

Always giving **THE BEST**



VALE OF YORK ACADEMY IS PART OF



HEARTWOOD
LEARNING TRUST

LIFE IN ALL ITS FULLNESS
A PLACE TO THRIVE



Principal's

WELCOME

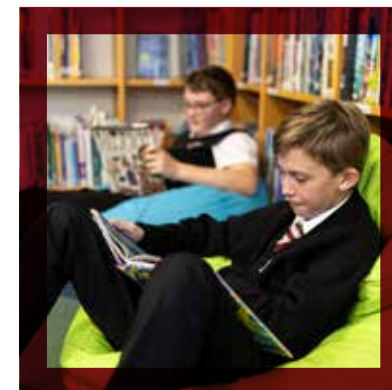
We would like to offer you a very warm welcome to Vale of York Academy and our community.

Our ethos is “always giving the best” and our ambition is that all our learners should experience “life in all its fullness” and that we provide “a place to thrive” through our core values of kindness, respect and teamwork. We do all we can to demonstrate these values in all that we do, and we expect your child to aim to do the same.

We strongly believe that our core purpose as an academy is to prepare our students for life after secondary education, by ensuring that they are equipped with the academic and pastoral skills and knowledge necessary to lead successful lives. We want our learners to make a positive contribution to our local community and beyond.

Students who join the academy find that Vale of York is a vibrant school, full of opportunity and high expectation for all. We offer a wide and varied range of extracurricular activities throughout the academic year. We are part of Heartwood Learning Trust. Links with the Trust provide opportunities for sharing expertise, supporting the academic outcomes and the personal development of our students.

Gill Mills
Principal



School INTRODUCTION

Vale of York Academy is a small, caring and close-knit community. We are committed to ensuring that all our students fulfil their potential, are well prepared for adult life and the world of work and are able to make a positive contribution to the society in which they live.

The welfare of our students is at the centre of everything we do, supported by the excellent professional relationships developed between staff and students. Students are supported throughout the school day by Progress Leaders and a dedicated team of form tutors. The team provide a visible and accessible presence and are the first port of call for both students and their parents to discuss any concerns, should the need arise. Tutors are able to respond to the needs of individual students enabling them to flourish, academically and socially.

We have very high expectations of all our students in every area of school life, including uniform and behaviour expectations. This leads to a caring yet ordered community with an atmosphere of purposeful learning.

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and are treated as individuals. We recognise and celebrate their different interests at every opportunity and have a team of student leaders who support the school's community, embodying our core values.

We aim to ensure parents are fully informed of the work of the school to ensure that we best support the individual needs of students to achieve their best possible learning outcomes. We firmly believe we grow stronger together as a team.

Our values

Kindness

Respect

Teamwork



School INFORMATION

Our school is an exciting place to learn with experiences available to our students to help build confidence and self-esteem.

We offer a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which strives to challenge, support, and enthuse all our students. This is encapsulated in the school motto 'always giving the best' and reflected through the curriculum provision we offer.

Our commitment to an appropriately tailored curriculum for all, including our SEND provision, ensures that learners feel supported and challenged so that they can fulfil their own potential.

Across all five years of education at Vale of York Academy, the appropriate level of careers information, advice and guidance is delivered through the PSHE curriculum, in tutor time and various enrichment activities.

We believe that learning should be stimulating and enjoyable; staff employ a wide range of teaching strategies within the learning cycle to accommodate the interests and needs of individual students, enabling every student to have fun and experience success. Students demonstrate their learning in the Independent Learning Zone (ILZ), the most challenging part of the lesson. The progress of students is constantly monitored to ensure continued high standards of achievement and high expectations in terms of the quality of work produced.

We believe that the most effective way of motivating students is by celebrating their achievements. Students draw great pride from each other's successes in weekly assemblies and through more formal occasions, such as end of term celebration assemblies where awards are presented for attainment, effort and sustained contributions to the wider school life.

