



DOLLAR
ACADEMY

Guide to Form I
2020-2021

Introduction

As your Head of Year for the coming academic year, 2020 – 2021, I would like to extend a warm welcome to you as you prepare to start your time at the senior school. The change from Primary to Secondary school is, for many of you, probably one of the biggest changes you will have experienced in your daily lives. Life in the senior school is really not so different from what you have experienced so far, but be prepared for some changes. For example, at Dollar we call your year group **Form I** whereas other schools call it S1 – it's not an important difference, but just one example of the way we do things here.

Throughout the year you will meet many and varied challenges. This is nothing to be scared of and you should think of it as part of moving on and into adult life. As a pupil in the senior school, there are different expectations placed on you but this is balanced with you having more responsibility.

Above all, we want you to enjoy your time in the senior school and hope you make the most of the opportunities made available to you in your time here.

Dr Richard Johnson
Head of Form I

Mrs Tamsen Livingstone
Assistant Head of Form I

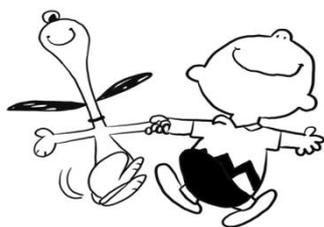
Starting the Senior School at Dollar Academy



You may have loads of questions going around your head and we hope that, after you have read this, many of them will have been answered.

Form Classes

You will be put in a Form Class under the care of a Form Tutor. Great care is taken in trying to ensure you are in a group with people you get on with and can work well with. You will be taught a number of subjects with the same people in your Form Class. You will see your Form Tutor every morning and the time you spend in the group will help you build friendships and develop skills over the coming years. Your Form Tutor is not simply someone who takes the register but will also take great care of your well-being. You will usually stay with your Form Tutor until you leave Dollar. We look carefully at how Form Classes are working throughout the session and there are occasionally a few people who change Form Class when they move into Form II.



The First Day

Your first day in the senior school is probably one which you will remember for a long time. The feeling of anticipation about getting started may be quite intense but should not be a cause for worry. You will probably have been shown around the senior school before

the first day and, while you may not remember everything you have seen and heard, you will recognise some areas of the school.

After assembly, the year group will be split into Form Classes. Your Form Tutor will be with you in the Assembly Hall to show you to your Form Class room. Once there, you will be given your timetable and be issued with some useful information. Your Form Tutor will also help you to find out about school rules, lunches, buses and so on.

Having been with your Form Tutor for a while and had a chance to ask some questions, you will start your lessons. New pupils will normally be paired up with two or more "buddies" who is someone who was in the Dollar Academy Junior School. Buddies have volunteered to do this job and take the position very responsibly. 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 normally involve a lot of paperwork and getting yourself acquainted with your new teachers and classrooms. It's best not to come with too much because you will be issued with many new books and folders etc. For the first few days bring a pencil case (with a pencil, pen, ruler, rubber and sharpener), a pad of A4 lined paper and some lined paper jotters. Your Maths teacher will give you information on which calculator to purchase at some point in the first few lessons there.



Your Timetable and Curriculum

This is what you will study, when and where. The range of subjects you have on your timetable is wide and varied. You will find that no two days are the same and you will learn many new things in many areas over the coming year. The key to success is **organisation**. With 16 subjects on your timetable, you must make sure you come to school prepared. You will be given a homework diary and must learn to use it effectively to organise your work and make sure that all of your homework is completed by the due date – your form tutor can advise you.

Packing your bag the night before takes only a few minutes and gets you into a routine which will prepare you well for later years. However, don't try to take everything for every subject every day. Your bag will be very heavy (which will not be good for your back!) and if your bag gets lost, you will have to spend considerable time, effort and money replacing all the lost books and catching up. Take only what you need for **that** day. A luggage tag on your bag (with your name, address, school and Form Class on it) can help in case your bag does become lost so it can be returned to you safely. There are also a limited supply of lockers available for you to store belongings in school.



