



# Why do we exist?

To challenge  
educational and social  
disadvantage in the  
North

# How do we behave?

Work hard – determined  
to get things done

Be good – behave with  
integrity and honesty

Be nice – show humility  
and be a positive team  
player





# What do we do?

We establish high-performing non-faith academies which maximise attainment, value diversity, develop character and build cultural capital

# How will we succeed?

Aligned autonomy - finding the optimal balance between consistency and self-determination

Academic rigour

Talent first

# About our Trust

- Original school Dixons City 1990
- Dixons Allerton 2009
- Dixons Trinity and Music 2012
- Dixons McMillan 2014
- Dixons Marchbank 2014
- Dixons Manningham 2015
- Dixons Kings 2015
- Dixons Trinity Chapeltown (Leeds) 2017
- Dixons Cottingley 2018
- Dixons Unity (Leeds) 2018
- Dixons Sixth Form 2019
- Dixons Fazakerley (Liverpool) 2021
- Dixons Broadgreen (Liverpool) 2021
- Dixons Brooklands (Manchester) 2022
- Dixons Croxteth (Liverpool) 2022
- Dixons Newall Green (Manchester) 2023

# Choose us if you want:

- a relentless focus on achievement
- an uncompromising position on attendance
- high expectations of behaviour for learning
- an emphasis on self-discipline
- a focus on values like respect and politeness
- a non-faith multi-cultural community where we value each other's differences
- to sign and support our 3-way contract (see academy websites)



# Don't choose us if:

- it's only because it's convenient – it's the local school
- you are not committed to excellent attendance
- education doesn't come first
- you are not prepared to sign up for **all** aspects of the Home-School Contract
- you are not prepared for a longer working week
- you are not prepared for different holidays
- your child really wants to go somewhere else
- your child won't travel independently



# Dixons Expectations

- Nearly all study at least one language (Spanish in most academies)
- All take a broad range of subjects at KS3; strong emphasis on EBacc plus Technology & Creative Arts
- All wear the same uniform
- All attend **compulsory** residential trips (at a small financial cost)
- There are no 'opt-outs' of the core experience

# Behaviour system / learning habits

- High expectations
- Clear boundaries, firm but fair
- We always work with students and families to put things right
- All students start with a clean slate the next day
- Integrity, fairness and respect are important values

# Attendance

- Minimum expectation of a 98% average attendance across the academy
- That means most children are in 100% of time
- No holidays or extended leave are authorised
- We work with attendance staff to make home-visits
- Time off damages educational outcomes
- If we condone absence, we are failing your children

# Hard work is an expectation for all

- We believe it is hard work that leads to success
- Your child will be expected to work hard
- This means in and out of school
- We challenge 'coasting'
- If your child comes here, it is to learn
- We are ambitious, they need to be ambitious
- We don't *just* want to be outstanding
- We want to be *exceptional*, because we care
- That means hard work for all of us



# Pastoral support

- Form Tutor / Learning Advisor
- Head of Year
- SENDCo and in some academies, a nurse
- A highly visible Senior Team, all student-centred
- Lots of opportunity to learn collectively
- Constant focus on our vision and values
- Great results and great young people

# Importance of parents

- Checking planners and bags
- Helping with organisation of equipment
- Ensuring students attend and are on time, 100% of the time
- Ensuring homework is complete, including regular revision
- Working with us when things go wrong
- Ensuring reading beyond homework - strong literacy is the key to success

# Three-way partnership

- We have a clear contract (see the academy websites)
- The contract outlines:
  - what you can expect from us
  - what we expect of our students
  - what we expect of you as parents

# To sum up, what is the Dixons difference?

- Longer working week (different start and finish times between schools)
- Some different holidays from other schools
- Uniform – 100% every day
- More homework
- Compulsory residential trips
- Emphasis on a highly academic curriculum, including a breadth of subjects
- High expectations of attendance, punctuality and conduct
- Nearly all students study a language
- We rarely close, even for strikes and snow
- Positive relationships



# About the admissions process

- It is vital you read the Admissions Guidance and Policy for each academy
- You can appeal but most schools are over-full
- Every year, parents get it wrong
- We want you to get it right
- E-mails / letters for children with exceptional medical or social needs and children of staff applications, need to be sent directly to the Dixons Admissions Office by 31 October 2024. This is required in addition to completion of the local authority CAF.

# Timeline for admissions

- Open evenings – information on the websites
- Our internal form (SIF) – the deadline has already passed
- Assessment in October
- CAF – 31 October 2024
- You can alter choices up until then
- Performing Arts places at Dixons City only
- You will receive a local authority e-mail or letter advising you of place allocation on 3 March 2025
- The start of term is usually in August (a week earlier than most – check the websites). Don't book holidays at that time, just in case.

