Welcome to Carrickfergus Academy, our new school which will officially open in September 2018 as a co-educational, non-selective, controlled post-primary school created to serve the educational and development needs of all its pupils and, to build on the excellent foundations provided by Downshire and Carrickfergus College.

The aim of our school is to provide all young people in its community the very best educational experience through a broad, balanced, modern curriculum with innovative and high quality learning and teaching at its core. Each pupil will be supported in realising their full potential through a strong pastoral care system based on positive relationships between pupils, staff and home. We will always strive to ensure that each pupil is encouraged, supported and feels cared for. In return we will expect high standards of work, conduct and appearance.

Personal development is a key aspect to the whole school experience at the Academy. We want all our pupils to become confident, caring and considerate young people who are equipped to make their way in the world. Through the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer by our committed and talented staff, there is an opportunity for each pupil to further develop these and many other essential skills and qualities that we value so highly within our community.

To our Parents/Guardians, I recognise that transferring to post-primary school is major milestone in a young person’s life and this prospectus provides only a small glimpse of school life and our community. I would encourage you to visit our website (also those of Carrickfergus College and Downshire) for further information and warmly invite you to attend our school Open Evening on the 4th January. You are also welcome to visit us by appointment at any other time.

To all P7 pupils, as a Year 8 pupil at the Academy, you will be part of an exciting, positive learning environment in the next stage of your post-primary education. I am delighted that you are considering our school as part of that journey and look forward to meeting with you all in January.

Finally, on a personal level, as a native of Carrickfergus and, having spent all my years in compulsory education in local schools in the area, I am delighted and privileged to have the opportunity to return home to be the first Principal of Carrickfergus Academy. I am committed to ensuring that our school is at the heart of the community, at the forefront of education locally and that each and every young person is supported and challenged in fulfilling their full potential.

Dr Paula P Downing
Principal (Designate)
Quality Provision

In the knowledge that all young people have the ability to succeed if they are given the opportunity, the Governors and Staff will provide:

• A broad and balanced curriculum for each child
• The opportunity to pursue academic excellence through the study of GCSE and Advanced Level subjects
• Effective teaching to ensure effective learning
• Specialist support for pupils with learning difficulties
• Continuous tracking of each child’s progress from Year 8 - 14
• Regular communication with parents
• A caring and supportive environment
• Celebration of success at every opportunity
• A wide range of after school activities

Success comes when:

• Pupils are happy at school
• There are quality teaching and learning experiences
• Good relationships exist between pupils, teachers and parents
• There are high expectations and standards
• First rate pastoral care is on offer, where the emotional health and wellbeing of all pupils is nurtured
• Opportunities are provided for every child
• An extensive range of after school activities are on offer
• Parents and staff share common goals for their children/our pupils
• There is a dedicated, child-centred workforce of teaching and non-teaching staff
School Curriculum

At Key Stage 3 pupils will study a wide range of subjects which meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. These subjects include:

- Art
- Drama
- French
- Home Economics
- Music
- Religious Education
- Technology & Design
- Business Studies
- Employability
- Geography
- Information Technology
- Personal Development
- Science
- Citizenship
- English
- History
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Spanish

During Year 10, pupils will select the subjects they wish to study at Key Stage 4. Guidance will be given by Careers staff, teachers and parents to ensure pupils make appropriate choices.

At KS4, (i.e. Years 11-12), all pupils follow courses leading to GCSE:

- Art & Design
- Engineering
- French
- History
- Hospitality
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Single and Double Award Science
- Technology & Design

- Business Studies
- English Language
- Geography
- Home Economics
- ICT
- Media Studies
- Plumbing
- Spanish
- Travel and Tourism

- Child Development
- English Literature
- Hairdressing and Beauty
- Horticulture
- Learning for Life and Work
- Music
- RE
- Sports Studies

The opportunity will be provided for pupils to attain the highest possible standards at GCSE and for less academic pupils to reach their full potential.

It is important to emphasise that all pupils will be encouraged to work hard and show commitment to their studies. Progress will be continually monitored and recorded to ensure that pupils are placed in classes which best meet their educational needs.
At Carrickfergus Academy we are committed to providing a quality educational experience for each young person who we are privileged to have placed in our care. We endeavour to create a secure, enjoyable and supportive environment where all pupils can thrive emotionally, academically, physically and spiritually to achieve their full potential as well-qualified, caring and contributing members of the community.

