



Family
Handbook
2024/25



FIRST

DESK

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ST TIME EVERY TIME

Welcome to Dixons McMillan Academy

As the principal of Dixons McMillan Academy, my vision is that our school is a place where everyone feels welcome, and everyone succeeds. All of our students should receive opportunities that equip them to contribute positively to their community and the wider world, and our mission is to provide a stellar educational experience that promotes cultural capital and enrichment experiences – but at the same time, is underpinned with academic rigour and excellence. To achieve our goals, we uphold our three core values and use our drivers of mastery, autonomy and purpose to propel us forwards.

Our motivation is simple: to provide young people with the very best education possible so that they leave the academy highly employable and ready to lead happy and successful lives. It is important to all of us that the students who attend Dixons McMillan have a memorable experience that will stay with them for the whole of their lives. In order to achieve this, we have our clear set of school values which we will all live by each and every day.

At Dixons McMillan Academy, we have created an impressive culture of success through the operation of strict routines and protocols, an unwavering focus on results, and by offering the very best teaching and support. Students at Dixons McMillan Academy learn, behave and are expected to be well-mannered at all times.

At Dixons McMillan Academy relationships are at the heart of everything we do. We consistently focus on building positive and professional relationships both within and outside of the academy, and we truly believe that our mutual respect is the foundation of our success.

Working with parents and carers and presenting young people with these common expectations at home and at the academy is the key to our success. Therefore, this booklet is an essential document in helping you understand our standards and approach, so we can ensure that your child gets the most out of the opportunities we provide. We rely on you to take an interest in what your child is doing each school day; on your support and encouragement for their work; and on your attendance at family evenings and academy events. Together, we are a strong united team for your child.

Finally, although we will always do our best to provide a great all-round education, we cannot be perfect and occasionally we will get things wrong. So, if you have any reason for concern, please do not hesitate to contact the academy; you will always find someone who is able and willing to help.

Kat Lang

Principal

We prepare our learners
for future success in an
ever-changing world.



CRITICAL QUESTIONS

Why do we exist?

To challenge educational and social disadvantage in the North

How do we behave?

As a highly professional team, together:

- we **work hard** on the things that matter, with humility
- we are **good** and **kind**
- we are motivated by **mastery, autonomy** and **purpose**

What do we do?

Within our communities, we work together to create joyful, rigorous, high performing schools, which maximise attainment, value diversity, develop character and build cultural capital

How will we succeed?

Talent first: people, more than strategy, create value – we all belong and grow together

Academic rigour: with powerful knowledge, our students shape their own future

Aligned autonomy: finding the optimal balance between consistency and self-determination



We are good people. We do the right thing, because it's the right thing to do. We make decisions for the good of everyone. We are honest and have strong moral principles.

Academy leaders: key staff at Dixons McMillan Academy

Senior Leadership Team

Mrs K Lang	Principal
Mrs K Wilby	Senior Vice Principal
Mr P Murray	Vice Principal
Miss L Gayle	Assistant Vice Principal
Mr R Ali	Assistant Vice Principal
Mr A Conlon	Assistant Vice Principal
Mrs S Sharif	Associate Senior Leader
Miss S Jordan	Associate Assistant Vice Principal
Mr D Gilderoy	Associate Assistant Vice Principal

Pastoral Team:

Mrs C Swain	Head of Year 7 and Year 8
Miss L Griffin	Head of Year 9
Miss S Jordan	Head of Year 10 and 11
Mr T Shah	Pastoral Lead, KS3
Miss V Cahill	Pastoral Lead, KS4
Miss K Wooler	KS3 Pastoral Pioneer
Miss A Patel	KS4 Pastoral Pioneer

Heads of Department:

Mrs S Aziz	Maths
Mrs C Thomas	English
Ms B Ashruff	Science
Mr D Gilderoy	Humanities
Mr P Conboy	Geography
Mr A Conlon	History
Mrs R Watkins	Physical Education
Mr P Murray	Head of IT
Mrs N Laws	DT and Arts
Mrs M Bowley	MFL
Miss L Gayle	Head of Music and Drama

2024 / 2025 Term dates

Term 1: Monday 2 September to Friday 18 October

Holiday dates: Saturday 19 October to Sunday 3 November

Term 2: Monday 4 November to Friday 20 December

Holiday dates: Saturday 21 December to Sunday 5 December

Term 3: Monday 6 January to Thursday 13 February

Holiday dates: Friday 14 February to Sunday 23 February

Term 4: Monday 24 February to Friday 4 April

Holiday dates: Saturday 5 April to Monday 21 April

Term 5: Tuesday 22 April to Friday 23 May

Holiday dates: Saturday 24 May to Sunday 1 June

Term 6: Monday 2 June to Friday 18 July

Holiday dates: Saturday 19 July

Additional holidays not included in the above
(the academy is closed)

Friday 14 February 2025 - Trust Conference

Monday 21 April 2025 - bank holiday

Monday 5 May 2025 - bank holiday

Staff data and planning days (students not in school)

Tuesday 27 August 2024 - training day

Wednesday 28 August 2024 - training day

Thursday 29 August 2024 - training day

Friday 30 August 2024 - training day

Thursday 14 November 2024 - data and planning day

Friday 15 November 2024 - data and planning day

Thursday 6 March 2025 - data and planning day

Friday 7 March 2025 - data and planning day

The academy week

At Dixons McMillan we operate a longer working day. With an extended academy day students have more time in the classroom to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding, as well as more opportunities to participate in a wide range of additional studies. There are no shortcuts to success.

