

May 2024

Dear families

I am writing to ensure that all students, parents and carers have absolute clarity over the expectations that we have for our community, how we ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of our community and the consequences for any students who do not align with our core values.

Our key priority is to ensure that our students and staff are safeguarded and feel safe within our community. As a busy, large, inner city comprehensive academy with a mobile population of students, we recognise that incidents will occur and that sometimes disagreements between students may be hard to resolve. However, we fundamentally believe in our core values of respect, integrity and determination and we believe in the power of a restorative approach when incidents do occur.

This year we have been focused on the safety and wellbeing of our staff and students and, with this as a priority have implemented a wide variety of improvements and developments to our systems. This includes introducing a split break for year groups; providing allocated social spaces for year groups; increasing the number of staff on duty at social times; offering the library as a calm and quiet social space and changing form groups and classes for certain students to promote an improved dynamic in the classroom which allows all our students to focus on their learning. A few students who have repeatedly failed to align to our values or have posed a serious threat to the safety of our community have lost their place at Dixons City Academy.

As an academy we take a very strong line against members of our community who make students or staff feel unsafe and this will continue. We work closely with our Safer Schools Officer with incidents involving discrimination against protected characteristics and we liaise closely with other professionals following incidents that take place out of school, including those that occur on social media. As I am sure you are aware, social media provides the opportunity for negative interactions between students in a very unregulated and uncontrolled environment. It is, therefore, extremely important that you, as parents and carers, monitor your child's use of social media and ensure that you gather evidence that you can share with the police where student's conduct on social media is in question. Historic and recent social media interactions are often cited by students as the spark that ignites challenging interactions between students in school.

Our building is filled with the next generation of lawyers, teachers, scientists, sportspeople, social workers, politicians, journalists, doctors, chefs, entrepreneurs – the list goes on. It is a special environment in which students are supported to be the best versions of themselves and are encouraged to live by our values. You chose DCA because this is our DNA and sheer volume of applications for places at our academy and our outcomes for students tells us that we are doing the right thing. If this culture is placed in jeopardy or is challenged, we will respond proportionately. As such, we will not tolerate intimidation, violence, discrimination or prejudice towards students, and we will not tolerate any behaviours that undermine our academy as a safe space.

I would ask that you talk to your child at home and re-iterate our values and the reason for our existence. At DCA we behave with respect, integrity and determination. If students have concerns or are aware of a potential issue, we ask that they demonstrate their integrity by being an upstander and reporting this to staff.

Please make it clear in your discussions that we have a zero-tolerance approach to students who are not aligned with our values and that persistent or serious incidents such as verbal or physical abuse will be dealt with in the most serious of manners – this may include your child losing their place at DCA.



The vast majority of our students are fully aligned with our values and our data shows us that they enjoy school and feel safe at school. For the small minority of students who may seek to jeopardise this, we are making it very clear that they will not succeed in their aims.

Together we are stronger, as we continue our mission to make our world a better place.

Yours sincerely

Mr Chris Bell
Vice Principal
Dixons City Academy