

Aligned Autonomy

Why do we exist?

Our mission is to challenge educational and social disadvantage in the north.

By the age of 18, we want every student to have the choice of university or a high quality apprenticeship.

How will we succeed?

- Academic rigour
- Aligned Autonomy
- Talent first

Why Aligned Autonomy

- We are Dixons and we are also leaders.
- The optimal balance between consistency and self-determination; freedom and responsibility.
- Aligned Autonomy will deliver a more agile and less hierarchical organisation:
 - Respect at every level
 - Rules focused on clarity rather than control
 - Roles that are needed and make sense
 - Pushing power down

Why Aligned

- We share the same mission and values.
- All Dixons students and staff should benefit from our best collective practice.
- We all benefit from the collective Dixons resources, brand and reputation.
- Staff can be more easily deployed to train and support at any academy.
- Central services become simpler to deliver and more efficient.
- Growth can be better controlled, supported and managed.
- A divisional leadership structure sub-optimises performance and tends to lead to cliques and fragmentation.

Why Autonomy

- Leadership and personal accountability are founded on ownership and self-direction.
- If there is no variation in how we work, there will be no opportunity for us to learn from different practices.
- A culture of conformity kills innovation and drives away the best staff.
- Standardisation fails to respond to changing needs and fails to adapt to a changing environment.
- Micromanagement breeds indifference.
- Autonomy is the foundation of our success so far.

The process

Aligning Autonomy is a process, not a destination. A component of the backbone one year may be dropped in another because it outlives its usefulness, or because it is a time for further innovation and testing.

Elements of the backbone must be as efficient and spare as possible in order to minimise workload and maximise impact. This also allows room for further elaboration and development in response to a leader's own drivers and context.

Backbone	An aligned academy...
Mission and values	<p>starts every meeting with the critical questions</p> <p>has a mission that is succinct, measurable and aligns to the trust mission</p> <p>has 3 academy values, mirroring how we behave</p> <p>focuses on self-determination theory for staff and students through our drivers: mastery, autonomy and purpose</p> <p>focuses on being healthy more than being smart: build cohesive leadership teams, create clarity, overcommunicate clarity and reinforce clarity</p> <p>values diversity as much as commonality; considers cultural add as well as fit</p> <p>commits to championing system wide development through supporting OpenSource</p>
Curriculum	<p>follows curriculum principles</p> <p>offers a sustained range of foundation subjects from Y1 to Y9</p> <p>deploys structured phonics</p> <p>is focused on foundation / EBacc subjects; committed to breadth in arts and sports</p> <p>stretches students through competition; experience and building cultural capital</p> <p>has an integrated EYFS curriculum</p> <p>is committed to powerful knowledge and delivers agreed (contestable) EBacc powerful knowledge at KS3 and KS4</p> <p>follows exam specifications KS4 EBacc and KS5 (a department with confidence of our trust can innovate)</p> <p>uses Dixons schemes and resources to support new schools</p>
Teaching	<p>understands true inclusion; the classroom is the strongest intervention</p> <p>starts from the most vulnerable</p> <p>is decisive about what to teach and appreciates that this informs how</p> <p>coaches to develop all skills and to build relationships</p> <p>is research informed and evidence driven</p> <p>deploys retrieval, spaced practice and modelling</p> <p>has clear routines that ensure learning</p> <p>has morning meeting / collective learning</p> <p>uses deliberate practice</p>
Assessment	<p>Understands and commits to our assessment principles with a focus on formative assessment</p> <p>holds effective data and intervention / prevention planning days in line with our trust schedule</p> <p>follows our DQI reporting schedule</p> <p>follows our assessment calendar and reporting: primary: Cycle 3 common assessments; common mock SATs for Y6 every cycle; scaled scores Y1-6 (national baseline); secondary: end-of-year common assessments (Y7-10); common Y11 mocks – all within set window</p> <p>uses Power BI for analytics</p>
Literacy	<p>uses NGRT RA assessments</p> <p>deploys research informed reading outside the English classroom (innovation with the confidence of our trust)</p> <p>deploys research informed disciplinary literacy (innovation with the confidence of our trust)</p> <p>has a fully functional and staffed library</p> <p>draws upon support from central capacity librarian to ensure has a library resourced to CILIP recommendations</p> <p>ensures ED&I is fully represented</p>
Behaviour and routines	<p>has high expectations (keeps aspiration on track, using the drivers to promote motivation whilst supporting all students with clear social norms reflective of local context)</p> <p>has clear, well communicated learning habits reinforced with students with <i>certainty</i> and <i>clarity</i> of consequence, considering the needs of all individuals (vulnerability-centred)</p> <p>has timetabled time for the PSHE and culture curriculum</p>

