



DOLLAR
ACADEMY

**DOLLAR ACADEMY
PREP SCHOOL
INFORMATION**

2023 - 2024



The Prep School

Taking our core values of be kind, work hard and get involved we enable our children to embrace their learning with enjoyment, develop their interests, bring out their talents and encourage them to be the best they can.

We follow a broad-based stimulating curriculum which reflects the values and principles of Curriculum for Excellence. We place a strong emphasis on learning the core skills in English and Mathematics and prepare the children for life beyond the classroom and outwith the Prep School. Children are encouraged to become confident, resilient and creative learners through our multi-sensory teaching approaches, our outdoor learning opportunities, our trips and events and through our extensive co-curriculum programme. This is further enhanced through our specialist teaching and through links with our senior staff

THE CURRICULUM

The broad curriculum in the Prep School is designed to be progressive in its development and each teacher is very aware of the preceding experiences of individual pupils. We pride ourselves in knowing our children well, having high expectations and ensuring each child meets his or her potential. The curriculum is further enhanced by input from senior school staff who take a leading role in the teaching of Music, Art, Physical Education and Technology and provide taster experiences in French, German and Spanish in Prep 4 and Prep 5.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Our dedicated team of highly qualified and motivated teachers use a variety of teaching styles and resources to ensure the children reach their potential. Teaching is done with the whole class, in small groups or with individual pupils – whichever is considered appropriate. We foster high expectations and differentiation and challenge are built into our curriculum. Our Support for Learning staff are involved with pupils of all ages and abilities. They not only assist children who have specific difficulties but also extend the most able children, in smaller groups. If your child is receiving extra support, we will discuss with you the nature of the help being given, as well as the role you can play in assisting your child. Class teachers and Support for Learning staff work closely together, team teach and plan next steps; extra help may be started by specialist booster group sessions and continued by the class teacher, with on-going monitoring of the child's progress. Children are taught in our modern, safe, well equipped classrooms as well as in specialist classrooms in the senior school and also outdoors in our extensive grounds.

FORMAL CONTACT WITH SCHOOL

We are here to help. If you have any queries or concerns please contact Mrs Harber, Assistant Head of the Prep School at prep@dollaracademy.org.uk

- **A Welcome Event** will be held in September.
- **Formal Parent/Teacher meetings** take place in October, and in February.
- **Christmas Productions** are held in December.
- **Sports Day** is held in June
- **Written reports:** these are sent out in June and provide a review of your child's progress and suggest next steps in their learning.

In addition to these key contact points, we operate an open door policy and invite parents to call, email, make an appointment or pass on a message at the beginning or end of the school day. That said, to minimise disruption during the teaching day, which commences at 8.50am please see the guidance below:

- **Telephone messages** will be taken by the receptionist and passed quickly to the Prep School via internal phone. This method should be used when an immediate response is required e.g. a change of collection arrangement.
- **Urgent** messages will be given directly to class teachers, but teachers do not normally take calls during class time.
- All emails for Prep staff should be directed via prep@dollaracademy.org.uk.
- If you need more than a few minutes with the class teacher before the start or at the end of the school day, please make an appointment.
- Notes for the class teacher can be written in the Prep Diary or left in the homework folder.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Prep School pupils will generally have homework every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evening. It should take between fifteen and thirty minutes and if it takes longer, please inform your child's teacher. The purposes of homework are:

- to establish good study habits from an early age
- to reinforce or revise classwork already taught, or prepare for future lessons
- to further develop independent learning skills
- to encourage the children to share their learning

The types of tasks will vary depending on the age and stage of the pupil. All children will have reading, spelling, maths and language activities each week. These tasks may involve written activities, active games, talk tasks or research. We appreciate parental support and help with homework and it is quite acceptable for you to point out mistakes.

ABSENCES

We ask parents to let the school know by 9.00am by phone or email to not@dollaracademy.org.uk if a pupil will be absent that day, and to contact the school again on subsequent days of absence, unless the period of absence has been clearly indicated in writing in advance. If your child is absent, for a period of time the teacher may provide work to be sent home; however, we do not expect a child who is unwell to do work at home. It is school policy to discourage absence from school for extra holiday days; we have regular school holidays and we encourage you to organise family vacations during these. Teachers do not provide work for family and holiday absences.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

The Prep School operates an After School Care Club and all parents are sent a separate letter about its facilities and costs. The children may be cared for from 3.15pm until 5.30pm. During this time the children complete their homework, have a small snack and play both inside and out.

