



Policy Documentation

Admissions and appeals for the admission year 2021-22

Responsibility for review: Executive Principal

Date of next review: October 2020

Last consultation period: 14 December 2018 – 25 January 2019

Determined by: Trust Board – 17 December 2019 (amended 14/10/21 to ensure compliance with the 2021 School Admissions Code)

Admissions

Statement of Policy

The Academy is committed to:

- admitting an intake, reflective of all communities and the whole range of ability;
- resolving a situation where there are many more applications than places available;
- providing a consistency of approach in a potentially emotive area;
- demonstrating that we are applying our oversubscription criteria equally and fairly;
- ensuring that children with special educational needs and disabilities, and vulnerable children are not treated less favourably than other applicants;
- working collaboratively with all schools within the Bradford local authority to improve behaviour and reduce exclusions by participating in the writing of and adhering to the Fair Access Protocol.

The aims are:

- to ensure that places are awarded fairly and openly;
- to ensure that all prospective parents are aware of the admissions procedures;
- to guarantee that all legitimate applications will be processed efficiently and within an agreed time span;
- to demonstrate that our procedures comply with the School Admissions Code;
- to provide an appropriate appeal procedure for those who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their applications which complies with the School Admission Appeals Code.

Procedures for Year 7 entry

The admission arrangements are:

- a) There are 180 places available.
- b) Applications for places at the Academy will be made in accordance with the local authorities Coordinated Admission Scheme, as published on local authorities' websites and in Bradford Local Authority's booklet "A guide for parents about admission arrangements to Secondary Schools". Where the Academy receives more applications than places available, the oversubscription criteria for admission will apply.
- c) Applications must be made on both the Common Application Form (CAF) provided by local authorities **and** the Dixons supplementary form which can be completed online, obtained as a paper copy directly from the Academy, or downloaded from the Academy's website or Bradford Local Authority's website. There will be a strict deadline for return of the supplementary form; forms received by this deadline will be considered first.

Oversubscription criteria

The Academy will admit up to 180 children in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received. All applicants will be admitted if 180 or fewer apply.

If the Academy is oversubscribed, after the admission of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan, where the Academy is named, priority for admission will be given to those children who sit the assessment and who meet the criteria in the order set out below:

- a) Looked-after children or children who were previously looked-after. See note 1 for a definition of these terms.
- b) Children who have *exceptional* social or medical need, supported by a written recommendation from the child's paediatrician/consultant or a professional from Children's Services. The recommendation must explain why the school is the only suitable school to meet the child's needs and why no other school could provide the appropriate support for the child.

Consideration under this criterion will be decided based on the information received and parents will be informed if the application meets this criterion before the end of December. See note 2 for how to apply.

- c) Eighteen places will be awarded to children who show a particular aptitude for Performing Arts.

Where possible, parents will be informed if their child's application is being prioritised under this criterion, prior to the local authorities CAF deadline.

- d) Up to three children of staff, who have been in post for at least two years, or to staff recently appointed to a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. See note 3 for how to apply.
- e) Children whose siblings live at the same address, currently attend the Academy, and will continue to do so on the date of admission (see note 4 for a definition of sibling).
- f) Children who are currently on roll at Dixons Music Primary (see note 5).
- g) All other children. Places will be decided by using a computerised random number generator programme (see note 6).
- h) Children whose parents did not return/complete a supplementary form by the advertised deadline but named the Academy on the CAF, in the order set out above (see note 6).

If demand exceeds places at points d), e) and f), the decision of who will be offered the place will be made by using a computerised random number generator programme (see note 6).

Where a child is allocated a place and they have a sibling/s (brothers or sisters) applying for the same year group, the sibling/s will also be offered a place/s (see note 7).

Notes

1. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

A previously looked-after child is a child who, immediately after being looked-after, became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order or special guardianship order including those who appear (to the Governing Body) to have been in state care outside of England¹ and ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.

¹ A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

2. Applications must be in the form of a letter or e-mail to the Governing Body of the Academy, sent via the Admissions Officer, and accompanied by the supporting information described above.

The e-mail or letter is required in addition to the submission of a completed local authority application form.

3. Applications must be in the form of a letter or e-mail to the Governing Body of the Academy, sent via the Admissions Officer, stating the name, post, and length of service of the member of staff and the child's name and date of birth.

The e-mail or letter is required in addition to the submission of a completed local authority application form.

4. In addition to brothers and sisters, the term sibling includes half, adopted, step, or foster brothers or sisters *living at the same address*. It does not include cousins or other family members sharing a house. Please note that we are heavily oversubscribed, and we cannot always guarantee to offer a place to every sibling.

5. Children must be on roll at the time of allocations and continue to be on roll until the end of Year 6. Please note that we are heavily oversubscribed, and we cannot always guarantee to offer a place to every applicant.

6. All applications directly to the Academy will be allocated a random number of between 1 and 8 that contains up to 7 decimal places. The numbers will be allocated by a computer programme and ranked from the smallest number at the top to the biggest number at the bottom. The applications are then sub-divided into the nine ability bands and ranked in order of the oversubscription criteria.

Late applications on the supplementary form and preferences made on the CAF form only, will be allocated a random number of 9 that contains up to 7 decimal places. These applications are then ranked in order of the oversubscription criteria.

The randomisation process will be supervised by an independent clerk of the independent appeals panel.

7. Where twins and triplets or siblings (brothers or sisters), are applying for the same year group and one sibling gains a place, the other sibling/s will be promoted within the ability band/s for a place. Where only one place remains, a place/s will be offered to the other sibling/s above admission number.

