



Survival Guide

2025-2026

Welcome

to York Catholic Middle School

Do not be Afraid. We've got you!

Everyone entering a new school has some fears. Normally we don't share these with anyone, or maybe only with our best friends. We are afraid they will sound stupid or no one else has ever felt this way. We are about to end that misconception right now! The list below is a list of doubts from last year's seventh grade class and probably every class ahead of them.

I was afraid...

- I wouldn't know anyone
- of missing my bus
- of going into the wrong room
- of how to carry my books
- of being late to class
- no one would like me
- of getting lost
- of falling up or down the steps
- of where the stairs would go
- I would look stupid if I carry my lunch

Do any of these fears sound familiar?? Read on and many of these early worries will be answered in this Survivor's Guide. Comfort yourself with the fact that you are not alone.

What to expect Day #1

Where should you report and what should you bring?

On the first day of school 7th graders will have the building and teachers entirely to themselves. You should wear your uniform. You are to report to the cafeteria by 8:10 AM. It would be nice to have a folder, pencil, paper, and pen with you for the first day. You do not need to bring all of your school supplies on day one.

What will the schedule be on the first day?

You will be directed to report to the cafeteria. You will be shown the way by our student ambassadors. You will have an orientation assembly there and will be welcomed by your Middle School Director and your Guidance Counselor. After they talk to you, you will get to meet your homeroom teacher and head to your homeroom classroom.

Homeroom - Your homeroom teacher will take you to your homeroom. In homeroom, you will receive your updated schedule and your locker assignment. You will have

some small group instruction sessions. Don't be afraid to talk to people you do not know. Learn more about daily homeroom below.

Scavenger Hunt - In homeroom, you will be placed in a small group. This will be your team for the scavenger hunt. This will be a fun way to get acquainted with some new friends, as well as your new surroundings. Once you finish the scavenger hunt, you will return to your homeroom with your clues and further instruction.

Your classes - You will follow an "A-day" schedule of your classes on day 1. This is when you will meet each of your teachers for the first time. You will find out your teachers' expectations throughout the year. You will also find out what you will need for your classes. Do not be embarrassed if you walk into the wrong room or if you need to ask for directions. Everyone does.

Lunch - Lunch time occurs during 4th period for Middle Schoolers. On the first day, you will have an extended lunch period (about 45 minutes instead of the usual 30 minutes) in order for you to become familiar with the routine of the cafeteria. You can pack your lunch or purchase lunch. **We don't use cash in the cafeteria so your parents will want to add money to your lunch account.** They'll get information about that the week before school starts. Your Student ID# (on your schedule) is your pin number for your lunch account. You will want to memorize this number because you will use it a lot. After lunch, you will continue on with your schedule.

Dismissal - At 3:00 PM your day will be over! We will end the day as a school community over the loudspeaker. Buses will arrive at the bus port entrance by the office (Door 1). Your teachers will help you find your bus until you know where to look. The buses always line up in the same order. If your parents are picking you up after school, please have them meet you in the main parking lot. You will exit through Doors 3-5.

Great news: The 2nd day of the school year is already a day off for you! Use the day to recover from Day 1, go shopping for school supplies, and get ready to meet the rest of the student body on Day 3 when the entire YC family comes to school.

GENERAL INFORMATION

What is homeroom?

Homeroom is where attendance is taken, announcements are made and general business is organized, such as: mission money, fundraisers, school forms, etc. You go to Mass, assemblies, and your specials with the students in your homeroom. During the 1st Quarter, you will also sit together at the same cafeteria table for lunch. You are a team.

How long is homeroom period?

The first warning bell is at 8:10 AM. Students must be in the homeroom and seated by 8:15 AM for prayers and announcements. On a regularly scheduled day, homeroom is 11 minutes long from 8:15-8:26 AM.

In the morning, if we arrive early, do we have to report to homeroom right away?