High expectations for pupils and staff facilitate the pursuit of excellence in all areas of learning and pastoral care. Underpinning all we attempt is the belief that education, at whatever level, should be an experience which empowers the learner.

**Ethos** *(what we stand for)*

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Pastoral Care including Emotional Health & Wellbeing

At Carrickfergus Academy we pride ourselves on providing a high standard of Pastoral Care and we are very aware of our pupils’ emotional health and how that can impact on their capacity for learning. Pupils are guided through their education with a caring, compassionate and friendly approach that we feel benefits all of the pupils in our care. We have a very experienced and caring pastoral team who will be linked with pupils throughout their time at the Academy. Pastoral Care/EHWB is everyone’s responsibility and pupils can approach any member of staff with worries or concerns.

We will have dedicated class time where pupils will be engaged in activities to improve their emotional intelligence, resilience and social skills. We will have induction for our year 8 and year 13 pupils as well as a Positive Behaviour Policy which not only applies sanctions but also rewards achievement.

Our Anti-bullying policy will be regularly reviewed by our pupils, parents and staff. We will take bullying of any kind very seriously and staff will be aware of tell-tale signs and symptoms.

There will be a dedicated area on both the junior and senior sites where pupils can meet with any member of the pastoral team, receive academic support, counselling or support from independent youth workers. Teaching staff and outside agencies will be there to provide a listening ear and professional advice when necessary.

This dedicated space will provide opportunities for our pupils, in a relaxed and quiet setting, to talk about their experiences, to share with friends and engage in social activity in a safe and regulated environment, something that can be extremely important for all of our children.

Our Personal Development, Citizenship and Employability classes will be delivered as part of the curriculum in junior school as unique subjects and in senior school as Learning for Life and Work which pupils are required to complete at GCSE.

The opportunity will exist for pupils to have a voice and get involved outside the classroom through the School Council, which will play a very active role in school life.

At Carrickfergus Academy, the future of all our pupils will be important to us and we will help them to make the best choices possible so that they can lead happy and fulfilled lives, no matter what their educational pathway.
Courses offered will be reviewed annually in an attempt to accommodate the needs of each Year 13 and 14 group. The following enrichment courses may also be offered:

- The Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (Level 3) which attracts UCAS points
- Young Enterprise
- St John Ambulance First Aid Training
- Sign Language
- Spanish classes
- Confucius Classrooms Project – classes in Mandarin

Along with these enrichment courses all the students will have access to all the extra-curricular activities which the school will offer.

Our careers and pastoral structure will provide guidance, support, advice and encouragement to all students and their parents. Sixth Form study will allow the students access to computers for independent study and students will have the use of their own Common Rooms.
In Carrickfergus Academy we plan to resource and support every pupil and cater to all pupils’ specific needs. Every child has many qualities and attributes to offer, this is also the case with those pupils with very specific talents and skills who are sometimes in need of assistance in only one area of concern.

Special Education Needs

Provision and support does not stop solely with specific members of staff, our continued training and capacity building enables all of our teaching and support staff to be enabled to give your child the richest learning experience possible.

In Carrickfergus Academy we will appreciate the rich diversity of abilities, talents, skills and personalities of our pupils. They will be valued and respected and we, as a school community, will embrace the opportunities to develop individuals as positive contributors to society ensuring they are capable of realising their future place in employment, the economy and the environment. We will have a wide range of specialist skills and facilities that will get the best from your child in a comfortable, supported and caring setting.

Our strengths are your child, the family at home and our staff working together so that everyone reaches their fullest potential.

Learning support will be provided in a discrete fashion, taking on the form of one-to-one assistance or small, targeted teaching groups. There are many reasons why a pupil may require learning support at some stage throughout their school career whether for a short period of time or for repeat sessions, the nature and duration of the support required will be determined by the specific needs of the individual pupil. Any subsequent provision will be reviewed on a regular basis with good channels of communication between all parties.

All learning support is most beneficial when the school, home and any external agencies involved, work together to formulate the plan of action for the young person. Parents will be fully involved in the process of offering pupils learning support.
In order to highlight the extent of our support network for your child, the following list shows many of the strategies and advisory networks which are available. For those who may feel that their child would benefit from some learning support, this may provide a starting point for an initial interview or education planning meeting.

