

SEND Information Report



Introduction

Dixons Sixth Form Academy provides full-time advanced level courses for students' aged 16-19. Our aspirations are to provide outstanding opportunities for our students and ensure they go onto some of the top universities in the country and into fulfilling careers which challenge and reward student aspirations. Details of the available subjects, entry requirements and admissions policy can be found on the website: www.dixons6a.com. Open evening events are held each year, which provide ideal opportunities for prospective students and their families to visit the Academy, collect information and discuss individual learning needs with both academic and pastoral staff.

It is our belief that the entitlement to a broad, balanced, relevant and scaffolded curriculum is a right for all and should not be constrained by age, gender, creed, race, physical disability, special education need or vulnerability. This entitlement should be delivered by trained personnel, committed to maximum inclusion, who are able to provide a happy, sensitive, secure and developmental environment in which all individuals are encouraged and enabled to undertake self-development, self-advocacy, respect for self, respect for others and respect for the environment. Equality of opportunity, thoughtful and effective assessment, parental involvement and effective teaching appropriate to the needs of the individual and the subject matter should be integral to the planning of educational provision, for all students. The academy is committed to ensuring that every student who is in difficult circumstances gets the extra support that is needed, without stigma or prejudice. All students are equally valued. High standards of behaviour and moral values are set for all.

A committed Inclusion Team offers personal support and guidance to students at Post-16 level and creates a seamless transition into the Academy through direct communication with the student, the feeder school, the parents / carers and any relevant outside support. The team works hard to ensure students feel settled as soon as they arrive and feel confident that their needs are known and are being met.

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The Inclusion Team are fully aligned with the Academy's mission to ensure all students access a top university, regardless of their situation or needs, and have every opportunity to reach their potential. We want all students to access any enrichment they desire to widen their skill set, to access any trip to increase their confidence and to access the curriculum to allow them to discover their passion and immerse themselves into their chosen subjects.

The values of integrity, curiosity and leadership underpin the way the academy works and what is expected of students and staff alike. Support is offered when students require it and ensure student confidence and ability is enhanced. We think about next steps and how the support will enhance students' ability and confidence.

Transition

Pre-induction

The vast majority of Dixons Sixth Form Academy students come from within the Dixons Academies Trust; the SENDCOs from each academy meet regularly to update each other on progress, effective processes and support; this also forms opportunities to discuss Year 11 students who are applying to the Sixth Form and to learn crucial information about them prior to their arrival. Key documentation is also shared including student's EHCPs, IEPs, passports and strategy sheets ensuring the transition runs as smoothly as possible.

All applicants are invited for a career and advice interview during the first round of applications where they will be able to discuss any further information surrounding their SEN, which can then be added to their file. This is also an opportunity to disclose any access arrangements and equipment they will require when they attend.

An equal quality education and experience for all students

All aspects of academy learning and community have been designed to meet the needs of every student in the academy and to give them the opportunities to enhance their understanding and interests. Each student is treated as a unique individual and is subject to the same high expectations, respect, compassion and flexibility as their peers. Every decision and action taken is done so with the aim to ensure that every student can access a top university, thrive in a top job and have a fulfilling life.



Values and Culture

The academy provides a safe and highly structured environment in which all students can learn and thrive. Students take charge of their own learning during study sessions, work hard in lessons and read around the subject and topics. Around the academy, students adhere to our dress code, they keep themselves organised and they develop independence by selecting enrichment opportunities to challenge them and to create new, lasting friendships.

Teaching and Learning

Quality first teaching is at the heart of a truly inclusive curriculum. Learning needs are met through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum taught by teachers who are experts in their fields; we have a very experienced set of teachers who bring a wealth of knowledge, expertise and challenge to each lesson. Students undertake four assessments throughout the year and have opportunities to display their knowledge and successes and to gain important feedback and support where need in structured intervention sessions.

Staffing and Timetable

The timetable is dynamic in its construction and includes regular developmental opportunities for all students including our lecture programme, which takes place on a Monday morning, our enrichment programme and our study support and intervention opportunities. The timetable is designed to focus on working mornings, where students attend lessons, and flexible afternoons where students decide where they want to study in the afternoon; at the academy or at a place of their choosing. This gives students independence to work where they feel comfortable and a solid structure of support.

