

When was the school founded?

Bedales Prep School, Dunhurst, was founded in 1902, opening as the Junior House to Bedales with space for 40 pupils to attend. The founders described Dunhurst as a “flourishing, pioneering adventure”. This is how we see it today – we give children a childhood to remember.

What is the school most renowned for today?

We are renowned for our focus on the individual child, our incredible pastoral care and sense of community, for forging creative, independent thinkers and learners and for our emphasis on outdoor learning.

We have a stunning 120 acre campus and our own school farm with pigs, sheep, cows, chickens, goats and more. All children have lessons in outdoor work – construction, gardening, cooking, and planting – each week.

Is the school strong in a particular field?

Creativity is the life force running through every part of Dunhurst – art, music and design are not relegated to an individual classroom but weave their way into all parts of school life. Dunhurst was born out of the arts and crafts movement and this influence remains strong today. Our pastoral care is also exceptional. Teachers know each and every child and children know that their views matter and their voice will always be heard.

Sport is strong – we compete at regional and national level and were recent county champions in football and hockey. Pupils are encouraged to play the sport they enjoy, regardless of gender or ability.

What is the school's motto and what does it mean?

Our motto is ‘Head, Hand, Heart’. Founder John Badley believed that children should be educated according to these values. Across the three Bedales Schools (Bedales, Dunhurst and our Pre-prep, Dunannie) this motto still underpins our whole approach to education. We foster a love of learning (Head), creativity (Hand) and a strong sense of belonging and community (Heart).

A second motto is ‘Work of Each for Weal of All’ another reminder that everyone is part of the school community and everyone has a part to play in ensuring that community flourishes.

What are the most interesting changes currently taking place in the education system?

Many parents are increasingly tired of the ‘hot house’ academic approach and Dunhurst’s way of instilling a life-long love of learning in our pupils has real

A+ SCHOOL REPORT



resonance at the moment. Our pupils achieve excellent academic results – we can track their progress through to the end of their time at Bedales – but they do not feel the pressure that can be so damaging to children at a young age.

Bedales introduced its own GCSE alternative qualifications 13 years ago, recognised by UCAS, universities and employers, which are much richer and broader than the current GCSE system.

The focus on wellbeing in schools is also welcome: all our teachers are equipped to help foster our pupils’ wellbeing and help them develop good mental health and resilience.

Tell us a surprising story about the school...

Every child has an individual timetable and no two timetables are alike – where many schools talk about individuality, we really do ensure each child’s week reflects their interests and passions.

When the school first opened in 1902 the children’s timetables were green. Today each child will have a number of ‘green’ periods in their timetable – children can use them for homework, tennis lessons, music lessons, dance, drama or another activity. The aim is that no homework is taken home at the end of the day. ■

BEDALES PREP SCHOOL, DUNHURST

Address: Alton Road,
Steep, Petersfield,
GU32 2DR

Tel no: 01730 711544

Website: bedales.org.uk

Number of pupils: 200
(plus 100 children in
Bedales Pre-prep,
Dunannie)

Age group: 8 – 13 years
(Dunannie: 3 – 7 years)

Gender: co-educational

Day/boarding: both