

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) about The Yorkland School (TYS)

### **What is a normal day at TYS?**

At 8:45 a.m., 'O Canada' is played to signal the beginning of classes. We follow a full year (non-semestered) academic program, with 6 classes during the day, each 50 minutes long, on a four-day rotational cycle. The lunch hour is 45 minutes long, beginning at 11:37 a.m., and the school day ends at 3:04 p.m.

### **What pick-up and drop-off arrangements are available?**

Students may enter the building and wait in the Forum Room at the south entrance of the ground floor as early as 7:30 a.m. The doors to the second floor classroom and locker areas are opened at 8:00 a.m. Students are permitted to remain at school during the after-school hours until 5:00 p.m. if involved in a teacher-sponsored activity, or if waiting in the main floor cafeteria for a ride home.

### **Is the school accessible by TTC?**

Yes. Many students take the TTC back and forth to school. Sheppard and Victoria Park buses stop close to the school property and the Don Mills subway station on the Sheppard line is within easy walking distance of the school.

### **Does TYS provide any busing services to families?**

No. We do not use our fleet of buses for home pick-up/drop-off. Our buses are used exclusively for shuttle service between TYS and our primary school, North Toronto Christian School (NTCS), field trips, and trips to our Chandos campsite.

### **How many holidays and professional development days are taken during the school year?**

Each school year begins the day after Labour Day in September. Normal holidays are Thanksgiving Day, a two week break at Christmas, Family Day in February, one week for March break, Good Friday, Easter Monday and Victoria Day. We generally schedule three PD (professional development) days during a school year in November, January and April.

### **What is your normal class size?**

Our normal class size is 25-30 students, usually fairly equally split between boys and girls. We have two classes at each grade level from grade 7 to 12, so there are approximately 50-60 students in each grade and age group. Each class from grade 7 to 9 stays together all through the day. Starting in grade 10, there are more elective courses available so the students are distributed across more courses and the class sizes in the higher grades tend to be lower.

**What is involved in the application process?**

We welcome applications from all interested families and students. There is no specific deadline for applications as we deal with families on a first-come, first-served basis. The best time to make an application for admission is generally during the winter months. TYS's Open House is usually held in early February – you can call the school office to get the exact date. At some grade levels, very few places are available each year, so it is best to apply early in the year to avoid being placed on a waiting list or being denied a space because classes have already been filled.

We provide interested families with an information package which answers many questions and includes an application form that can be completed and returned to us with copies of report cards/transcripts from previous schools attended. After receipt of an application, we arrange a meeting with our Administrator or Principal who will answer your questions and give you more information about the application process. Sometimes testing in a specific subject area is done if the school has concerns about an applicant's grade level readiness before the school makes a decision about whether or not a space will be offered to the student.

**What are the costs involved in sending my child to Yorkland?**

There is a one-time, non-refundable \$150 registration fee that must accompany an application to TYS. Once a student has been offered a place at TYS, an initial \$1000 capital deposit is required to guarantee the place in the class. One half (\$500) of the capital deposit is refunded without interest, within 60 days of a student's departure from the school. The annual tuition fee is \$6288 (2010/2011) school year. Tuition is generally paid with a series of 12 postdated cheques, beginning in July of each year. A second child in a family pays a \$100 registration fee, no capital deposit, and gets a 40% discount on the full tuition fee. A third child in a family pays a \$100 registration fee, no capital deposit, and gets a 60% discount on the full tuition fee.

Students entering grade 7 at TYS from our primary school, NTCS, are not required to pay the registration fee or a further capital deposit and the family tuition discounts apply for families with children in both schools.

Other costs to anticipate at TYS are: school and gym uniforms (about \$500), textbooks (about \$500/year), rental of musical instrument for band (\$75/year – band is mandatory in Grades 7-8 and optional from Grade 9-12) and a \$75 art and drama class fee for high school students. There are some other fees during the year for some field trips, yearbook, etc. but nothing of a significant nature.

