

# Dixons City Free School

## Secondary Application

### Opening September 2012



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## Section 1: Applicant details

<b>Details of Company Limited by Guarantee</b>	
Name:	<b>Dixons City Academy Charitable Trust Ltd</b>
Company address:	<b>Dixons City Academy Charitable Trust Ltd</b> [REDACTED] <b>Bradford</b> [REDACTED]
Company registration number:	<b>2303464</b>
<b>Main contact</b>	
Name:	[REDACTED]
Address:	<b>Dixons City Academy</b> [REDACTED] <b>Bradford</b> [REDACTED]
Email address:	[REDACTED]
Telephone number:	[REDACTED]
<b>Members and Directors</b>	
There are <b>3 Company Directors and members of the Governing Body</b> appointed to date.	
Name:	[REDACTED]
Position:	[REDACTED]
Name:	[REDACTED]
Position:	[REDACTED]
Name:	[REDACTED]
Position:	[REDACTED]
Name:	
Position:	
Name:	
Position:	
Name:	
Position:	

Does the Company Limited by Guarantee have any links (through the members, directors or otherwise) with any other charitable or commercial organisation? **Yes**

If Y please provide their name and Charity Commission number and describe the role that it is envisaged to play in relation to the Free School:

**Dixons Allerton Academy (1127926). As a member of the Federation of Dixons schools, Dixons Allerton Academy may provide additional support and capacity.**

If your organisation is an existing independent school, please provide your six digit unique reference number: **N/A**

## **Declaration to be signed by a Company Director**

I confirm that the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge and that if the application is successful the Company will operate a Free School in accordance with the requirements outlined above and the requirements of the Independent Schools Standards\* and the Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State.

Signed:

Print Name: 

Date: **31<sup>st</sup> May 2011**

Each Member and Director of the Company should also complete and return the personal information and declarations from Section 9 (which is in a separate downloadable form).

## Section 2: Outline of the school

Proposed school name:	<b>Dixons City Free School</b>							
Age range:	<b>11-19</b>							
Proposed numbers in each year group at point of opening and explanation of how pupil numbers will expand to fill the school over time.  If your application includes nursery provision, please add additional rows as appropriate.		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
	Reception							
	Year 1							
	Year 2							
	Year 3							
	Year 4							
	Year 5							
	Year 6							
	Year 7	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>
	Year 8		<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>
	Year 9			<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>
	Year 10				<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>
	Year 11					<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>
	Year 12						<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>
Year 13							<b>70</b>	
If an existing independent school, provide details of your latest inspection (including the report), current numbers on roll and total capacity of school.	<b>N/A</b>							
Will your school have a religious character (i.e. be a faith school)? If Y, please specify which faith. Please see notes below (at the end of this table).	<b>No</b>							
Is this an application for a single-sex school? If so, please tick the relevant box.	<b>No</b>							
Local authority area in which the school would be situated (and if near to a LA boundary please include names of neighbouring LAs).	<b>Bradford</b>							

## Section 3: Educational vision

Our proposal is for a four-form entry co-educational 11-19 Free School serving the whole of Bradford, ideally located close to its sponsor, Dixons City Academy in West Bowling. We will open with Year 7 on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012, rising to our full capacity of 720 students by September 2018.

As an Accredited School Provider and a National Support School, Dixons City Academy is looking to build a small federation of three to five schools in Bradford or the surrounding area, offering the same ethos and success to more of the 1,250 Year 6 pupils who apply for a place every year. To this end, we opened our second Academy, Dixons Allerton, in September 2009.

As an outstanding and high-performing school with a comprehensive inner-city intake, we are well placed to replicate our success elsewhere. Over the last 3 years 80 - 90% of our students have achieved 5 A\*-C at GCSE including English and Mathematics. Over the same period 85 - 90% of our students achieved 3 levels of progress in English and Mathematics. We have the trust of our parents and students, and are highly effective at raising their aspirations: while most of our parents did not benefit from higher education, most of our students do. We now want to bring our distinctive brand of success to more families in Bradford.

As our most recent Ofsted report confirms, our provision across the wider "helping every child succeed" agenda is also outstanding. This is evidenced by the fact that there are no underachieving sub-groups by gender, ethnicity or deprivation at Dixons City. As one of very few multi-ethnic schools in Bradford, our brand is strong among all local communities. We aim to make a significant contribution to community cohesion, both by working in partnership with other local schools and by attracting a mixed intake ourselves.

There is a need across Bradford for 500 additional secondary places by 2015. Our outstanding track record, and with the experience we are getting at our second academy, we believe we are very well placed to make a success of the Dixons City Free School.

The principal activity and objective of Dixons City Academy is the advancement, for public benefit, of education in Bradford by maintaining and developing a high performing secondary school. At Dixons City Free School, we shall achieve high value added across the board primarily by asserting collectively, consistently and strongly enough those shared values which are familiar to students from every background. The Dixons City Free School will truly reflect the mix of cultures around it, and as a secular school it will not be owned by any one of them, but by them all.

The sponsor's vision and mission is to provide high quality education and training, enriched throughout by technology, for the benefit of its students, staff and the wider community of Bradford. In seeking to fulfil this purpose, the Free School aims:

- To listen to and have high expectations of every student, regardless of their ability, gender or background and to challenge every individual to reach their full potential.
- To create and maintain an environment based on mutual respect in which students develop a sense of pride and belonging and become self-disciplined and self-reliant individuals.
- To provide a safe environment where all students can enjoy and achieve.

- To develop independent and responsible students through a range of team strategies and the use of information technology.
- To develop high level skills in the application of information and communication technologies amongst students of all abilities, giving them a head start as they enter further and higher education or employment.
- To equip all students with the knowledge and attitudes to play a positive role as active citizens in society as a whole.
- To give all students the opportunity for personal development and high self-esteem through experiences beyond the formal curriculum.
- To provide students with the knowledge and confidence to adopt healthy lifestyles.
- To support the concept of life-long learning by encouraging all students to continue in education or training after the age of 16 and by offering the local community a broad range of adult education courses in partnership with other organisations.
- To develop an active and responsive partnership with parents to enable them to support their children's education.
- To establish mutually beneficial partnerships with industry, commerce and other organisations within the Community of Bradford.
- To offer a range of appropriate professional development opportunities for all the Free School's staff to extend their skills and maximise their career potential and to provide a supportive environment for the training of future teachers.
- To invest in advanced educational technologies by participating in national and international research and development projects.
- To provide value for money for the funds expended.

The Free School's main driver is the replication of its heavily oversubscribed sponsor, Dixons City Academy. It also draws inspiration from the Charter School movement in the US. Several of our team have visited the highly successful Charter Schools in New York and this bid incorporates some elements of their mission and model. In this way we hope to refresh and reinterpret the vision and values of the original CTC set up 20 years ago.



## Section 4: Educational plan

### 4.1 Admissions

The Free School's admissions policy will comply with admissions law, the School Admissions Code of Practice and the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice as they apply to maintained schools. The Free School will have regard to and have an independent appeal panel which acts in accordance with the Secretary of State's guidance on exclusions. The admissions policy will ensure that the Free School meets the statutory requirements (i.e. "provides education for pupils of different abilities who are wholly or mainly drawn from the area in which the school is situated"). The Free School will take up its place on the local Admissions Forum.

Admissions will be fair banded. The main oversubscription criterion will be randomised selection, as it is at Dixons City Academy, because this promotes the best ethnic mix of students in a city of largely mono-ethnic provision. The sponsors will also consult the Local Authority and other interested parties as to the appropriateness of a sibling rule.

Looked After Children and students with Statements of SEN will be given priority. There is no intention for the Free School to select up to 10% of its pupils by aptitude for any specialism.

#### **The admission arrangements for the year 2012/2013 will be:**

- a) There will be 112 places available.
- b) These children will be taken from the defined city-wide catchment area i.e. Bradford post codes 1 through to 12, 14, 15, 17 and 18.
- c) Applications for places at the Free School will be made in accordance with the Local Authority's Co-ordinated Admission Scheme, as published in the Authority's booklet "Guide for Parents about Admissions to Secondary Schools".
- d) Applications must be made on both the Common Preference Form provided by the Local Authority (LA) and the Free School's own additional form.
- e) There is a strict deadline of 4.00pm on Wednesday 21st September 2011 for return of the additional form. Forms received by this deadline will be considered first.

#### **Criteria for admission**

The following criteria for admission apply in the order set out below:

- a) Children in public care, who apply to the school, will be offered a place.
- b) The admission of children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will be conducted in co-operation with the Local Authority and without reference to the following over-subscription criteria. In addition to this, governors may grant a place to a child with a very exceptional medical or social need on the recommendation of an independent professional.
- c) Children whose siblings at the time of admission will be within Key Stages 3 or 4 at the Free School. The term sibling includes legally adopted children, and step- and half-brothers or sisters living at the same address. Please note that we are heavily oversubscribed and we cannot always guarantee to offer a place to every sibling. Applications must be made on both forms (as specified above) to be considered as a sibling.
- e) Other children living within the postcodes listed above on the basis of independently scrutinised random selection.

