone 028 90286660 or email info@downeyhouseprep.org, or by message via the School Gateway App, please contact the school as soon as possible. Extra work will be set for a sick child, if requested.

All requests for permission to be excused from classes should be made in writing at least 3 days in advance and such requests should be kept to a minimum. Parents/guardians must send in a note to explain any absence for any reason.

HOLIDAYS

Clear advance notice is given by the school of all holidays. Parents should not arrange family holidays during school terms unless exceptional circumstances have arisen. Written requests for leave of absence outside these dates must be made in advance to the Head of Prep. No work will be set by class teachers when a family holiday is taken in term time.

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SCHOOL TIMETABLE

Details of class timetables will be given to each pupil.

TIMETABLE

Year	School day	Break	Lunch	Afternoon
P1-P3	8.45am – 2.30pm	9.45am – 10am	12noon – 1pm	1pm – 2.30pm
P4-P7	8.45am – 3pm	9.45am – 10am	12noon – 1pm	1pm – 3pm

Thursday 26th August 2021

School ends at 12 noon for pupils P2 – P7.

P1 pupils finish at 11.50am

Friday 27th August – Friday 17th September 2021

P1 pupils will finish at 1pm, as they settle into school routine.

END OF SCHOOL

Pupils should be collected promptly at the end of the school day. Please do not arrive late and allow your child to play unsupervised.

Uniform Requirements

UNIFORM

It is expected that parents will adhere to the official list. It creates difficulties for the staff and embarrassment for the children when they arrive in clothing which is non-uniform. All items of clothing should be **clearly marked** with the child's name – sew on labels are preferred. Clothing will be inspected by staff for 'name labelling' two weeks after the beginning of term.

Only black, navy or white hair accessories may be worn and these must be plain. Jewellery is limited to gold or silver stud earrings.

Hair should be neat and tidy, natural in colour and conventional in style (minimum #2 clipper, medium/high/skin fades are not permitted i.e. the scalp should not be visible). Long hair should be tied.

SHOES

A slipper bag (not polythene carrier bag) should be brought to hold gym shoes and gym kit. An additional pair of shoes for those wishing to play football in free time is advisable. A peg will be allocated to each child on the first morning and the child uses that peg for the rest of the year. Parents are urged to impress upon their children the necessity of looking after their possessions carefully.

NB. You are reminded that track shoes must **not** be worn with school uniform.

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Uniform requirements

UNIFORM LIST – COLOURS ROYAL BLUE AND GOLD

	Girls	Boys
Compulsory	School Blazer School Shirt Royal Blue Pinafore Royal Blue Cardigan Grey Knee Length Socks/Grey Tights Navy Pants Black outdoor shoes (Flat or low heel)	School Blazer School tie White Shirt (grey optional) Grey trousers – short/long Grey socks Grey v neck pullover Black outdoor shoes
Summer	Regulation cotton dress White knee socks/ankle socks Brown/Navy sandals	
Optional	Black wellington boots for wet days	School cap Black wellington boots for wet days
Hair	Long hair must be tied back Ribbons/bands etc. should be royal blue/navy/black/brown	Hair should be conventional in style (minimum #2 clipper, medium/high/skin fades are not permitted i.e. the scalp should not be visible).
Jewellery	Maximum permitted: Watch Plain ring (no stone) 1 pair of studs	Watch
	School Bags	
P1-P7	The traditional brown leather or leather type satchels (either with straps or briefcase). This bag should be large enough to hold a folder. These can be obtained from Warnocks, 791/793 Lisburn road or Zatchels (chestnut or dark brown with back straps).	
Games/PE	Draw string swimming bags can be purchased from the school office.	
Sports Bags	Plain blue or black	

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PE UNIFORM

	Girls and Boys
P1 & P2	Black gym shoes
P3 – P7	White Polo Shirt* Navy Shorts* White ankle socks Black gym shoes * All items in bold print must display the MCB Prep logo.
P3 – P7	Swimming costume/trunks Towel Goggles Swimming hat Verruca socks (when necessary)
P3 & P4	Navy tracksuit bottoms* Navy fleece / Sweater / Hooded top* Trainers *All items in bold print must display the MCB Prep logo.