Admitting children of all abilities

Our intake is representative of the full ability range and exactly matches the ability profile of the children applying.

To achieve this, all applicants by the deadline are invited to take a non-verbal reasoning assessment to divide them into 9 ability bands or "stanines", from Band 1 at the bottom up to Band 9 at the top. We will admit the required number from each band based on the spread of ability of those applying.

The assessment is externally set by a well-respected educational assessment agency and the papers are collected by the agency to be marked. The Academy is then provided with a list of each child's assessment mark, similar to an IQ score, with 100 being the average. The marks are divided into nine bands and we are instructed how many children to take from each band e.g. if 20% of those applying are identified in band 5, then 20% of our intake has to be from this band. This ensures that the 180 places we offer reflect the ability range of our applicants.

The likelihood of being offered a place at the Academy is the same in every band.

The assessment is not a traditional entrance exam which children either pass or fail. It is done to ensure that we take a fair number of children across the whole ability range.

Performing Arts places

There are eighteen places (10% of our intake) available each year for children who demonstrate a particular aptitude for performing arts.

To apply for one of these places parents must complete the Supplementary Form, including the Performing Arts page, and return it to the Academy by the deadline.

All applicants for these places will be required to attend workshops and, if they opt to apply for a chosen specialism, an audition, to be considered for one of these places.

Children who are not offered a performing arts place will still be considered for one of the remaining places, along with all other applicants.

Calendar for admission

Mid-July 2020

Dixons' supplementary form available online, as a download from the Academy website, or as a paper copy from Reception.

September 2020

Local authority booklet and common application form (CAF) is made available.

Thursday 17th September 2020

An Open Evening will be held.

3.30pm on Monday 21st September 2020

Deadline for receipt of the supplementary form.

Saturday 3rd October 2020

Non-verbal reasoning assessment for all applicants whose supplementary forms are received by the deadline.

Mid October 2020

Performing Arts process for all applicants who apply for Performing Arts and whose supplementary forms are received by the deadline. Applicants will be allocated a half-day session to attend.

Where possible, parents will be informed if their child's application is being prioritised under this criterion, prior to the local authorities CAF deadline.

31st October 2020

Deadline for receipt of:

- local authorities' common application forms.
- letters or e-mails and any documentation in relation to applications under exceptional need.
- letters or e-mails in relation to applications under children of staff oversubscription criteria.

1st March 2021

Local authorities write with offers made to parents for all schools in their schemes.

In the event of oversubscription, those children who cannot be offered a place will automatically remain on the waiting list at the Academy until the end of December.

In-year admissions

- There are 180 places in each of years 7 & 8.
- There are 165 places in each of years 9, 10 & 11.

Vacancies rarely occur, but where they do, places are not offered based on the length of time names have been on the list. They are filled in coordination with the local authorities and in line with the oversubscription criteria stated above. It is, therefore, possible that a child may be added to the list who qualifies more highly within the criteria than children already on the list. If a place becomes available, the list will be ranked in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Wherever possible, places are also filled on a like-for-like basis (as determined by the non-verbal reasoning assessment) based upon the ability band of the child who is leaving. Looked after children, previously looked after children, and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol (explained below) take precedence over those on a waiting list.

Applications should be made on Bradford local authority's 'In Year Common Application Form' (ICAF) which needs to be returned directly to the local authority. On receipt of an ICAF the authority will send a copy of this to the Academy, and then respond to advise you if a place is available or not.

Fair access protocol

All local authorities must have a Fair Access Protocol, which the Academy is required to be part of, to ensure that access to education is secured quickly for children who have no school place. Children who are dealt with under the protocol are likely to be the most vulnerable or present challenging behaviour and who cannot reasonably be managed through the normal admissions process. Children admitted through the protocol may be placed into a year group which is full and will take precedence over other children on the waiting list. It is the local authority's decision to determine which children are dealt with by the protocol and the Academy is obliged, as are other schools within the district, to admit a proportion of these children.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group, for instance, where the child is gifted or talented or where a child has suffered from particular social or medical issues impacting his or her schooling.

When such a request is made, the Governing Body will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interest of the child concerned, taking into account the view of the Principal and any supporting evidence provided by the parent. The process for requesting such an admission is as follows:

Parents should submit an e-mail or letter to the Governing Body to request that the child is admitted to another year group (stating which year group) and the reasons for their application. Enclosed with this should be any evidence in support of their case; some of the evidence a parent might submit could include:

- information about the child’s academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and
- whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

The Governing Body will advise the parent whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed or the reason for any refusal. Where the Governing Body refuses such a request, there is no right of appeal against a refusal to offer a place in the preferred age group. The right of appeal only applies against a refusal of a place at the Academy.

Waiting lists and appeals

Waiting lists

If your child is not offered a place at the Academy for Year 7, your child’s details will automatically remain on the waiting list until the end of December i.e. one term after the start of the year. You will need to contact the Academy in January to ask for your child’s details to remain on the waiting list.

For in-year applications, the details will remain on the waiting list until the end of the academic year (July). You will need to make a new school transfer application in early July if you wish for your child to be placed onto the waiting list for the next academic year.

Where places become available, they will be filled in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Appeals

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. This is a legal process and places are not ‘reserved’ for appeal panels to offer.

If you are considering an appeal, please contact the Appeals Coordinator for further information.

Tel: 01274 423134

E-mail: appeals@dixonsacademies.com