GRACE ACADEMY DARLASTON

YEAR 7 TRANSITION BOOKLET

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Potential I Excellence I Respect I Integrity I Grace

Our Values

Potential I Excellence I Respect I Integrity I Grace

WELCOME

We are extremely proud of our school and are looking forward to you and your child joining us.

We are delighted that your child has been allocated a place at Grace Academy. If you have not had the chance to come and see us we would very much like you to come and meet us and have a tour of the school. You can meet students and staff and see the academy hard at work. If you contact Reception we will be more than happy to arrange this.
We are incredibly proud of our academy and our community.

We are proud of our happy students and staff, both of whom work together to achieve excellent results. As part of Tove learning Trust our academy benefits from being in a strong partnership with a number of other schools. We are also supported by a number of Ethos staff as part of the Trust. Grace Academy students thrive during their time here and visitors frequently comment on students' excellent manners and behaviour.

We expect and give the very best education to every child. The academy's core set of values ensure every student is given every opportunity to develop into a confident, successful and happy young adult, ready to face the future. Our most recent Ofsted inspection in April 2026 confirmed that "Grace Academy is happy and calm place to be" whilst showcasing our "strong" personal development programme in school.

Our GCSE and Post 16 results over the last few years show the progress that students make across a range of subjects. However, our staff know that academic achievement is only one part of success.

At Grace we have so much going on including a wide range of trips, visitors, presentations and sporting and creative opportunities for all students.

We are really excited about the chance to work in close partnership with you over the next 7 years. If you have any questions, please ask any member of staff and they will point you in the right direction to have your question answered.

Henry Holland
Principal

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ORGANISATION

Be in school by 8:20am

SCHOOL DAY/ REGISTRATION

Each day students will complete five lessons , plus a registration period at the start and at the end of the day.

Students are expected on site for 8:20am (registration will commence at 8:30am) and school will conclude at 3:00pm. You will meet on the MUGA for lineups. This is where your form tutor will meet you to check you are prepared for the day before taking you up to your form room

Every morning at registration, students will meet their Form Tutor and Tutor Group. They will have form activities, equipment inspections, and a weekly assembly throughout this period. As students see members of your form group and form tutor everyday, they may develop a close bond with them and develop new frienships.

There are two breaks throughout the day when students can utilise the school canteen. Both times include a full food service.

You will be dismissed at 3pm by form tutors unless you have a 10 minutes detention to sit on that day.
A variety of after-school enrichment activities are offered to pupils from 3pm - 4pm daily.

STUDENTS WHO ARRIVE LATE TO SCHOOL

Students are expected to be in school by 8:20am. At 8:28am the gate will be closed and students will receive a late stamp.
Students who arrive at school after 8.55am will receive a U code for their AM attendance mark. This will impact their attendance.

School day

AM Registration
Lesson 1
Lesson 2
Break
Lesson 3
Lesson 4
Lunch
Lesson 5
PM Registration

These times are subject to change. Any changes will be communicated with parents.

ATTENDANCE

Grace Academy Darlaston promotes the importance of good attendance to all students. Excellent attendance is honoured with certificates, a rewards system, praise, and recognition.
You must arrive to school and to your lessons on time. If your child is ill and not attending school you must call 0121 560 3300 each morning of their absence.

Canteen

A wide variety of options are available from the restaurant including main meals, snacks and drinks. You can eat your packed lunch in the restaurant with friends who purchase food. This is supplied through our caterers Cucina.

Students will be given an account which their parents/carers can top up with money. They purchase food using their thumbprint. They can load your biometric thumbprint using Parent Pay website (card only) or the machines in school (cash only).

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS ILL

If your child is ill it is important that the school are made aware of this.
Please call the absence line before 8:20am on each day your child will be absent from school to let us know they won't be there.

Absence line: **0121 568 3300** - select option1

If your child has an injury outside of school please make school aware so we can put a risk assessment in place. This will allow us to put supportive measures in place to help your child to continue their studies in school.

If an accident has happened at school students will be cared for by the school's first aid staff until we can contact a parent or guardian.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

If your child needs to take medication during the day, it should be clearly labelled with the child's name and form and left with reception. Please contact the school to make us aware of any changes to medication.

MCAS

My Child At School (MCAS) is the online system that we use to communicate with home.
Once your account is set up there are links to the following platforms we use in school; setting up payments including topping up a student's account to pay for food in the school restaurant, paying for school visits, booking parents evening appointments and receiving important whole school messages including letters regarding events and important information.

TIMETABLE

Students will have core lessons in English, Maths and Science alongside lessons in Citizenship, Geography, History, RE, IT, Languages, PE, Music, Drama, Art and DT.

Our lessons are arranged on a fortnightly cycle. Year 7 students are given a personal timetable telling them the subject, teacher and room they need to attend their lesson. Students will keep their timetable in your planner. It is important that they check their timetable the night before to check which lessons they have and pack their bag.

Please ensure that the school has an up-to-date emergency contact number so that we can reach you in the event of an emergency. If you change your details please contact reception so these can be amended.

Example timetable below:

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Tutor	ADZ 101	ADZ 101	ADZ 101	ADZ 101	ADZ 101
P1	Science XTE 216	English SAN 147	Maths LSB 222	Science MSA 236	DT MES 137
P2	French ADH 202	Ethics TOM 226	English SGM 105	Maths JMK 229	DT MES 137
P3	English SAB 107	French ADH 202	History SHA 219	Art ARS 141	French ADH 202
P4	Computing EAH 212	Music JLS 127	Geography EGS 218	Geography EGS 218	Science KTN 234
P5	History SHA 219	PE LPT	Science SLT 238	Science KTN 234	English SAN 147
P6	Science MSA 236	PE LPT	Maths LSB 22	English SAB 107	Maths ADB 220

teacher | subject | room

"I was worried about how much work and homework there would be and that I wouldn't understand it. I didn't need to worry; the work was linked to what we already knew so it wasn't much harder than primary."

BE PREPARED

Getting ready to start at Grace Academy Darlaston

WHAT DO I NEED?

It is really important that students bring the correct equipment to school each day. It is helpful to keep more than one pen and pencil in their pencil case to ensure they are always prepared.

Must have items:

- A school bag
- A pencil case
- Black or blue pens
- Green pen
- Pencil
- Rubber
- Ruler
- Sharpener

Other useful items include:

- Maths kit Calculator (We would recommend
- the scientific calculator Casio FX-83
- or FX-85 GTX or the Casio FX - 991EX)

Coloured highlighter

HOMEWORK

A crucial component of learning and of education is homework. Microsoft Teams is an online platform you can access from any device. This will be used to assign homework so that students and their family may view it at home.
While some assignments are short, others may last for an entire term. Students can use the Library at lunchtimes if you need additional support.

MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones, tablets and music devices, including earphones, are **NOT** allowed to be used in school as per our policy.

Mobile phones are allowed at school, but students are required to switch them off and put them in their bag.

If a student is observed using a device, it will be confiscated and kept in a secure location until the end of the school day.

On the first occassion of confiscation (in the school year) the phone can be signed out by the student at the end of the school day. Any further confiscation will need parents to sign the item out of reception at the end of the day.

BE PREPARED

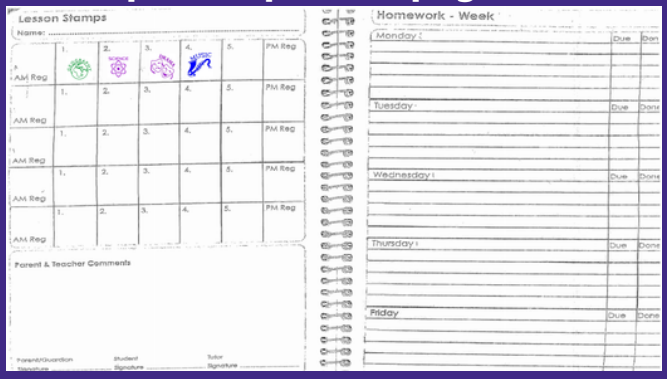
Your GAD Planner

What is a planner?