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GAMES UNIFORM

	Girls	Boys
P4	PE Kit* Fleece / sweater / hooded top* Tracksuit bottoms* Trainers	PE Kit* Fleece / sweater / hooded top* Tracksuit bottoms* Trainers
P4 – P5	Navy shorts*	
P5 – P7	White polo shirt* Navy shorts* Navy and white hooped socks Shin guards (where applicable) Gum shields (where applicable) Navy tracksuit bottoms* Fleece / sweater / hooded top* Trainers	Navy reversible rugby shirt long sleeved* Navy shorts* Navy and white hooped socks Shin guards (where applicable) Gum shields (where applicable) Navy tracksuit bottoms* Fleece / sweater / hooded top* Trainers Boots where applicable
	* All items in bold print must display the MCB Prep logo	



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OPTIONAL UNIFORM FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

An outer jacket (reversible waterproof/fleece) may be purchased through the school. Please note this jacket DOES NOT REPLACE school blazer.

Winter hats should be royal or navy blue ONLY.

All compulsory items may be obtained from WARNOCKS LTD, 791 LISBURN ROAD, BELFAST, BT9 7GX.

PE Uniform can be obtained in school from Donna Armstrong, 07974977854.

The PTA operate a nearly new uniform shop, please contact the school office directly for further information.

- Your support is vital to ensure that your child is smartly dressed in the correct uniform at all times and therefore a credit to you and the school.
- Track or gym shoes are not permissible for daily wear.
- Schoolbags MUST be the traditional brown satchel type (or briefcase).

PLEASE NOTE: EVERY ITEM BROUGHT TO SCHOOL MUST BE MARKED CLEARLY WITH CHILD'S NAME.

General

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR CONTACT DETAILS

It is essential that the school is notified immediately of any changes of address, permanent or temporary, of pupils. Failure to do so causes inconvenience both to school authorities and parents. It is also very important that current telephone numbers, including business ones, are known by the school. Please inform us also if the number is ex-directory.

We also use School Gateway App to send text and email information to parents. It is therefore vital that we hold up to date mobile phone and email addresses for this communication to be effective. The School Gateway App will also be used as the method for paying for most prep activities including trips, after school, breakfast club and school meals etc.

PARENT/STAFF CONSULTATIONS

Parent/staff consultations will take place by video conference on the following dates:

P1 –P7 consultations are held during the autumn term.

In February 2022 a specific day for parent consultations has been set aside. These parent consultations will take place for P1 - P6 children on **Friday 11th February 2022**.

P7 Transfer interviews will take place in the week following the publication of the AQE results on Saturday 29^h January 2022.

Parents are able to speak to teachers at any time throughout the year but requested to do so out of school hours as unscheduled meetings can be very disruptive for the remainder of the children in a class. Interviews will be more productive if prior notice is given by parents.

REPORTS

A report is sent home once a year in June.

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HEALTHY EATING

We have a healthy eating scheme in Downey House. This helps encourage and develop a positive attitude towards food and a healthy diet. The Healthy Eating Policy is available to [read here](#). We encourage a healthy break from Monday – Thursday; treat should be reserved for Friday.

A two-course dinner is available; currently at a charge of £2.60 per day. This is subject to increased changes made by the Education Authority. School dinners are booked and paid for on the School Gateway App and must be booked before 9.00 am. A refund is given when appropriate i.e. illness or school trips. Refunds are **NOT** given when holidays are taken during term time.

Children may bring their own packed lunch if parents wish.

Downey House is a Sesame and Nut Free school and therefore we would ask that you do not put any products containing **SESAME or NUTS** in lunch boxes or any food that is brought into school.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

The PTA has raised an immense amount of money over the years to provide valuable extra equipment to benefit future generations of pupils. It is hoped that all parents will support this valued organisation enabling it to grow throughout 2021/22. Details of meetings are sent regularly to all parents.

GAMES

These are held on Fridays for P4 - P7. The children will have an opportunity to participate in a selection of games including; athletics, cricket, football, hockey, netball, rounders, rugby, and tennis. Children will be reminded at the beginning of term about any equipment required for games and gym. Failure to bring shin guards and a mouth guard when requested will result in a child not being allowed to participate in that session.

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SWIMMING

Forms P3 – P7 have swimming tuition throughout the year. Travel is by school minibus to the Methody campus.

MUSIC TUITION

In addition to the normal music curriculum, private tuition is available for other instruments. Interested parents should contact the Music Teacher as soon as possible after the beginning of term. Individual music tuition usually commences in P4. Please note the following important information regarding pupils attending tuition in school:

- Children must complete, at home, any class work missed during their music lesson.
- Children must remember their own lesson times.

