

How to find out more...

We hope that this updated guidance has answered many of your questions, however if you are still unclear about any aspects of school life, please do get in touch:

LOCATION

99 Ballot Street, Smethwick
West Midlands, B66 3HH

SCHOOL HOURS

M-F: 8am – 4pm
Weekends: Closed

PHONE & EMAIL

0121-558-8701
headteacher@victoriaparkacademy.org.uk



Welcome to our school

2022—2023

A handbook for children and families.

Contents:

A very warm welcome to Victoria Park Academy. We are extremely proud to serve our local community and to make all of our children and stakeholders the 'best they can be'.

This leaflet hopes to provide an updated summary of essential information about our school and where to go if you have any questions.

Mr R Reed, Summer 2022.

- ***School day and timings, drop-off and collection***
- ***Attendance, punctuality***
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- ***Food: Lunch and snacks***
- ***Uniform***
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Communication and payments

All letters, updates and school information is now shared with families through the **ParentMail App**. We encourage families to install this, and can discuss support with data and access if required. Or, we can arrange for paper copies on request.



Parents can speak to their children's teacher at the end of each day, or call the office to schedule a telephone chat.



ClassDojo All classes also use **Class Dojo**, and parents are encouraged to sign up to this as an alternative

method of communicating with their class. *(From September we will also trial sending school letters via Dojo as well so that families can make use of the translation features)*

We would like the school office to remain cashless, to speed service for families and keep precise records. Whenever possible, payments will be charged via **ParentMail App**.

We will always aim to give maximum notice to families about any likely costs to families, and are happy to coordinate individual payment plans.

Support for families

We will regularly send out links to local organisations and services that we think can help families. We have also created a space on our website to share these <https://victoriaparkacademy.org.uk/community-support-2020/>.

Mrs Mahal (DSL) and Ms Blackstock are our dedicated Pastoral leads—if there are barriers at home to your children's learning, or aspects beyond education that you would like support with, please contact the office to speak to either of them.

Breakfast and Afterschool clubs



A wraparound service, delivered and managed by 4Community Trust is available for families from Nursery to Year 6.

[4Community Trust](#) are based in Oldbury and run satellite centres in schools across Smethwick.

Benefits to families:

- Extended hours: Breakfast club starts from 7.30am
- No upper cap on attendance numbers
- Warm meals provided
- Online, flexible booking and payment system

Prices and policies are set by 4Community Trust. At time of writing costs are:

Breakfast club: 7.30—8.50 £5.00

After School club: .3.30—6.00 £11.00

To find out more, to register, or to book a place for your child please contact 4Community Trust directly on 0121 752 5969 or via their website

<https://www.4communitytrust.co.uk/>

School day and timings, drop-off and collection:

Nursery (am): 8.30—11.30, Nursery (pm): 12.30—3.30

Reception to Year Six: 8.50—3.15

(Before school)

- ◆ The school gates will open daily at **8.40**.
- ◆ Doors to the classroom and entrance points will open at **8.45**
- ◆ Children should be handed to an adult at their classroom door (or entrance point).
- ◆ Register and lessons will start at **8.50**.
- ◆ The school gates will close daily at **8.50**.

We've restricted the opening time of the gates into the playground to limit the time children are left unsupervised by staff in school.

Parents are expected to supervise their own children before and after school, this includes their safety and their behaviour.

Parking around school is very limited and can be a danger to small children, we recommend families walk to school where possible and where not, to park away from the school entrances and walk the final distance.

For any families arriving after 8.50, parents will need to accompany their children to the school office to sign in on our computer.

(After school)

- ◆ The school gates will open daily at **3.10**.
- ◆ Children to be collected at **3.15** from classes or designated exits.
- ◆ School gates will close daily at **3.20**.

Children will only be released to an adult with parental responsibility or whose details have been supplied to the office. We will not release to unknown people without prior arrangement or permission. Children in Year Six can apply to walk home on their own.

Attendance, punctuality

“Children who miss school, miss out as adults.” Secretary of State for Education 2012

“Of pupils who miss between 10 per cent and 20 per cent of primary school, only 35 per cent manage to achieve five A to C GCSEs, including English and maths.”*

We expect and encourage our children to be in school everyday. And on time. Our focused support and reading sessions take place from 8.50, and so it is vital children are in on time and ready to learn.

- ◆ Children who arrive after the gates close at **8.50** will need to report, with their carer, to the office to be registered and escorted to their class.
- ◆ Children not collected by **3.30** may be placed in our Afterschool Child-care service and relevant charges maybe incurred.

We operate a strict policy regarding holidays in term time and any such applications will not be approved. This is inline with Sandwell guidance and the law. If children are away for a prolonged period of time there is a strong possibility of their place being allocated to another child.

Absence, illness, medication (and contact details)

If your child is ill, please contact the school office as soon as you can either by phone (0121 558 8701), or via the ParentMail App.