Year 7-9	Monday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday (55 minute lessons)	Tuesday (50 minute lessons)
Morning Meeting	8.00am	8.00am
Period 1	8.25am	8.55am
Break / line up	9.20am	9.45am
Period 2	9.35am	10.00am
Period 3	10.30am	10.50am
Period 4	11.25am	11.40am
Lunch / line up	12.20pm	12.30pm
DEAR	12.50pm	1.00pm
Period 5	1.20pm	1.30pm
Period 6	2.15pm	2.20pm
Dismissal	3.10pm	3.10pm

Year 10-11	Monday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday (55 minute lessons)	Tuesday (50 minute lessons)
Morning Meeting	8.00am	8.00am
Period 1	8.25am	8.55am
Period 2	9.20am	9.45am
Break / line up	10.15am	10.35am
Period 3	10.30am	10.50am
Period 4	11.25am	11.40am
DEAR	12.20pm	12.30pm
Lunch / line up	12.50pm	1.00pm
Period 5	1.20pm	1.30pm
Period 6	2.15pm	2.20pm
Dismissal	3.10pm	3.10pm

Notes:

- All students must arrive at the academy by 7.55am at the latest in order to attend line up on time
- We finish at 3.10pm Monday - Friday
- Same day corrections (corrections of up to 1.5 hours) start at 3.10pm each day and end at 3.40pm (one correction), 4.10pm (two corrections) or 4.40pm (three corrections)



We live by the mantra every day that we are a school where everyone feels welcome, and everyone succeeds.



Work Hard

Teaching & learning

At Dixons McMillan Academy our mission is simple: we celebrate diversity and relentlessly focus on the highest standards of student achievement.

We build a partnership between families, teachers and students to ensure that we put learning first. Everything we do is based on the strong relationships that are our foundations.

We achieve this mission through an unwavering focus on results, and by offering the very best teaching and support.

Our teachers have real respect for their learners as people with ideas of their own. They are passionate about teaching and learning, and able to present challenging learning tasks. Their expertise allows them to 'read' their classrooms and to be more responsive to learners. They are extremely flexible and take every opportunity to maximise learning. They are great seekers and users of feedback.

In our classrooms and in our schemes of work and lesson plans, we value knowledge, skills and understanding.

Instead of excusing bad learning habits we insist on good learning habits day-in-and-day-out with high expectations and no excuses. Teachers make full use of the rewards system to ensure that students who consistently display excellent learning habits are recognised and rewarded.

We expect all students to progress at least two levels over a Key Stage. This will result in nearly every student succeeding in achieving at least eight good GCSEs at grades 5 - 9 (including English and mathematics), and the majority achieving the English Baccalaureate (5 - 9 Grades in English, mathematics, science, one language and history / geography).

Curriculum at Key Stage 3

The start of Key Stage 3 marks an exciting phase in the lives of our students. It is the period when they build on their primary education and prepare for their Key Stage 4 choices, most of which will be made in Year 8. Our curriculum is designed so that students can master the basics as well as offer more flexibility so that teachers can tailor their teaching to students' needs and aspirations.

There are four key principles underpinning the design of the academy's curriculum:

- All students have access to a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum that supports learning.
- A strong core ensures that basic skills are embedded at an early stage so that students are able to access the wider curriculum.
- A range of learning pathways to support and challenge **all** students.
- An extended curriculum ensures all students have access to catch-up, extension and enrichment.

Subjects studied and time allocations at Key Stage 3 – 2024 / 2025

Weekly Allocation		
	Year 7	Year 8
English	5	5
Maths	5	5
Science	5	5
History	1	2
Geography	2	1
RE	2	2
MFL	2	2
Computing	1	1
Art	1	1
Music	1	1
Drama	1	1
DT	2	2
PE	2	2
Cultural studies*	(1)	(1)
Total	30 (31)	30 (31)

Elective

Students at Dixons McMillan Academy are provided with every opportunity to expand their cultural capital. They participate in extracurricular activities to allow them to contribute positively to their community and lead happy and successful lives. Examples of enrichment activities students can elect are; self-defence, sign language, photography, drama, art, music, first aid, debating club and sport.

Cultural studies*

Cultural studies This is an extended Collective Learning session on a Tuesday morning. We are committed to ensuring that our students develop into young adults with the knowledge, understanding and skills to make informed decisions in their future life. We have designed cultural studies around DfE Guidance for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).