Backbone	An aligned academy...
Safeguarding and attendance	<p>trains all staff on front loading, positive framing, assuming the positive and de-escalation as part of induction / reinduction of learning habits</p> <p>removes barriers and has support mechanisms in place to make sure all students are successful</p> <p>consults with trust leader for consideration of permanent exclusions</p> <p>follows agreed WTD sanctions table for identified behaviours</p> <p>always takes managed moves from Dixons academies to enable a fresh start for students</p> <p>will have the SCR checked three times per year by a HR advisor and principal and ensure amends are completed to timescale set</p> <p>supports bi-annual external review of safeguarding practices</p> <p>adopts our DSL and DDSL job description and those for delegated safeguarding responsibilities; ensures all new and existing principals are DSL trained and updated</p> <p>ensures all new staff are trained in annual safeguarding training and all staff receive regular safeguarding training and understand their role in relation to filtering, monitoring and online safety</p> <p>aligns on CPOMS categories, record keeping protocol and reporting as agreed at the CCT</p> <p>provides narrative to support the CPOMS safeguarding report and works with the local academy board and our safeguarding trustee to address concerns and opportunities</p> <p>ensures that the DSL and / or DDSL have sufficient time to manage the demands of CPOMS, Senso and the safeguarding lead role (as defined in KCSIE)</p> <p>follows trust protocol and has professional regard to the LA, following their guidance and challenging this where required relating to arrangements other than full time on site, including but not limited to EHE, CAE / CME, part-time timetables, MM / OSD and AP</p> <p>checks attendance codes (for statutory age students) report sent weekly and have spot checks by trust attendance lead</p> <p>publishes academy attendance and families WTDs attendance annually</p> <p>has a named lead for RSHE (statutory age students) who is either part of the safeguarding team or is line managed by someone who is</p> <p>treats RSHE with equity alongside other curriculum subjects, including rigorous quality assurance and assessment</p> <p>provides regular PD for all staff delivering RSHE</p> <p>uses the principles of adaptive teaching to ensure that all students have equal access to the RSHE curriculum in a way that meets their individual needs (including any students attending any different provision)</p>
SEND	<p>personalises our trust SEND policy to their own academy through the SEND information report</p> <p>uses trust templates for statutory documents (SEND info and access plan)</p> <p>protects SENDCo non-contact time (minimum 30%)</p> <p>shares cycle data analysis on four broad areas of need (communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional and mental health difficulties and sensory and / or physical needs)</p> <p>deploys the statutory graduated response (APDR cycle) and aligns this to academy cycles</p> <p>ensures that all provision, that is additional to or different from the main offer, is evidence-informed and responsive to need (intervention fits student needs not students selected to fit interventions used)</p> <p>works from an appreciation of the United Nations convention on the rights of persons with disabilities: commitment to UNCRPD articles 7 and 24, that inclusive education is the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education</p>
Talent management / HR	<p>ensures that all safer recruitment processes are followed, and the SCR is fully compliant at all times</p> <p>adheres to HR policies and procedures</p> <p>manages staff performance effectively following our professional growth and performance improvement WTDs</p> <p>seeks advice from the HR advisory service in line with the service standards</p> <p>adheres to recruitment and HR / payroll system process and procedures and deadlines</p> <p>follows standard salary ranges</p>

