

10 Questions to Ask During a Tour

Is your first child nearing school age? Choosing a school is a big decision – your child will spend about seven hours of their day at that elementary school. To help you choose the right school for you, here's some questions to ask during a tour.

1. Will the school meet the needs of my child and family?

Will your child need extra help in certain areas? Does he or she enjoy a specific subject or activity? Would you need a school with before and after school care? Does the school provide bussing? Does the school day start time work with your own work schedule?

2. What's the typical class size?

Are class sizes large or small? How are classes organized or grouped? Will your student receive individualized attention? Are there ample opportunities for your child to socialize and make friends at school?

3. How is student behavior managed?

Does the school focus on encouraging positive behavior? What are the consequences for rule-breaking?

4. What makes your school special?

What special programs does the school offer? Do they have student support programs and resources like school counselors? Has the school received any special recognitions or awards?

5. What kinds of work do students do throughout the day?

Are there creative projects in the classroom? Do students complete a lot of worksheets? How much homework is typically assigned? Are students involved in active learning?

6. How do you meet the needs of all students?

What types of teaching methods do teachers use? Do students work together in groups or individually? Is tutoring available? Are there resources for academically gifted or challenged students? ESL?

7. What activities are available beyond the classroom?

Do students participate in extracurriculars and athletics? Are there a variety of extracurricular programs... religious programs... community outreach programs? How often do students attend mass? Prayer services?

8. What's the school environment like?

Are students and staff happy to be there? Do they support each other? Is the school bright and spacious or cold and institutional? How involved are parents and the community? Is God present in the hallways and classrooms?

9. What is the curriculum like?

Is it balanced with many subjects? How integrated is Catholic Christian teaching? Does the school offer specials classes in the arts, music, physical education, foreign language, and technology? Are there co-curricular learning opportunities? Do classes take field trips? Do you prepare children for the sacraments?

10. What does the school expect from its students?

How is student progress and achievement tracked? How often do students take standardized tests? How do students test scores rank?