Curriculum at Key Stage 4

Our Key Stage 4 curriculum is broad and balanced with a strong core in the EBacc (English, mathematics, science, Spanish and history / geography), RE, as well as a range of high value subject options such as IT, art, DT, drama, music and sport. We have limited the number of Key Stage 4 subjects to be studied by our students to a maximum of seven. This will reduce the exam burden and help ensure that our students are given the time and opportunity to develop intellectually. This does not mean students will leave with only seven GCSE qualifications as some subjects are double awards (most will leave with 9 or 10* qualifications).

*If selected to take triple science, this is equivalent to three GCSE qualifications.

Subjects studied and time allocations at Key Stage 4 – 2024 / 2025

	Weekly Allocation	
	Year 9	Year 10 / 11
English	5	6
Maths	5	5
Science	5	6
History/Geography	2/2	3
Arts/Computing/PA Rotation	1	N/A
RE	2	2
MFL	3	3
Option	2	3
Duke of Edinburgh	1	N/A
PE	2	2
Cultural Studies*	(1)	(1)
Total	30 (31)	30 (31)

Literacy

Our duty is to develop students who are confident readers, writers, speakers and listeners, who value these life skills and strive to improve them. We recognise that it is the responsibility of all staff from all subject areas to teach literacy skills as reading, writing, speaking and listening is integral to all subjects.

In order to raise the profile of literacy across the curriculum, to support students with their learning and to raise standards across the curriculum, there are three 'literacy' expectations of all students at all times:

1. **Reading book in their possession (reading)**
2. **Speak in full sentences and no slang (speaking)**
3. **Track the speaker/s (listening)**

There is also 30-minute reading time three times a week during sessions with their advisor. Students are expected to complete tasks such as: read in silence, discuss their reading, complete a reading log and complete book reviews. Advisors are required to model reading aloud and reading in silence, facilitate class discussion and check reading logs.

Modern foreign languages

Spanish is offered as the core language. All students will study Spanish at Key Stage 3 and 4. Spanish is a vitally important world language and is the third most spoken language in the world.

As the study of a foreign language becomes more prevalent in primary schools, some parents and students may be concerned about the continuity of their language study, particularly as several Bradford primary schools are offering French. The aim of primary phase foreign languages is actually not for students to study one language to a particular level at primary school and then to proceed to a higher level in that same language at secondary school, but that effective primary phase language teaching should lay the foundations for successful language learning, focusing on the development of transferable skills.

The focus should be on the development of listening and speaking skills, on the development of cultural awareness and understanding, and on language awareness. It therefore does not matter which language is studied at secondary school; those who have experienced effective primary language teaching and learning should experience accelerated progress in their secondary language studies.

Duke of Edinburgh

We offer Duke of Edinburgh as a compulsory enrichment activity in Year 9 to develop cultural capital. This qualification is renowned and respected by colleges, sixth forms and universities as a brilliant course for developing students' wider skills.

Health and sex education

Outside speakers will come into the academy to talk about diet, hygiene and exercise. The facts of life are taught in Science lessons as part of the National Curriculum, and backed up with discussions on relationships and moral values in tutorial sessions.



Personal development studies (PDS)

We are committed to ensuring that our scholars develop into young adults with the knowledge, understanding and skills to make informed decisions in their future life. We have designed personal development studies (PDS) around DfE Guidance for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). These will be delivered in advisor groups.



Educational visits and outdoor education

During the year, there are a wide variety of educational visits available to the students. These range from local visits within lesson time to nearby places of interest, to residential activities further afield.

Parents will always be given reasonable advance notice of visits and will be informed as to which visits are compulsory and those that are optional. If a visit takes place within the normal academy day and within a one-mile radius of the academy, then we will inform parents / carers of the visit by text or a note in their child's planner.

As part of the academy life and the National Curriculum, all students must take part in and experience a variety of outdoor activities.

Our Year 7 residential in particular offers the year group a chance to bond as a team and provides a broad experience. For this reason, we do say that the residential is compulsory.

Homework / stretch

All students in the academy receive weekly homework in the EBacc subjects (i.e., English, mathematics, science, humanities, and MFL). Key Stage 3 and 4 students will also receive homework in their Art / Options subjects, which will be set by individual departments on a rotational basis. Key Stage 3 homework is entirely online using platforms such as Educake, Sparx, and Seneca.

Not all subject homework will be written work; some may involve reading, research, or learning key spellings. There are homework clubs to support access to computer facilities, as well as access to computers in

the library every evening after school. Homework is one of our key learning habits, and failure to complete it will result in a correction.

Students in Key Stage 3 are expected to complete one independent 'stretch project' each assessment cycle (13 weeks). Stretch is delivered in advisory time and students are expected to support this learning at home by spending 30 minutes a week on preparing the projects.