**What fundraising programs does the school undertake?**

None. Our budget does not rely on any fundraising for the operational or capital needs of the school. We aim to avoid approaching our constituency during the school year for any additional funds beyond the published tuition rates.

**Do students wear a school uniform?**

Yes. All students are required to wear a school uniform that can be purchased directly from our supplier, R. J. McCarthy's. A gym uniform for Physical Education classes (shorts and t-shirt) and a tracksuit may be purchased from the TYS physical education teachers at the beginning of the school year. Pants are not an option for girls as part of the normal school uniform.

**In what ways does the school expect, or encourage, parents to be involved?**

We certainly hope that parents will take an active interest in the work and progress of their child, encouraging them to maintain disciplined work habits and to make a strong effort to be involved in all aspects of the school program – academic, athletic, the arts, and other school extra-curricular activities. Ongoing communication with individual teachers is encouraged (by visiting the school, by phone or by email) to ensure that parents are fully informed of their child's progress, particularly when concerns arise. Attendance at some school functions throughout the year is strongly encouraged, particularly for student programs like the Christmas and Spring Music Nights, Dinner Theatre, Drama Productions, and the Athletic Banquet in the spring. Parental involvement in some field trips and particularly fall and winter Chandos trips for grades 7-9 to assist with supervision is very helpful.

**What makes TYS different from other schools?**

TYS is an interdenominational Christian school that espouses an evangelical worldview in all of its activities. All of our staff are committed evangelical Christians. The staff endeavours to "inculcate by precept and example" the Christian values upon which this nation was established and which are still very important to Christian families trying to raise their children in a humanistic, pluralistic society. As a staff, we make every effort to support the Christian values that parents are building into their children at home. It is our goal to expose our students to the Biblical principles and truths that should guide their daily lives. It is our objective not just to educate, but to develop Christ-like character in our students. TYS differs from many private schools by accepting students with a wide range of academic abilities, not just the top 20%. We are very proud of the fact that virtually every student finishes high school and moves on to successful post-secondary studies.

**How are your teachers selected?**

Our teachers are carefully selected to be well-qualified, enthusiastic, Christian teachers of young people. Our teachers hold university degrees (some of them have several), teaching qualifications (normally from the Ontario College of Teachers, occasionally from other provinces/states) and some have formal Bible school or seminary training. Importantly, our teachers are teaching in their area of subject specialty. At some schools, an English major teaches Chemistry, or a Science major teaches Geography –not at TYS. We believe that it is important that teachers are teaching in their area of interest and academic study so they can make the academic program as interesting and challenging as possible. Staff members are carefully chosen to be Christian role models for young people and to be in a position of authority over them.

**What is the relationship of TYS to the Ontario Ministry of Education?**

TYS is a registered school with the Ministry of Education (MOE). We are not 'approved' by them, as that is not their function. The Ministry does not 'approve' any private school and in fact, prohibits schools from claiming the Ministry's approval. The Ministry registers schools and then inspects those that offer credits at the high school level to ensure that the school is meeting the general standards of operation as prescribed by the Ministry of Education. TYS is inspected biannually by the Ministry of Education and has always received very positive and encouraging reports from them about our policies, procedures and general operations.

**How do you reflect the Christian philosophy of the school in the TYS program?**

While we follow the Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum in all our grades and courses, our Christian philosophy is woven into our daily class activities. At the start of each day, a ten minute devotional time is held in each of our homeroom classes. The homeroom teacher leads a time of Bible study and prayer with the students in the class. Students are encouraged to participate in these times with their comments and their prayers. In our grade 7 and 8 classes, three periods a week are devoted to Bible study. Students study a survey of topics from both Old and New Testament books. In our high school English curriculum from grades 9 to 12, at least one book of the Bible is included in the students' literature studies. In Grade 10, a credit course in Christian Living is a mandatory part of every student's course schedule. On a monthly basis throughout the school year, student assemblies are held. These assemblies are times to remind the students of the spiritual component of their lives, for the students themselves to share their spiritual experiences and insights, for our school worship team to lead the student body in songs of worship, and for guest speakers to challenge our students in their spiritual walk.