VALUABLES

Children should not bring large amount of money, electronic devices, expensive jewellery or other valuables to school. If it is necessary for a child to have a large amount of money, their teacher will be glad to look after it until school ends. **Children should not bring toys from home into school.**

TELEPHONE CALLS

We discourage the use of the school telephone by children, except in cases of real emergency. It can be very disruptive for the office staff (and parents) if children consistently telephone their parents to request forgotten PE kits, packed lunches or other items.

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MOBILE TELEPHONES

Pupils should not bring mobile phones to school. The school introduced a mobile phone policy which is part of our Safeguarding Policies booklet sent home to parents each year. Key points are as follows:

- Pupils are not to bring mobile phones to school unless a parent feels that it is absolutely necessary.
- If necessary P7 pupils may bring a mobile phone to school. This is considered to be a privilege for P7 pupils and is a privilege that can be removed.
- A form, available from the school office, needs to be filled in by the parent stating the reason why their child needs to bring a mobile phone to school.
- The school principal grants permission for a mobile phone to be brought into school.
- Under special circumstances, Mr Jennings may give permission for a younger pupil to bring a mobile phone to school.
- All such authorised phones must be switched off and be given to the class teacher at 8.45am each day and the phone will be returned to the child at 3pm.

Full details regarding phones are available in our recently published mobile phone policy.

USE OF COMPUTERS

We strongly advise parents to restrict access to sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Fortnite and other gaming sites to weekends (if at all) and it is recommended for one-hour maximum per night. Please be aware of age restrictions to sites with most social media sites being 13+. Please ensure you monitor your child's access to the internet and ensure you are vigilant to cyber-bullying.

Downey House supports the work of [REIM Training Solutions](#) who have lead internet safety seminars for both children and parents (the latter sponsored by the PTA).

PHOTOGRAPHS

From time to time photographs will be taken of pupils taking part in various activities. These may be used by the PTA, for the school website and social media, the school display boards or in the press. The pupils will **NOT** be identified by name. If you have any objection, please state this on the Photograph Consent Form which you will receive at the beginning of term.

Traffic

TRAFFIC WITHIN THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

Please note the following important details regarding parking in the school grounds.

1. ALL traffic, apart from staff cars and delivery vehicles should turn left immediately on entering the grounds and not drive up the driveway. All other parents and visitors must use the car park.
2. If you are dropping your child off, in which case, please drive up the driveway and **stop briefly** in the bus parking lane, but do not stop for longer than five minutes as your car becomes a hazard for other motorists.
3. **Drivers should not stop at the roundabout or near any double yellow lines, for dropping off purposes.**
4. Please do not use the spaces at the front of the school or in front of the caretaker's house. These spaces are reserved for staff and emergency vehicles only. However, there are two spaces at the front of the school for the use of disabled drivers. No one else should use them at any time.
5. Please adhere to the 15 mph speed limit.
6. If you do not bring your child to school yourself, you should inform the relevant driver about these arrangements.

Please do your best to comply with these arrangements. As I am sure you will understand, they have been put in place with the safety and wellbeing of all the children in mind.

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School Term Dates 2021 - 2022

AUTUMN TERM

Term Begins	Thursday 26 th August 2021	Finish 12 noon
Exceptional Closure 1	Friday 22 nd October 2021	
Half Term	Monday 25 th October – Friday 29 th October 2021 inclusive	
End of Term	Friday 17 th December 2021	Finish 12 noon

SPRING TERM

Term Begins	Monday 3 rd January 2022	
Exceptional Closure 2	Friday 11 th February 2022	
Half Term	Monday 14 th February – Friday 18 th February 2022 inclusive	
End of Term	Thursday 7 th April 2022	Finish 12 noon
Exceptional Closure 3	Friday 8 th April 2022	

SUMMER TERM

Term Begins	Monday 25 th April 2022	
Bank Holiday	Monday 2 nd May 2022	
Exceptional Closure 4	Tuesday 3 rd May 2022	
Exceptional Closure 5	Thursday 2 nd June 2022	
Platinum Jubilee Holiday	Friday 3 rd June 2022	
End of term	Thursday 30 th June 2022	Finish 12 noon

DOWNEY HOUSE PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

Contact Information

ALAN JENNINGS
HEAD OF PREP

ANNE CUNNINGHAM
DEPUTY HEAD

SUSAN HAMPTON
SCHOOL SECRETARY

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