## **Admitting students of all abilities**

Our intake will be representative of the full ability range and will match exactly the ability profile of the children applying. To achieve this, all applicants take a non-verbal reasoning assessment to divide them into 9 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 for September 2012. For example, if 20% of those applying are identified in Stanine 5, then 20% of our intake has to be from this band. We will then be instructed by GL Assessment, who run the assessments, to admit 33 students in Stanine 5. The assessment will be, therefore, not a traditional entrance exam which students either pass or fail. It will be done to ensure that we take a fair number of students across the whole ability range.

## **Calendar for admission**

*September 2011*

Prospectus available to parents

*Wednesday 21st September 2011 (4.00pm)*

Deadline for the return of the Free School’s additional form

*During Week beginning 3rd October 2011*

Non-verbal reasoning assessments for all applicants

*31st October 2011*

Deadline for the return of the Common Preference Form (CPF) to the LA

*November 2011*

The LA sends details of these CPF applications to the Free School

*December 2011*

The Free School sends its list of applicants to the LA

*February 2012*

Bradford LA assigns places for all schools in the district

*1st March 2012*

Bradford LA writes with offers made to parents

## **Applications to the Free School**

Every year, many more children apply for the City Academy than we have places for.

	<i>Applications</i>	<i>Places</i>
2011	1,013	165
2010	1,138	165
2009	1,128	165
2008	1,225	165
2007	1,249	165

These figures clearly demonstrate that no-one can be guaranteed a place at Dixons.

## **Right of Appeal**

If a child is not offered a place at the Free School, parents will have the right of appeal. The Appeal Panel will be independent of the school. The Panel’s decision is final and binding on the school.

## 4.2 Curriculum and organisation of learning

### 4.2.1 Expectations around the length of the school day, term and year

Dixons City Free School will open for 380 half-day sessions (190 days) in each school year, beginning from the first term – which will start on the Tuesday immediately following the August bank holiday. This is consistent with Dixons City Academy and the annual up-to-195-days required by a teacher's statutory conditions of service; the additional up-to-five-days are non-teaching work days.

The school day on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday will be structured as follows:

<b>Pre School</b>	<b>Period 1</b>	<b>Period 2</b>	<b>Period 3</b>	<b>Period 4</b>	<b>Period 5</b>	<b>Period 6</b>	<b>Extended School</b>
08.00 – 08.30	08.30 – 09.30	09.30 – 10.30	10.50 – 11.50	11.50 – 12.50	13.30 – 14.30	14.30 – 15.30	15.30 – 16.30
	Tutorial	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5	

The school day on Wednesday and Friday will be structured as follows:

<b>Pre School</b>	<b>Period 1</b>	<b>Period 2</b>	<b>Period 3</b>	<b>Period 4</b>	<b>Period 5</b>
08.00 – 08.30	08.30 – 09.30	09.30 – 10.30	10.50 – 11.50	11.50 – 12.50	13.30 – 14.30
	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5

Pre-School will be compulsory and will include a burst of physical activity (15 minutes) to help improve students' cognitive control in readiness for the days learning, followed by breakfast and registration (15 minutes).

Tutorial time will be used for assemblies, personal development and reading. Students need both robust academic skills and strong character skills in order to be successful. Therefore, we will pay as much attention to the character development of our students as we pay to their academic success. Character development cannot be pigeonholed into a 3-hour tutorial block and we will ensure that the countless student-teacher and student-student interactions that take place every day are character-enhancing. However, tutorial time will be used to explicitly reinforce the school values, teach good discipline and to celebrate collective success and individual strengths. At least one tutorial session each week will be devoted to reading in order to ensure that 'nose in text' time is high and so develop students' appetite for independent reading.

Every Key Stage 3 student at the Free School will be expected to engage in three hours of additional study per week. Students may either be pre-selected for these extension classes based on their individual strengths and weaknesses or they will be able to choose their classes from a variety of inspirational subjects offered. The focus of the extension classes at Key Stage 3 will be on the creative arts and particularly music. We will encourage every student to learn how to play at least one musical instrument. The extended day will also be used for catch-up and targeted intervention.

In KS4, to address pupils' range of interests, a wide variety of further study opportunities will be made available within the extended timetable of the school day. This provides up to 3

hours per week of additional study and intervention.

We recognise that teachers are the key to unlocking student achievement. As such, every teacher – whether a 10-year veteran or an NQT – will have a coach from within the federation of Dixons schools. Coaches will provide teachers with individualised attention to help them achieve their learning goals for each of their students. Our support will be rooted in great modeling, lesson observation and feedback, collaboration and co-planning. To support this process, every teacher will participate in school-based training sessions every Wednesday afternoon. As Dixons City and Dixons Allerton also use Wednesday afternoon for staff professional development, there will be plenty of opportunity for collaboration across the federation.

#### **4.2.2 A broad and balanced curriculum meeting the needs of all pupils**

The sponsor has Applied Learning as one of its specialisms, and offers a good range of vocational and practical courses in all three Key Stages, and especially at 13-19 after an accelerated Key Stage 3 in the core subjects. We shall bring to the new school our excellent academic record, with the highest A Level pass-rate in Bradford, and with particular strengths in English and Media, the Humanities, Maths and the Sciences.

The Free School is committed to providing a curriculum that will prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life and meet our aims as a Dixons Partner School:

- To maximise student achievement in all areas, regardless of ability, disability, gender or race.
- To foster successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve.
- To encourage confidence in our students so that they are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.
- To ensure that our students become responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.
- To equip students with the skills (identified as Dixons skills) needed to participate in the technological, economic, social and cultural life of the country.
- To ensure that students develop the essential skills for learning, life and employment by incorporating personal, learning and thinking and functional skills into their curriculum offer.
- To encourage students to develop the skills needed for employment by including opportunities for business challenges and applied learning in real contexts.
- To ensure students have high aspirations and self-esteem and accept responsibility for their learning.
- To offer students the opportunity for moral and spiritual reflection in order to promote positive emotional health and confidence.

*“Students and staff rise to the challenges presented to them and have sustained and built on achievements since the academy opened in 2005.”*

Ofsted 2007

- To develop a personalised curriculum, which is broad, balanced and coherent, which has content appropriate for students' needs, interests and abilities and which meets legal requirements.
- To ensure the curriculum is innovative and is enhanced throughout by technology.
- To establish appropriate and coherent links across the whole curriculum by highlighting key concepts, skills and processes and drawing together cross-curricular dimensions such as enterprise, creativity, global and cultural awareness.
- To prepare students effectively for their role as a citizen.
- To ensure a range of opportunities for physical activities.
- To ensure that students have the information to make informed life-style choices.
- To ensure the quality of teaching and learning is continually being evaluated and improved.

The Dixons City Free School curriculum will ensure outstanding student achievement, for example by:

- A strong core ensuring that basic skills are embedded at an early stage so that pupils are able to access the wider curriculum.
- A flexible curriculum allowing for adaptations to be made that are responsive to the needs of both individuals and groups of pupils as they progress through the Free School.
- The introduction of an extended school day which includes a wider variety of enrichment and extension activities, including access to sports and arts facilities, ICT equipment and study support.
- A school week and term which maximises and sustains learning.
- A wide range of progression routes for all students, and especially those at risk of failing to achieve 5 A\*-C with English and Mathematics.
- The compression of Key Stage 3 over two years rather than three for some students to provide additional time for the curriculum and coursework at Key Stage 4.
- Regular analysis of student data to drive daily instruction and long-term planning.
- Focussing departmental meetings on the organisation and delivery of the curriculum, on the identification of underachieving students and on specific interventions to address this.
- Involving the community in personal tutor/mentoring and peer mentoring systems to support the wider development of students, and ensure that their activities at school support and are supported by their activities at home and outside school.

A curriculum does not teach students, teachers do. Therefore, all our teachers will be focussed on completely closing the achievement gap for our students, and student performance will be the chief factor in teacher evaluations. This focus will be translated into practice through highly effective teaching:

- Bite-sized, measurable learning intentions and outcomes: Using multiple forms of assessments, teachers will track their students' progress every minute of every lesson.
- Modelled and guided practice: teachers will introduce the learning intentions by modelling a process to attack the lesson aim. Then, the teacher will lead the class into a guided practice of the aim. In which students model their own answers and thought processes, the goal of which is to ensure that every student is set up for sustained, successful independent learning.
- Independent practice: Students will spend the majority of the lesson in a sustained, successful independent practice. In other words, students will do the hard work, whilst the teacher acts as facilitator.
- Assessment, data driven analysis and planning: regular assessment will provide our teachers with the data-rich information they need to edit their unit plans, target their instruction and schedule interventions for struggling students.

We will run extra-curricular and out-of-hours activities every school evening and at weekends. We have particular strengths in sport and the performing arts, but these are supplemented by a wide variety of other clubs in a wide number of subject areas. Ofsted rated this aspect of our provision at Dixons City Academy as outstanding:

Students recognise the academy's extra-curricular provision as a strength. Activities cater for a range of interests and abilities and are wide ranging, including sport, music, drama, residential visits and community projects.