In March of each year, a Spiritual Emphasis week is held. A guest speaker addresses the students each day in a whole school assembly, encouraging the students to make a difference with their lives by living unashamedly as Christians in a secular world. We also are involved in various events and projects like Thanksgiving Food Drives to local food banks, Christmas charitable programs to support local, needy people, Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child and World Vision's 30 Hour Famine to encourage our student body to focus on the needs of others.

**Does TYS specialize in any particular academic discipline?**

TYS offers a comprehensive, broad-based academic curriculum from grades 7 to 12 that covers all of the major academic subjects, preparing our students for any of the post-secondary institutions of learning that they might choose to attend. We do not specialize in any particular area of study such as the arts, French immersion, cyber arts, or elite athletics.

**What is the sports program like at TYS?**

We have an extensive sports program with many opportunities for students to get involved. The sports in which we participate depend on the interests of our student body, the capabilities of our staff and the nature of our facilities. The smaller size of our student body means that the emphasis is on participation by as many as possible, although each sport usually involves tryouts and cuts. Students must balance their interest in sports with the importance of getting a quality education, but the opportunities are there for those interested and willing to commit themselves to the sport and the team.

**What kinds of sports teams are available for my child to join?**

Our sports teams compete in three league associations. They are ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International), which is primarily for junior high sports (Grade 7 and 8), TDCAA (Toronto District Colleges Athletics Association – a combination of private and separate schools), which is primarily for senior school sports (Grade 9-12), and the SSAF (Small Schools Athletic Federation).

Junior high teams include soccer, tennis, volleyball, swimming, basketball, track and field, softball, table tennis and cross country. Junior high sports are often held as one-day tournaments. Senior teams include volleyball, swimming, basketball, tennis, softball, golf and table tennis. Senior sports usually play scheduled games after school. These sports are held at various times throughout the school year, depending on the league schedules and tournaments. At the beginning of the school year, we publish a schedule to notify students of the time of the year each sport will be active. Practices and games are generally held after school between 3:04 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., either at the school, a local community centre gym, or local parks.

For all students, an active lunch time intramural program in a variety of sports throughout the school year is also available.

**What other extra curricular programs are available?**

There are many other non-sports groups active in the school. Some of them are: worship band, a social concerns committee, intramural sports, choir, knitting and stamping club, yearbook committee, public speaking club, School Reach team, chess club, and Bible study and Christian fellowship groups. A comprehensive list is available in the student handbook.

**What programs are in place to give my child extra help in a particular subject area if that becomes necessary?**

There are several levels of help available. Teachers generally notify their students of which days/times they are available for extra help – this is usually done in the after school period between 3:04 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. Our vice-principal also organizes a peer tutoring program that pairs an older student with a younger student for help in a certain subject area.

**How would you describe the academic standard at TYS?**

It is difficult to make comparisons with other schools because of the wide variety of factors that shape each school's academic environment. The concept of an 'academic standard' is not clearly defined. We prefer to judge our program based on the success of our students in post-secondary studies. All of our students are well prepared to handle the academic demands of post-secondary institutions across the nation. While we are a relatively young school with only a short history of high school graduates, all of our students have fared well in their college and university applications, and have been successful in their studies in those institutions.

**How well do you prepare your students for university acceptance?**

Almost all of our courses are taught at the 'university-bound' level of difficulty. Students completing our courses are eligible to enter all varieties of post-secondary schools. Certainly, most of our students are university bound and the goal of our program is to prepare them for successful entry and completion of a university program of their choice. Our experience is that our students have no difficulty with their university admissions applications.

In general, most post-secondary institutions like to admit students from private schools because they know it is more likely the students have had solid academic training, developed generally strong study habits, and have come from homes where education is valued. These students are, therefore, better prepared to endure the rigours of the university experience. Most of our students are accepted into all the universities to which they apply, many with scholarship offers. Even more importantly, we are pleased to hear of the successes of our graduates in their university studies. From these personal visits and reports, we are confident that our high school program prepares our graduates academically, socially and spiritually for the demands of an independent university lifestyle. From the general Ontario-wide student population, many are admitted to university, but few graduate. Our goal is to prepare TYS students with the skills to complete their university program, not to merely gain acceptance to the universities of their choice.