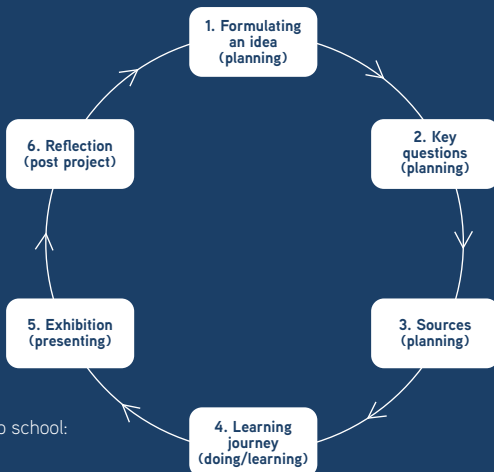
By engaging in Stretch lessons, students will develop their employability skills through independent research, creating a professional presentation and public speaking. Stretch projects are assessed through a student exhibition at the end of each cycle. Year 9 complete one stretch project and then move to an entrepreneurial project lead externally, by the "First Give" team.

Parental engagement

The academy hosts a variety of session during the academic year which are aimed at supporting scholars and parents / carers. On occasions, families will be personally invited to a parental engagement session; on these occasions attendance is compulsory. Parental engagement sessions include presentations on social media and internet safety, understanding data, literacy and numeracy amounts others.

The themes for the stretch projects are loosely based on the multiple intelligence theory of Howard Gardner, Professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, USA:

There are six stages to each project:



Equipment

There are a number of items students *must* bring to school:

Daily:

A **clear** pencil case containing:

- two black pens
- two green pen
- two pencil
- rubber
- ruler
- glue stick
- highlighter
- whiteboard pen
- mini whiteboard
- whiteboard rubber
- prism

Mathematics:

Calculator – preferably a Casio fx-83GTX or Casio fx-85GTX

(calculators can be purchased through student support at price of approx. £13 or from any supermarket)

Students must also bring:

- planner (provided to students at the start of the academic year)
- a reading book
- student lanyard
- their locker key
- their ID card
- 100% folder

Year 7 students will be provided with a whiteboard, whiteboard pen, whiteboard rubber, planner, student lanyard, locker key, ID card, prism and 100% folder on their first day. After this, it is the student's responsibility to replace lost or damaged equipment.

The following items will be useful to have at home:

English: an English dictionary

Languages: a Spanish dictionary

Be Good

Learning habits

We will insist on good learning habits DAY-IN-AND-DAY-OUT with HIGH EXPECTATIONS AND NO EXCUSES. Your child may already have really good learning habits and if they keep those habits as they move through adolescence, they will shine at our school.

Our view - and it has been shown to work in the best schools in the country and abroad - is that, over time, almost all students (not just most) can pick up good learning habits for themselves and will end up happier, better qualified and more successful.

From the first day at Dixons McMillan Academy, your child will be expected to pick up and keep to 6 GOOD LEARNING HABITS. If they do, we will reward them. If not, we think it will be in the long term best interests to receive an automatic sanction.

This may cause you a great deal of inconvenience. As parents / carers we ask that you support your child by making sure they fully understand our expectations and the inconvenience as a reason for following our high standard routines in future.

1. NO ANSWERING BACK

Like a referee, teachers have to manage lots of different emotions and behaviours in class to ensure that everyone is receiving first class quality education. What is totally unacceptable is for a child to answer back or question the decision in front of the class. It stops others from learning and it undermines all respect for the teacher. This is a very bad learning habit to get into.

2. UNIFORM

We will insist on perfect uniform: not nearly perfect but **perfect**. This is because we want children at our academy to be proud. Evidence suggests that sloppy uniforms, lead to sloppy behaviour and sloppy learning habits for many students.

3. HOMEWORK

We will insist on all homework being completed on time and to a good standard, neatly and with pride. Please sign your child's planner weekly. We have clubs to support with homework, and we also open our Library at breaks, lunchtime and after-school. No child, therefore, has any reason not to do it. All homework must be done for the right day and time. If it seems too hard, every child should still show that they have tried by what they bring in.

4. ON-TASK

We will insist on focused learning in class. When a teacher has carefully planned a lesson and other students are trying so hard, there is nothing worse (you will remember) than a child or children being OFF-TASK and distracting learning for themselves and others.

5. PUNCTUAL

We will insist on punctuality to school and to each and every lesson. Every child should be in school for the start of the day (7.55am) and will be considered late after that time to school and / or each lesson and will be issued a 30-minute correction. Students should go to their locker at the start of the day, breaks and lunches only to avoid being late to lesson. Please support this by keeping to well structured evening routines at home and preparation time



6 EQUIPMENT

We will insist that every child carries a clear pencil case, the right exercise books, homework books and textbooks (where relevant) to every lesson. At first you could help by packing bags with your child, but you should expect them to check their timetable each night and learn for themselves very quickly. Your child will worry at first but a quick check each night will help.

To help your child to pick up these habits quickly and keep them for five years we will also teach the habits in class that you need to teach at home (you may be doing so already). We will also praise and reward those who demonstrate these habits (using positive postcards, letters, student of the week and trips). I do not want any child to underachieve by the time of Year 11 in Dixons McMillan Academy.

Our system of sanction is very simple, and we are counting on your support. If you are worried about it, the best way to avoid it is to make sure your child picks up the habits and sticks to them every single day. Please use some of the summer to get them into the right frame of mind. There is nothing to worry about if they do.

