



Induction Programme

Starting secondary school is a big step for your child. In most instances, they will be moving from being the oldest in a small school to the youngest in a much bigger school. Some children will be moving with friends and classmates from primary school; others may not know anyone in their new school. For all children, there will be a lot to take in and to learn, particularly in the first few weeks.

We want all students who choose Vale of York Academy School to get used to their new routines and school organisation with great ease; develop new friendships and improve their self-esteem and confidence. In order to prepare them for this transition process, we have an intensive programme in place throughout year 5 and year 6, in conjunction with our primary feeder schools.

Key Stage 2 Taster Menu

Each year we run a series of taster sessions inviting the Year 4, 5 and 6 students in our feeder primary schools to come into Vale of York Academy, and take part in a range of sample lessons spanning our curriculum offer.

Welcome Evening

A Welcome Evening for parents and carers of students who will be joining us as Year 7 students in September 2019 will be held in the 2019 Summer Term. The date and time of this event will be communicated to parents and carers when it is confirmed.

Induction Days

A series of induction days for incoming students will also be held during the 2019 Summer Term. The dates of these days will be confirmed in the same letter as that of the Welcome Evening. Students will be able to meet our Principal and staff. There will be taster lessons throughout the day and students are advised to please remember to bring their PE kits. The Induction programme is an opportunity for students to make new friends and meet our staff. The Assistant Vice Principal for KS3 will make arrangements with your primary school to visit and meet students in person before the induction days. Our learning support department will also work closely with your primary school to obtain relevant information to support your child's learning.

To alleviate these anxieties, we have an intensive planned programme, worked out in consultation with our partner primary schools. As well as developing stronger links between the schools through teacher visits and meetings to discuss the curriculum, we invite all of our potential students to join us for various events in school. We also run two open evenings during the school year, one for Year 6 parents and students during September / October and one for Year 5 parents and students in June / July. This gives a view of the school in action.

Differences Between Primary School and Secondary School

- The school site is large and students will need to move around independently to each lesson
- There will be new rules to learn
- A full and new school uniform
- Students will have many different teachers rather than just one or two
- Students will move from room to room for different lessons
- Students will be expected to carry bags and equipment from lesson to lesson, and will have the chance to get a locker
- Students will be responsible for a planner to record homework
- Students may have different subjects than they had at primary school
- Students may need to travel further to get to school, perhaps by bus or bike
- Students will need to be more independent at breaks and lunchtime
- Students will become more self-organised and independent

Parents – Helping Your Child Through the Transition to Secondary School

Moving up from Primary to Secondary school can sometimes seem like a daunting and complicated experience. At Vale of York Academy, we want to make the Transition Process run as smoothly as possible, but here are some top tips for parents on helping your children make the change smoothly.

- Build your child's confidence. Settling in well is all about self-esteem. Children with high self-esteem are less likely to be bullied, or to bully, or belong to gangs. They are more likely to gather a wide circle of friends. They can confidently say "no" to anything with which they don't feel comfortable. So tell them how great they are. When did you last pay them a compliment? They don't have to have done anything special to deserve one; a compliment on how well they look after a pet, or that they are kind or thoughtful, goes a long way. Do this daily and watch their confidence develop.
- Listen to their fears. Your child is possibly anxious and also afraid their concerns will appear trivial. For instance, if they become lost in the maze of corridors, what should they do? They could make their way to the school office – they should have a map – or find a pupil or teacher to direct them.

What they shouldn't do is hide in the toilets until the lesson is over. Talk through the options with them. Do this for every concern they may have so that they know you take it seriously.

- Remind your child that being a good friend, especially to shy and quiet children, is one way to make friends. Be encouraging if they want to invite friends home and suggest it if they don't.
- Show that you feel positive about their school and "talk it up" even if it was not your first choice or you lost an admissions appeal. If you have high expectations, these will be sensed by your child.
- Have a trial run of the route, especially if they walk or cycle.
- Get up earlier during the last week of the holidays so that early starts for school aren't a shock to the system.
- Stick to the uniform code. Your child will feel more comfortable from day one.
- Think about any changes you might need to make at home so they have the time, space and energy for homework. One parent who has three children shared her strategy: homework begins at a set time every day, after dinner, with all three children working simultaneously to avoid distractions. In the early days you should check their homework diary daily and if it looks empty, check with other parents or the school. Your child may simply forget to write it down.
- Encourage them to join lunchtime or after-school clubs. They are a great way to make friends. If after half a term they really don't enjoy it, they can drop it.
- Give your child a few weeks to settle in. Ensure you know who to contact for any situation, and the school's preferred means of contact. If they are having any problems, social or educational, make an appointment to see their form tutor.