**How does a TYS student apply to university?**

All students who will qualify to complete their secondary school diploma in a given school year are asked in October if they intend to apply to university. This application process is guided by the principal and the guidance head to ensure that all the relevant information about students and their grades and courses is supplied in the correct way to the Universities Application Centre. The process begins in October and continues throughout the school year with students and the school office updating the Application Centre periodically with completed course information through the Universities Application Centre's Internet-based computer system. Generally, students begin to receive early offers of admission from universities in March, with others normally coming in June.

**Do universities and colleges come to TYS to recruit students?**

Yes. Through our guidance office, many universities and colleges are invited to TYS to personally present their programs and distribute information to interested senior students during our lunch time period. Senior TYS students are also taken to the annual universities fair at the Metro Convention Centre in the fall where they spend the day visiting representatives, and collecting information, from dozens of post-secondary institutions. We also attend the CCU Fair (Christian Colleges and Universities) where many Christian post-secondary institutions across Canada gather to recruit high school students.

**What is the homework policy at TYS?**

As a staff, we are sensitive to the issue of homework load, realizing that an undue burden of homework can put stress on the whole family. In most classes, time is given in class to start homework assignments, and many students who use this time wisely will get much of their assigned work finished at school, leaving only small amounts of work to be completed at home. In addition to daily homework assignments, more substantial projects and assignments will need to be worked on, and completed, at home. These assignments are given well in advance of their due dates, and when a student manages his or her time well, these more major projects should be able to be completed without too much stress. A general guideline is that a student should be prepared, on average, to do about ten minutes of homework per grade (i.e. a grade seven student should plan for about seventy minutes of homework daily).

**What is the textbook policy at TYS?**

All TYS students are responsible for purchasing their own textbooks from our book supplier, Academic Book Services – The Bookman. Students may go to the retail store (Yonge/Sheppard area) on their own to purchase their books or purchase them through the book supplier's online bookstore, accessible from the TYS website. The school will buy back from students used books in good condition at the end of each school year and resell them out of the school office during the summer months to students interested in used books. As textbooks change from time to time, this 'recycling' of used books is only done for those texts that will be used the following year.

**How does the staff handle behavioural problems among students? Is there a detention policy?**

Each teacher is encouraged to handle individual discipline problems within their own classroom. In so doing, a teacher may well assign a detention to an offending student. Such detentions are normally given to students for chronic lateness, ongoing uniform violations, or whose behaviour in class is inappropriate or disruptive. These detentions are normally served after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If the behavioural problem becomes an issue that is negatively affecting the learning environment of the entire class, or involves a flagrant or persistent violation of school rules, that student will be referred to the Principal's office for further disciplinary action. It should be noted that discipline issues are not major concerns of our normal school day and that the social environment of

our school is very positive. We do not have to contend on a daily basis with the serious discipline concerns that characterize many schools.

**Do you offer summer school or night school?**

There are no regularly scheduled summer or evening courses. Credits earned in summer or evening courses taken by TYS students at other private or public schools are recognized by TYS on the student's Ontario transcript.

We do offer summer English language courses for international students to assist them in preparing for September admission. These are typically non-credit English skills development courses that are available to any high school students who are trying to upgrade their English skills. We also normally offer a one-week summer math (non-credit) course for students entering grade nine.

**What is Chandos?**

Chandos is the school's outdoor education camp facility on Chandos Lake in the Kawarthas, north of Peterborough. It is a beautiful, rural property with comfortable cabins, a main dining lodge, and several other buildings. The school uses the property extensively during the school year. All students from grade 7-9 make two trips (one in the fall and one in the winter) of three days duration to Chandos. Senior students may also make trips for retreat weekends, or for specific class-related purposes such as band excursions, physics (astronomy) trips, and environmental studies outings. In the summer, Chandos operates for seven weeks as Camp Ke-Mon-Oya, a full residential camping program for children from age 8 to 15.