Lesson time is divided up into four lessons per week per subject; each lesson is 70 minutes in length. The classrooms are modern, bright and accessible and promote a focused work ethic through the resources and equipment available. If students are struggling on any particular topic, intervention is arranged with the subject teacher. Students are regularly assessed to ascertain their understanding and where the gaps of knowledge lie.

Range of support

When starting at the academy, students can access many sources of support:

- All students have a Progress Tutor who maintains an overview of academic progress, emotional health and well-being. The tutor is the best person to speak to in the first instance if students feel they require further support.
- The SENDCo, in close collaboration with the Examinations Manager, implements additional support and Access Arrangements for examinations.
- Teachers are readily available in subject specific intervention sessions where support is needed.
- The Library and quiet working areas provide an appropriate setting for independent learning.
- A Progress Tutor can be made available to assist with, time management, personal organisation and generic study skills.
- The Student Bursary Fund aims to support young people who face the greatest financial barriers to continuing in education.

Involving students in planning support

Initial interview

Information is collated about students identified as requiring additional support. This comes from a range of sources: student, parent, previous educational provider and current teachers. Students who fall behind with their work are provided with additional resources for independent study, or strategies are suggested to enhance progress. The initial discussion focuses upon how individual needs can be met. Details of the initial discussion are recorded, with both parties signing to acknowledge agreement. All teachers, the Progress Tutor and support staff who work with the student are made aware of the needs, the desired outcome, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. This information is recorded on the academy information system (Improve) and Bromcom. Support could include assistive technology or other specialist equipment, personal or mobility care.

Independent learning is encouraged at all junctures; discussions regarding health and safety and increased responsibility for personal medication form an integral part of this initial interview.

Communication with parents

The SENDCo is the first point of contact for any concerns that parents may have concerning a young person with SEND, although the Progress Team or a member of senior staff may also be contacted. Tutors are available by telephone or email during the academy day and meetings can be arranged at mutually agreed times if this would be more appropriate.

Although the Children and Families Act 2014 applies directly to young people after compulsory school age, the academy maintains dialogue with and encourages the involvement of parents, guardians and carers in the vast majority of decisions.



Monitoring Progress

Record Keeping

All students accessing additional support (including those without an EHCP) have a separate file, which is held with the SENDCo, and details the learner journey from pre-induction to progression. Accurate records detail any additional or different provision utilised to meet the student's SEN and note progress towards specified outcomes. This information is revisited at interim points throughout the course to evaluate and adjust support as appropriate. Regular liaison with tutors and subject specialists ensures continuity and consistency.

Review

The effectiveness of support and its impact on the student's progress is reviewed regularly. Formal monitoring occurs at the end of each term.

Accessibility

Physical Access

The academy building is a newly-renovated, modern setting with a thoughtful and open design which ensures a flowing and unobstructed passage for students. The corridors are wide and there are three sets of stairs for students to access as well as three lifts; a lift key can be given to students with a physical disability to ensure they can safely navigate the building and the upper classrooms. There are no restrictions on choice of curriculum. A medical room is available for students to access if they need as well as a dedicated room for students to take any form of medication; it is lockable, private and includes a sink. Disabled toilets are located throughout the academy building as well. A personal Fire Evacuation Plan is provided for all students who require on, which is agreed with the student in advance and made available to subject staff.

Equipment

The needs of students who require assistive technology are addressed on an individual basis, based on what is already being used.

Inclusion

The academy delivers an innovative and exciting Enrichment Programme, with a broad range of activities on offer, catering for all tastes and for all students. This includes:

- sport and physical activity
- music and drama
- emotional wellbeing
- voluntary service
- creative writing
- yoga

Preparing for Adulthood

Learners with disabilities are encouraged to develop their self-confidence by acting as worthy advocates and representatives of the academy; a considerable number of students are involved in work experience placements and community participation. This is in line with the academy's aim to see all students progress successfully and dynamically into adulthood and access a top university.

Tutorials

The tutorial programme contains a range of topics aimed at supporting the transition to adulthood:

- Higher education and/or employment
- Independent living
- Participating in society and contributing to the local community
- Being as healthy as possible in adult life



Frequently Asked Questions

How are the different types of additional need and disability provided for at Dixons Sixth Form? How are young people with additional needs taught?