- LTSS - Literacy Teaching Support Service
- Internal Literacy & Numeracy Support
- Paired Reading
- Accelerated Reader
- Literacy Maps (Ability & Writing Skills)
- Bright Spell Competition
- Monthly Literacy Club
- Reading Competitions
- Junior School Spelling Programme
- Newcomer Student English Support
- Examination Concessions/Access Arrangements
- Individual Education Plans
- Direct Learning Support Assistance for selected pupils
- Streamed classes for pupils with common abilities
- Reading Partnership Programme
- Exam focus and preparation
- Revision Classes in all Subject Areas
- Withdrawal Support Work
- Peer Mentoring Programme
- Timetabled Revision Classes (Immediately before GCSE Exams)
- Assistive Technology with ICT Applications (Tablet Devices)
- Study/Revision Booklet

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### Parent & Pupil Support

- Parent/Teacher Interviews and opportunities to meet when required
- Academic Educational Psychology Assessments
- Referrals for outreach support and assessment
- Educational reviews in subjects
- Annual reviews
- Homework Planner and ‘Show My Homework’ App
- ‘Home to School’ diary for assisted pupils
- Monitored tracking of academic progress on Assessment Manager
- Pupil progress reports
- Website Parent Portal and social media
- Parental Study Skill Sessions
- Access to SENCo and Head of Year

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### Positive Behaviour

- Individual Behaviour Plans
- Behaviour Support Unit (small groups)
- Time-out process
- Class Conferencing
- Withdrawal Support
- Social Skills Group
- Exam Concessions
- Behavioural Educational Psychology Referrals
- Guidance Centre Referrals
- Modified Curriculum for Supported Pupils
- Supervised Study Support
Outside Agencies

- Gateway
- ASD Advisory Service
- Guidance Centre
- Education Psychology Service
- CAMHS
- Literacy Teaching Support Service
- Northern Health & Social Care Trust
- Social Services
- Transition Service
- Careers Advisory Service
- Peripatetic Support Staff
- Speech and Language Outreach
- Inclusion & Diversity Service
- Primary School Links
- Employment Providers

Access & Mobility

- General Assistance with an accompanying adult
- Supervisory Assistance in class
- Elevators
- Chair-Lifts
- Early release from class arrangements
- Adaptable seating plans in each classroom
- Pupil Buddy system to aid mobility between classes
Religious Education

R.E. is a compulsory part of pupils’ education from Years 8-12.

The main aim is to help pupils achieve knowledge, understanding and evaluation of religious insights, experiences, beliefs, practices and concepts so that they are able to continue in or come to their own beliefs and respect the right of other people to hold beliefs of their own.

Through participation in class discussions, group work and visits from a variety of external agencies, pupils are encouraged to become responsible, rational and independent decision makers. Parental rights are respected with regard to the provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship.
Physical Education & Sport

The PE Department will offer a wide range of sporting activities for boys and girls. In addition to timetabled lessons there will be an extensive range of after-school activities, providing additional coaching in sporting activities. There will be teams and activities to suit all age groups.

The following activities will be available to pupils: athletics, basketball, cricket, cross-country, football, orienteering, trampolining, hockey, netball, rounders/softball, rugby, tennis, gymnastics, dance and recreational activities.

Local Leisure Centre facilities are also used for badminton, swimming, squash, aerobics and fitness conditioning.

The senior site has a Fitness Suite with state-of-the-art equipment which will be available for use by pupils both during class-time and as an after-school activity.
Every member of our teaching staff will be involved in the extra-curricular life of the school. Outside the normal school day we will offer an exceptionally wide range of activities to suit the interests and needs of students. There will be over thirty clubs and societies available.

Whilst involvement is not compulsory, we will encourage young people to participate in them to enhance their overall educational experience. Schools are about more than just academic qualifications. Well rounded, interested pupils, participating in the extra-curricular life of the Academy benefit through the confidence that can be gained working with others to enjoy shared interests.