**What special events go on in the school during the year?**

A Get Acquainted Night in late September/early October, Parent/Teacher Interviews in early November (grade 7-9) and early December (grade 10-12) and an Open House in February are scheduled events for parents to visit the school and the staff. Other significant events are: Chandos outdoor education trips in September for grades 7-9, Spiritual Emphasis Week in the spring, winter Chandos trips in February, winter ski trips, Junior High Science Fair in April, Festival of the Arts in May, golf tournament in May, Athletic Banquet in May, grade 8 and grade 10 class trips (usually to Quebec and Ottawa) in May, grade 8 and grade 12 graduations in June. We also offer swimming lessons at TYS and a residential camping program at Chandos during the summer months. These provide activities for students of various ages and employment opportunities for some of our senior students as well.

**What kind of computer facilities does TYS have?**

TYS has three separate computer laboratories, each designed to meet the needs of different grade levels. Our junior lab is used by Grade 7 and 8 students for their keyboarding classes; the intermediate lab for Grade 9 and 10 Introduction to Computing and Applications courses; and the senior lab is used for the more advanced Grade 11 and 12 computer courses. The three labs are networked together and high speed Internet access is available from all three rooms. Students have access to the labs outside of class time to enable them to work on projects related to other coursework.

**How does TYS monitor Internet access by students?**

All students at TYS use the computer labs with a personal user I.D. This allows for all network and Internet activity to be monitored and logged and traced to a specific individual. Hardware filtering and proxy servers which monitor all network traffic help us to avoid spyware, viruses and undesirable content to help avoid those accidental web hits and pop up banners that cause so much trouble. This also allows us to filter material that may be considered inappropriate or that we don't want accessed by the student body (e.g. Facebook, YouTube etc...) The computer labs are always well supervised and students are not permitted to use the school's network for casual, personal purposes. Parents and students agree in writing that they will use the computer network for school purposes only or suffer disciplinary action. We do utilize software that allows us to block specific websites that are considered inappropriate or that we don't want accessed by the student body (e.g. YouTube) We have installed an internet filtering appliance that sits between the Internet and the school computers. This helps to monitor what and where students are visiting when using the computers. This appliance is updated daily to keep up with the number of "bad" sites that are out there. Students are not permitted to bring personal computers to school for any reason. Computer labs can be used with data being brought to school on memory keys, CDs, or by personal email accounts. All data projectors for students to use have a laptop attached and during class time, each student has a computer to use.

**Does my child need a computer with Internet access and email at home?**

Our computer facilities are designed so that if a student does not have access to a computer, their work can be completed at school. However, it is very strongly recommended that a student have access to a home computer so that projects and assignments can be typed. Internet access is also recommended as there are many excellent resources to be used for school work. Email is not necessary, but is a convenient way to send work back and forth from school, and among group members, when working on projects and assignments. A memory key to transfer data is a preferred alternative to email. In the TYS Student Handbook, some guidelines are given as to suggested configurations of a home computer.

**What science laboratory facilities does TYS have?**

TYS has two senior level science laboratories for senior science courses. A fully equipped chemistry and biology lab complete with water, natural gas, fume hood and all necessary chemicals and glassware allows our students to conduct a wide range of hands on experimentation as part of their classwork. The second lab is a 'dry' lab, primarily for physics, that includes computers and electronic probeware. A third, junior level science laboratory has work benches with water and electricity for conducting experiments appropriate for the grade 7-9 level.

**What do the students do for lunch? Are they allowed to leave the school property?**

Most students bring their own lunch to school each day. We have two separate cafeteria areas, one for Middle School students (grade 7-9) and the other for Upper School students (grade 10-12). Alternatively, students may purchase a lunch from the café each day--the food is good, but the selection is limited. Upper School students may leave the

school property during the day to frequent local eating establishments, but Middle School students may not.

We trust that these FAQ's are helpful to you to understand more about our program and policies. If you would like to discuss any other matters with us, please do not hesitate to contact us at the school!