#### 4.2.3 Curriculum model

The Free School will follow the National Curriculum at Key Stage 3. The 31-hour weekly programme includes 28 hours of core curriculum plus an additional 3 hours of enrichment activities. The extension programme will focus on the creative arts (especially music) as well as allowing further curriculum time in literacy and numeracy for pupils entering the Free School below level 4 at KS2.

The table below shows the allocation of hours per subject in Key Stage 3:

<b>Key Stage 3</b>	<b>Year 7</b>	<b>Year 8</b>	<b>Year 9</b>
English	4	4	4
Mathematics	4	4	4
Science	4	4	5
Humanities	4	4	4
MFL	3	3	3
Advanced ICT	2	2	1
PE	2	2	2
Technology	2	2	2
Tutorial	3	3	3
Total	28	28	28
Enrichment	3	3	3
Overall total	31	31	31

Pathways at Key Stage 4 will ensure pupils of all abilities have access to an appropriate choice ranging from traditional GCSEs to BTECs, COPE and Life Skills. The structure of the option blocks will be specific to each year group based on prior attainment and needs of pupils. It will also ensure that the majority of students are able to achieve the English Baccalaureate.

The table below shows the allocation of hours per subject in Key Stage 4:

<b>Key Stage 4</b>	<b>Year 10</b>	<b>Year 11</b>
English	4	4
Mathematics	4	4
Science	5	5
Humanities	3	3
MFL	3	3

2 Options from the Creative Arts, ICT, PE, Technology or alternative high quality vocational provision (where appropriate)	6	6
Tutorial	3	3
Total	28	28
Enrichment	3	3
Overall Total	31	31

The curriculum at Key Stage 5 will be designed to cater for the needs of the cohort and will offer a comprehensive range of A Level and BTEC subjects. Enrichment activities for all pupils will encompass a wide range of pursuits: creative, intellectual and physical.

#### 4.2.4 Approach to disabled pupils and those with SEN

We believe that the entitlement to a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum is a right for all and should not be constrained by age, gender, creed, race, physical disability, special education needs 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 and testing, parental involvement and a variety of teaching and learning styles appropriate to the needs of the individual and the subject matter will be integral to the planning of educational provision, for all students.

*“Students’ individual needs are well understood by staff so that they can tailor support to accelerate progress. Consequently, there is little variation in the progress made by different groups of learners.”*  
Ofsted 2007

The Free School will be 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 whilst appreciating that not all students will already have the ability to meet them.

Since Dixon’s City Academy’s foundation in 1990 we have prided ourselves on our provision for Individual Needs. We have had particular success with Hearing and Visually Impaired children, with those on the Autistic spectrum, and with those who have severe medical needs. We employ our own full-time nurse to work alongside our Individual Needs Department.

Since our conversion to a City Academy in 2005, we have worked increasingly closely with the various Local Authority services, and have been a full partner in the local BAC (South Bradford Behaviour and Attendance Collaborative) since its inception.

Again, it is a distinctive feature of the sponsor school that no ethnic, social, ability or gender subgroup underachieves (DCA Ofsted Report 2007), and this includes students with SEN.

Staff development and training will be at the heart of effective provision for individual needs. All staff will accept personal responsibility for the education of exceptional learners and this should be reflected in the professional development of all staff. We will put in place collaborative teaching and co-operative action-research and evaluation, vital for the development of effective provision, which is in harmony with legislative requirements and progressive educational ideas.

Our commitment and success in this area is reflected in the fact that Dixon's City Academy was the first in Bradford to be awarded the IQM (Inclusion Quality Mark) in 2009.

The Academy's SEN policy will meet the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice. Provision will be in line with all other secondary schools in the district. It is not proposed to locate any designated special provision at the school.

The belief that is expressed in Circular 5 of the Education Act 1988 underpins our Individual Needs departmental philosophy:

Participation in the National Curriculum by students with special educational needs is most likely to be achieved by encouraging good practice for all pupils. Special educational needs are not just a reflection of pupils' inherent difficulties; they are often related to factors within schools, which can prevent or exacerbate some problems. For example: schools that successfully meet the demands of a diverse range of Individual Needs through agreed policies on teaching and learning approaches are invariably effective in meeting special educational needs.

We believe in the principle that each pupil should have a broad and balanced curriculum and that it is not enough for the curriculum to be on offer; it must be fully accessed by each individual pupil. We also recognise that it is vital to measure the outcomes of every student.

### **The Individual Needs Handbook on Policy and Practice**

Full details of the Individual Needs Policy and on its implementation, including details on how the Free School will meet our legal requirements, is contained in the Dixons City Academy Individual Needs Handbook, which is available for consultation on request.

### **Vulnerable Students**

We recognise the importance of our role in listening to all students who are vulnerable for whatever reason. We recognise that some children's vulnerability may make them more at risk from abuse. As such, our approach to Individual Needs plays a vital role in ensuring all students feel that they are listened to and that their concerns are taken seriously.

### **Safeguarding**

The Free School will take seriously its 'duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school' (Education Act 2002 sec 175). The welfare of the child is paramount. All children must have equal rights to protection. We are committed to having in place procedures that will support informed and sensitive management of child protection issues.

The sponsor recognises that there are several inter-linking components which form an integrated framework to provide a protective/preventative service. These are; there are



known operational policies and procedures for dealing with child protection issues, having in place clear structures to support the child protection function (i.e. named persons, named governor and a clear policy), a Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures are operated, that staff understand the expected code of conduct for working with children and that students are empowered and aware of issues related to their own welfare (particularly through the tutorial programme and assemblies). In addition, the Senior Leadership will ensure that every precaution is taken to ensure that we minimise the risk of harm to our students in our school environment and on education outside of the classroom (see related policies below).

We recognise the importance of being vigilant at all times both with regards to those we know and also those we do not and never believing that 'it could never happen here' (see Bichard Report 2004). In relation to this, we recognise that it is possible for staff and volunteers to behave in a way that causes harm to children. We will take any allegation seriously and will follow local arrangements for dealing with this.

The aims of our Safeguarding Policy will be to enable all staff to be aware, sensitively, of the need for child protection in appropriate circumstances; to enable all staff to understand the 'duty of care' placed on them and their role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils to ensure that all staff understand the procedures in place when dealing with potential Child Protection issues; to demonstrate the school's commitment and procedures with regards to child protection; and to contribute to the school's safeguarding portfolio of policies.

Safeguarding students is a core function of the Free School and involves a whole-school approach. As such, this policy relates to many other policies and in particular the following:

- The whole-school anti-bullying policy
- The Health and Safety policy
- The Outdoor Education policy
- The Safer Recruitment policy
- The Professional Conduct policy
- The Individual Needs policy
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff
- Care and Control of Students
- Confidentiality- Students
- Use of School Premises
- ICT policy
- Whistleblowing policy

In order to minimise risk to students, the main elements to our safeguarding practice will be as follows:

- We shall practice safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- We shall continually review all practices in order to establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- We shall raise awareness of child protection issues with students and aim to equip them with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- We shall ensure staff are aware of how to conduct themselves with students.
- We shall recognise that some children are more vulnerable than others and therefore may be more at risk from abuse.
- We shall carry out appropriate risk assessments for all school activities.
- We shall raise awareness with all students of the risks of technologies.

- We shall encourage a positive atmosphere of openness and support where students are encouraged to have the confidence to talk to familiar adults with the understanding that they will be listened to. All staff play an active part in this, but we shall also refer students to Individual Needs or the School Nurse in order that they can have quality talking time if this is needed. The Free School will operate a 'zero-tolerance' approach to bullying.
- We shall have a strong emphasis on student voice through the student council, departmental reviews, policy reviews and the employment of key staff.
- We shall have procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse.
- We shall support students who have been abused in accordance with their agreed CP plan and offer non-prejudicial support for those who make allegations.
- We shall ensure all staff have training in Child Protection procedures at induction. These procedures follow the guidelines set out by OFSTED, Circular 10/95 and Safeguarding Children in Education 2004. Staff will be updated at a minimum of a two yearly interval to ensure everyone is trained in the way to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns. Staff training is tailored to the role of the individual.
- We shall be committed to working with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- This policy will apply to the whole Free School community.

### **4.3 Organisation of pupils**

There will be 4 tutor groups in each of the Years 7 through to 11, containing an average of 28 pupils. There will be one block in each year group, containing four teaching groups with a possible additional fifth 'nurture' group depending on the profile of the cohort.

Pupils will be set according to ability in most subjects; the setting arrangements will allow for smooth movement of pupils between sets. Key Stage 3 'nurture' groups will receive additional literacy and numeracy through reduced MFL / Humanities curriculum time. Key Stage 4 'nurture' pupils may follow alternative high quality vocational courses in addition to the core curriculum of English, Mathematics and Science. Higher ability students will begin GCSE courses in the core subjects in Year 9.

### **4.4 Pupil development and achievement**

All Dixons City Free School leaders and teachers will be focused on completely closing the achievement gap for our students, and student performance will be the chief performance indicator in school, leadership and teacher evaluations.