SUPPORTING *our students*

At Vale of York Academy, we encourage students to discover and develop their talents, whatever they may be. We provide a wide range of opportunities for all including European Day of Languages, World Book Day, and UK Maths Challenge, alongside poetry workshops, school productions, community days and sporting opportunities.

The academy runs a number of before and after school activities including a free breakfast club which is available on a daily basis in the Dining Room. We have a very well-stocked and well attended library which sits at the heart of the school. Students are able to access the library before and after school for reading for pleasure, IT facilities and board games.

An after school homework club is available as part of the provision. Many other enrichment activities take place at the end of the school day and students can take advantage of a vast array of extra-curricular clubs, such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, drama and music clubs, alongside a wide range of more traditional sporting activities. The school has a well-established programme of trips and visits both within the UK and abroad, including trips to Europe.

An extensive programme of community activities support our school-based provision, including cultural enrichment days. Students have the opportunity to work with York St John University; study Latin and Astronomy via the YISSP at St Peter's School; and participate in numerous

enterprise challenges and work experience through NYBEP. For the most able mathematicians, the ability to undertake Further Maths as a twilight session is possible. In all year groups, students are encouraged to take on responsibilities and develop their leadership skills by acting as peer mentors, and junior leadership team representatives.

Students in Year 10 are elected each year as prefects and Head Students. They are our proudest ambassadors. Students can access additional support through specialist teaching and a dedicated team of teaching assistants who focus on developing basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and social skills.

The teaching assistants facilitate a 'Hemisphere' after school homework club for the students who may need a more nurturing environment. We work closely with the Local Authority and the NHS to provide a wellbeing service for our students. This is supported further by our Safeguarding and Pastoral team who are dedicated to enable our students to be more confident young people.

" From the moment I stepped into the Reception, it was clear that this was a great school where both the pupils and the staff are happy to be "



JOINING *our school*

Transition arrangements from Year 6 to Year 7 are very important to us. We have close relationships with our partner primary schools and all children are visited in their primary setting before they join us in September.

We have a dedicated transition expert who works with our partner primary schools to prepare students for the move to secondary school. The transition expert is your first point of contact throughout the transition process and into the Autumn Term of Year 7. You can ask questions at any time by contacting our Reception team.

Prior to joining school, your child will hopefully have taken some of the opportunities to visit us. We offer a programme of master classes and transition events for Years 5 and 6 throughout the year. Year 6 also enjoy visits to school before starting in September so they are familiar with many staff and the school environment. We continue to offer a summer school provision for students who may need additional support in their transition.

" School really do play a part in making our children better humans."



In July of Year 6, your child will visit Vale of York Academy at least twice to take part in induction activities and to start to form relationships with new friends and staff. As a parent, you will be invited to the school for a transition evening. This is an opportunity for the team at Vale of York to answer your questions and provide peace of mind for you.

The school has a designated catchment area defined by the Local Authority, City of York Council. Parents can access the secondary school 'guide for parents' online at www.york.gov.uk/guideforparents Parents need to make an online application or request a paper copy of the application form and return it to the local authority by 31 October 2025. These are available at www.york.gov.uk/school-admissions

"The teachers at Vale are honestly outstanding and I commend them for the effort and time they put into the children." Parent

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Our Trust's Vision & Values

We are a strong, inclusive and collaborative Church of England multi-academy trust of fourteen church, community and alternative provision schools. Guided by our Christian ethos and values of kindness, respect and teamwork, we welcome students, colleagues and schools of all faiths and none.

We share a clear vision – 'to create schools where children and young people thrive, as we help them prepare to live life in all its fullness'.

For us, a place to thrive means much more than a place simply to be comfortable. Instead, our aim is to develop schools and an educational offer which enable each student to flourish academically, practically, emotionally, socially and spiritually. We help them to understand what their own successful and fulfilled life could be, by opening doors, providing choice, and encouraging ambition.

KINDNESS | RESPECT | TEAMWORK

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