Backbone	An aligned academy...
	<p>engages with the annual employee wellbeing and engagement survey by promoting completion and responding through effective action planning and staff communication</p> <p>ensures that regular coaching and 1-2-1s take place in line with our approach to professional growth</p> <p>promotes our trust employee benefits package</p> <p>follows our trust recruitment process and utilises standard documentation to a high standard</p> <p>ensures that all safer recruitment processes are followed, and the SCR is always fully up to date</p>
Meetings and training sessions	<p>ensures all meetings are healthy and efficient – refer to WTD</p> <p>runs no more than one regular after-school meeting each week for all staff; no more than two for leaders</p> <p>timetables faculty / subject / phase / year group meetings during the academy day</p> <p>has four distinct senior leadership team meetings on a regular basis: daily check-in, weekly tactical, bi-weekly strategic / topical, end of cycle review at Lewis building / other academy</p> <p>has full and appropriate attendance at all calendared meetings across our trust</p> <p>contributes, promotes and commits to full attendance and engagement at trust conference</p> <p>ensures professional growth principles are followed by all staff</p>
Finance	<p>ensures that financial policies and procedures are adhered to</p> <p>adheres to the finance elements of our trust calendar</p> <p>contributes to our shared costs and reserves (tailored to academy context)</p> <p>purchases goods in line with agreed shared services product specifications and contracts where available</p> <p>follows our trust procurement guidance, according to public procurement regulations</p> <p>follows our trust capital expenditure process and approval route</p> <p>sets annual budget and agrees forecasts and monthly management accounts with FBP</p> <p>holds the finance team to account for agreed service standards</p>
Estates / health and safety	<p>ensures adherence to our trust policies and procedures</p> <p>agrees a maintenance budget for costs relating to statutory compliance and planned and reactive maintenance using condition surveys as a basis</p> <p>ensures all related documentation is uploaded to EVOLVE for approval by the principal and for residential visits approval must be sought from trust leader</p> <p>ensures risk assessments are up to date and documented on the risk assessment register</p> <p>uses Smartlog for all H&S training identified by our trust</p> <p>provides training relating to curriculum areas, first aid and medical training and ensures certification is in date</p> <p>records training relating to curriculum areas e.g. science, DT, art, PE and first-aid</p> <p>ensures statutory checks relating to curriculum areas are completed and recorded e.g. radioactive sources</p> <p>utilises agreed suppliers for all estates work to ensure value for money is achieved with contracts approved</p> <p>submits projects to REMs via TAaA for consideration, to include providing advice on the project, clarify possible costs and budget and ensure the management of the minor works in line with building regulations, planning and fire management (this may also include minor design or management of outsourced contractors / service providers)</p> <p>raises queries relating to estates to include advice and support at TAaA meetings</p> <p>ensures fire evacuation drills are completed three times per academic year in line with the Fire Reform Order</p> <p>is responsible for managing minibus leases and organising minibus driver training for staff who are required to drive academy minibuses</p> <p>ensures the building is maintained through the application of the PFI contract at local level and should have an in-depth knowledge of the project agreement, output specification, payment mechanism and contract management handbook</p> <p>is responsible for cleaning including recruitment, line management, coaching and performance</p> <p>supports energy saving initiatives</p> <p>will submit requests for portorage in line with shared service standards</p>

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IT / Digital Service	<p>speaks to the IT team leader to support the research of suitable software solutions to meet internal requirements</p> <p>ensures all incidents and requests are captured by logging a ticket on the service desk tool</p> <p>completes a DPIA for all new software (including web-based services)</p> <p>keeps IT informed of any significant changes to curriculum or buildings that will require IT input</p> <p>ensures all files are stored in OneDrive, MS Teams and SharePoint only, for sharing and security purposes</p> <p>works with IT around the ongoing refresh of devices, ensuring devices are internally well managed, and any requests for digital hardware is justifiable</p>
Communications	<p>has an engaged communications champion to support the development, delivery and promotion of internal and external communications and marketing activity</p> <p>adheres to our trust brand and language guidelines</p> <p>uses the most up to date standard document templates and formats for: letterheads, PowerPoint, external documents, recruitment</p> <p>updates websites in line with trust guidance and ensures that websites are fully compliant and adhere to DfE regulations</p> <p>shares academy news trust wide (Team Dixons, internal comms, events etc); cascades trust comms in schools</p> <p>sends all press queries to the central comms team and accounting officer</p> <p>follows the What to do... Internal Communications</p> <p>complies with social media guidance</p> <p>uses approved preferred supplier lists for external marketing</p> <p>sends all trust wide communications to the accounting officer via the central comms team for approval</p>
Governance	<p>is held to account by our trust board</p> <p>adheres to our scheme of delegation and articles of association</p> <p>participates as directed in internal audits</p> <p>follows the agreed LAB meeting cycle</p> <p>invests time and engagement with ambassadors as a voice of the community</p> <p>enables ambassadors to support and challenge the experience of the cluster's students, staff and families</p> <p>encourages an active relationship with ambassadors for academy events</p>
ED&I	<p>engages in ongoing ED&I training and this informs all elements of academy thinking</p> <p>considers our most vulnerable children and full diversity of staff in all decision making</p> <p>works to break down barriers with local communities and build trust</p> <p>appreciates and welcomes staff, students and families as their authentic selves</p> <p>supports our trust strategy to address barriers to fair outcomes and representation</p> <p>creates a sense of belonging for all where all can speak up and feel safe</p> <p>actively seeks to ensure that ED&I permeates the curriculum</p> <p>can articulate the impact of strengthening our ED&I pillars of culture, representation and curriculum on the academy community</p>