The Free School will have a strategic development plan, which will set whole school priorities for the year and will be monitored and reviewed in February and May. The Senior Leadership Team will also be set a series of targets at each Key Stage, together with other key performance indicators such as attendance, punctuality and behaviour. 10% of their salaries will be withheld to the end of the academic year and reviewed by governors pending the achievement of the key performance indicators.

Departmental targets will be set for each Key Stage and interim progress rounds. There will be 3 data rounds per year with an identification of under-achieving students. Each Head of Department will be required to follow up any significant under-achievement and the Head of Year will be expected to intervene where a student is under-achieving in 5 or more subjects.

Weekly departmental meetings will focus on the organisation and delivery of the curriculum, on the identification of underachieving students and on specific interventions to address this. In addition to this, a 'data afternoon' after each assessment cycle will be dedicated to reviewing the individual assessments and together creating data-driven instructional plans that target whole class, small group and one-to-one instruction to address gaps in student learning. There will be designated time during the school day, after school and on Saturdays for small group and individual tutoring. Both teachers and students will believe that we need to do 'whatever it takes' to make sure all students learn.

Dixons City Free School will present teachers as positive role models alongside former students, community mentors and champions. It will also look to make extensive use of support staff and teaching assistants from within the community. The Free School will embrace workforce reform by releasing teachers from non-teaching tasks through use of support staff so that teachers can concentrate on their core responsibility of teaching and learning. A systematic programme of self-review and quality assurance followed up with Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and training for all staff will be led by our Training School and will underpin and sustain improvements in teaching and learning.

*"Excellent care, guidance and support ensure that students' personal development and well-being are outstanding."*  
Ofsted 2007

### **Performance Management**

The Free School will have a clear and consistent framework for the assessment of the overall performance of teachers, support staff and the Principal, and for supporting their development needs within the context of the School Improvement and Development Plan and the school's Self Evaluation Form.

We shall:

- Meet the legal requirements of the revised performance management (PM) regulations (S.I. no.2661 2006).
- Show how the arrangements for performance management link with those for school improvement, school self-evaluation and school development planning.
- Minimise workload and bureaucracy by ensuring the performance management process will be the main source of information as appropriate for school self-evaluation and the wider school improvement process.
- Build upon those requirements to implement a performance management model specific to this Free School and exemplary of good practice.
- Create a shared commitment to the highest professional standards.
- Focus attention on more effective teaching and learning to the benefit of the students.
- Ensure the identification of the appropriate individual and collective training and development needs.

The objectives set will:

- Be rigorous, challenging, achievable, time-bound, fair and equitable in relation to teachers with similar roles/responsibilities and experience.
- Address the needs of the teacher as identified through analysis of the relevant data e.g. observations, student progress data, departmental monitoring and assessment against the relevant Standards.

- Be such that, if they are achieved, they will contribute to improving the progress of pupils at the school.

### **Self-evaluation, Monitoring & Support**

The Free School is committed to continuous improvement through a climate of self-evaluation and support for staff development. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring that we meet the aims of our Mission Statement and targets. This will be achieved through continually reviewing the day to day effective and efficient operation of the Free School; and monitoring all areas through rigorous systems of quality assurance.

Our aims are:

- To develop and implement a whole-school self-reviewing strategy in which all who work at the Free School emphasise quality and continuous improvement in all they do.
- That staff actively monitor, evaluate and review their own work and participate in the evaluation and effectiveness of work done by teams with which they work.
- To support the professional development of all staff and encouraging them to become life-long learners.

### **1. Ongoing Monitoring, Evaluation and Support**

This will ensure that all areas of the Free School regularly collect, analyse, and reflect on information about key aspects of their work. Ensure that where performance may be unsatisfactory, staff are appropriately supported to improve performance.

Means of Monitoring and Evaluating Staff Performance:

- All teaching staff will be observed a minimum of 3 times a year. Teachers' performance, including class by class data, student voice, parental voice, results of marking evaluation and student work scrutiny, formal observation, is analysed by the line manager.
- Evidence and judgements about quality of teaching, learning and exam performance are held by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and discussed as appropriate with individual members of staff and teams, with resulting action where appropriate.
- Middle Leaders analyse progress data and guide teams in planning intervention to maximise the achievement of identified groups and students.

Means of Support:

- Where teacher underperformance has been identified, support will be given, and incorporated into the Performance Management process. Sometimes informal support from the Head of Department (HoD) is sufficient to improve performance. When informal support has insufficient impact, more formal support will be given. Support may come in the form of mentoring, coaching, lesson observations or alternative Continuous Professional Development (CPD) arrangements and support from the School Improvement Group (SIG). Evidence of impact will be collected.
- Sometimes support will supersede the Performance Management process.
- Where a teacher's performance and development continues to be a concern, despite recorded support mechanisms being put in place, a referral is made to the Vice Principal and a decision is made over what further support and action should be taken.

### **2. Quality Assurance - Reviewing of work of areas of Academy**

This will ensure that each work area within the Free School undergoes a Quality Assurance Review within a 3 year cycle, supported by the termly Self Evaluation Form (SEF) process. The Free School Review process aims to recognise best practice and identify areas for improvement.

Means:

- All leaders will follow the Free School Development plan cycle and termly SEF to identify agreed areas of strength and to focus planning for improvement. Aspects unforeseen in the annual Development Plan are referred to in the departmental SEF which should be the vehicle for continual self-evaluation.
- The Free School Review will include performance analysis and progress review, lesson observations, student feedback and discussion of evidence against success criteria in identified aspects relating to school performance.
- Where lessons are judged to be unsatisfactory a repeat observation will be carried out and an individual action plan negotiated with the teacher and HoD as appropriate. Where there is significant cause for concern, further support may be put in place (see above).
- Department and Key Stage reviews will be carried out by SLT, and supported by other trained Middle Leaders as appropriate.
- Arising from the Review process is a Review Action Plan which feeds into the School Development Plan.

### **3. The Use of Data**

This will ensure that the Free School implements and continually develops appropriate measures to evidence the extent to which we are 'adding value' to our students. It will also ensure that all areas of the Free School are able to effectively analyse data in order to support the monitoring, evaluation and reviewing of their work against the Free School mission statement, goals, targets and priorities. Finally, it will ensure that all teachers are able to use data effectively to review their own performance and motivate students to achieve aspirational targets.

Means:

- The Link SLT will meet with the HoD in Term 1 each year to review performance, including teacher performance; action points may arise including possible provision of additional support and monitoring. Where specific performance questions have arisen, the HoD will meet with SLT.
- Progress data will be collected from departments at regular intervals and analysed with resulting action points from SLT, Heads of Years and Heads of Department for each cohort or subject area.
- The impact of any intervention will be tracked over time.
- Departments ensure that appropriate assessment methods are used to produce accurate progress reports for students.
- Students and parents will receive information regarding individual student progress and students will be involved in discussions as to what their current progress is and how they can make continued progress.
- Whole-school ICT systems will be used to aid the process of data production and analysis.

## **4.5 Behaviour and attendance**

At Dixons we promote a strong ethos of respect, self confidence and high aspiration. Our ethos is founded on a strong three-way partnership between school, student and family; a highly effective and personalised pastoral system; and a distinctive use of outdoor education for personal development at three key points of a student's school career. All students are nurtured and challenged to achieve their full potential, and it is a distinctive feature of the sponsor school that no ethnic, social, ability or gender subgroup underachieves (DCA Ofsted Report 2007).

One measure of an inner-city school is to what extent it delivers genuine success and real

opportunity to every ethnic sub-group. In our experience in Bradford the challenges are especially some groups of white working class and Asian boys. For them especially, quality of opportunity and equality of opportunity go hand in hand. At Dixons, staff achieve high value added across the board primarily by asserting collectively, consistently and strongly enough those shared values which are familiar to students from every background.

The school's commitment and obligations under this agenda will be taken very seriously. Ofsted 2007 describes how:

Outstanding care, guidance and support underpin the very positive ethos that permeates the academy community. Students receive very good guidance to help them to become responsible young adults who can make healthy and safe choices. Procedures for safeguarding students are very robust. Students who have concerns know which staff can help them or, if more appropriate, they may be referred to another student who has been specially trained to provide counselling.

### **Strong School Culture**

Immediately upon entering Dixons City Free School, you will feel a sense of urgency, order, rigour, focus and joy. Key elements of the Dixons City Free School culture will reflect the outstanding practice we saw in New York and will include the following:

**Core values:** They will appear in every classroom and will be taught, cultivated and reinforced as explicitly as academics.

**Sweating the small stuff:** In many urban schools, teachers and leaders “pick their battles,” only addressing egregious instances of poor behavior. Like the Achievement First schools in the US we will adopt sociologist James Q. Wilson’s “broken windows” theory that even small details can have a significant effect on overall culture, and we believe that students will rise to the level of expectations placed on them.

*“...an academy ethos that enables students from many different backgrounds to grow in confidence and thrive as learners.”*

Ofsted 2007

**University focus:** The message at Achievement First schools is that ALL students are going to

college. We will continuously expose students to university: all of our classrooms will be named after universities, students will make field trips to university campuses, hear speakers talk about university, and, most important, master a university-preparatory curriculum. From the moment our students arrive, they will know what year they are expected to graduate from university. In our achievement-oriented culture, it will be cool to be smart, and all students will work hard to climb the mountain to university.