The building is open at 7:45 AM. If you arrive between 7:45-8:10 AM, go to the cafeteria to study, to talk or to do the homework you forgot the night before. The bell will ring at 8:10 AM. and you will go to your locker, unpack, prepare for the day, and head to homeroom. If you have made prior arrangements with a teacher for tutoring, makeup work, etc. the teacher will give you a pass that will allow you to report to that teacher's room before 8:10 AM, otherwise you will stay in the cafeteria until the 8:10 AM bell. You must be in your homeroom by 8:15 AM or you are late. You are not to hang out at the lockers before homeroom.

If you are late for school, do you go to your homeroom?

If you are late, you will need to get a late pass at the Attendance Desk in the main office. This pass will admit you to your homeroom or to class. If you are late because of your bus being late, you do not need a pass. The administration will make an announcement for homeroom teachers to admit students on a late bus.

Do I have any classes with my homeroom teacher?

There is always that possibility, but it may be you will only have that teacher for homeroom.

LOCKERS

Where will my locker be?

Your locker will be in the same hallway as your homeroom.

How many times during the day can we visit our lockers?

You may visit your locker before school, at the end of each period, and at the end of the day. Just make sure you are on time for class. Going to your locker is not an excuse for being late. Lockers are off limits during class times and the lunch period because classes are going on. You may go to your locker before and after lunch.

What can I store in my locker?

You keep notebooks, textbooks, coats, backpacks, gym bags, or anything else that will fit. Your locker is not a place for valuables. Do not leave money in any locker. Turn in money and valuables to the Middle School Director. Phones may not be stored in your locker; your phone must be given to your homeroom teacher for safe storage. Over-sized sports bags are stored on racks outside of the gym. Open food may not be stored in your locker.

May I put pictures in my locker?

Yes, you may decorate the inside of your locker with pictures, mirrors, cartoons within reason and with taste, of course. All items must be removed at the end of the school year. Nothing can be permanently affixed. Use scotch tape to tape items to the inside of your locker. Do not use stickers because they do not come off the locker without peeling the paint.

How can I organize my locker?

Keep subject texts and notebooks together. Always keep a schedule taped to the inside of your locker door and clean out your locker on a regular basis. A good suggestion is to color code your classes. Pick a color for each class. Then use that same color for your book cover, notebook, folder, and anything else you need for that class. For example, on your schedule color your math class green. Then get a green book cover, green notebook, and green folder. When you go to your locker between classes, you will simply need to look for your green books instead of random books that look alike. Locker organizers may be used.

Is there locker inspection?

Teachers and administrators may inspect lockers at any time. No student is allowed in another's locker without permission.

Do I have to buy a lock for my locker?

When you walk the halls of YC you'll notice a lock is not necessary and most people do not have one. If you feel you must have a lock, you must provide the administration with a spare key or the combination for the lock. Our advice – don't buy a lock.

What do I do with things that will not fit into the locker?

Anything that won't fit, like a project, can usually be kept in your homeroom or taken to the subject room in the morning. Over-sized sports bags are stored on racks outside of the middle school restrooms on the ground floor. All bags (gym bags, backpacks, lunch bags) must be labeled with your name.

LUNCH

When is lunch?

Lunch is always during 4th period. You will have 30 minutes for lunch. Lunch will be from 10:45 AM-11:15 AM except on assembly days.

What is served?

The menu varies each day and includes hot lunch of the day, hot and cold sandwiches, snacks, water, juice, salads, and much more. Every item is priced separately, so you buy only what you want to eat.

How much does lunch cost?

The cost of lunch depends upon how much you wish to eat. The average cost of lunch (sandwich, snack, milk, and dessert) is between \$5.00 and \$8.00 depending on what you purchase. Many students buy more than one sandwich.

How do I pay for my lunch?

We do not use cash in the cafeteria. You and your parents will set-up an online lunch account through Focus. Parents will be able to add money to the account at any time electronically. Your parents will be able to keep track of how much money is in your account. If you want to put lunch money in your account, please do so before school. There is a dropbox in the cafeteria behind the hot lunch line. Money put in the dropbox before school will be credited to your account by lunch time the same day. Once you select the items you want to purchase, the cashier will have you punch in your pin number which is your Student ID # found on your schedule. The cost of your lunch will then be deducted from your online lunch account.

