



# PARENT ORIENTATION: CHECKLIST

MOVING FROM ANXIOUSNESS TO ANTICIPATION

"Hi, I'm excited that you are planning to try out the Parent Orientation process for yourself! I hope you have gone through the pack and enjoyed seeing the videos.

I invite you to use this quick at a glance checklist as a reference to ensure that you do not miss out on any of the key ingredients! It's really very simple to execute, and here are some things that I keep in mind during the process. **Please feel free to innovate, translate and implement the way you want. And, I would love to know how you have done it. Do share your experience with us".**

- Jahnavi Mehta

## BEFORE

### SETTING THE TONE

- ☐ Before the academic year ends, send an email to share the **relevance of Parent Orientation** process and invite parents to the Orientation (*Check resources for a sample of invitation email*). The email should mention the date and time of Orientation so that parents have enough notice to attend the orientation and can plan their vacation accordingly.
- ☐ Send a **reminder email** and/or Whatsapp a week before the Orientation. (*Check resources for a sample of follow-up email*)
- ☐ It is best to plan a separate Parent Orientation for **entry point grades and transition grades** (from one Key Stage to the next, for example Grade 3 and Grade 8). For the rest, you can plan Orientation for two grades together.
- ☐ Meet your team and facilitators (alumni / parents) and plan the Orientation by assigning **roles and responsibilities**.
- ☐ It is best to not try and sell the school's philosophy. To make it visible a great idea would be to **invite your alumni / existing parents** to demonstrate the process of learning in your school.
- ☐ Depending upon what your goal is, (*for example, if your theme is partnership, faith or trust*) choose an **appropriate icebreaker** to kick-start the session.
- ☐ Recommended duration for the Orientation is **40-60 minutes**:
  - **Ice-breaker** of 10 minutes (*Check resources for some examples of icebreakers*)
  - **Address parents** for 20-30 minutes (*on philosophy and house-keeping*)
  - Set aside 15 minutes for **addressing questions** and receiving feedback from parents.

- ❑ Keep all **resources ready** and check all **technical equipment**. Do a dry run to ensure a smooth flow of the Orientation.

## **DURING**

- ❑ Always start on time. Welcome parents into a **comfortable space** conducive for discussions. Ensure that the **seating** is not very formal.

### **STEP 1: Welcome, Ice-breaker & Introductions**

- ❑ Conduct the **icebreaker** to kick-start the session.

### **STEP 2: Time with alumni/parents in cohorts**

- ❑ The parents get to experience the learning process in the school through **demonstration** by and **Q&A** with alumni and existing parents.

### **STEP 3: Introduction to the school philosophy**

- ❑ Share the **school's philosophy, values, routines, processes and the academic program**.  
(Check resources for template of PowerPoint for Leaders' presentation).
  - To engage parents, use instances of **past school programs** and don't forget to **narrate the stories** that have built your school.
  - Make sure to share with parents the **key highlights** of the coming year.
  - **Introduce** your team.

### **STEP 4: House-Keeping details/ Closing note**

- ❑ Always remember to emphasize in the end that we are '**Better Together**' so that the parents go back with a feeling of **partnership**.
- ❑ Let the home room teachers stay on with the parents and share the **house-keeping details** for the first 2 weeks; for e.g. school timings, bus timings, lunch routine, etc. (Check resources for template of PowerPoint for house-keeping details).
- ❑ This would also be a great time to explain the **process of Home Visit** to new parents, as the best time to conduct home visits for new students is within a week, after the Parent Orientation.

## **AFTER**

- ❑ Arrange for **some tea / snacks** for the parents.
- ❑ At the end of the Orientation, before parents leave, allow for parents to take some time to have **informal conversations** with teachers.
- ❑ If you have **promised** to meet any parent for a one-on-one session, ensure that you **schedule** the meeting within a week.

## **SOME IMPORTANT TIPS**

- ❑ Plan the Parent Orientation a week before the start of the academic year, so that **questions and concerns** of parents are addressed and the first day to school for the child is smooth and easy.
- ❑ Keep the tone of the Orientation **light, informal and welcoming**.