

# Dr Michelle Downes | University College Dublin

## General Biography

Dr Downes is an expert on brain and behavioural development in the early years. In their programme of works, Dr Downes explores how to leverage modifiable factors to promote learning in children who may be at an early disadvantage due to genetic or environmental risks. As co-director of the UCD Neuropsychology Lab and director of the UCD Babylab they use a range of novel techniques with young children and collaborate nationally and internationally. They completed research internships and training at international centres such as Children's Hospital Boston, USA (research internship 2010) and UCL Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health (Msc, PhD, PostDoc) in the area of developmental cognitive neuroscience. Since the completion of BA Psychology (2010, first class honours, NUIG), MSc Paediatric Neuropsychology (2012, distinction, UCL) and PhD Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience (2016, UCL) they have successfully delivered on projects as principal investigator from international funders such as the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation and The Waterloo Child Development Fund. They have written book chapters and published in top education, neuroscience, and developmental psychology journals. Dr Downes is the 2021 awardee of the Psychological Society of Ireland award for Contribution to Research in Psychology. They have an excellent public engagement track record and have designed and run workshops and events for hundreds of children and families. They are particularly interested in educational neuroscience and hope to work with schools to develop ways to support teachers with children who have attention or executive function difficulties in the classroom that impacts their learning potential and experience.