

FAQ

How can I buy uniform?

Our uniform can be purchased from Sanco Uniform Shop in Hounslow. Follow the links below for more information. You need the Ark Acton Academy blazer, tie and jumper but your trousers/skirt and shirt can be purchased from any shop.

<https://arkacton.org/uniform>

<http://www.sanco.co.uk/page/contact-us/>

What work should I be doing at home?

Make sure you are doing all of the work your primary schools have set you! If you are still not sure, then you could:

- Read for an hour a day
- Use the Oak National Academy website and do two lessons every day
- Try learning a new skill, do some crafts or a Joe Wicks PE session

How will you make sure I don't fall behind in my learning?

All of our teachers are making changes to their curriculum for next year to make sure you know everything you need to. We will adapt our curriculum to take into account the closures.

What will September be like?

As soon as the government decides what will happen with schools in September, we will update you. We are excited to have you join us as soon as we can.

What are the rules like at Ark Acton?

The rules at Ark Acton are warm, but strict. We want children to feel safe and to be able to learn. The best way of ensuring this happens is to be strict, but we want our teachers to be nice too. We ask our teachers not to shout at students as well. Good behaviour is something that needs to be learned and at AA we will support you to make the right choices through our rules. We always make sure that we try to focus on positive behaviour and rewards.

What will my lessons look like?

At Ark Acton, we begin each lesson with a task to help students remember what they were learning previously so they don't forget important knowledge. Teachers will know what the most difficult parts of a task are and will live model these for students so that they will know how to do it for themselves later when they practise independently. Teachers are keen to know what students are thinking so we ask lots of questions to check students' understanding. We expect our students to be ready to answer questions as well as ask interesting questions about what they are learning when discussing the work with their peers. It is important that students practise applying new knowledge so we make sure there is enough time for students to organise their thinking through extended writing. During this time, teachers are always circulating to see how students are doing and offering help where needed as well as looking for great examples of work to share with the class.

How do you make sure I won't be bullied?

Bullying is something that happens in all schools at varying levels. It could be something less serious as one off name calling, or more serious like physical bullying. At Ark Acton we had very few recorded incidents of bullying last year. Students know that our rules around bullying are serious and it won't be tolerated. If it does happen we will sanction the student, but also work with them to help them understand what they have done is wrong and how it makes people feel. We have worked hard to create an environment where people will speak up if they're being bullied or see it happen.

What facilities do you have?

We are very lucky at Ark Acton Academy to have huge grounds. Every year group has their own playground which is used in the morning, at break time and at lunch. The year 7 area has several table tennis tables you can use. We have a big sports hall, a dance studio and our own fitness gym. We also have several art rooms, design technology rooms, two drama studios, a music recording studio, two band rooms and several fully equipped IT rooms.

What food do you have and how do I get lunch?

We have a whole range of food. Every break and lunch time you can come down to the canteen and take your pick. Baguettes, fruit pots, pasta, cookies and pizza.

Every day there is a hot lunch, vegetarian and meat (except for meat free Mondays when everything is vegetarian), sandwiches and baguettes. All the students look forward to fish and chips Friday!

This is probably quite different to what you were used to at primary school so for the first term we have a separate queue for year 7 students so you can get into the canteen quickly and easily.

What extra-curricular opportunities do you have?

There are over 50 extra-curricular clubs on offer here at AAA! To name a few we have, Chess, Lacrosse, Choir, Duke of Edinburgh, Debating, Drama and many more! All our extra-curricular opportunities will be a great place for you to meet new people (both staff and students) and develop excellent interpersonal skills!

What school leadership opportunities do you offer?

There are student leadership opportunities for every student at AAA. These include school council, form rep, subject ambassadors, junior librarian, senior prefects and head student team. We believe everyone should see themselves as leaders and are keen for students to lead on areas they feel passionate about.

How will teachers look after me?

Teachers at Ark Acton work very hard to get to know all our students. The rules at Ark Acton are there to ensure that our students are well looked after, because it means the school is a safe environment with very clear and very high expectations. This helps keep everyone safe and happy. Teachers work hard with non-teaching members of staff to ensure there is a lot of support in place for students when they need help. Every year group also has a Head of Year who doesn't teach. This means they are more readily available to support you.

Will I get lost?

The likelihood is yes- but that's ok! Even new teachers get lost for the first few weeks! However, we will do all we can to help you find your way. We will give you tours during your induction days and for the first few weeks relax our rule around being late to class to give you

time to know your way around. During lesson change over there is always a teacher on every corridor who will also be available to guide you. You can even ask another student to help you. After 2-3 weeks we guarantee you'll know your way around so don't worry.

Who do I go to for help?

All staff are here to help you, but we would always recommend going to your form tutor in the first instance to discuss any concerns about your learning, wellbeing or peer-relationships.

If you have a safeguarding concern (situations where you are worried about yourself or others) then we have a dedicated team for you to talk to and all teachers are trained for these situations.

We can refer students for mentoring, counselling and other forms for therapeutic support to help them with their emotional and mental health needs.

What if I don't have any friends?

Starting a new school can be a daunting experience but it's a great opportunity to meet new peers that will potentially, be with you for the next five years! Everyone will feel the same as you so don't think you are the only person who may feel this. There are many opportunities to meet new students in different settings such as clubs, the dining hall, tutor bases and playtime. If you are feeling isolated there are many teachers and support staff that can help ease the transition and can help lessen that anxiety.

Will the school understand my needs?

We celebrate the fact that students at Ark Acton Academy are all individuals with different abilities and needs, and to reflect this we have strong systems in place to support all students throughout their time at Ark Acton. It is our goal to ensure that all students have the support necessary to empower them to thrive academically and make positive contributions to life at Ark Acton.

We have a three-tiered approach to supporting students' learning needs – universal, targeted and specialist. This means that the needs of students are met by:

- ensuring all teachers use strategies to support all students in the classroom
- running targeted interventions delivered by the Student Support Team
- offering in-school support from specialists (such as a speech and language therapist)

I feel a bit nervous about starting secondary school!

It's normal to feel nervous starting secondary school as it's something unfamiliar and very new. We have a team of people that have been planning for your first day at Ark Acton Academy, so that you will be successful here. If you have any problems or issues your form tutor and Head of Year will be around to support the transition. There is also a safeguarding team that are also on site and they are trained in helping students feel safe in school. Most importantly there are specific routines that will be trained in and this will help you to focus on your learning. It might help to plan and rehearse your journey to school, so therefore you won't get lost or be late for your first day! All these tips will help you feel less anxious and nervous about starting secondary school.