How many lunch lines are there? Does it matter where we enter?

There are two lunch lines. The hot lunch is in the front of the cafeteria (lobby end) and the cold lunch line is in the back section (middle school end). Students enter the lines from the outside and move towards the center. No butting allowed in lines.

Can we pack our lunch?

You may pack your lunch. We have an equal opportunity cafeteria. It's OK to pack; no one will care. Clearly print your name on your lunch box or bag. Microwaves are not available.

Do we have to eat lunch?

If you are hungry you can eat, if not, you do not have to. After all, you can always study. We recommend you don't underestimate the length of the afternoon. It pays to eat lunch. Remember, you will not be able to eat again until after 3 PM.

Will I have lunch with the high school students?

No, there will be no high school students in the cafeteria during the Middle School lunch.

Do we have time to socialize during lunch?

Sure, you have 30 minutes for lunch. Usually students talk or use the bathrooms, which can be used any time during the lunch period.

What do I do with my books when I go to lunch?

You will leave your books and your Chromebook in your locker before going to the cafeteria, and you will pick them up on your way to your 5th period class.

Are there any special rules during lunch?

Eat with manners and clean up the area where you have been eating. This is just common sense. With the exception of a few students, your mother does not work here, so no one will wait on you. If you spill something, go to the kitchen and ask for a towel to clean up the mess. Two teachers will always be on duty during the Middle School lunches. You may ask for permission to use the bathroom.

RESTROOMS

The restrooms for the Middle School are located on the ground floor and the second floor. You will be shown these restrooms on your first day of school. No High School student may use these restrooms at any time during the day. They are for your use only. You may only use the Middle School restrooms, not the High School restrooms.

BUSES and CAR PICK-UP

Buses arrive and leave from the circular driveway at the main entrance by the office (Door 1). When the bus arrives in the morning, it is your free time until 8:10 AM. If your bus arrives late, this will be announced over the PA system. Just go directly to class or homeroom, depending upon the time you arrive.

Until you know for sure what time your bus arrives in the afternoon, be outside waiting after the 3:00 PM bell. No one will tell you your bus has arrived. The only time buses are called is for early dismissal due to inclement weather. If you miss your bus, go to the main office and someone will help you call for a ride.

Students should be dropped off and picked up at the main parking lot of the school by the gym/auditorium (enter through Door 5). At 3:00 PM dismissal, students who have a late bus or late pick-up may wait in the lobby. All students must be picked up by 4 PM unless involved in an activity. If this is a problem for any parent, please contact the Middle School Director as soon as possible.

ACADEMICS

What major courses will I have?

You will take the following major classes: Theology, Math, Science, Social Studies, and English Language Arts.

How many classes are in a day?

There are 8 class periods every day plus one lunch period every day, so your schedule will display 9 periods.

How long are classes?

All class periods are 42 minutes long.

Does every class meet every day?

All major subjects meet daily, but minor subjects meet every other day.

Does anything happen if our grades drop?

This generally makes parents, teachers and coaches very unhappy. If you are failing two subjects, you will be ineligible for all activities and sports. Your parents will be emailed periodically if you are in danger of failing. Students and parents are able to check grades daily in Focus, the online gradebook.

How often will I have tests or quizzes?

In general, the number of quizzes varies with the individual subject teacher. Every major subject has a minimum of 4 tests and/or projects per marking period.

What kind of grades do we get?

On your report card you will receive a numerical grade. To pass the course, you must have a 70 average.

When and how do we receive our report cards?

You will receive your report cards through email approximately 1 week after the close of each marking period.

What do I do if I lose my class schedule?

First, make a copy of your schedule. Tape one copy to the inside of your locker door (they are very hard to lose this way) and the other to the inside of your Student Handbook/Agenda book you will receive the first day of school. If for some bizarre reason you lose all of your copies, you will have to go to the middle school office and they will print you another copy.

What are the Enrichment classes and when do they meet?