**Teachers know and care:** Achievement First schools are small learning communities in which all the teachers and leaders know the names of all the students. Dixons City Free School will also be small enabling teachers to develop meaningful relationships with all the students in their advisory.

**Parents as partners:** At Dixons City Free School, parents, students and school leaders will all sign a contract that outlines their shared commitment to hard work and consistent support of one another. While this contract will not be legally binding, it will be an important symbolic commitment that will play an important role in strengthening the relationship between parents

and the school.

**Focus on attendance:** Class time is precious, so clear attendance goals will be set, and strong, swift intervention with students and parents will occur if student attendance falters. A significant part of the Principals evaluation will consist of his or her ability to maintain high levels of attendance.

**Uniforms:** All Dixons City Free School students will wear their uniform with pride.

**Joy factor:** Like Achievement First we believe that great education should be rigorous AND fun, challenging AND engaging, structured AND joyful. Therefore, we will evaluate teachers on their ability to ensure that the JOY factor is high in every class and dominates regular school-wide celebrations.

The sponsor's aim is to work with other schools in the Central Bradford Confederation for the benefit of all young people in the area, co-operating and leading where appropriate, for example to build an effective local Behaviour & Attendance Collaborative, and to develop extended choice for young people at 14-19. We will also look at provision in and relationships with the independent sector, where there are synergies and educational benefits to be gained for all students, and especially those from disadvantaged and excluded communities.

Another strength of Dixons City Academy is Student Voice, which attracted an Ofsted survey visit in March 2009:

The academy has an excellent range of mechanisms for capturing students' views on all aspects of its work. These include questionnaires, reviews of teaching and learning in subjects, reviews of all A-level courses and the work of focus groups on a wide range of topics such as anti-bullying and curriculum issues. Once captured, the students' views are analysed and used exceptionally well to help to inform planning for change and improvement. For example, views on aspects of teaching and learning in all subjects have a high profile in subject and whole school development planning.

Dixons Allerton Academy has led a progressive partnership with a people first development company called 'humanutopia' since December 2009. They help people grow and in doing so, transform cultures. The Academy has worked with 'humanutopia' to deliver unique high impact experiences such as the highly acclaimed 'heroes journey'. Over 140 students from years 9 to 12 have volunteered to become heroes and be supported by 'humanutopia' to break negative cycles at school, at home and in the community by becoming positive role models for younger students. Ofsted 2010 describes the impact of this partnership:

There is a growing self-awareness emerging through the „humanutopia' programme. Students who have participated in this articulate an increasing sense of personal responsibility and willingness to be role models or heroes for their peers. Opportunities for students to train to deliver aspects of the 'humanutopia' experience to their peers are contributing well to the development of their self-confidence and leadership skills.

Examination success is the currency and the passport to an individual's higher education and future career pathway. However education is far more than this, it is about helping to produce young men and women who are happy and who know themselves and what they want to do in life. A partnership with 'humanutopia' will have a profound effect on both the young people and staff at Dixons City Free School by:

- Increasing confidence
- Improving relationships
- Helping people reach their potential
- Improving life chances
- Improving grades
- And most importantly helping people become happier.

The sponsor's aim is to work with other schools in the Central Bradford Confederation for the benefit of all young people in the area, co-operating and leading where appropriate, for example to build an effective local Behaviour & Attendance Collaborative, and to develop extended choice for young people at 14-19. We will also look at provision in and relationships with the independent sector, where there are synergies and educational benefits to be gained for all students, and especially those from disadvantaged and excluded communities.

## 4.6 Community Engagement

Dixons City Academy has ethnic diversity at the core of its brand. As one of very few ethnically mixed schools in Bradford, we celebrate and promote our diversity: our students and families identify it as a distinctive strength of their school. Dixons Allerton Academy will be more ethnically mixed once results improve and it appeals equally strongly to both sections of its immediate local community. We are highly committed to working with other local schools in Bradford to promote social, racial and community cohesion.

The Free School is committed to involving parents closely and positively in their children's education in order that each student may benefit from the best possible learning environment, both at home and in the Academy, focusing on optimum achievement. The Academy strives to achieve an effective and dynamic partnership with parents.

We will welcome all parents into our learning community to help them understand the daily life of the child in the Free School. To achieve this we will aim to:

- Welcome all parents who wish to help in the daily work of the Free School.
- Provide a full and balanced curriculum.
- Strive to educate each student so he or she achieves to the best of his or her ability.
- Provide records and information about each student's educational progress as well as the student's development in practical and social skills.
- Arrange regular meeting with teachers and be available at other times when parents have concerns or questions.
- Welcome all parents to be involved in short-term target setting in both academic and pastoral areas.

*"Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Relationships between students are a particular strength and they feel safe from racism and other forms of bullying."*  
Ofsted 2007



- Let parents know immediately if their child is having any difficulties at the Free School.
- Provide information about education welfare benefits, where parents can go for help and advice about procedures for complaints.
- Arrange facilities for parents to meet informally.
- Reply promptly to all parental concerns.
- Provide regular planned opportunities for parents to feedback on all aspects of our provision.

Dixons City Free School will strive to become a community-focussed school, demonstrating this in practice on a daily basis. We will achieve this by working in a cluster with other schools in the area. We believe that this will present a real opportunity for us to work together in new ways for the future benefit of the children, young people and the communities we will serve.

By working in this way we will support the core mission of our school and the core aims of the 'helping every child succeed' agenda – to ensure that all children:

- Have a flying start in life.
- Have a comprehensive range of education, training and learning opportunities.
- Enjoy the best possible health, and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation.
- Have access to play, leisure, and sporting and cultural activities.
- Are listened to and treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised.
- Have a safe home and a community, which supports physical and emotional well-being.
- Are not disadvantaged by poverty.

To ensure that this happens we will:

- Provide a range of activities and learning opportunities outside the normal school day for children, young people, families and adults, some of which will be available to the wider community.
- Provide a range of additional services/opportunities and relevant information for children, young people, families and the wider community.
- Base our provision on the widest possible consultation with our communities.
- Work in partnership with other schools in our cluster and with other partners and agencies, to ensure that we use a 'joined-up' approach to community-based learning.

Dixons City Free School will become integral to community capacity building, providing not just education and training, but a range of other services, which will support children, young people and adults to raise their achievement and aspirations, and become full active citizens. Dixons City Free School will be at the heart of the heart of local community.

To fully develop its profile as a community focused school, Dixons City Free School will need to consider the extent of its engagement with its community, including typically:

- Making facilities available for children in the community, whether they attend the school or not, and for lifelong learning.
- Actively building links with the wider community, including local community and voluntary groups e.g. tenants and residents associations, health forums.
- Influencing local policies and supporting initiatives in improving the quality of community life e.g. local community forums, children and family services groups.
- Developing extended services on school sites, which can lead to an integrated approach to the provision of local services to meet local requirements.

The Sponsor is committed to fostering good community relations and promoting active contribution to modern British society. The Dixons Allerton Academy replaced an underperforming school with low admissions and a very poor reputation in the local community. Through the innovative appointment of a Community Engagement Manager the Academy has developed strong, active and reciprocal partnerships with local schools and community organisations. The Academy has secured over £150,000 worth of funding for joint projects linked to its specialism, including the development of food growing areas on the local estate, an outside gym for our local park, the development of the Academy grounds for a land based science qualification and an outdoor science lab for key feeder primary schools. As a direct result of these collaborations the reputation of the Academy is improving: feedback from neighborhood forums is very positive and the Academy has a waiting list for admissions into Year 7. Despite only opening in 2009, this year the Academy became the first school in Bradford to be awarded with the SSAT's prestigious Investing in Community Engagement quality mark (ICE).