If any of the learning habits are broken, we will contact you by text that day and let you know that your child has a 30-minute correction that night. If a child breaks more than one rule on any given day, then they can receive up to 1.5 hours of corrections on one day.

Extended corrections

Occasionally, we may need to issue your child with an extended correction:

- truancy – 1.5 hour correction
- involvement in any kind of physical altercation such as fighting – 1.5 hour for five days
- booked into red line as an outcome for a behaviour concern – 1.5 hours

Any other serious incident may warrant an extended correction and these will be issued by SLT at their discretion.

Red Line

If a student is removed from a lesson they may be taken to red line. This will mean an extended 1.5 hour correction is issued; this could be the same day or the day after depending on when the event occurs.

Teaching children that every action leads to a consequence, therefore a negative action will lead to a negative consequence and a positive action will lead to a positive consequence is empowering children to make the right choices and form good learning habits which will help them be successful in the future.

We will teach students about how to learn, not just what to learn.

The evidence from the UK and abroad suggests that the sanction must be immediate (a correction three days later doesn't work with children) and it must be specific to the problem. Please make sure no one gets a correction on their first day at school!

If your child fails to attend a correction, then they will have crossed our 'red line'. This means that your child will have an extended (1.5 hour) correction the next day. The consequences of missing a second correction, quite rightly, will be very serious and could result in your child being placed in isolation in our red line room. Should this be repeated frequently it could lead to further sanctions, such as suspension.

External placements

If your child is involved in a very serious incident, we may choose to issue a behaviour placement. This means that your child's education will be provided by another

Bradford school for an agreed period of time (usually from 1 day to 10 days) within their isolation space. We do not take the decision to do this lightly and this is seen as a last resort. This offers the chance for your child to reflect, reset, and return to the academy in a more successful manner.

Advisors

All students have an advisor (our word for a form tutor) who sees them Monday to Friday during advisory time, this advisor should be your first step in resolving any issues or concerns you may have regarding your child. The advisor will regularly update your child's attendance and behaviour in their planner and ensure that this communication is passed onto to parents at home. The student planner is expected to be signed very week by the advisor and by parents. Our advisors also attend family dining each day with their advisory group.

Individual Needs (Mountain Rescue)

The academy encourages high aspirations, high motivation and high achievement for all. This vision applies equally to students with any kind of special educational need. Our philosophy is to include students as far as possible within the normal provision of the

academy, which includes a strong teaching model and early intervention with extra teaching and individual attention for students who are having difficulty reaching the expected standards. Additional support for students is provided under the direction of the Mountain Rescue department.

The Mountain Rescue department is for all students – be they disabled, gifted and talented, dyslexic, dyspraxic, with learning or behavioural difficulties, or for students that just need advice and support. In Mountain Rescue, we'll do whatever it takes, for as long as it takes to support your child.

Our experienced team will always be there to help and support the students. Should you require any assistance or have any queries regarding the academy's provision for your child please contact the Mountain Rescue department who will arrange to meet with you.

Students wishing to stay after school to complete homework must be in the designated areas – the library or the heart space. Alternatively, they must be registered at one of the published subject catch-up sessions or additional studies sessions. The library will remain open until 5.30pm from Monday to Wednesday. On Thursdays, the Library will be open until 5.00pm, and on Fridays until 4.30pm. After this time all students will be expected to leave the premises.

Daily attendance

It is essential that students arrive at the academy in plenty of time to organise themselves for the start of their day which is 7.55am. Students should enter the school building no later than 7.59am so this will allow them time to collect their equipment and books for periods 1 to 4 and attend line up on time. Students are allowed into the academy from 7.00am to work in supervised areas only.

If your child is persistently late to school, this will impact on their progress and ultimately their outcomes. Students need to be on time every day. Therefore, we do have an escalating system of sanctions for lateness to discourage this.

- 1 late mark (in a week) – 30 minute correction
- 2 late marks (in a week) – 60 minute correction
- 3+ late marks (in a week) – 1.5 hour correction

Attendance

Why is good attendance important?

Good attendance at school is vital for students to achieve their full educational potential. Students with good attendance records benefit in the following ways:

- continuity of learning which makes progress and retention easier
- improved performance in coursework tasks
- enhanced performance in examinations
- continuity of relationships and friendships
- good references for further education or employment
- good habits are formed for later life

As you can see from the data above, it is vitally important that all children attend school every day. If your child is struggling to attend, school, we are here to help. Please speak to your child’s Advisor or HOY as soon as possible, so we can work together to help break down barriers and motivate your child back into school.

Attendance vs progress

Research has shown that there is a strong link between attendance and achievement. If you have high attendance, you have a much better chance of higher grades. These higher grades will ensure you can go on to achieve their goals when you leave education.

What can parents do to support their child to achieve good attendance levels?