We encourage you to always send your children into school if possible. If they become unwell then we will phone you to collect them. Therefore, it is important that we have a minimum of two **contact numbers** where we can speak to a trusted adult throughout the school day. **You must make sure that you update the school office if these numbers change.**

If your child is prescribed with medication that requires administration at school, you will need to log this with the school office and complete a medical registration form. For longer-term medical requirements, our SENCo will work with your medical specialists to complete a personalised care plan.

Nursery (Places and prices)

From September 2021 we increased our Nursery provision from 15 to 30 hours for 3 and 4 year olds.

ALL 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to **15 hours free** childcare.

Working families may be entitled to **30 hours free** childcare. Check if you're eligible at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

All families can request a 'top-up' 15 hours paid childcare.

Nursery AM sessions run between 8.30 and 11.30 during term time.

Nursery PM sessions run between 12.30 and 15.30 during term time.

30 hour session will be charged £10 a week for optional lunchtime cover between 11.30 and 12.30.

15 hour paid 'top-up' sessions will cost £75 a week (or £15 a session if we have capacity—preference will be given to full week requests), with an additional £10 a week fee for optional lunchtime cover.

We will have inductions at set times each year, younger children may be delayed until the January intake on discussion with families. Inductions will include home visits and stay and play sessions to ensure children make a happy, secure transition.

Although very much part of our wider school community (often visiting the 'big building' to take part in assemblies or meet other classrooms), the Nursery has a separate entrance (on Suffrage Street) and an enclosed playground and outdoor space.

Children are taught (through structured talk and play) inline with the Early Years Framework and their learning is captured and shared with parents via the Evidence Me App.



Before:



After:



3. Start a 'Save the Planet School Wear' programme.

You can now donate your school uniform when you have outgrown it.

You can then purchase uniform at our Termly sales.

All items will cost between 50p and £1

Donate any time using the donation boxes in the reception office.

To buy uniform, look out for our sale events throughout the year.

All profits will be used to fund the food bank.

PE Kit:

For PE children need: a black skirt, shorts or tracksuit bottoms, pumps or trainers, and a white T-shirt. These will go home at least once each half term to be cleaned and returned.

Food: Lunch and snacks

School Dinners

We have our own chef. And he is brilliant. Everything is made fresh daily on site with a wide selection that caters for tastes, cultures and allergies. All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 receive a free school meal, (funded by the Government).

For children in Years 3,4,5 and 6, parents can pay for school meals. Some families may be eligible for Free School Meals - please see our school website or speak to the school office to check if you qualify.

Children can select to be dinners or packed lunches each day—they must tell their class teacher during morning registration time.

Free Breakfast (Warm, buttered bagels)

All children are provided with cooked bagels in class with the register in the mornings .

Healthy packed lunches

Families can choose to bring a healthy packed lunch instead of a school dinner. Mrs Mahal can advise families of the most affordable way to ensure lunch is healthy. Unhealthy lunches including take-aways, chocolate, crisps or fizzy drinks are not permitted and will be challenged by school leaders with support provided to find alternatives.

Milk and fruit (provided by school)

All children under five years old are entitled to free milk, after five years old parents can chose whether to continue to pay for this throughout reception.

All children in Reception, Years 1 and 2 receive free fruit and vegetable snacks as part of the Healthy Food in Schools scheme. (Again. We're investigating if we can expand this provision from September 2021).

Healthy snacks (provided from home)

Children can bring in a healthy snack to eat at break time. **Either fruit or a cereal bar.** If a child brings an alternative, unhealthy snack, this will be replaced with a piece of fruit and handed back to their parent at the end of the day.

Uniform

We want children to be able to attend school without experiencing any signs of stigma or isolation, therefore we insist all children wear a school uniform so that nobody feels left out.

However, we would never want the expense of uniform to become a barrier to learning, therefore we will work with families to find affordable solutions and supplies.

Please, can all items of uniform be clearly labelled with your children's name and class details, this means, if they become lost, they are easier to return and so prevent families having to pay to replace them.

The average parent spends **£315 on uniform each year!**

So here's how we are **helping**.

* If you already have any of the above items, you can continue to wear them.

1. Simplify the uniform

New uniform expectations

Navy blue round-neck sweatshirt **with or without** Academy logo

Plain white polo shirt (from Asda or other stockists)

Grey or black trousers or skirt

Black shoes

(Children may wish to wear blue and white checked dresses or shorts in the Summer time.)

What we have changed...

Polo shirts can be worn in all years group. Shirts are no longer needed.

No need to wear a tie in any year group.

Jumpers do not have to have the school logo so can be purchased from a wider range of shops at cheaper prices.

2. Find alternate providers

You can now purchase jumpers containing the school logo from:

Clive Marks—£13.99 (+ £4.99 postage and packaging)

Crested school wear—£10.99 (+ £3.99 postage and packaging)

Alpha Corporate Branding— £11.50

Myclothing.com— £9.99 (+£3.75 postage and packaging)

(delivered to school)

What we have changed...

Previously, jumpers containing the school logo could only be purchased from Clive Marks.

We have sourced alternative providers to provide more affordable options.