The needs of all students at the academies are met through well-designed whole school systems and quality first teaching. Flexibility, timely intervention and high quality scaffolding are key to the success of all students and the Academy understands that some children will need additional support in order to achieve equal quality of education and experience. The progress of all students is assessed and reviewed on a regular basis. For a review of how the curriculum and learning environment are adapted and improved in order to meet the needs of children and young people with additional needs please refer to the Academy Accessibility Plan which is also available on the website

What systems are in place for identifying and assessing the needs of children and young people with additional needs?

Information from secondary school and / or other agencies, alongside our own identification, are the main ways in which we identify individual needs. In addition, any member of staff or parent / carer can raise a concern that would then be investigated fully by the SENDCO. This would initially involve a thorough analysis of up to date progress and attainment data alongside current provision before referring to outside agencies if needed.

How are the children/young people and their parents/carers consulted in order to involve them in their education?

One of our key drivers at the academy is autonomy and we support and empower the students to increasingly direct their own lives, including their education, by giving them the tools to be successful now and in the future. Student voice activities are conducted throughout the year and students are encouraged and supported to share their opinions. Parents can contact the Academy and arrange a meeting or phone-call at any time if they have a concern or would like an update on their child's provision. For students with an Education, Health and Care Plan, the SENDCO will arrange a yearly review of their provision (the Annual Review) for parents/carers, key school staff and any outside agencies. Interim reviews can be called at any time if the needs or provision change.

How are young people with additional educational needs and other vulnerable learners supported when moving between phases of education?

A successful transition from secondary school sixth form is key to the success and wellbeing of any post-16 student and so a rigorous and supportive transition programme is in place for all admissions to the academy. All students who receive a place at the academy will meet with the SENDCO on numerous occasions before starting their studies; the SENDCO will officially note down any additional needs and requirements, create an IEP and request relevant information and documents from the feeder school. The SENDCO also contacts parents/carers to outline what has been agreed with the student and to gain any further insight. Transition event will be organised prior to the start of the Autumn term where any identified students will be welcomed. Students will then meet with the SENDCO again on regular occasions to update the IEP where needed and to ensure the support is working.

How are staff supported to meet the needs of students with additional needs?

Focused staff training and support is crucial to ensuring that the needs of all students are met inclusively and all students receive an equal quality learning experience. All staff have access to a range of documents designed to inclusively support students with individual needs and staff training and CPD is incorporated into staff induction, coaching, and the weekly progress briefings that take place on a morning. In addition to this, the SENDCO is available to support with individuals and classes at any time. If a student requires specialist support or intervention that is beyond the current expertise of the academy outside agency help will be sought. This could take the form of staff training or regularly scheduled input from outside specialists.

How does the academy work collaboratively with the local authority and other outside agencies?

Outside agency involvement is sought when the needs of a student go beyond the expertise of the academy. This could be for staff training or to work directly with an individual student or group of students.

How does the academy ensure that it is meeting the needs of students with additional needs who are also Children Looked After (CLA)?

The needs of all students, including those with additional needs and/or who are looked after by the local authority, are met through well designed whole school systems and quality first teaching. The Inclusion team are there to meet the individual needs of all students when they need it and because they need it, including those with additional needs and/or who are looked after by the local authority, and staff within this department have the expertise, experience and contacts needed to ensure this is done to a high standard. All provision is based on the principles of true inclusion; equal quality of education and experience for all students, regardless of starting point, socio-economic background, personal circumstance, special educational need or disability.

What should I do if I am not happy with the provision that has been put in place for my child at the academy?

Please let us know at the first available opportunity. Providing a high quality education is of paramount importance and we believe that a close working relationship between the academy, student and parent / carers is crucial in achieving this. We actively seek to collaborate with parent / carers on a cycle by cycle basis but understand that things can change much more quickly than this. We are always happy to arrange a meeting or phone-call in order to discuss a student's provision and how best to meet their needs.

Any complaints to the Academy would follow the standard complaints procedure for the Dixons Multi-Academy Trust, details of which can be found by following the link below: https://www.dixonsat.com/uploads/files/Policies/120445_Complaints_Procedure-1.pdf