Parents play a very important role in ensuring the good attendance records of their children. Below is a list of suggested strategies:

- encourage full attendance
- do not allow your child to have time off for minor complaints or illnesses: if they are well enough to be out of bed, they are generally well enough to attend school

How attendance affects GCSE outcomes

Attendance	Days missed	Risk of underachieving	Chance of gaining good GCSE's at 5+
100%	0	No risk	94%
98-99%	2		
97%	3	No risk	92%
96%	6		
95%	7	Small risk	74%
92-04%	12	Serious risk	60%
90-92%	15	Severe risk	34%
83-88%			
66-82%	17+	Extreme risk	26%
65% or less			



- monitor your child's attendance
- take any time off during the academy holidays, not during term time
- try to book any medical or dental appointments out of school hours or at the end of the school day
- ensure your child is punctual to school

Absence

When a student is absent from the academy with no advance notice, for example because of illness, parents must telephone the academy that same morning, and each subsequent morning, to inform us of the reason for absence *before 8.30am*. It is possible to leave messages on the student absence voicemail at any time prior to 8.30am. To report an absence please dial the main academy telephone number and select the appropriate option.

Please note that only *emergency* appointments for dentists, opticians, and doctors should be during school hours. Routine appointments must be made out of school hours. When it is known in advance that an absence is to be requested for such emergency appointments, parents must provide evidence of appointments to the Attendance team. Absence is monitored very carefully at the academy. Every day missed is a learning opportunity wasted.

Leave of absence

The government states that a student may be taken out of the academy during term time for exceptional circumstances only, and never for more than **five days**. If exceptional circumstances occur, a Request for Leave form must be obtained from reception to request permission; this must be done **3 weeks in advance** and submitted to the attendance team. Permission will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

Religious leave of absence

The academy community does grant the statutory leave of absence of up to three days, in order that students can observe important religious festivals.

Dress code

The academy has a dress code that all students are expected to follow. There is an emphasis on being clean and tidy and students must appreciate that not all items of clothing are appropriate for a place of work. Students should recognise that conflict over the dress code is inappropriate. Our dress code is practical and allows a choice within very clear boundaries.

All Key Stage 3 students must wear:

- an academy jumper with a logo
- an academy polo shirt (also with a logo). Students are permitted to wear long sleeves underneath, but these garments must be plain white or black, no colours
- boys and girls trousers should be black full-length straight trousers; jeans / tracksuits / leggings / very flared trousers / very tight or skinny cut trousers / knee length trousers/ trousers which gather at the ankle are not considered appropriate wear. Jeans are defined as trousers with patch pockets and rivets. Trousers should not trail on the floor. The bottom of the trousers should overlap socks when standing
- girls may wear plain black shalwar kameez or tunic with a with the academy jumper over the top
- if socks are visible under trousers, they should also be plain black. (no ankle socks should be worn)
- hijabs, scarves, prayer hats, turbans, crowns and top knots, worn for religious reasons, must be plain black and well secured
- shoes must be sensible and entirely plain black, (not dark brown). If shoes have laces then these must be fastened and be plain black. Heels, boots and trainers are not acceptable. Students wearing the wrong footwear will be asked to change into academy footwear
- clear nose studs only are accepted; all other facial jewellery or visible body-piercing is inadmissible. Plasters cannot be worn to cover piercings. Students are permitted to wear a sensible, plain watch (no smart watches). Jewellery is not permitted and will be confiscated if worn
- no make-up or nail varnish should be worn at any time at KS3
- hair should be appropriate to a place of work. A student may be asked to tie hair back for health and safety reasons. Hair bands should be plain, no other hair ornament is necessary.
- belts, if worn, should be plain black and not worn as a 'fashion statement' over jumpers or shirts.
- outdoor jackets or jumpers or cardigans other than school uniform, should not be worn at any time inside the academy. Academy jackets are optional at KS3
- hats and caps need to be removed before entering the building
- PE lessons - students should wear the academy polo shirt, academy hoodie and academy navy tracksuit bottoms. Suitable trainers must be worn for both indoor and outdoor PE. Students should also have a suitable PE bag
- **Families are strongly advised to label all items of clothing**

To avoid embarrassment or unnecessary cost, if a student or family is in any doubt about a hairstyle, or the purchase of an item of clothing, they should speak with their Head of Year before going ahead. Students will be asked to rectify any hairstyle, or replace any clothing at their expense that is perceived to be unsuitable for school.

We will make any final decision about any uniform and we welcome your co-operation in maintaining the smart appearance of the academy students.

As students move into Year 10 the uniform policy adapts to reflect their position in education. Students in Key Stage 4 wear business dress to prepare them for the world of work.