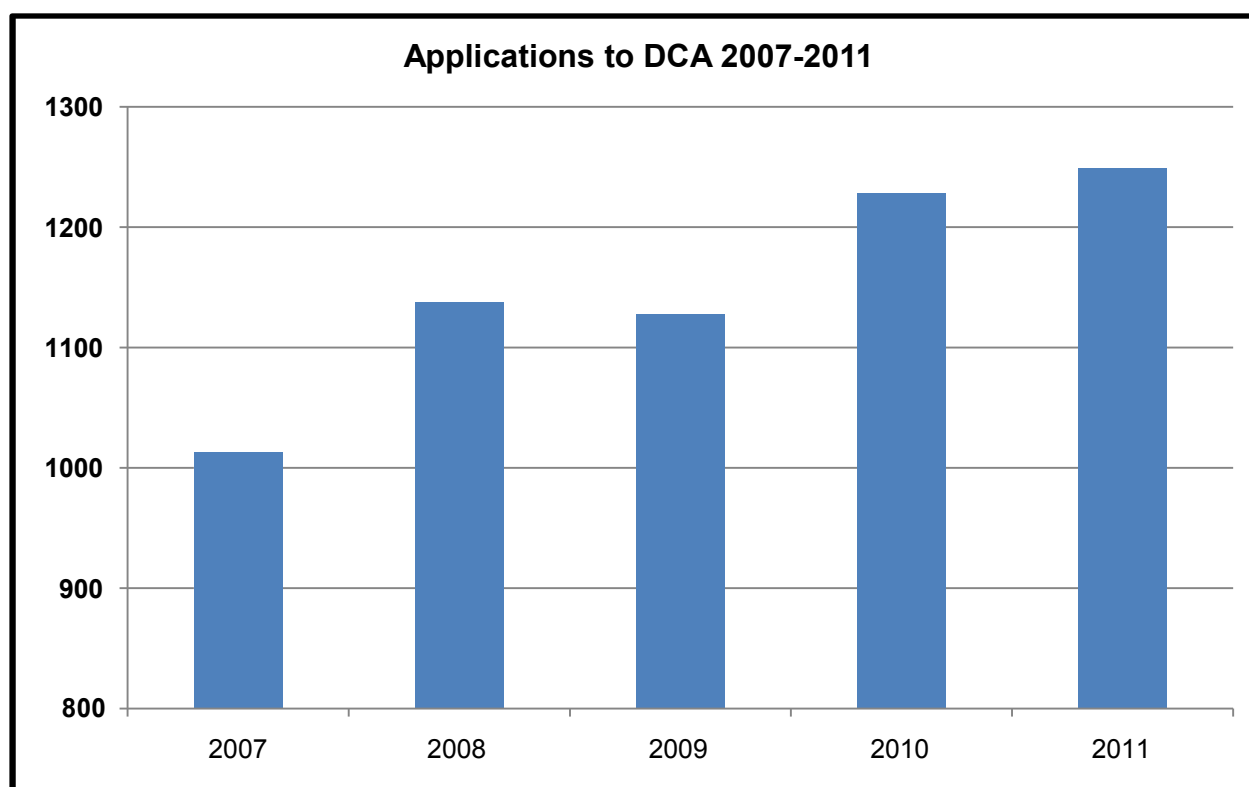
At Dixons City Free School we will aim to build on our health specialism at Dixons Allerton, including its partnership with the local PCT, and our adult training arm at Dixons City, focussing on community and parent learning. The sponsor will build on the experience of its Minerva Centre which serves parents and adults, especially women, in order to combat poverty and exclusion through for example, investing in adult basic skills (e.g. English as an Additional Language), citizenship, training and employment programmes. In this way, we will actively exploit opportunities to strengthen support to families and children by embracing the 'helping every child succeed' and 'extended schools' agenda.

## Section 5: Evidence of demand and marketing

### 5.1 Evidence of parental demand

The district's population is projected to surge from the current 506,000 to 649,400 by 2020, as Bradford is expected to experience the fastest-growing population of all major UK cities. With additional primary places already required in Bradford, this surge in population will result in a shortfall of secondary places by 2013, with a Local Authority estimate of 500 additional places required for Year 7 by 2015.

Demand for places at Dixons City Free School will be high, given the reputation and popularity of its sponsor, Dixons City Academy. Applications have risen from 1,013 for September 2007 (the first Academy cohort) to 1,250 in 2011.



The sponsor's second school, Dixons Allerton Academy, is over subscribed with over 500 applications for 240 places after only two years: the predecessor school had not been oversubscribed since the 1990s.

The Dixons City Free School clearly meets the minimum and comparative criteria for demand. In the short term it will supply additional places in one of the few cities in Britain with a growing population. It will also offer greater diversity and choice to a large group of parents (this year almost 1,100) who failed to secure a place at a Dixons school for their child. As advised by the Department for Education, parental surveys are not required given the overwhelming demand for a Dixons education in Bradford.

Dixons City Free School will serve a city-wide catchment, as does Dixons City Academy. In this way, we will achieve a multi-ethnic school in otherwise relentlessly mono-ethnic provision in Bradford. We wish to extend our success and status as Bradford's most diverse and highest-performing secondary school, offering more places to those who already apply..

## **5.2 Marketing strategy**

With 1,250 applications for 165 places at the existing Academy, Dixons City Free School will be marketed to the current applicants to Dixons City Academy. Each year over 90% of these applicants name us as first choice on the Local Authority's Common Application Form, and around one hundred appeals for a place are heard by the independent panel. The Admissions Policies of both schools will be identical.

Parents will be invited to indicate their willingness to take up a place at the new school if their application to Dixons City is unsuccessful.

There are no plans to broaden our appeal further, or to escalate a demand which we already cannot meet.

## Section 6: Organisational capacity and capability

### 6.1 Capacity and capability to set up a school

#### 6.1.1 Members of the company and their areas of experience and expertise

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

On the Governing Body of Dixons City Academy we have, among others: the Leader of Bradford Metropolitan District Council; a solicitor ([REDACTED]); an accountant ([REDACTED]); a professor at Bradford University; a HR Manager at HM Revenue and Customs; the Managing Director of a local engineering firm; a healthcare consultant; and a former Headmaster of Leeds Grammar School.

#### 6.1.2 Resources, people and skills

Dixons Academies Trust will act as sponsors for this Free School project. Dixons CTC project-managed its own conversion to a City Academy in 2005. This included the refurbishment of and addition to its buildings.

From 2006, Dixons City Academy led the Interim Executive Board and the Local Authority's intervention strategy at Wyke Manor School. This project ended in September 2009, when Wyke re-opened as the Appleton Academy, sponsored by Bradford College.

From 2007, Dixons City Academy led the Academy project at Rhodesway School, following the withdrawal of the previous sponsor. We are therefore familiar with the legacy of highly controversial projects, and have a track record of changing minds and winning support where the confidence of staff and the local community has been lost. Dixons Allerton Academy has had a very successful opening, and we are confident of taking the school out of National Challenge this summer, in only our second year.

Now with two schools, we are building partnership capacity in the areas of Finance, Human Resources, Quality Assurance and School Improvement. The cost of this central capacity is borne equally between the sponsor school (DCA) and the partner school (currently only DAA), capped at 2% budget in order to focus resources on front-line operations. This compares very favourably with the recharges of up to 10% levied by some of the larger Academy chains, levels which we believe damage the education of children. In this way

central capacity can grow to accommodate a larger partnership with the addition of Dixons City Free School and any subsequent projects.

Following our previous Academy projects we have access to a number of contacts and sources of support, including Legal, Project Management, BSF, ICT procurement and Human Resources.

### **6.1.3 Plans for recruiting the Principal Designate**

As Dixons City Free School will be a replication of its Sponsor, the Principal Designate will be appointed internally from within the existing Dixons federation of schools. We have two very strong Senior Leadership Teams, which include two graduates from the Future Leaders programme.

The Principal Designate will be appointed at least two terms in advance of the opening date and will play a significant role in the management of the project in the pre-opening phase. Project management and reporting will relate to:

- The feasibility process
- Building design and construction
- Funding agreement
- Stakeholder consultation
- Education vision and brief
- Curriculum and organisation of learning
- Information and communications technology
- Transition planning, including admissions
- Start up grants
- Governance
- Free School registration
- Employment records and appointments
- Financial systems
- Health and safety
- Marketing and collaboration
- Service agreements
- Every child matters
- Staff policies and procedures
- Environmental improvements

### **6.1.4 Plans for appointing a Governing Body**

We offer strong governance with a proven track record of success as an outstanding school ourselves and in partnership as part of the intervention strategy at the former Wyke Manor School. The two existing Dixons Academies have political representation from Bradford Council, parent representatives, and two elected staff (one teaching and one support). Dixons Allerton has four Dixons City governors as sponsor governors on its board of twelve, with the power to appoint a majority of sponsor governors should this become necessary. With the addition of a Free School and in any case within twelve months, we plan to move to a single governing body and trust across the partnership. We will also invite representation from partners (for example as we have from the local Primary Care Trust at Allerton) and from the local community as appropriate.

## 6.2 Capacity and capability to run a school

As an Academy and formerly as a CTC, we have a very strong network of support and collaboration. Dixons has been at the cutting edge of this movement for almost 20 years, and there is very little that we, or one of our partners, has not experienced and learnt from before.

The Principal of Dixons City spends two days per week as Executive Principal of Dixons Allerton. All members of the Dixons City Senior Leadership Team take responsibility for an area of work with Dixons Allerton, which is monitored as a performance management target and as part of the Partnership Development Plan. These arrangements will be mirrored in and extended to the Dixons City Free School.

### 6.2.1 Financial management of the school

Our Finance Director spends 1.5 days per week at Dixons Allerton, and will act as Finance Director across the group as the partnership grows to encompass its Free Schools. We use the same ICT, and share similar financial systems and reporting structures. From September 2010 we have used the same MIS across the partnership, enabling the monitoring and use of performance data to be standardised across the schools.

### 6.2.2 Leadership and staffing

After Dixons City's designation as a National Support School in February last year, we have taken an opportunity to restructure our Senior Leadership Team and to build further capacity for School Improvement and Partnership work across a small number of schools, should the opportunities arise.