Our GAD planner is a piece of a equipment that students must have with them every day they are in school.

Every lesson students will be given a stamp in their planner according to how well they have worked in the lesson. This gives everyone who picks up the planner a visual representation of the child's day at school.

Example of a planner page:



Our planner is a form of communication with parents. This is where all detentions will be communicated with parents. Please ensure you check your child's planner each evening.

We will keep students for up to 10 minutes on the same day for a 10 minute detention.

All detentions longer than 10 minutes will be written in students planners for a day in advance to ensure students are aware.

How does it work?

Every lesson a stamp will be put in each students planner depending on their work ethic and behaviour. Stamps can be given around the academy for any positive or negative behaviour demonstrated by a student.

Positive stamps:

Gold Star - Gold Stars are rewarded for exemplary attitude to learning in lessons

Subject stamp - This will be black in colour with a symbol for the subject. This is to symbolise that students have completed the necessary work and behaved in the corrected manner throughout the lesson.

Negative stamps:

Negative stamps are red in colour. Negative stamps are given if behaviour has not been acceptable in the lessons or an insufficient amount of work has been completed.

We have a range of red stamps all of which have a detention attached to them:

YCDB - 10 minute detention sat with students form tutor at the end of the school day - 3pm

NIL - 30 minute detention set by the class teacher on the next school day

Parked - 45 minute detention set for the next school day

Pastoral detention - 1 hour detention set for the next available day

Year group team

Transition from primary to secondary school can be an exhilarating time. The opportunity to experience new subjects, new activities and make new friends at a bigger school is often met with great excitement. At GAD we understand that whilst most students feel this way, some may experience nervousness at the thought of starting at a new, larger school. We strive to ensure that all students feel supported in their transition process and that it goes as smoothly as possible. We have a team of experienced staff who are here to help you every step of the way to make you feel welcome and secure in our school.

Form Tutor

This person is your first port of call if a student has a concern. They will see your Form Tutor every day. They will be the teacher responsible for you day to day. They will register you every morning and afternoon.

Head of Year 7

The Head of Year will oversee the year groups well-being and work with form tutors regarding students well-being, attendance and progress at school.
They will be the main contact if there are any concern regarding this area.

Assistant Head of Year 7

The Assistant Head of Year will deal with concerns or issues you have in school. They will work with the Head of Year and Head of Key Stage.

Head of Key Stage

The Head of Key Stage oversees multiple year groups in the lower school years.

They have an oversight of behaviour, attendance and progress of their year groups. They will also ensure that students are set and provided with the necessary support to access learning in school.

Pastoral Team

The pastoral team work across a breadth of different departments in school to ensure that students are safe, confident and feel supported in every part of school life.

Assistant Head of Year 7

Mrs L Price

Head of Year 7

Mr L Haynes

Associate Assistant Principal

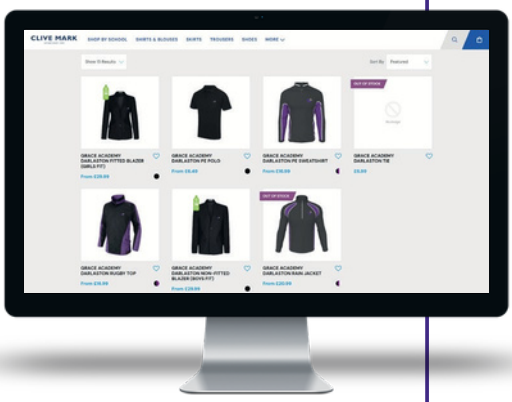
Head of Key Stage 3

Mrs J Wheeler

UNIFORM

All items of branded academy uniform can be obtained from either **First Choice Uniforms** or **Clive Marks.** Other items can be purchased from any retailer that the parent/carer wishes.

- **Clive Marks Schoolwear**
  Units 40-44 Saddlers Centre, 1 Park Street, Walsall WS1 1YS.
  Tel: 01922 622556 **www.clivemark.co.uk**
- **First Choice Uniforms**
  26 Union Street, Wednesbury, WS10 7HD.
  Tel: 0121 505 7100 **www.firstchoiceuniforms.co.uk**



Blazer * Black Grace Academy Blazer

School Tie *

Purple Grace Academy tie with GA logo on display below the knot. *Prefect purple and gold stripe, awarded by the Academy, should be worn instead of the plain purple tie when prefect status is given

Trousers

Plain black (no denim/fashion trousers) which should cover the legs and ankles entirely with black socks i.e no trainer socks. Trousers need to be regular, straight leg fit.No flare or boot cuts. Leggings or trousers of a "stretchy" material are not allowed.

Skirts
Plain black pleated/non-pleated of knee length. with black opaque tights which should cover the legs and ankles entirely and which must be a minimum of 60 denier

Shirts
Plain white cotton shirt with a top button which should be fastened at ALL Times (no polo- shirts)

Jumper
Plain black V-neck – optional (no sweatshirts, no hooded tops, no cardigans, no tank tops)

Shoes
Plain black shoes (no trainers/pumps/canvas shoes/boots/sports brands/shoes with fashion laces or extra adornments)

Socks
Plain black

Coat
Winter coats/anoraks – optional. Plain in colour (no denim, hooded tops, tracksuit style tops or fashion jackets). No coats, gloves/scarves to be worn inside the Academy

Headscarves
Black school approved headscarf conforming to the school requirements

Piercings

Students may wear one pair of earrings (plain studs, gold or silver only). No other visible piercings are allowed (eg. nose, lip, eyebrow, tongue etc.)

Nails
Nails are to be no longer than the tip of the finger. No nail varnish, BIAB or false nails are allowed.

* These items are GAD branded:

Blazer, tie, PE sweatshirt, polo top, and rugby top.

AN EXAMPLE OF CORRECT SCHOOL UNIFORM

Students should also have a school bag to carry their planner and equipment they need for the day

AN EXAMPLE OF CORRECT PE KIT

The provided images serve as a visual guide to assist you in purchasing the correct uniform. If you have any concerns or queries regarding the correct clothes to purchase, the school will happily advise. Please see our website for the full uniform policy : https://darlaston-graceacademy.org.uk/useful-info/uniform/

PE Kit

- Grace Academy Polo shirt* Grace Academy Rugby shirt and/or Grace Academy Sweatshirt*
- Black Rugby/Football shorts or Black sports joggers/sports leggings
- Grace Academy waterproof PE Jacket (optional)
- Non-marking sports shoes
- Football boots (optional for football/ rugby)
- Black Rugby/Football socks
- Shin pads (optional)
- Grace Academy waterproof PE jacket (optional)
- During outdoor activities especially in winter months, we advise a black or white underlay/base layer to be worn

ADDITIONAL UNIFORM INFORMATION

The following applies to all students:

- No rings
- No bracelets
- No necklaces
- No trainers
- One small plain, gold or silver single stud allowed in each ear lobe. No piercings allowed anywhere else on the ear.
- No additional piercings anywhere on face or body including tongue
- No make-up, nail varnish or acrylic nails (including BIAB)
- No fashion belts
- No hair accessories including bows and clips except for a plain hair band which is white or black
- Hair must be a natural single colour, no extreme styles, spikes, patterns or shaved areas. No shaved eyebrows

X Not Acceptable Shoes and Trousers/Skirts

No buckles, bows, embellishments.

No trainers.

No leggings, or tight trousers, or jeans

No tube skirts, or tight skirts.

Student must not have:

- Mobile Phones
- Electronic Games
- Ear Phones
- Walkman/Personal Stereo/MP3 player/iPod etc.

If found ALL will be confiscated.

If you have any concerns or queries regarding the correct clothes to purchase, the school will happily advise.

Please visit our website for our full uniform policy: https://darlaston-graceacademy.org.uk/useful-info/uniform

OUR CHARACTER VALUES

"Our vision is to develop well-educated, considerate and caring citizens with a strong sense of values who will succeed in and contribute to modern society".

As well as wanting you to succeed in your studies and exams, there are plenty of opportunities for you to develop your whole character and other important life skills during your time at the Academy… we are here to help you reach your potential!

Here at Grace Academy everyone is working together to demonstrate our Christian ethos through our shared values of:

Excellence

Consistent EXCELLENCE. Success doesn't happen by mistake.

Integrity

Genuine INTEGRITY. Honesty and doing the right thing are what really count.

Grace

Amazing GRACE. Life is better with fresh starts and second chances.

Potential

Limitless POTENTIAL. We can achieve so much more than we think we can.

Respect

Mutual RESPECT. Everyone deserves to feel valued and important.

GAD REWARDS

We celebrate the achievements and successes of our students inside and outside the classroom

REWARDS

At Grace Academy we want to recognise and celebrate students' accomplishments and hard work. Gold stars, which students accumulate throughout the year, are given out in lessons for going above and beyond in their learning or showing an exemplary attitude to learning. You can also achieve Character stamps, these are for students who show our Character Values in lessons and around the Academy. Students who collect gold stars and Character stamps are rewarded through-out the year.

Every half-term, celebration assemblies are held for each year group to recognise accomplishments and notable gains made by both individual students and student groups.
Students are given certificates for whatever accomplishments they have made throughout the current term. Excellent attendance is also recognised and rewarded on a weekly and half termly basis.

Students can achieve rewards for the following:

- Representing the school's values
- Attendance/Punctuality
- Outstanding effort in lesson or in homework
- Outstanding attainment in lesson and in homework
- Representing the school in sports or other activity
- School leadership
- Exceptional performance outside of the school
- Helping/supporting school events
- Tutor reward for equipment or uniform,

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Moving from primary school to secondary school is a big transition. Teachers in both schools do their best to prepare you for this step and support you through the change.

The move from primary to secondary school is a significant one. Teachers at both schools try their best to help you adjust to the move and get you ready for this next step.

At Grace Academy Darlaston we work with our local primary schools to ensure we gather as much information about our new students as possible. This provides us with the information we need to ensure the support both academically and pastorally can be put in place to support your child.

On Thursday 25th June you will be invited to attend our Welcome Evening. This is chance for you and your child to come along to Grace Academy, meet key staff members and to find out more about secondary school life. There will also be the chance to ask any questions you may have. You will be sent a time slot and more details nearer the time.

Welcome Evening will take place on:
Thursday 25th June

Transition days will take place on:
Wednesday 1st & Thursday 2nd July 2026

Transition days are a great way to get a feel for your new school.

You will be invited to spend Wednesday 1st & Thursday 2nd July with us at Grace Academy as part of your transition into secondary school. This will give you the chance to get to know the building, the layout, some of our staff, the subjects you will be studying and most importantly, meet new friends. You will even get to sample the culinary delights in our canteen.

Over the course of the two days in school you will take part in activities and lessons in the academy which will provide you with information about your new school and our expectations. This is a great chance to find out information and ask questions.

What you will need for transition:

- In full primary school uniform
- Bring trainers with you
- Bring a packed lunch if you wish - we will be providing a hot meal free of charge on each day for students

HOW DID OTHER STUDENTS FEEL?

“I was worried about where to go on my first day, but everyone was really friendly and made sure that I knew what to do and where to go.”

“I was worried about not making any friends, but now I have new friends as well as my friends from primary school.
You spend lots of time together in lessons and form time so there are lots of chances to get to know people.”

“I was worried at first about getting lost, but the school isn’t as big as I thought.”

FAQ

The next few pages will cover some of our most frequently asked question. You will find more information regarding some of these answers throughout the rest of the booklet.

When are your Transition Days?

This year our Transition days take place on **Wednesday 1st and Thursday 2nd July** from **8.30am- 2.50pm**. All students should attend in their full primary school uniform (they may wear trainers with their uniform on these days to assist with some of the activities planned.
If your child has any medication that is needed to be taken during the day, then this will need to be brought in, along with an inhaler if they use one.
Lunches will also be provided free of charge.

In September can my child bring a bike to school?

Yes this is fine, we have a bike shed which is locked during the day, please give them a lock and chain to lock the bike up. Please note, electric scooters are not allowed to be brought into school.

Where can I buy uniform?

Uniform can be brought from First Choice Wednesbury or Clive Mark Walsall. You can buy things such as black trousers and white shirts however from places such as supermarkets.

FAQ's continued

When will my child know which form group they are in?

This will be decided over the next few weeks. For the Welcome Evening, your child will be placed in a group, this will be the group they will be in for the Transition days. During Welcome Evening, you and your child should meet their Form Tutor, however it may be that your child will be having a new member of staff who starts in September. Wherever possible, we will introduce your child to their Form Tutor on the 25th of June. Please note that up until September we may need to move some children into other Form groups. Form Time is first thing in the morning and the last thing at the end of the day and is around ten minutes.

Can my child have a locker at school?

Yes. Our lockers are £10, this needs to be brought in along with a completed form that you can get from our Reception. Once we have received the consent and the £10, your child will be issued with a locker. Please note as long as your child looks after the locker and the key, this £10 will be returned when they leave. These forms can be filled out in September.

Can my child bring their mobile phone to school?

Mobile phones, tablets and music devices including earphones are NOT allowed to be used in school as per our policy. Mobile phones are allowed to be brought to school as we understand there may be a need for your child to contact you on their way to/from school, but students are required to switch them off and put them in their bag, upon arrival. If a student is observed using a device, it will be confiscated and kept in a secure location until the end of the school day. On the first instance of confiscation (in the school year) the phone can be signed out by the student at the end of the school day. Any further confiscation will need parents to sign the item out of reception at the end of the day.

Can my child bring their own drink to school?

Students are allowed to bring a bottle or flask of water only. They are allowed to drink on their way to and from lessons and this can be placed on their desk at the start of the lesson.

EXTRA CURRICULAR

Outside of formal lessons there are a wide range of opportunities for students to develop their skills and confidence as well as meet and work with other students and staff as they learn from new experiences.

There are a variety of clubs for our students to get involved with such as:

- Art Club
- Cooking Club
- Textiles Club
- Games Club
- Voice Squad
- Homework Club
- KS4 band
- Plus lots of different sports clubs and activities.

Students can participate for fun or even represent the school in various sporting events.

Many other clubs and activities are available throughout the school day and we encourage students to make the most of these opportunities.
If students have never been involved in a club before, this is your opportunity to try something new.

We also run an annual Year 7 residential trip to an Outdoor Learning Centre with activities including: caving, gorge walking, mountain walking, coasteering and many more. Information regarding this trip will be available later in the school year.

We currently also offer peripatetic music lessons. This will be discussed with students when they start at the Academy in their music lessons.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Term Dates 2026-2027

Autumn term 2026

- Term starts: Wednesday 2nd September 2026
- Half term holiday: Monday 26th October 2026 to Friday 30th October 2026
- Term ends: Friday 18th December 2026 (early finish)

Spring term 2027

- Term starts: Monday 4th January 2027
- Half term holiday: Monday 15th February 2027 to Friday 19th February 2027
- Term ends: Thursday 25th March 2027 due to Bank holiday on Friday 26th March 2027

Summer term 2027

- Term starts: Monday 12th April 2027
- Half term holiday: Monday 31st May 2027 to Friday 4th June 2027
- Term ends: Wednesday 21st July 2027 (early finish)

Important dates:

Year 7 parents evening - Thursday 7th December 2027

Inset days

Tuesday 1st September 2026
Friday 23rd October 2026
Friday 4th December 2026
Monday 22nd February 2027
Monday 28th June 2027

Additional to these dates the school calendar will highlight any late starts or early finishes.

Key contacts

Transition co-ordinator: Mrs S Giles

Assistant Head of Year: Mrs L Price

Head of Year 7: Mr L Haynes

Associate Assistant Principal - *Head of Key Stage*: Mrs J Wheeler

Tel: 0121 568 3300

Email: enquiries@darlaston.graceacademy.org.uk

Website: www.darlaston-graceacademy.org.uk

Your child's Form Tutor should be your first point of contact for any pastoral concerns or queries you may have.

Grace Academy Darlaston

Grace Academy Darlaston, Herberts Park Road, Wednesbury WS10 8QJ
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