All Key Stage 4 Students must wear:

- a matching suit or a smart jacket and tailored trousers in neutral colours. Simple patterns are permitted
- any skirts worn should be knee length or below
- dresses and jumpsuits may be worn. These should be round neck and smart in design, and dresses should be knee length or below. Jackets should be worn with the dress or jumpsuit
- nothing low cut or revealing is appropriate – all should be dressing appropriately for a place of work
- a smart, plain jumper can be worn with the suit. This should be knit and not sweatshirt, and is only permitted under the jacket
- shirts should be formal style with a stiff collar and full buttons, no polo shirts
- blouses should be smart and formal
- hijabs, scarves, prayer hats, turbans, crowns and top knots, worn for religious reasons, must be in neutral colours and well secured
- boys may wear a jubba but this must be worn with business dress trousers and shoes, along with a business dress jacket worn over the top
- all boys to wear a tie of appropriate professional design
- shoes should be formal, leather or leather look. No heels or sandals
- at KS4 neutral make-up is permitted. No heavy make-up or bright colours. Nail varnish, false nails or false eyelashes are not permitted
- girls can opt to wear a neutral coloured shalwar kameez or tunic
- clear nose studs only are accepted; all other facial jewellery or visible body-piercing is inadmissible. Plasters cannot be worn to cover piercings. Students are permitted to wear a sensible, plain watch (no smart watches). Jewellery is not permitted and will be confiscated if worn
- hair should be appropriate to a place of work. A student may be asked to tie hair back for health and safety reasons. Hair bands should be plain, no other hair ornament is necessary
- belts, if worn, should be plain black and not worn as a 'fashion statement' over jumpers or shirts
- in summer, reasonable adjustments will be made regarding jackets and ties, at SLT discretion

Student planner

At the beginning of each year, all students are issued a planner. Both advisors and parents are expected to sign the student's planner each week. In this way, the parent can see comments from the advisors or subject teachers, and parents can also communicate with the teachers if they wish. The planner is a very important document and students are expected to take great care of it. If the planner is defaced or lost, student will be expected to replace the planner at a cost of £5.00.

Lunchtime

Family dining is an integral part of our academy ethos and provides an opportunity during the day for students and staff to sit together and eat a balanced and nutritious meal. All of our students are expected to take part in the family dining experience and it is compulsory.

We approach each day with a can-do attitude, tackling every challenge as an opportunity.



Be Nice

This will help us to establish a genuine three-way partnership between families, students and staff. A shared sense of purpose will ensure that Dixons McMillan Academy can genuinely support your child.

Contact with families

Families play a crucial role in ensuring their child achieves at the highest level, meets their targets and makes the most of their opportunities at the academy. We provide regular data for parents to ensure they have the latest information on their child's progress.

Advisors and heads of year contact the parents of their students regularly. Parents are required to attend at least one parents' evening throughout the year. Advisors should always be the first point of contact for parents.

Families are given regular information on their child's progress in every subject. Progress reports will happen twice in the year.

Our turnaround time for any calls or emails to the academy is 48 hours for a response. We will endeavour to respond as soon as we can.

Other ways the academy may communicate with you

MCAS (My Child at School): Every family will have access to the My Child At School app which is used to pass information to parents about important issues such as corrections, homework clubs, interventions and school closures in bad weather – this do not cost you any money. MCAS is also used to pass information to parents about important updates the academy. Parents can also use this platform to view information about your child's attendance, behaviour and data reports.

Please ensure that you update the academy with any changes of mobile number or e-mail address.

Academy website - where you will find up to date information regarding the academy, including policies, and term dates as well as links to Parent Pay.

Letters home - whole school letters are also posted on the academy website, as well as being issued to students to take home.

Lockers

The purpose of lockers is to provide students with a place to leave their equipment and belongings and, therefore, they should not be carrying bags around the academy.

If a student forgets his / her key, the heads of year have master keys so that equipment can be accessed. If a key is lost, or a student wishes to have a 'spare' key, it can be purchased during break from the student support desk, at a cost of £4. These have to be made and will not be issued immediately.

Lost property

When students come to the academy we do request that all their possessions, including clothing, should be named, in order to facilitate returning found articles. All lost property should be handed in to student support. If a student loses any item he / she should ask at student support if it has been found.

Items that are not named are placed in lost property. These are held until the end of term and then put on display for the students to look at. Any unclaimed property will then be disposed of.



Media, film and photographs

From time to time the academy receives requests from the media to take photographs and / or films of academy events and activities. In the majority of cases most parents are happy for their children to be photographed providing that appropriate safeguards are implemented which, of course, are always observed by us. Photos and images of our students remain anonymous and students are referred to as “academy students”.

If you do not wish your child to be photographed or filmed, for public relations purposes, please contact the Senior Vice Principal. In the event that we do not hear from you we will assume that we have your permission.

If you have any queries in respect of this issue please call the academy.

Mobile phones and smart devices

If students need to make contact with home, they are allowed to use the phone in reception. A student does not, therefore, have any need for a mobile phone in the academy. If a family feels that a student needs one for the journey to and from the academy, then the phone must remain switched-off and out of sight in the student’s locker for the whole day.

Any student found having a mobile phone or using a mobile phone during the day will have the phone confiscated. It will not be returned for a full week,

when a parent must come into school to collect it. The student will also receive a suitable sanction.

Smart watches are also not permitted and will be dealt with in the same way.

Airpods and earphones should also be stored in lockers and not worn in the academy. If a student is found having airpods or earphones these will also be confiscated.