Please contact prepafterschoolcare@dollaracademy.org.uk

HEALTH and SAFETY of PUPILS

- Please ensure that emergency contact numbers are always up to date.
- Medical information is very important. This includes any occurrence of infections, illnesses or allergies. Please make sure you keep the Medicine Administration page on the Current Parents pages of the school website up to date.
- Children who transfer to Dollar do not always arrive with records and there can be a delay before the previous school sends them on. Please inform us if there is information we should know.
- Should you find nits or lice on your child's hair, please do let us know. Occurrences often peak after the summer holiday and into winter. Long hair should be tied-back.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

There is a wealth of co-curricular activities during lunchtimes for the younger pupils. Children in Prep 4 and 5 are given opportunities to join a number of clubs after school and further information will be sent to you at the beginning of the term. Details of after-school clubs are posted on SOCS, our online information system. If your child is involved in a club after school they should be collected from the Prep School or pre-arranged pick up point at the appropriate time. If a club has to be cancelled, written notice will be given up to twenty-four hours before, where possible, but if there is a late cancellation, and we cannot contact you by phone, pupils can be supervised in school and dismissed at the usual end of club time.

Pupils are not permitted to travel home on the late bus following attendance at an after school activity apart from by pre-arrangement, in exceptional circumstances.

Clubs commence a few weeks into term once we feel the children have settled into their new year school routines.

Please do not drive into the school grounds to collect children attending clubs but park in the Mylne Avenue car park.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC LESSONS

Children may take individual instrumental music lessons with our peripatetic music specialists from Prep 3 upwards. Please see the website for full details and booking form.

PROPERTY AND APPEARANCE

Children often bring toys to school to play with outside. They should not bring expensive electronic games as we cannot take responsibility for the safe return of such games. We try hard to reunite children and their property – especially clothes, but un-named lost uniform is kept for a number of weeks, then washed and given to Thrift Shop. Uniform details are all on the website.

EQUIPMENT

Although we provide all text books, a homework carrier and some stationery, we ask you to equip your child with certain basic items. Prep 2 upwards need one small pencil case with pencils for writing and colouring (sharpened), short ruler, and rubber.

MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones are permitted but, during the school day, they must be switched off and stored away. Prep pupils must seek their teachers' permission to use their phones. The recording of images is strictly forbidden. **We strongly recommend simple call/text only mobile telephones at this age.**

MONEY MATTERS

Dollar Academy runs a **ParentPay** system of online payments for trips, lunches etc details of which are available from the Bursar's Office.

SNACKS AND LUNCHES

Children should bring with them a healthy snack and a water bottle each day. Children in Prep 1, Prep 2 and Prep 3 bring a packed lunch which is eaten in the classroom, under the supervision of the teacher. Packed lunches may be ordered from the Dining Hall. In dry weather the rest of the lunch hour is spent outside. In wet weather children will need a waterproof as we try to enjoy the outdoors as much as possible. On very wet days children may play inside.

Pupils in Prep 4 and Prep 5 may choose to bring a packed lunch or take school lunch in the dining hall. Those opting for a school lunch pay a single amount by *ParentPay* at the beginning of term to cover a substantial period of time. Details about our cashless catering system will be sent separately from the Bursar's Office. The cost per lunch is £4.50. Pupils are escorted to the dining hall by staff and supervised in the choosing and eating of their meal. They return in groups to the Prep School. Lunch menus are displayed on the school website so as you can discuss choices with your child.

START OF DAY ARRANGEMENTS

The Prep School playground is supervised from 8.30am onwards and children may be dropped off and left from that time, but not before. The Prep School Day starts with a bell at 8.50am.

END OF DAY ARRANGEMENTS and transport

The Prep School day ends at 3.15 pm (*Prep 1). Children in Preps 1, 2 and 3 must be handed into the care of a guardian or adult at the end of the day. Children may use our school buses from Prep 3 onwards (or Prep 1 if travelling on the infant bus to and from Dunblane). Children leave the Prep School, under supervision, before the senior school closes, in order to ensure that they are safely on board their buses before the older pupils. Please see the school website for transport details or email dollaracademy@dollaracademy.org.uk

***Prep 1 finishes at 2.45pm until Friday 15 September and then at 3.15 pm for the remainder of the session.**

Prep 4 and 5 children are permitted to walk to meet their parents at different parts of the school campus, or walk home (if in Dollar) by previous arrangement. Please ensure your child knows their going home arrangements and 'back up' plan.

We ask that Prep pupils leaving school at 3.15pm show consideration around the grounds for senior pupils who are in class working until 3.25pm. We also ask that parents park considerately in *Back Road*, observing the double yellow lines, farm entrances and pavement.

Dogs are not permitted anywhere near the Prep School playground and must be kept on a lead if brought within the school grounds