

Admissions Process

Autonomy | Mastery | Purpose



Our mission

**To challenge educational
and social disadvantage
in the North**

Our trust values

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

Mastery

*The drive to improve, learn
and get better at something
that really matters*

Autonomy

*The desire to self direct our
own lives*

Purpose

*The sense that what you do
serves something larger
than yourself*

About the admissions process

- You must submit any applications by the deadlines (see timeline for admissions slide) for your child to be considered for a place.
- An additional application must be submitted to apply for priority under the following criteria:
 - exceptional medical or social need
 - children of staff at the academy
- It is vital you read the [admissions guidance](#) and policy for each academy / school you are applying for, to understand how applications are ranked.
- Our academies are oversubscribed, so there is no guarantee a place will be allocated to your child.



Timeline for admissions

- Open evenings – information and dates can be found on the academies' websites.
- 3.30pm on Tuesday 30 September 2025 – deadline for supplementary form (SIF) to enter a child for the assessment (Dixons City and Dixons Kings academies only).
- Performing arts places are available at Dixons City Academy only and a SIF must be completed.
- Assessment is in October for those who completed the SIF by the deadline.
- Performing arts assessments are in October for those who applied for a performing arts place.
- 31 October 2025 – deadline for the CAF (common application form).
- 2 March 2026 – local authorities send e-mails / letters to families advising them of the school allocated to their child.
- The start of term is usually at the end of August or beginning of September. Your child should be ready to start on the first day of term if they are offered a place. As explained earlier, holidays in term-time will not be authorised.

Why do we have the admissions policies we do?

- Dixons City Academy's original vision was that it was to be city-wide.
- This was to make sure the school was diverse and to give a wide variety of children a chance to attend.
- Dixons City Academy has maintained this position, because if we changed to distance, it would have too much of a negative impact on local schools, particularly as Dixons City Academy, Dixons McMillan Academy, and Dixons Trinity Academy are all in the same area.
- Dixons Trinity Academy has changed because of traffic on Trinity Road and because a lot of Dixons Music Primary children go there.
- Dixons McMillan Academy has changed so that more places can be offered to children in the local area.
- Other Dixons schools have the admission policy they had when they converted (e.g. Dixons Allerton Academy, Dixons Kings Academy, Dixons Cottingley Academy).
- Dixons City Academy has a performing arts specialism so up to 18 places can be awarded for aptitude in music or drama.
- None of the academies are grammar schools; we are truly comprehensive.

Some important messages: Dixons City and Dixons Kings

Applications for Dixons City and Dixons Kings academies

- The assessment is not a pass / fail test.
- Siblings have a strong chance, but we cannot guarantee a place due to limited places in some ability bands.
- Children have no better or worse chance of getting a place according to their ability; places are fair-banded (i.e. we admit children from all ability levels).
- Where you live does not increase your chances of a place; these academies do not give priority based on how close your house is to the school.
- Places are decided by the oversubscription criteria



Fair banding

- The child sits the assessment (just once).
- GL Assessment (an external company) then allocate children to 1 of 9 stanines (ability bands) based on their scores.
- This tells us how many of the 180 / 160 places at Dixons City / Dixons Kings should go to each stanine (this reflects the numbers that have applied for each stanine).
- So, for example, if 20% of applicants at Dixons City score in stanine 3, then there will be 36 places offered in stanine 3 (i.e. 20% of 180).
- Because most children score in the middle, there are more places in the middle stanines.
- There are fewer people who score at the top or the bottom, so there are fewer places in those stanines.
- **Make sure your child does not feel they have taken an 11+. If they do not get a place, it is not because they have failed the assessment.**

Random allocation and ranking of applications

- A computer programme randomly generates a number that applies to each application for each academy.
- This process is run separately for both Dixons City and Dixons Kings academies.
- The applicants are then placed in random number order from the smallest to the highest.
- We then apply the oversubscription criteria (in the order listed below) to the applicants in each stanine, with applicants moving up the lists according to which criterion they qualify under.
- Children with an EHCP that names the Academy; children who are looked-after; exceptional medical / social* need, 18 Performing Arts places (at Dixons City only), up to 3 children of staff at the Academy, siblings (brothers & sisters) in Years 7-10 only, children at Dixons Music Primary (at Dixons City only), children at Dixons Manningham and Dixons Marchbank (at both Dixons City and Dixons Kings academies).
- Applicants that do not meet any of the above criteria then follow in random number order.
- At the end of this there are 9 lists for Dixons City and 18 lists (9 bands split into inner & outer area) for Dixons Kings, and these are sent to the local authority.

* As applied for, and if agreed by, the local academy board

Some important messages (all schools / academies)

- Put schools in your ***genuine*** order of preference on the CAF. An equal preference system is in operation so you will not be disadvantaged by doing this.
- No school sees your preference order; they consider all applications according to the oversubscription criteria listed in their admissions policy.
- You can change your preferences and order of preference up until 31 October 2025.
- Take your choices seriously; check the oversubscription criteria to see whether you are likely to qualify for a place. Schools can only rank applications against that criteria and cannot consider other reasons / information provided.
- If you put several Dixons schools, be prepared to take whichever one you qualify for. There are no swaps because you prefer a different Dixons.
- It is not advisable to fill your form with all Dixons schools as some admit by distance. For example, an application is unlikely to qualify on distance for both Dixons Trinity / Dixons McMillan and Dixons Allerton / Dixons Cottingley.
- The exception to this is if one of those schools is very close to your house, or you live in the catchment area for Dixons Cottingley. Dixons Cottingley do offer some places beyond the catchment area.
- If you want another Dixons school, add it on the CAF too, but don't put down a Dixons school that:
 - your child will not be able to / is not willing to travel to. Not wanting to get on the bus is not a strong ground for appeal.
 - your child does not want to go to.

Dixons schools are in high demand

There can be up to 8 times as many applications as places, so make sure:

- you have your chosen schools (preferences) in genuine order, but don't expect to get your 1st choice
- you have added a local school on the CAF (one that admits by distance). This may be Dixons Allerton, Dixons Cottingley, Dixons McMillan or Dixons Trinity if you live close*

If you are not allocated a place, you can appeal, but most academies are over-full. Appeals are generally only successful if the needs of a child having a place at a particular academy outweighs the academy's case for being unable to admit any more children.

*Check the admissions page of the Dixons websites for the furthest distances in previous years and how many places were allocated in each criterion last year.



The role of the local authority

- To ensure schools are applying the oversubscription criteria correctly.
- If you qualify for more than one Dixons, the local authority (LA) will allocate whichever is listed higher.
- If you only qualify for one Dixons, then that is the one you are allocated.
- If you do not qualify for a place at your 1st preference, the LA will go down your list of preferences until you are allocated a school.
- If you put down all over-subscribed schools, and do not qualify for any of them, the LA will allocate your child a place at another school with a space. You can stay on the waiting list for your preferred schools in case a place becomes available.

Waiting lists

- When a place is refused, that child will come out of the list for that academy.
- The next person on the list (whoever qualifies highest within the oversubscription criteria) will then fill that place.

What next?

- Ask questions if you are unsure by emailing the admissions office: admissions@dixonsca.com
- Make sure your CAF is submitted on time (31 October 2025)
- Make sure you put a ***genuine*** order of preference
- On 2 March 2026, the LA will write to you with the school allocated

Dixons City only – Performing Art (PA) applications

- Outcome of PA applications will be advised to parents before the deadline for the CAF
- Make sure your child wants a PA place
- Put Dixons City 1st if this is your preferred school
- You can still put other schools down, including Dixons schools