Academic Matters

You may find that you cover similar work to that which you have already studied. Don't be put off by this. Pupils in the senior school have come from many different schools and although there is some revision of work to start with, over the course of the whole year, you will move on significantly in all subject areas. To help us see how you are coping with your work, you will be given homework, tests and exams throughout the year. These are nothing to be afraid of and your teachers will usually tell you in plenty of time when you have major assessments coming. If you keep on top of the work and meet the deadlines given to you by your teachers, you should be fine. If, for whatever reason, you find yourself struggling, don't wait for the situation to improve all on its own – speak to your teacher, myself, your Form Tutor or indeed, any teacher with which you feel comfortable talking to and we will try to sort out the problem, before it has a chance to get serious. How you manage your work in Form I will prepare you for what lies ahead as you progress further up the school.



Getting Lost

Dollar is a very friendly school and most people will admit to getting lost at some point, so don't be afraid to ask a teacher or another pupil if you get lost and need pointed in the right direction. If you are new to Dollar, your buddy will generally be around to show you where to go.

Absences



If you know you are going to be off school for any reason, you must email not@dollaracademy.org.uk. If you have an appointment, say for the dentist, bring in a note or email in, your Form Tutor will give you a card which you show to your class teacher at the start of the lesson you will be leaving from. You must always sign out in the school office if you are leaving school during the school day and sign in again (if you return during the same day). If you are ill, your parents should email or telephone the school to inform that you will not be attending on that day. If you are injured and come back on crutches or with a cast, you should see the school nurse (located at Academy Place) on your first morning back before you go to any lessons.

Getting to School

Depending on their home's location, many Dollar Academy pupils walk or get private transport to school. A large number also get the bus. Your Form Tutor will answer any questions you may have about travel to school.



The School Day

The normal senior school day is broken up as follows:-

8.45 – 8.55 am	Form Class with your Form Tutor
8.55 – 9.15 am	Assembly (on Monday/Wednesday/Friday)
9.15 – 10.15am	Period 1 class
10.15 – 11.15am	Period 2 class
11.15 – 11.30am	Interval
11.30 – 12.30pm	Period 3 class
12.30 – 1.25pm	Lunch for Form I
1.25 – 2.25pm	Period 4 class
2.25 – 3.25pm	Period 5 class



At 3.25pm you can go home or get involved in one of the many co-curricular activities on offer.

On Tuesday and Thursday there is an extended Form Class until 9.05 am. Period 1 also finishes at 10.10am and Period 2 is 10.10am-11.15am on these days.

On Friday, there is an extended break until 11.35am – the first bell is at 11.30am – to allow for a staff briefing.



Clubs and Activities

Dollar offers a vast range of clubs and activities and there is sure to be something to suit you. Getting involved in an activity helps you make new friends, lets you see a different side to your teachers, develops skills to help in the classroom and in your life beyond Dollar and helps your overall development. Don't wait to be asked to join a club – go along and try out a few things for yourself if you are not sure what you would like to do. There will be an "Activities Fair" in the first few weeks where you get a chance to go speak to people running an activity and to find out a little more about it. The more you get involved, the more you will get out of your time in the senior school. Here is a list of what activities Form I pupils took part in this year (2019 – 2020).

Year Round Activities

Basketball, Chess club, Christian Union, Computer Club, Debating, Drama, Drumming with the Pipe Band, Fabric, Fantasy Football, Games and Puzzles, Geography – On Top of World, Golf, Pipe Band, Japanese, Rock Climbing, Politics, Technology, Touch Typing, Young Engineers, Strategy Gaming.

Terms 1 and 2 Activities

Art Club, Badminton, Ballroom Dancing, Choir, Curling, Fencing, Football, Gymnastics, Hill-Walking and Mountaineering, Hockey, Jazz Orchestra, Modern Language Trips, Music Theory, Orchestra, Rugby, Salsa Dancing, Skiing, Swimming.

