

“Hi there, 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 ingredients! It’s really very simple to execute, and here are some things that I keep in mind during the process. **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”**

😊 *Jahnavi Mehta*

I. My checklist:

SETTING THE TONE:

Before the summer break, send an email to share the relevance of Parent Orientation sessions and invite parents to the Orientation (*Check resources for a sample of invitation email*). The email should mention a convenient date and time of Orientation so that parents have enough notice to attend the orientation and can plan their vacation accordingly.

BEFORE:

- Send a reminder email/whatsapp a week before the orientation. (*Check resources for a sample of follow-up email*).
- It is best to plan separate orientation sessions for entry point grades and transition grades (from one Key Stage to the next, for example Grades 3 and 8). For the rest, you can plan orientations for two grades together.
- Meet your team and facilitators (alumni/parents) and plan the orientation session by assigning roles and responsibilities.
- Recommended time for the orientation session is 40-60 minutes duration.
 - Select a suitable ice-breaker of 10 minutes (*Check resources for some examples of ice-breakers*).
 - Address parents for 20-30 minutes
 - Set aside 15 minutes for addressing questions and receiving feedback from parents.
- Keep all resources ready and check all technical equipments. 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, Introduction & warm-up** Depending upon what your goal is, (for example, if your theme is partnership, faith or trust) choose an appropriate ice-breaker to kick-start the session.
- Step 2: Time with the alumni/parents in cohorts** It is best to not try and sell the school's philosophy as much as tell it through the stories of alumni and existing parents. Invite your alumni/existing parents to demonstrate the process of learning in your school.
- Step 3: Introduction to the school philosophy**
- Now is the time to 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 feeling a sense of partnership.
- Let the home room teachers stay on with the new parents and share the house keeping details for the first 2 weeks; for eg. 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
- After the orientation, as parents leave the room, let the session blend and flow into informal conversations with teachers.

CLOSING THE LOOP:

- If you have promised to meet any parent for a one-on-one session, ensure that you schedule the meeting within a week.

II. 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.