In 7th Grade, you will have 4 Enrichment classes (PE, music, art, and study skills), and they are scheduled according to the cycle days. During one semester, you will have 2 of these classes on alternating days (so you will meet both classes for 3 out of the 6 days). Then the next semester you will have the other 2 every other day. Your schedule will include one Enrichment class every day during Enrichment period.

Note: In 8th Grade, you will have Health, Theater, Career Exploration, and PE as Enrichment courses.

Do I wear my gym uniform to school?

Do not wear your gym uniform to school. You always want to wear your school uniform to school. You bring your gym uniform, socks, and sneakers in your gym bag. There are both boys' and girls' locker rooms for you to use to change. You will have 5 minutes to change into your PE clothes and 5 minutes to change back into your school uniform at the end of class. So PE class is really only 32 minutes long. Do not leave valuables in the locker room; give them to your PE teacher. This includes your phone if you have one.

Do we have to take showers?

No, you do not have to take a shower. However, please bring some type of deodorant with you on PE days.

Where do we buy the PE uniform?

PE uniforms can only be purchased online through the York Catholic Spirit Store. The link to the store can be found on the YC website at www.yorkcatholic.org under the Student Life tab. When your PE uniform arrives, be sure to write your name on the inside tag of your shorts and t-shirt.

Do we use a special gym bag?

You can have any gym bag you wish. You can even use your backpack. Your name must be clearly visible on your gym bag, backpack, and lunch bag.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Do we pray a lot?

Yes! We do pray a lot and we are proud of this. Every morning we start our day with school-wide prayer. Each of your classes will also start with a prayer led by your teacher. We start 7th period with school-wide prayer, either The Angelus or the Regina Caeli. You can find these prayers at the end of this guide and in your Student Handbook/Agenda. We end each day with the Prayer of Praise/Glory Be as a school community.

I'm not Catholic. Do I need to take Religion class?

Every student is required to successfully complete a religion class each year. But don't worry! Your teachers will teach you everything you need to know. Just do your homework and study for your tests as you would for a social studies or vocab test.

What are community service hours?

Community service is work done by a person or group of people that benefits others. Service is a basic requirement at York Catholic because it is part of our identity, part of who we are. All Middle School students will be expected to do 6 hours of community service for each semester, a total of 12 for the year. This must be work done for someone or for some organization without pay for your service.

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center is open in the morning at 7:45 AM during most periods of the day and after school until 3:30 PM.

If you wish to use the Media Center during a study hall, you must report to the study hall first. The study hall teacher will issue you a hall pass to the Media Center.

HOMework

How much homework do we get each day?

The amount of homework will depend upon your teachers, though generally it's about 1-2 hours each night.

How much does homework count toward my grade?

Homework is an important part of your grade, but your subject teachers decide just how much of your grade it affects. Doing your homework is essential for passing your classes. Passing or failing a course has often been affected by whether or not you have made the effort to do the work.

May we do our homework in school?

Yes, you may do your homework during school, which is why we have study halls. Before and after school are other popular times to do homework. Do not do homework during another teacher's class. Homework done in this manner will be taken from the student. For example, do not do your math homework during science class. This really upsets the teachers.

Must I buy an assignment book?

All students are given a York Catholic Student Handbook/Agenda on the first day of school. Immediately write your name on the inside front cover. This book also includes the rules and regulations and is used as a hall pass. If you lose it, you must buy a new one in the main office for \$7.00.

What if I did not write down my homework?

It is very important to write down your homework assignments. This helps you remember what you need to do. If you forget, or have a question about an assignment, you can check your Google Classroom for all of your classes.

What kinds of excuses are acceptable if I don't get my homework done?

There are very few excuses accepted by teachers when you don't do your homework. If you are sick or there has been a death in the family, you will be given time to make up the work. This should be discussed with the teacher and it is your job to do so. Sports, dance, scouts, etc. are not acceptable excuses for unfinished homework.