Term 3 Activities

Athletics, Badminton, Cricket (boys and girls), Fishing Club, Tennis – Girls.

If there is an activity you may wish to try and don't see it, it may be because that activity is only available for more senior pupils or that the school doesn't run it yet. New clubs are started quite often so, if you have an idea for a new club, mention this to your Form Tutor or Head/Assistant Head of Year who will advise you.

Your Form Tutor will help you find out about who to see and where to go if you want to join in an activity and you can find more information at the Activities Fair early in term. There is also a yellow information booklet published in the first few weeks of term on school activities which is very helpful.



Lunches and food

The school Dining Hall offers excellent value for money and will provide you with a lunchtime meal of up to 3 courses for £3.80. Everybody in Form I will have lunch there until at least the mid-term break in October. This is so that every pupil has someone to eat lunch with at the start of the year, and no-one gets left out. There is a cashless payment system that you should register for if you will be eating there regularly. It also has a tuck shop that sells sandwiches and rolls if you want something a bit lighter. You can also take the option after the October break to purchase your lunch from one of the village shops or you can bring in a packed lunch. The Dining Hall has space for you to eat your packed lunch or food bought from the local shops. The Dining Hall also sells hot filled rolls from 8.30-8.40am before the start of school and also at the morning interval.

And finally.....

Enjoy yourself! Work hard and make the most of the opportunities available to you. If in doubt – ASK!!

My room is to be found on the ground floor of the Dewar building (Science Building - Lab D02).

Mrs Livingstone, your Assistant Head of Year, can be found in the Maguire Building.

You will also find much more information in the booklets on "Information for Pupils", "Information for New Pupils" and "Information on Co- Curricular Activities" (which is published a bit later in the term.)



The pupils from the year group above you have also produced their own "Rough Guide to Form I at Dollar" which gives you an insight what Dollar is like from the pupils' perspective. The following pages give you a selection of their ideas.

Starting Form I – a Rough Guide

Quotes on **settling in...**

"If you get lost, just ask someone – if no-one is around check your diary."

"The new prep diary is useful – it includes a map that helped me find the different buildings."



"Stay organised and revise a lot – two important things to do."

"Turn up to class promptly so you don't miss anything important"

"Pack your bag the night before so you don't forget anything."

"Starting Form I was not as nerve-wracking as I thought it would be – the buddies were really good and helped me throughout the first few weeks."

"Use your prep diary and check Firefly to record your homework – there are far more subjects to keep track of."



"Don't be afraid to introduce yourself to others, you'll be more likely to make friends."

"The booklet helps to allow you to settle in easily and makes you more relaxed about your first day."

"I enjoy the extra freedom and responsibility you get in the senior school."

Quotes on **Form Classes and Timetables...**

"If you have any problems, make sure you tell a teacher – don't let it bother you."

"You have the same Form Class all the way up the school so try to get along with everyone."

"Don't worry if you are not in a Form Class with your friends as you will soon make new ones."



"I was really happy with my Regi class as a lot of my friends were in it."

"We have a cake day every Tuesday in Registration that has helped us get to know each other well"

"I found settling in very easy – the teachers were kind and helpful."

"The timetable can be confusing at first, but you quickly settle into the rhythm of it."

"I was worried about fitting into my regi class, but it was fine and I soon made new friends."



"Form I is fun – you have more freedom, but it is harder to organise homework"

"Read your timetable and learn where you are meant to be."

Quotes on **Clubs and activities...**

"New pupils will love Dollar as it gives opportunities to try many different clubs as well as giving you a first class education."

"Never be afraid to try new clubs even if none of your friends are."

"Joining clubs is a good way to have fun and make new friends."



"Dollar offers so many opportunities in and out of the classroom. New pupils will blossom here."

"Join as many clubs as possible – they are the best part of the year."

"After school activities are fun to do and help develop your skills."

"There are lots of clubs and everyone is bound to find one they enjoy."

"I've loved all the things I've tried this year – I wish I could do it all over again."

"The coaches really know their stuff."





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