At Dixons Allerton, we are taking the opportunity to appoint an additional member of the SLT at Deputy Principal level with primary expertise to review our curriculum offer and teaching strategies in Years 7 and 8 and to lead on the development of our primary element.

*"The Academy's success is enhanced by the strong three-way partnership that exists between students, parents and staff which in turn supports the academy's outstanding capacity to improve further.."*

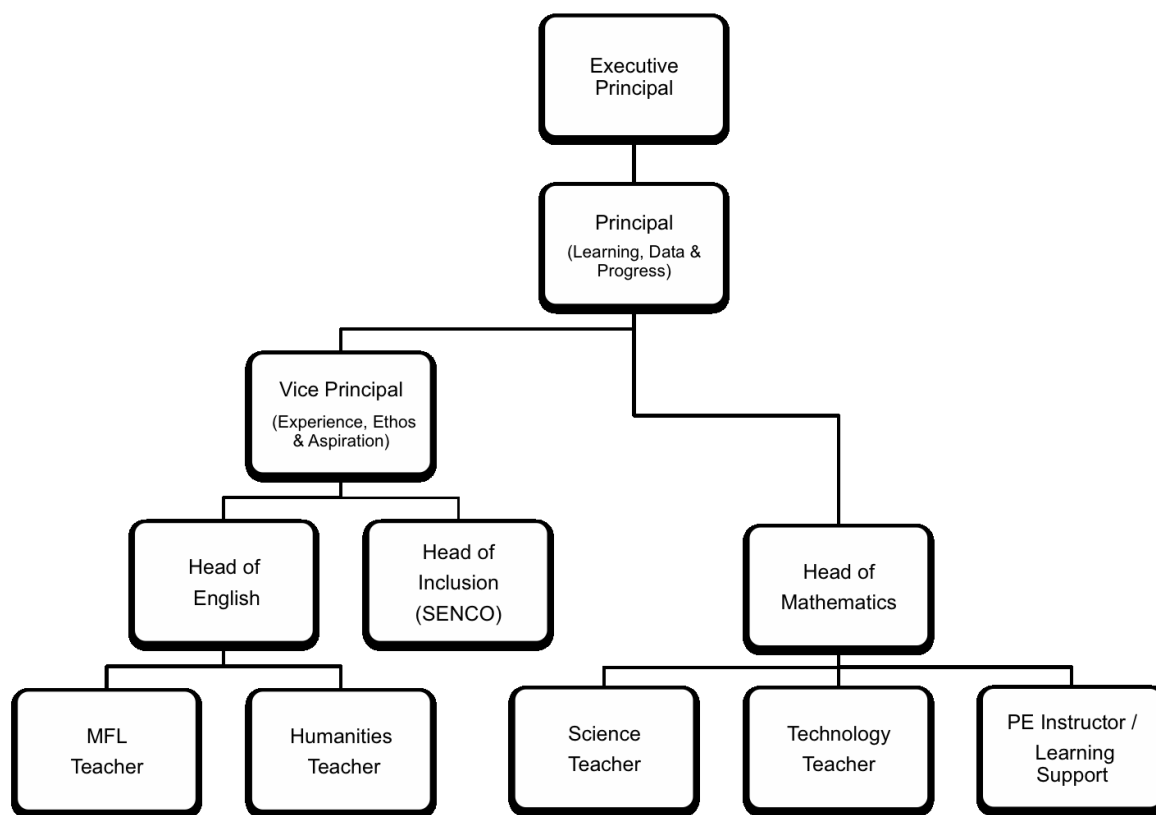
OFSTED 2007

Much of our capacity to drive improvement, however, revolves around ethos and attitudes, shared by students and staff alike:

"A 'can-do' culture has been established in which expectations are high. Students and staff rise to the challenge presented to them and have sustained and built on achievements since the Academy opened in 2005." (DCA Ofsted 2007).

The Free School will open with 2 full-time Senior Leaders. The Principal of Dixons City will also spend ½ day per week as Executive Principal of Dixons Free School to support the Principal and Vice Principal. Two subject leaders will be appointed in the core and they will

line manage 4 class teachers and 1 instructor / learning support assistant. The diagram given below outlines the proposed staffing (teaching) structure for 2012/13 (Year 1):



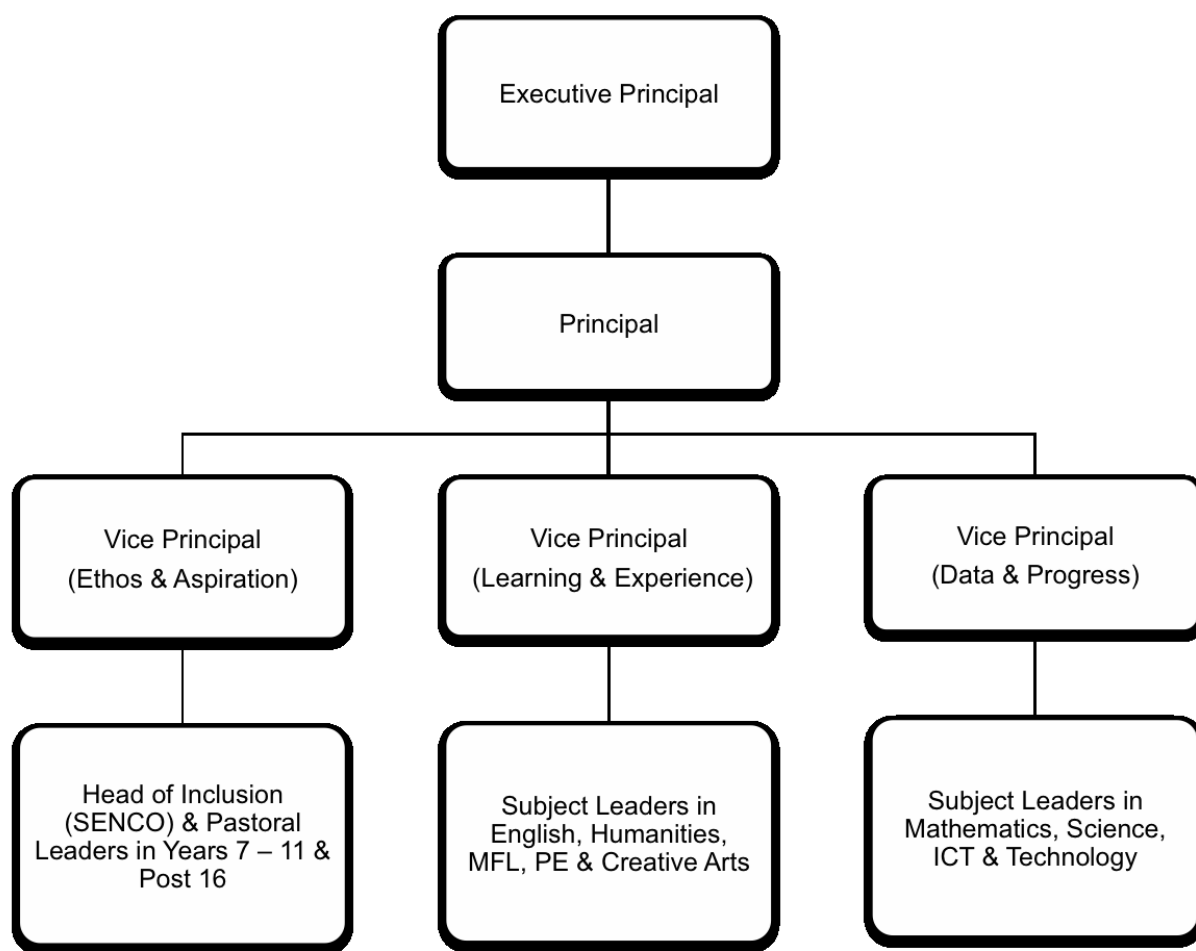
Proposed staffing structure 2012/13 (Year 1)

In Year 2 we will recruit a further four subject leaders and one pastoral leader. We will also increase capacity in the core. In Years 3 and 5 we will recruit an additional Vice Principal to strengthen senior leadership. Every year from Year 2 onwards we will take on a pastoral leader and continue to build capacity at subject leadership and class teacher level.

In Year 5 we will take on a Head of Post 16 ahead of the opening of our sixth form in Year 6. Creative Arts will be delivered through enrichment by outside providers in Years 1 to 4. From Year 5 onwards we will begin to build capacity to provide Creative Arts provision internally. The diagram given on the following page outlines the proposed leadership structure for 2018/19, which reflects the existing structure at Dixons City Academy (Year 7 *overleaf*).

We firmly believe that the most important determinant of student achievement is the quality of the teacher in the classroom. Likewise, the quality of school leaders is the most important driver of teacher success. Consequently, we will go to great lengths to recruit, develop, recognise and retain a team of talented teachers and school leaders. All new Dixons Free School teachers will be expected to complete a rigorous induction period and to participate in continued professional development. Students will be released early on Wednesdays and Fridays to provide three additional hours every week of staff meeting and learning time. Every teacher will have a coach (a senior leader or lead teacher) who will meet with them at least once every two weeks to provide individual coaching and support.





