

DIXONS MCMILLAN ACADEMY

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS



Contents

1. Letter to applicants from the Principal
2. Academy Overview
3. Academy Improvement Priorities
4. Essential Information
5. Academy Policies
6. Application Process



2. Academy Overview

Like all Dixons Academies, our mission is to establish and sustain a high-performing, non-faith school which values diversity and maximises scholar achievement. Dixons McMillan was the third Free School to be opened by Dixons Multi – Academy Trust, sponsored by the high performing Dixons City Academy. We are a hard working and a truly value driven school, with a culture of high expectations and no excuses. Everything we do is underpinned by our core values of excellence, positivity and respect which has created an ethos of mutual respect in our place of learning and work.

We put scholars learning first, this does not always mean putting staff last. We believe in effort based ability and that with hard work, determination and grit, that every scholar has the potential to be a great learner and every teacher can be a great teacher. We want all of our community, not only to be ready to take their place in the world in which we share and live with each other, but to make a special lasting contribution to it. To help staff and scholars understand what their lasting contribution is each member of the organization has their own sentence; this describes how each of us wants to be remembered. For our current sentences please see the media gallery on the DMA website.

DMA Values

All our community subscribes to our values whole-heartedly. We know that having a common set of values unites and brings people together to work towards a common goal. Our values are important because they demonstrate our commitment to excellence, positivity and respect in our daily actions and interactions. We try to use these words as much as possible in conversations at DMA.

- Excellence:** striving for 100% in everything we do, demonstrated through hard work, grit and determination.
- Positivity:** approaching each day with a can-do attitude, tackling every challenge as an opportunity and fully contributing to a joyful school culture for all.
- Respect:** ensuring all members of the community feel valued through treating everyone around us with kindness, fairness and honesty.

DMA Drivers

At DMA we try to keep things simple and focused on scholar learning. We have learnt from some of the best practices to develop strategies, that remove barriers to learning and ensure all are scholars are fully engaged at all times. At DMA teachers can teach and scholars will learn. Every day we are developing our three drivers which are needed to be successful in learning and in life more generally.

- Growth Mindset:** maximising our abilities and talents through dedication, seeking advice and grasping any moment of disappointment to ensure it becomes an opportunity to learn and develop.
- Employability:** developing attributes and habits which are essential to gain and sustain a rewarding career.
- Relationships:** building strong and professional relationships involves truly appreciating those around us and fully taking part for the benefit of all.

3. Academy Improvement Plan

The Academy Improvement Plan focuses on the strategies that are known to make a difference to the education and therefore the life chances of our scholars. We have three key priorities reflecting our three drivers; each one has a clear intended impact attached to it. Below is a summary of the 2017 – 20 Improvement Plan.

Priority

Sustaining a learning culture inspired by everyone having a growth mindset.

Extending an ethos focussed on employability.

Maintaining a community which is cemented by highly professional and productive relationships at all levels.

Impact

- Demonstrate outstanding progress and achievement for all.
- Ensure learning is rigorous, engaging and underpinned by meaningful feedback.
- Cultivate effective, autonomous staff members at every level of the organisation.
- Create a disciplined and happy school culture.
- Develop scholars who demonstrate grit, hard work and determination.
- Embed a rich and exciting curriculum that provides cultural capital for all.
- Establish a genuine three-way partnership between families, scholars and staff.
- Work with the Dixons Academies to replicate best practice and to contribute to continuous improvement.
- Develop strong external partnerships to enhance the life choices of DMA scholars.



4. Essential Information

DMA Scholars

We do not have a prescribed catchment area at DMA, this means that our scholars come from across the Bradford district. We want Dixons schools to be diverse and we want our school population to represent the ethnic and religious make up of Bradford as a whole. Currently 40% of scholars are eligible for the Pupil Premium funding and 17% are receiving additional support from our Inclusion team. 0.9% (5) of scholars have an EHCP and we have no LAC.

Our scholars each have an advisor who they see daily for registration and DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) programme. Advisors also have one session a week with their advisory to deliver Personal Development Studies (PSHE / SMSC / Citizenship). At DMA nearly all teachers will take on the role of an advisor.

Continuing Professional Development

The academy has a thorough induction programme for all staff which includes an induction weekend in the July of each year before the start of the academic year when most new staff will be joining the organisation. All staff will have annual safeguarding and child protection training. Every member of staff will create Professional Growth Plans (PGPs) with their line manager, these plans will be individual and personalised to ensure every member of staff is striving for and achieving excellence in their role. We believe that practice does make perfect. In order to get even better we rehearse and practice with staff. Teaching staff take part in our Coaching for Excellence programme. What is practiced during a coaching session may vary, for example, one member of staff may practice different questioning techniques with their coach whilst another member of staff might be practicing voice projection in the theatre. We believe that teachers should continually practice the craft of teaching. Teachers will receive weekly feedback on their performance; this feedback is informed by learning walks, work scrutiny and coaching sessions. 100% of teaching staff at DMA agree that they are moving forward as a teacher since joining the academy.

Inclusion

DMA aims to ensure every child can take part in every aspect of the school day regardless of their individual need. Our INCo works very closely with scholars, teachers and parents to ensure we are meeting the needs of every child. We fully believe in quality teaching as the first source of support for scholars. Some scholars will follow a personalised curriculum with the aim of having every scholar both literate and numerate in the shortest amount of time. We are committed to each scholar having a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers are expected, as part of their daily planning, to identify scholars who will receive highly tailored activities in each lesson. Catch-up sessions are offered each week in core subjects, Lexia reading programme runs on a morning and various intervention programmes with a proven track record run over the week. Currently, we do not employ any learning support assistants in the academy, however, where needed some scholars are supported in practical lessons. Inclusion at Dixons McMillan is at the heart of everything that we do, it is not surprising that those scholars who entered the academy below national expectation make strong progress.

Family Dining

Our lunchtimes are different to most other secondary schools. Each member of staff sits with a group of scholars and enjoys a meal with those scholars – we call this family dining. Scholars have roles to perform such as serving the meal and clearing up, just like many families at home. This arrangement ensures that every scholar and member of staff has access to a home cooked meal each day and it allows times for strong professional relationships to be built. Teaching and associate staff take part in this important part of the academy day. In return, staff meals and refreshments are provided by the academy. There is some time at the end of family dining for scholars to relax, visit the library or go outside for some fresh air and for staff to recharge their batteries before formal learning recommences.

Learning Habits

In order to maintain our ethos of high expectations and no excuses, every member of staff has to implement our behaviour for learning policy consistently. We have a simple, effective system for rewards and sanctions in our academy. 'Reward Events' motivate scholars to follow our learning habits over a longer period of time, whilst daily and weekly public appreciations acknowledge small but impressive achievements of our scholars. Scholars who do not meet our high expectations are issued with a same

day correction. The correction session enables the teacher to have a conversation with the scholar and repair any potential damage that may have been caused to that professional relationship. Our 'tough-love' approach is equally balanced with our insistence on no-grudges and the frequent use of verbal descriptive praise. Staff at DMA welcome all scholars in to their classroom. At the start of each lesson we have a short mantra to signal the start of learning and remind scholars that they should be ready to learn.

University Ready

The academy puts a high emphasis on ensuring all scholars will be university ready when they leave us. Although, some scholars may choose a different career path, their education and qualifications should allow them to have that choice. During transition day in Year 6 scholars attend Leeds University so they can begin to understand something about life at university. In school, scholars complete Stretch Presentations which is a Key Stage 3 version of a dissertation and teachers sometimes teach a whole year group at once in our theatre so our scholars begin to experience a university style learning experience from the start of year 7.

Facilities

Our school building offers:

- An impressive central space for large group teaching and various communal activities.
- A modern library off the central space based on the concept of a 'Learning Commons'.
- Separate dining space for around 250 scholars to enjoy family dining at any one sitting.
- Specialist DT teaching rooms (Food, Textiles, CAD-CAM & Resistant Materials).
- Music Technology space, practice and ensemble rooms.
- Purpose built Sports Hall with changing facilities.
- Two specialist Computing suites.
- Inclusion and Pastoral area.
- 19 General Teaching rooms.
- Office space for each department.
- SLT Offices throughout the building.
- Staff refreshment areas.



Academy Day 2017 – 18

Activity	Mon – Wed	Thurs	Fri
Academy opens	07.15	07.15	07.15
Pre-teaching / Morning Mastery	07.30	07.30	07.30
Curriculum day starts	08.00	08.00	08.00
Line up	08.03	08.03	08.03
Collective Learning	08.05	08.05	08.05
Period 1	08.35	08.35	08.35
Period 2	09.30	09.30	09.30
Break	10.25	10.25	10.25
Period 3	10.45	10.45	10.45
Period 4	11.40	11.40	11.40
DEAR / PDS	12.35	12.35	12.35
Lunch (including family dining)	13.15	13.15	13.15
Period 5	13.55	13.55	13.55
Period 6	14.50		
Focus	15.45	14.50	14.50
Dismissal	15.55	14.55	14.55
Curriculum day ends	16.00	15.00	15.00
Co – curricular & corrections start	16.00	15.00	15.00
Co – curricular & corrections end	16.40	15.40	15.40
Library closes	17.00	17.00	17.00
Academy closes	19.15	19.15	18.00

- Weekly CPD (Thursday 15.15 – 16.45)
- Daily CPD / Briefing at 08.10 (scholars in collective learning).
- All staff will need to be able to be in school until 16.45 on a Thursday for CPD.
- All staff will need to be able to be in school for one co-curricular session (this is negotiable with the Vice Principal and could either be before or after the curriculum day).
- When staff are not timetabled for co-curricular activities, they need to be in school for 8am for the start of the school day and are free to leave at end of the curriculum day.

Default Teaching Loads / Contact Time*

- 21 subject lessons.
- 1 co-curricular (including intervention, catch – up or correction duty).
- Advisory (5 DEAR sessions).
- 7 non – contact time within the 28 period curriculum week

**some flexibility maybe required for example a member of staff who is not an advisor may teach two additional subject lessons or a member of staff may do more co-curricular if their subject allocation is below 21 periods*



5. Academy Policies

All of our academy policies are on our website (www.dixonsma.com). We know applying for a new job is a stressful time and there is a lot of preparation to be done. To help potential applicants we have summarised some key policies below. (These should give you a better understanding of DMA and inform your potential application).

Child Protection

All of our community are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our scholars at all times. The Assistant Principal is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DLS) supported by the Principal who has also undergone Named Person Training. We have annual Child Protection and Safeguarding Training for all staff. All new members of staff will be expected to undergo an enhanced DBS check and complete the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board online training module prior to being able to teach scholars unsupervised. Associate staff also complete the relevant module provided by the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board.

Curriculum

We follow a very traditional curriculum with each subject being taught discreetly. Opportunities for cross – curricular working are encouraged and can be powerful learning experiences for scholars when well planned. Some scholars will have a personalised curriculum and so may not have as many opportunities in every subject as the rest of the cohort, although every scholar will experience a broad and balanced curriculum. All Dixons schools are working collaboratively to share practice and share resources. It is hoped that all staff especially middle and senior leaders will work across the group on the curriculum in the hope of mirroring provision in each of the Dixons schools as much as possible.

Teaching & Assessment

We do not prescribe a particular lesson structure or teaching methodology at DMA. We do expect each department to collectively produce a high quality Scheme of Work, which is constructed to ensure that scholars develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to be successful at GCSE level and beyond. Teachers are expected to use data to inform planning and identify which scholars who will be targeted in individual lessons in order to close any progress or attainment gaps that may exist. Scholars will be formally assessed at least three times a year in each subject, through the means of an exam in most subjects. We value feedback highly at DMA. Staff provide scholars' with regular written feedback using the whole school language of successes and next steps. Scholars in English, maths and science receive written feedback at least every three weeks. In other subjects, it is provided every four lessons as a minimum. Oral feedback is a powerful tool and should be used as much as possible, descriptive praise is a common feature in lessons to help scholars move on in their learning and embed a joyful school culture.

Staff Conduct

At all times staff should conduct themselves with integrity, honesty and respect. Staff are expected to interact with others in a respectful professional manner. Staff are not expected to use raised voices in their interaction with others. A place of work ethos is maintained at all times built on strong professional relationships.

Every adult has the responsibility to act as a role model for our scholars (in terms of our dress, communication, body language and behaviours). Staff should aim to follow the scholar rules as much as possible, for example, not having mobile phones on show. Every adult should remember that they are in a position of power and this should never be exploited.

Staff dress professionally and appropriate to their roles. Teachers and office based colleagues are expected to wear business dress, with the exceptions for teachers of PE and DT for practical reasons. Dixons McMillan is a no smoking and a chewing gum free zone.

ICT equipment and services should only be used for professional purposes at all times. If appointed all staff will be asked to sign an agreement detailing what constitutes professional purposes.

6. Application & Selection Process

We strongly advise applicants to visit the academy before applying and meet the staff and scholars. Changing employment is a major life event and informed choices often result in more successful transitions for both the employer and employee. We hope this pack along with the academy website www.dixonsma.com gives you a flavour of our school.

1. Please complete the DMA application form and email it to DMA_HR@dixonsma.com before the advertised deadline (a covering letter is not needed but if you wish to attach a supporting statement rather than completing the box on PDF please do so).
2. Your application will be assessed along with the others against the personal specification for the job advertised (please use this when writing your supporting statement) and then a short list will be created. The academy uses a scoring system to generate a short list.
3. The academy will aim to contact the candidates shortlisted for interview at least 48 hours notice prior to the interview (if you do not hear from us before the interview day please assume you have been unsuccessful on this occasion).
4. If you are shortlisted, we will take up references prior to the advertised interview date. Please remember that one of your references must be your current or most recent employer. Two satisfactory references must be received before we can appoint anyone to a post at DMA. The referee will be asked to provide information about your last/current role in relation to salary, length of employment, suitability to work with children and any disciplinary records along with being asked to assess your skills and abilities for the advertised role. Your referees may be contacted to provide additional information if something is unclear or there is a discrepancy with other information that has been provided. We will not accept e-mail addresses such as gmail.com, yahoo.com etc to contact your referees and please note that your referees should be known to you in a professional capacity as 'friend' is not acceptable.
5. The selection process will involve various activities related to the role. There is likely to be a scholar panel and for teaching roles, applicants will be asked to teach at least part of a lesson. We are fully committed to safeguarding children so there will always be some questions relating to safeguarding issues regardless of the role applied for. As part of Dixons being committed to diversity and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 we would ask any potential candidate to contact us who would like us to consider adjusting the application and selection process to ensure that any candidates with a disability are not disadvantaged in any way by the academy processes.
6. Candidates, once short listed will receive a programme for the day outlining the activities that will be undertaken and any additional resources that might be needed on the day. Candidates will be asked to bring proof of qualifications, photographic proof of identity along with documentation to show they are eligible to work in the UK where appropriate.
7. The interview panel will consist of at least one Senior Leader usually the principal and up to 3 other relevant members of staff / Governor. At least one member of the interview panel will have had recent safer recruitment training.
8. Once all of the selection activities have been completed by all applicants the interview panel will consider to what extent each candidate met the personal specification and a decision will be reached. All short listed candidates will receive a telephone call from a member of the interview panel and feedback will be offered.
9. Shortly after the interview day the successful candidate(s) will receive various documents to read and sign in order to process their employment at DMA. This will include an enhanced DBS check and checks will also be made against the Independent Safeguarding Authority Barred List. All such checks must be satisfactory before any contract can be signed and work can take place at the academy. Any offer of employment is **on the condition of satisfactory references and DBS check**.
10. If you are successful in securing an 'all year round' post (these would normally be associate posts), the academy would expect that you take your holiday entitlement outside of term time.