The academy accepts no responsibility for the safety or security of the above equipment.

Personal money

With the introduction of cashless catering, students do not need money for lunch, as parents are able to pay via Parent Pay. Parents can also pay for trips and visits and charges from the stationary shop via Parent Pay. Students will need money to replace lost equipment

With the introduction of cashless catering, students do not need money for lunch, as parents are able to pay via Parent Pay. Parents can also pay for trips and visits and charges from the stationary shop via Parent Pay.

Car parking

The area in the immediate vicinity of the academy will therefore remain a no parking area.

Causes for concern

1. Any parent who has any concerns about any aspect of the academy, be it curriculum based, pastoral or administrative, is encouraged to contact the academy at the earliest possible opportunity to register their concern.
2. All such instances will be recorded.
3. Where there is a cause for concern, details will be forwarded to the appropriate senior member of staff for their urgent attention and investigation.
4. Parents will be kept fully informed of the situation and the final outcome.

We will do whatever it takes to ensure our whole community is highly employable and ready to lead a happy and successful life.

Please note:

1. In the case of any serious or urgent matter, should any parent wish to come into the academy to directly discuss any concerns they may have, the academy will endeavour to have a senior member of staff available.
2. Should this not be possible, full details will be taken and forwarded to the appropriate senior member of staff without delay.

Leaving the academy

If, for any reason you have to withdraw your child from the academy, we require the information in writing to the principal at least one month before the leaving date.

We also need to know which school your child is transferring to as this enables the leaving procedures to be put in place and necessary documents drawn up.



Staff and students strive to uphold these 100% of the time.

Home - Academy Agreement - 2024 / 25

The Dixons Difference

The Dixons Difference is our relentless focus on student achievement, led by highly committed and highly professional staff. By creating a can-do, independent culture with an emphasis on self-discipline, we prepare our learners for future success in an ever-changing world. Our academies put students at their heart and work in close partnership with parents. We value diversity and cultivate happy schools, based on strong relationships, mutual respect, integrity and honesty.

Dixons McMillan Academy will ensure that:

- we uphold our core values of resilience, integrity and courtesy
- we provide a safe and supportive environment for students to enjoy learning and achieve their full potential
- we provide a consistently high standard of teaching
- students have the best possible education by providing a suitable curriculum and individual support
- we provide families with regular reports and opportunity for discussion about their child's progress
- we set regular homework
- we contact home to praise and acknowledge students' success
- we contact home if there are concerns about students' learning, behaviour, effort or attendance
- we contact home for information purposes before 14:00 if students are to be detained for more than 10 minutes after the end of the academy day
- We enforce our rules and high expectations fairly, and always demonstrate that they are underpinned with care
- we provide a wide variety of activities, experiences, trips and residential visits

Families will ensure that:

- you uphold our core values of resilience, integrity and courtesy
- your child attends every day, on time, unless they are ill
- your child arrives by 7.55am at the latest; all students are expected to be in their line up positions by 8.02am
- your child does not take extended family trips or holidays during term-time; if your child has a medical appointment, you need to fill in a Leave of Absence form at least one week in advance
- your child has the correct learning equipment needed for the day, every day, including PE kit when necessary
- you support the academy's policies and regulations on behaviour and uniform, including same day after school corrections for 90 minutes after communications from the academy
- you provide a suitable environment for your child to work at home
- you attend advisor consultations and parent / carer evenings to discuss your child's progress, and any other meetings arranged with your support
- you read, check and sign the student planner weekly
- your contact details are up-to-date and you let reception

know if your contact details change

- you support your child in participating in activities, experience, trips and residential visits
- you pay for the replacement of any equipment or books your child loses or damages
- all reply slips to be returned to school within 48 hours
- ensure that your child sits all corrections as instructed by the academy; students must not miss corrections for out of academy commitments
- You support all of our rules and high expectations, knowing that they are in place because we care
- You support your child in taking part in wider academy life, including extra-curricular activities, experiences, trips and residential visits

Students will ensure that they:

- uphold our core values of resilience, integrity and courtesy
- work hard and make progress everyday
- attend regularly, arrive on time, wearing the correct uniform and with the correct equipment
- go to the student support desk before 08:00 if they need any spare equipment or uniform
- follow the academy's learning habits at all times
- behave responsibly, both at the academy and travelling to and from the academy
- complete all homework to the highest standard and hand it in on time
- treat all adults and students with courtesy
- be polite at all times
- respect the academy building and equipment and leave all rooms tidy after using them
- do not undermine the safety of others
- take letters and messages home and deliver them to their families
- keep their planner up to date with homework and targets and show it to academy staff if requested
- ensure they sit all corrections as instructed by the academy; students must not miss corrections for out of academy commitment
- take an active part in wider academy life, including extra-curricular activities, experiences, trips and residential visits

Failure to keep to the agreement will result in disciplinary action and ultimately a loss of place at Dixons McMillan

Signed:

Student: _____

Parent / carer: _____

Principal: _____



**DIXONS
McMILLAN**
ACADEMY

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