STUDY HALL

Study Hall is a period in which you can do homework or visit the Media Center with permission. You will have one Study Hall per day. You might also receive a pass for tutoring or for an appointment with your guidance counselor or the middle school director during your Study Hall period.

Study Hall is not a social period. You cannot talk, socialize, watch Youtube videos, or play computer games. Study Hall time is used for studying for a test or completing homework. With your busy schedule, it is wise to get your homework out of the way so you have time for extra activities. You should always have a book to read for enjoyment. Carry it with you to your classes, as well as to Study Hall.

ACTIVITIES and SPORTS

Get involved in clubs, activities, sports, or school functions. It can be great fun and you will meet new people. Middle School options can be found below and on the YC website at www.yorkcatholic.org in the Student Life and Athletics sections.

How will I know of meetings and when to try out for activities?

Every morning in homeroom, activity announcements are made over the PA system and/or are announced during homeroom period. Activities are held after school.

How do I get home after an afternoon activity?

You will have to provide your own transportation home. Because we draw from all school districts, York Catholic does not have an activity bus.

Is there a limit to the number of activities I can join?

There is no limit to the number of activities you may join, but some will interfere with each other and you should be sure to find this out. Also, remember to leave some time for yourself. You need it!

Current Middle School Clubs and Sports

Art Club	Marching Band/Color Guard
Auditorium Assistants	Math Counts
Band – Middle School	Mission Moderator
Basketball (winter)	Soccer (spring)
Brass Choir	Scripture Slices
Cheerleading (fall/winter)	Service Club
Chess Club	Student Ambassadors
Chorus	Student Council
Cross Country (fall)	Theatre Performance – Cast
Football (fall)	Theatre Performance – Stage Crew
Geography Bee	Volleyball - girls (spring)
Jazz Band	Woodwind Ensemble

General Questions and Advice

Is Middle School harder than elementary school?

Middle School can be a challenge because you will have more responsibility for your own assignments and a greater variety of new material. If you practice responsibility, time management, and have a positive attitude, you will do just fine.

Do we always have to wear our uniforms?

Yes, except on special occasions like fund raisers, which will be announced. Girls: Remember to wear white or light colored undergarments under white shirts...no dark colors.

How do I see my Guidance Counselor?

You can see your guidance counselor by making an appointment with her personally. Mrs. Jodi Maurer is the Guidance Counselor for grades 7 & 8. She will be arranging individual appointments with you throughout the year. When this happens, you will receive an appointment slip during homeroom, which counts as your pass.

If I am feeling sick, what do I do?

If you think you can't sit in class, ask your teacher to go to the nurse. If you know you are going to be sick, go to the bathroom. Do not call or text your parent. The nurse will take care of that.

How much time do I have between classes?

You have three minutes to travel between classes. It might not seem like a lot of time, but as you learn your way around the school it will seem just right.

May I use the water fountain whenever I want?

You may use the water fountain between classes if you are thirsty or if the subject teacher grants permission. It is best to ask the teacher prior to the start of class. You are also permitted to carry a water bottle (no more than 32 oz.) during the day which can be refilled at the refilling station. This is especially beneficial on warm days or if you are an athlete and need to stay hydrated. Your Student Handbook/Agenda will give you more details about the types of water bottles that are approved to use.

What if I have to go to the bathroom during class?

Most teachers have very specific rules about the bathroom. If you don't abuse the privilege, most teachers will allow you to go during class. There is a place in your student handbook/agenda that is used to sign out to the bathroom.

May I make a phone call during the school day? How do I get permission?

If you need to call home, ask to use the phone in the Middle School office. **You may not text or call from your cell phone.**

What happens if I am late for class?

This is a minor infraction. Your teachers may be lenient the first couple of days of school.

Are we allowed to eat or drink other than at lunch?

You are allowed to eat and drink items before or after school as long as you eat them in the cafeteria. You may not take food or drink to classrooms, or anywhere else, with the exception of an approved water bottle.