Proposed leadership structure 2018/19 (Year 7)

**The role of the Principal will be:**

- To develop the Dixons City Free School into an outstanding school, with a local, national and international reputation for excellence.
- To maximise all income generation opportunities associated with the school.
- To ensure that the Free School becomes a leading innovator in education.
- To ensure that the Free School's success is reflected in the quality standards awarded.
- To lead and manage the successful establishment of the Free School, and to represent it in all relevant external forums.
- Be responsible to the Board of Governors for all aspects of the operational management and administration of the Free School, the welfare and academic progress of the students and the welfare and professional development of the staff.
- Undertake overall responsibility for quality assurance within the Free School and for its public relations and image.
- To ensure:
  - the maintenance of the high performance standards already associated with Dixons City Academy
  - the recruitment and retention of desired numbers of students and staff
  - the effective delivery of the goals and corporate aims of the Free School
  - the achievement of all Free School targets
  - a purposeful and supportive ethos in which students are self-confident, self-disciplined and self-directed

- the effective delivery of an innovative curriculum
- high levels of attendance, behaviour and achievement by all students
- the provision of all performance indicators, statistics and information required by external agencies
- the implementation of the school performance management process, to ensure:
  - the annual performance management of all staff
  - consistently high levels of performance and commitment from all members of staff
  - appropriate opportunities for professional development for all staff
- a productive partnership with parents, the local community, business and industry
- the effective management of resources, both financial and physical; and
- the maintenance, to a high standard, of the fabric of the buildings and the quality of the physical environment

**The role of the Vice Principal will be:**

- To be accountable to the Principal for:
  - sustaining the aims and objectives of the Free School, and establishing the policies through which they shall be achieved
  - managing staff and resources to that end
  - monitoring progress towards their achievement
- To contribute to (with other members of the Senior Leadership Team):
  - the strategic direction and development of the Free School
  - the efficient and effective development of staff and resources
- To ensure:
  - the effective recruitment and selection of new staff
  - the effective implementation of the performance management policy
  - the school's working practices are free from discrimination relating to race, gender, disability or socio-economic class
  - the school has an appropriate and inclusive curriculum
  - all students make progress and reach their full potential
  - high standards of behaviour, attendance and achievement for all students and ensure they have a voice
  - the school provides for the welfare and needs of all students
  - the school has high quality target setting and monitoring processes
  - the school has excellent relationships with all stakeholders
  - the school is a self-evaluating institution with robust system of quality assurance
- And to:
  - manage staff, developing their autonomy and their contribution to the work of the Free School
  - provide leadership across the Free School
  - be responsible, with the Principal, for staff appointments, taking into account the relevant employment legislation
  - monitor staff attendance; dealing with requests for leave of absence
  - lead the School Development Planning process, ensuring the integration of the school's management, curriculum, pastoral and staffing structures with the continuing development of school facilities
  - to manage the school's involvement in a range of networks
  - sustain the school ethos of respect for the individual, hard work, and celebration of achievement
  - a teaching commitment at a level consistent with the needs of the school and the demands of post
  - undertake any professional duties delegated by the Principal and carry out the professional duties of the Principal in the event of his absence from the school

### **The role of the Head of Department will be:**

- Responsibility for the delivery and development of teaching and learning in their subject throughout the Free School.
- Ensuring that each student is positively encouraged to develop her or his potential to the full. She or he will maintain an overview of work being done and maintain an overview of progress, target and actual levels at all key stages.
- S/he will liaise with as appropriate members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Within these functions and responsibilities, the Head of Department is expected to maintain the health of the department for the benefit of both students and colleagues.
  
- **Leading Learning and teaching:**
  - plan, implement and review the department's curriculum within the framework of the National Curriculum, and the Free School's curriculum philosophy and co-ordinating the production, in conjunction within departmental colleagues, of appropriate schemes of work
  - ensure that assessment is both regular and thorough and that full records of assessment and intervention strategies are kept
  - support department members in dealing with the management of student behaviour and progress
  - organise grouping arrangements of students within the department, according to a clear departmental rationale
  - encourage and promoting cross-curricular developments
  - to encourage links with the community and local industry to develop appropriate contexts for applied learning
  
- **Strategic Direction and Development:**
  - establish the philosophy, aims and objectives of the department, ensuring that they reflect those of the Free School
  - identify priorities for development
  - ensure effective 2 way communication between the department and SLT
  - ensure that whole-school policies are incorporated into departmental documentation and implemented
  - ensure that the department is represented in all curricular matters at meetings
  - liaise with other departments
  
- **Leading and Managing Staff:**
  - promote the development and training of departmental staff, including participation in performance review arrangements and the supervision of newly qualified or appointed teachers
  - ensure that effective formal and informal communication channels are maintained
  - work with others to create a positive climate and shared culture of mutual support.
  - hold regular departmental meetings
  - monitor the effectiveness of other members of the department and negotiating and implementing an improvement plan where appropriate
  - build an effective team through effective delegation of appropriate tasks, department responsibilities and duties
  - manage own workload and that of others to allow an appropriate work / life balance
  - treat team members with equity and respect and be proactive in supporting all team members regardless of their need
  - take time to listen to the views of team members
  - celebrate successes of team members - both work related achievements and life events

- Efficient and Effective Deployment of Resources:
  - keep the department's spending within budget and ensuring that stock and equipment are well cared for and economically used
  - supervise the work of support staff and delegating administrative tasks where appropriate
  - ensure that departmental rooms present a stimulating environment
  
- Accountability:
  - oversee the health and safety of students and staff;
  - co-ordinate SATs, GCSE, A-Level, Applied courses and other appropriate examination entries for the Planning Department
  - liaise with the link SLT and the Vice Principal (Learning & Experience) in all matters concerned with the timetable, curriculum, staffing, assessment and student achievement
  - direct efforts towards improvement as well as day to day maintenance; take appropriate action when performance is unsatisfactory
  - accept responsibility for problems that may arise and actively seek solutions

General Duties:

- to be a Tutor to an assigned Tutor Group if required, and to carry out related duties in accordance with the general job description of Tutor
- to carry out a share of supervisory duties in accordance with published rotas; and
- to participate in appropriate meetings with colleagues and parents relative to the above duties
- to carry out any other reasonable duty that is directed by the Principal

## Section 7: Premises

### 7.1 Possible site options

Dixons City Free School will serve the same city-wide catchment as its partner and sponsor, Dixons City Academy. Any site with good transport links within the city of Bradford would be feasible.

████████████████████ currently houses the Bradford and Airedale Teaching PCT and would be ideal, given its proximity to the sponsor and our proposed Primary Free School at the ██████████ site to the north. The PCT is already in a position to vacate the top floor of the building, and will vacate all of it on its dissolution.

#### Key

*Current Site*

████████████████████

*Proposed Site  
For Dixons Free Primary*

████████████████████

*Preferred Site  
For Dixons Free School*

████████████████████

We are aware that there is another Free School proposal for this site, however, and news of the demise of the PCT or a similar central administration may prove to be greatly exaggerated given the current review of the government's NHS Reforms.

The Hartley Investment Trust has a 17 acre site on [REDACTED] which might be available for a Free School. However, this would be very close to both our second Academy, Dixons Allerton, and to the [REDACTED] site of the new King's Science Academy, a Free School opening in September. The site would allow for a substantial development, however, and possibly an increase in roll, if funding was available to develop it.

The JTI Trust has an 8 acre site in [REDACTED], to the east of the city, and near to playing fields.

[REDACTED], the [REDACTED], is concerned about the shortage of school places in Bradford and has undertaken to identify potential sites for new schools.

The KIFSA (King's Free Schools and Academies) Trust has offered to share its [REDACTED] accommodation from 2013 while a permanent site for us is being built or renovated.

## 7.2 Details of preferred site

Our preferred site on opening would be:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The site is immediately available to us. It is 9.5 acres in total, the main part being 7 acres with an additional 2.5 acres adjacent but on a significantly higher level. The main site is a former car dealership, the bulk of which is a car park with tarmac in good condition. Its building comprises:

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Further details are given in our Application for a Primary Free School.

This site could be shared with the primary school until September 2014, when a permanent site could be ready. Within twelve months it will be clear whether [REDACTED] will become available to us or whether we have to look elsewhere.

If our application for a primary school is rejected, the [REDACTED] site could possibly accommodate a small secondary school, but we would need advice from PfS on this.

## 7.3 Capital investment

Dixons City Academy is a well established Trust with £800k of reserves funding a 15 year capital replacement programme. While we have no capital available for investment in a second school, we do have the financial strength and proven experience to guarantee good maintenance of any building and site secured for us.

# **Appendix I**

## **Section 8a**

### **Initial costs and financial viability**

Financial plan template spreadsheet attached, demonstrating sustainability and in-year operating surpluses.

## **Appendix I cont**

### **Section 8b**

#### **Initial costs and financial viability at 90% capacity**

Financial plan template spreadsheet attached assuming only 90% places filled, demonstrating sustainability and in-year operating surpluses.



## Appendix II

### Section 9: Suitability and declaration

*Originals posted to:*

Due Diligence Team  
Department for Education  
Fourth Floor  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT