



**DOLLAR**  
ACADEMY

## **DOLLAR ACADEMY GUIDE TO FORM 1 2023-2024**



Throughout the year there will be many varied challenges for pupils together with many fantastic opportunities, both in and beyond the classroom. This is all part of young people moving on and into adult life. Different expectations are placed on our pupils, but this is balanced with them having more responsibility.

Most importantly, we want all of our pupils to enjoy their first year in the Senior School and we will make every effort to ensure that they make the most of the many opportunities made available to them in their time at Dollar Academy.

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## **Form Classes**

All pupils are put into a Form Class called a Form Tutor Group (FTG) under the care of a Form Tutor, who will be a subject teacher in the Senior School. Great care is taken in trying to ensure that pupils are put in a group with people they will get on with and who can work well together. Pupils will be taught most of their subjects in their FTG. The Form Tutor will be the first point of contact for pupils every morning and the time spent in this group will help build friendships and develop skills over the coming years. The Form Tutor is not just someone who takes the register but is also the first point of contact for any day-to-day guidance issues. Normally, pupils will stay with their Form Tutor until they leave Dollar. How FTGs are working together is reviewed throughout the session and occasionally a small number of pupils may change FTG when they move into Form II. The Head of Year will organise regular Year Group Assemblies which bring all of the classes together so that informative and interesting information can be passed on.

## **The First Day**

The first day in the Senior School will probably be remembered for a long time. The feeling of anticipation about getting started may be quite intense but it should not be a cause for worry. Pupils new to Dollar Academy will have had the opportunity to look around the Senior School before the first day and will therefore recognise some areas of the school and some familiar faces. There is also typically a Transition Day in June where pupils are introduced to their fellow pupils who will come from the Junior School. There will be a first Senior School assembly, after which the year group will be split into Form Tutor Groups (FTG). There are typically seven or eight FTGs of around twenty pupils. Each Form Tutor will be in the Assembly Hall to show pupils to their Form Classroom. Once there, pupils will be given their timetable and be issued with a lot of useful information. The Form Tutor will also help the pupils to find out about school rules, lunches, buses and so on. A lot of this information – and more - can also be found on the Dollar Academy website.

Having been with the Form Tutor for a while and having had a chance to ask some questions, pupils will start their first lessons later that morning, typically in period 3. New pupils will be paired up with two or more *buddies*, pupils who were in the Dollar Academy Junior School and have volunteered for this important role. A buddy's main job is to ensure new pupils know how to get around the school and to ensure they have someone to be with during break and lunch for the first few days while they make new friends.

## **Coming Prepared**

The first few days of classes will inevitably involve a lot of paperwork and getting acquainted with new teachers and classrooms. Pupils will be issued with many new books and folders and will be given instructions for what other materials you require. For the first few days a pencil case (with a pencil, pen, ruler, rubber and sharpener), a pad of A4 lined paper and some lined paper jotters (which you can purchase from *The Sorting Office* in the village) are all that is required. The Maths Department will provide information on which calculator to purchase at some point in the first few lessons. Uniform details are available on the website and all items of uniform must be named.

## **Timetable and Curriculum**

This is what Form I pupils will study, when and where. The range of subjects on the timetable is wide and varied. No two days are the same and pupils will learn many new things in many areas over the coming year. One of the keys to success is organisation. With 16 subjects on every Form I pupil's timetable, they must make sure that they come to school prepared. A homework diary will be issued, and pupils should learn to use it effectively to organise their work and make sure that all homework is completed by the due date. The Form Tutor will always be on hand for any guidance on how to use the diary effectively. Depending on the subject, pupils will also be guided towards homework on digital platforms such as Teams.

Pupils should quickly get into the habit of packing their bag the night before – it only takes a few minutes and establishes a routine which will prepare them for later years. They should not try to take everything for the whole week as bags will get very heavy and there is the risk that, if the bag is lost, considerable time, effort and money will be spent replacing lost books and catching up. It is strongly recommended that pupils take only what is needed for that particular day. A luggage tag (with name, address, school and FTG on it) can help in case of loss.

## **Academic Matters**

Initially, pupils may find that they cover some similar work to that which has already been studied. Pupils in the Senior School have come from many different schools and although there is some revision and consolidation of work to begin with, over the course of the whole year, they will move on significantly in all subject areas. To monitor performance, pupils will be given homework and tests throughout the year. Subject teachers will advise their classes in plenty of time when assessments are coming up. Most subject teachers use Teams to advise pupils of upcoming homework and assessments. If pupils find themselves struggling, they should speak to their teacher or Form Tutor or indeed, any teacher with whom they feel comfortable talking to and they will try to sort out the problem before it has a chance to get serious.

## **Moving Around the Campus**

Dollar has a large campus but it is a very friendly school; most people – pupils and staff - will admit to getting lost at some point, so pupils should not be afraid to ask a teacher or another pupil if they get lost and need pointed in the right direction. For new pupils, their buddy or buddies will generally be around to show them where to go. There is a map of the campus in the current Homework Diary and a full map on the school website.

## **Lunchtime**

All Form 1 pupils take lunch together in the Dining Hall; they can choose from a range of options prepared by our catering partner, Thomas Franks, or bring a

packed lunch. Meals are paid for via ParentPay and menus can be found on the website.

## **Clubs and Activities**

Dollar offers a vast range of clubs and activities and there is sure to be something to suit all tastes and interests. Getting involved in an activity helps pupils make new friends, lets them see a different side to their teachers, develops skills to help in the classroom and in life beyond Dollar and helps overall development. Pupils should be encouraged to go along and try out a range of activities if they are not sure what they would like to do. There is an “Activities Fair” early in the new school session, where all pupils are introduced to the range of clubs on offer and notices about these are shared throughout the year in class and on our digital activities platform SOCS. A list of activities for Form I pupils is on the Dollar Academy <https://www.dollaracademy.org.uk/co-curricular/>. New clubs come up quite often; if any pupil has an idea for a new club they should mention this to their Form Tutor or Head/Assistant Head of Year.