ADVICE FROM FORMER MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

- Keep a schedule taped to the inside of your locker and to something you always carry with you like a folder or your student handbook/agenda that you will receive on your first day. Also, keep a copy at home in your room or on the refrigerator.
- Sit where you are assigned or you will be marked absent.
- Sell your quotas for fund-raising projects so you can dress down and receive homeroom rewards.
- Review daily for quizzes and tests.
- Check the online gradebook regularly for homework assignments and grades.
- Use your study hall for homework. The payoffs are worth it.
- Being prepared reduces the stress of school dramatically.
- Get rest each day. Falling asleep in school can be very embarrassing!
- Make friends. Everyone is starting off new.
- Be yourself; you'll make more friends.
- Don't call for a hall pass out loud in class – just raise your hand and ask the teacher quietly to be excused. Anything more is not funny – and could earn you a detention.
- Learn time management skills.
- Keep track of your agenda. Write your homework in your agenda so you do not forget.

- Don't always depend on your study halls to get your homework done. You might receive an appointment pass in homeroom that day that pulls you from this time.
- Do your homework; if you fail two or more classes, you are ineligible and cannot participate in any afterschool activities.
- Always have something to do in Study Hall (sleeping is not an option!).
- Do not be afraid to talk to your teachers when you need help.
- Get a unique gym bag you can spot easily from a distance, and put your name on it.
- Be sure you have all the parts of the school uniform.
- Respect your teachers and your classmates. You trying to make your friends laugh instead of paying attention is not respectful.
- Make sure your skirts are long enough.
- No chewing gum.
- Keep your phone turned off and put away at all times.
- Do not take any food or drinks out of the cafeteria, except for an approved water bottle.
- Get involved in something.
- Learn the Angelus prayer. It's located at the back of this Survival Guide.
- Use the bathroom during lunch; teachers do not appreciate it if you ask to use the bathroom the period following lunch. If you have to go to the bathroom during class, ask at the beginning of class.
- Every first Friday of the month is a Spirit Shirt Friday. If you pay \$1 in homeroom, you can wear any kind of shirt you want, but you have to remain in uniform bottom and shoes.
- Do not be intimidated by Mass and ask people questions if you have them.
- Memorize the bell times.
- Do not count on printing things at school.
- Memorize your student ID number if you plan on buying lunch.

- Use your hallway time wisely.
- Try hard in your classes, on the athletic fields, and in musical pursuits.
- If you fall down on the stairs, do not worry about it. We have all been there at least once.
- We are excited for you to join our YC family! Put yourself out there and make new friends. :)

YORK CATHOLIC ALMA MATER

Fondly we hail thee, Alma Mater, fair White Rose. Gentle Mother teach us wisdom, love of friend and foe. Keep us loyal to thy love and true to Heaven's Queen, Proudly we raise on high the Gold and Green.

Never we'll fail thee, Alma Mater, Mother True. Faithfully we'll strive to prove our loyalty to you. High ideals we'll keep before us – steadfast and serene. Through life we'll conquer 'neath the Gold and Green.

PRAYERS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Our Father

*Our Father, Who art in heaven hallowed be Thy Name;
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but
deliver us from evil. Amen.*

Hail Mary

*Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and
blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

Prayer of Praise/Glory Be

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

The Angelus

V: Prayer Leader R: Response

V – The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary:

R – And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary...

V – Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R – Be it done unto me according to Thy word.

Hail Mary...

V – Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R – That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V – Let us pray:

R – Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of the angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord.

Amen. Sign of the Cross

Regina Caeli

V – Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.

R – For He whom you did merit to bear, alleluia.

V – Has risen, as he said, alleluia.

R – Pray for us to God, alleluia.

V – Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.

R – For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia.

V – Let us pray.

R – O God, who gave joy to the world through the resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Amen. Sign of the Cross

Prayer to St. Michael

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil; May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; And do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen.

Hopefully, we have answered many of your questions and concerns. Even the high school students don't know everything. Your year will be exciting – filled with ups and downs. Things and people aren't always fair. Sometimes you will have a bad day, a bad week. It happens. What you will do is survive and have a great experience. After all –

WE ARE YORK CATHOLIC!