# Some important messages

- The assessment is not a pass / fail test
- Put schools in *genuine* order of preference on the CAF
- Not too late to change if you've done this already
- You will not be disadvantaged by doing this
- No school sees your preference order
- If you want another Dixons school put it on the CAF too, but don't put a Dixons school down that you don't want
- Your child will need to be able to travel to the school
- Not wanting to get on the bus is not a strong ground for appeal
- There are no games to improve chances

# Some important messages

- Siblings have a strong chance but due to limited places in some ability bands, we cannot guarantee a place
- So, take your other choices seriously
- Your child has no better or worse chance of getting a place according to their ability or where they live
- If you put several Dixons schools, be prepared to take any
- It is not advisable to fill your form with all Dixons schools as some admit by distance
- The exception to this is if Dixons Allerton, Dixons McMillan, or Dixons Trinity is very close to your house or you live in the catchment area for Dixons Cottingley
- Dixons Cottingley do offer some places beyond the catchment area



# About random selection

- This process is applied for each school with this in their admission policy (i.e., Dixons City and Dixons Kings only)
- The child sits the assessment (just once)
- GL Assessment (an external company) then allocate students to 1 of 9 stanines (ability bands)
- They then tell us, how many of the 180 / 160 places at Dixons City / Dixons Kings should go to each stanine (depending on the numbers that have applied for each stanine)
- So, for example, if 20% of applicants at Dixons City are stanine 3, then there will be 36 places for stanine 3. (20% of 180)
- Because most children score in the middle, there are more places in the middle stanines
- There are fewer people who score at the top or the bottom, so there are fewer places in those stanines
- **Make sure your child does not feel they have taken an 11+. If they do not get a place, it is not because they have failed the assessment.**

# About random selection

- A computer programme randomly generates a number that applies to each application for each academy
- The applicants are then placed in random number order from the smallest to the highest
- We then apply the over-subscription criteria (in the order listed below) to the applicants in each stanine, with those applicants moving up the lists
- Students with an EHCP; students who are looked-after; exceptional medical / social\* need, 18 Performing Arts places (at Dixons City only), up to 3 children of staff, siblings (brothers & sisters) in Years 7-10 only, children at Dixons Music Primary (at Dixons City only), children at Dixons Manningham and Dixons Marchbank (at both Dixons City and Dixons Kings academies)
- Applicants that do not meet any of the above criteria then follow in random number order
- At the end of this there are 9 lists for Dixons City and 18 lists (9 bands split into inner & outer area) for Dixons Kings, and these are sent to the local authority
- You can see on the Admissions page of the academy websites how many were allocated in each criteria last year

\* As applied for, and if granted by, the Governing Body

# Why do we have the admissions policies we do?

- Dixons City's original vision was that it was to be city-wide
- This was to make sure the school was diverse and to give a wide variety of students a chance to come
- Dixons City has maintained this position because if we changed to distance, it would have too much of a negative impact on local schools
- Particularly as Dixons City, Dixons McMillan, and Dixons Trinity are all in the same area
- Dixons Trinity has changed because of traffic on Trinity Road and because a lot of Dixons Music Primary children will go there.
- Dixons McMillan has changed so that more places can be offered to children in the local area.
- Other Dixons schools have the admission policy they had when they converted (e.g. Dixons Allerton, Dixons Kings, Dixons Cottingley).
- Dixons City has a performing arts specialism so up to 18 places can be awarded
- None of the academies are grammar schools, we are truly comprehensive

# The Authority's role

- Check the order of preference (schools do not see your order of preference)
- If you live next door to a school who admit by distance and you have put that school first, you are likely to be allocated that school
- That child will come out of the Dixons stanine list
- The next person on that stanine list will then fill that place
- You could be picked out for more than one Dixons school
- The authority will then allocate according to preference order
- If you *were* picked out for both schools, you would be allocated the one that you listed higher, and you will not be able to swap



# In sum, Dixons schools are in high demand

There can be up to 8 times as many applications as places so:

- make sure you have a local school on the CAF (one that admits by distance). This may be Dixons Allerton, Dixons Cottingley, Dixons McMillan or Dixons Trinity if you live close to those schools
- if you are not randomly picked, the LA will go down your list until you are allocated a school
- if you put down all over-subscribed schools, you could be allocated one you did not choose
- make sure you have your schools in genuine order, but don't expect to get your 1st choice
- be prepared to take the school you are allocated, there are no swaps

# What next?

- Ask questions if you are unsure by emailing the Admissions office: [admissions@dixonsca.com](mailto:admissions@dixonsca.com)
- Make sure your CAF is submitted on time (31 October 2024)
- Make sure you put a ***genuine*** order of preference
- On 3 March 2025 the LA will write to you

## **Dixons City only – Performing Art (PA) auditions**

- Outcome of PA will be advised to parents before the deadline for the CAF
- Make sure your child wants a PA place
- Put Dixons City 1st if this is your preferred school
- You can still put other Dixons schools down