After School Activities

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Community Links

Our school is at the heart of our community and we believe that it is important to develop meaningful and wide ranging links. Examples include:

- Parent Teacher Association
- Community education eg PAKT and Art Club
- Youth Club
- The Choir supporting civic events
- School productions
- Conducting primary school assemblies
- Fundraising for charity events
- Involving local businesses in the curriculum and in Work Experience placements for senior pupils
- Encouraging pupils to join local sports clubs

Education for Mutual Understanding is an important educational theme and staff will actively seek opportunities to develop this aspect of the curriculum.

School Visits

Opportunities will be given to pupils to take part in an extensive programme of visits to theatres, exhibitions and to places of geographical and historical interest.

Other extra-curricular activities may include:

- Visits to Outdoor Residential Centres
- European Visits
- Ski Trips
- Sporting Visits
- Scripture Union/Engage Weekends
- Monthly Rambles
The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

Pupils from years 10-14 will be given the opportunity to be involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme at either Bronze, Silver or Gold level.

The award comprises of four sections:
1. Voluntary Community Service
2. Physical Activity
3. Skill Activity
4. Expedition

The Gold Award includes a fifth section which is a residential trip. The Award is an extremely worthwhile opportunity for pupils to embark on their own personal development. They learn new skills, meet new people and grow in their self-confidence.

Child Protection & Safety

We will operate a policy on child protection consistent with the guidelines given in the Department of Education publication ‘Child Protection’. The Policy document will be available on request at the school or on the school website.

Academy staff recognise that the well-being of pupils is paramount. The Pastoral team should be contacted immediately if a parent has any concern about their child’s safety.

Drugs Education

Carrickfergus Academy is a caring, health promoting school and so we cannot ignore the threat that the increasing drug culture poses to the health and wellbeing of our pupils. Thus we are committed to promoting a comprehensive Drugs Education Programme within our school.

Positive Behaviour Policy

Guidelines on conduct and expected standards of behaviour will be clearly communicated to all pupils. When behaviour is deemed unacceptable it will be dealt with appropriately and within a continuum of sanctions detailed in the Positive Behaviour Policy which is available on request. When it is necessary, parents will be contacted and their support is important to us.
Careers & Employability

All students in Carrickfergus Academy will have access to Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) from Year 8. The Employability Programme in Years 8-10 seeks to equip students with the ability to build up a profile of skills and qualities which are transferable to the world of work. In Year 10 there will be a focus on Personal Career Planning and decision making to prepare students for the GCSE Option Choices they will make.

CEIAG is provided for students in years 11-14 through Careers classes. Students in Years 11 and 13 will have the opportunity to spend one week in the world of work. A Careers Officer from the Department of Employment and Learning is linked with the school and will be available to each Year 12 student and any other student who requests advice. Students have access to a wide variety of practical activities including Enterprise Days, Personal Development Activities and Careers Conventions. We encourage Parental Involvement and Parents will be invited to guidance interviews at key transition stages.

Assessment & Reporting

All pupils entering Year 8 will complete baseline testing. This is a value added tool and it gives teachers valuable data which allows them to tailor their teaching to suit pupil needs. Baseline testing will continue at all transition points. All pupils in Years 11 and 12 will have their progress monitored through the use of a series of standardised tests spread over 2 years. These tests are of GCSE standard and the results are used to indicate those pupils who might benefit from some additional help. The results of the tests are also fed back to parents at regular parent/teacher meetings as well as through School Reports at Christmas and in June. Parents can keep up to date with assessments through the parent portal on the Academy’s website.
School Uniform
When pupils take pride in their uniform and personal appearance they help create a business-like atmosphere in school conducive to effective learning. At the time of going to press the new school uniform for Carrickfergus Academy has not been finalised. The Interim Board of Governors will make this information available to parents as soon as possible.

Home Study
In order to extend and reinforce learning, homework will be regularly set for all students. As part of the Academy’s partnership with the home, parents are asked to support their child by providing a quiet, well-lit area where the various tasks can be completed. All pupils will be provided with a planner in which to record each homework and access to the ‘Show My Homework’ App. Pupils will also be encouraged to take advantage of regular Homework Club sessions after school.

Visiting Arrangements
In addition to the Transfer Open Evening in early January, parents who wish to visit the junior school site are always welcome. To arrange a visit, contact the school office on the junior site.
Carrickfergus Academy

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Downshire Road, Carrickfergus BT38 7DA
T: 028 9336 4334

Senior Campus
110 North Road, Carrickfergus BT38 7QX
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