

November 2023

Dear families

At Dixons City Academy our purpose is excellence. We focus on being the best version of ourselves to change our world for the better. We will consistently be in the top 1% of schools nationally. As an academy we will work tirelessly to ensure that your child achieves the best that they are capable of.

Students made an excellent start to the academic year in their first term. I'm really proud of their determination in lessons and the respect they show to the staff and one another. Students wear their uniform with pride and are always polite. Thank you for working in partnership with us to support your child's education, as we begin the second term.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for students to get the most out of their academy experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The students with the highest attainment in GCSE results have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment. If your child misses school on a regular basis, they are damaging their future life choices. Nationally, it has been proven that children with poor attendance miss out on making the expected progress in skills vital to future education and employment, and find it difficult to catch up. 19 days' absence correlates, on average, to a grade at GCSE in all subjects. Missing just a week can significantly reduce your child's chance of gaining five GCSE strong passes (grade 5-9), as shown in the table below:

Category	% Attendance	Days missed per year	% Chance of attaining 5 grade 5 - 9
100% attendance	100	0 days	94.8
Excellent attendance	98 - 99.99	3 days	
Risk of underachieving	97 – 97.99	5 days	74.3
	95 – 96.99	7.5 days	
Serious risk of underachieving	93 – 94.99	12.5 days	60.4
Serious risk of underachieving	90 – 92.99	15 days	34.7
Extreme risk of underachieving	89.99 and below	17.5 days	26.7

Medical and dental appointments should be made outside academy hours. Any urgent medical and dental appointments must be authorised by the Head of Year and the Attendance Officer by completing the 'Request for Medical Leave of Absence' form which is available from the Attendance Officer. If the absence is authorised, families must ensure they collect the student from visitors' reception, as no student will be allowed out of the academy unaccompanied. Families must also ensure that the student is aware of the appointment and is ready waiting at the authorised time. It is not the responsibility of the academy to inform students of appointments. In emergency situations we will ensure the student is aware of the appointment. In any other circumstances the student must make their own way to reception at the authorised time.

Leave of absence during term time is not permitted. Any extended absence from the academy will be counted as unauthorised and can lead to a fixed penalty notice from the Local Authority and the possible risk of your child losing their place. In order to avoid personal opinion and to ensure complete fairness for all, we refer all leave of absence to the authority.



Punctuality

Late to school is defined as students not being at the academy by 8:15am. Students must then be in Morning Meetings / Morning Mastery ready to learn by 8:18am. If students arrive after this time an 'L' mark is applied to the register. If a student arrives after 10:30am, an unauthorised absence code of 'U' will be applied to the register. The Attendance Officer will send a text message to families informing them when their child is late. If a student is late to school they will receive a P2 PRIDE correction. Families do not need to call to report that their child is going to be late, the student will register with the Home Links Officer who will discuss the reason for their lateness.

Uniform and equipment

As we start term 2, I would like to take the opportunity to remind families of the uniform and equipment expectations. Uniform is an important part of an academy's identity, it reinforces who we are as a community and helps allow students to feel pride in our academy. It also helps prepare students for future life, where many will have to dress smartly for work.

Students are able to wear their PE kit to school on the days they have core PE. This approach is designed to ensure that lesson time and participation in PE are maximised. All students must wear DCA embroidered navy blue tracksuit bottoms as part of their PE kit. For Sports Studies students, they will be required to bring their PE kit with them on the days they have PE. They will have access to the PE changing rooms before and after the lesson. On these days, they should wear the full school uniform as they arrive and leave school premises.

In addition to supporting your child by ensuring they have the correct uniform, please also make sure they have the correct equipment. The equipment list can be found on pages 16-17 of the Family Handbook. The link is here – [Family Handbook](#)

Parking

Please be considerate and safe when parking around the academy. We have residents and businesses neighbouring our building and there have been cases where parking has caused problems. We therefore request that you adhere to the following when parking, dropping off or collecting children from the academy:

- Keep the School Keep Clear marking (zig zags) clear
- Ensure pavements, driveways, the school gates and pedestrian access points are kept clear
- Ensure emergency vehicles would be able to get past if needed
- Adhere to local parking restrictions
- Turn off your engine when parked – engines left idling contribute to air pollution
- Behave in a manner that is respectful towards others – including pedestrians and local residents
- Park further away from school if at all possible

If you don't have any other options and do need to use a vehicle to drop your child off, then we request that you allow extra time in order to drop off safely and legally and park further away from the academy, if you are at all able.

Year 11 Mocks and Cycle 1 Assessments Year 8 and 10

Year 11 will be sitting the GCSE mocks from Monday 13 November until Wednesday 22 November. These mocks are imperative in helping students prepare for their GCSEs in the summer but also because colleges and sixth forms will base their conditional offers for places on the mock grades that students attain. Further details about the mocks can be found in the *Year 11 parent mocks letter 04.10.23*. The link is here - [Year 11 Parent Mocks Letter 04.10.23](#)

Year 8 and 10 will be sitting their Cycle 1 assessments in the week commencing 13 November. These summative assessments will be used by teachers to help identify any gaps in knowledge, so that they can be closed. Year 7 and 9 continue to be tested in lessons through quizzing, questioning and topic tests. They will sit Cycle 2 assessments when they've covered more content.

Yours sincerely



Raouf Mohammed
Principal