

Outcome on the consultation on changes to the admissions arrangements for Dixons Music Primary Academy

Summary of proposal

Dixons Academies Trust consulted on a proposal to change the admissions arrangements as described below, which will result in there being an increased chance of gaining a place for children suffering deprivation, followed by those who live in the local area.

Children applying for a music place, children of members of staff, children with siblings already at the Academy will be unaffected by these changes, as these children will still receive priority before those children who are eligible under the proposed criteria.

The proposed changes were:

1. Removal of random allocation as an oversubscription criterion.
Random allocation would only be used in a tie-breaker situation to decide between two or more applications that qualify equally for a place, and only one place remains.
2. Introduction of priority for children eligible for the early years' pupil premium (EYPP)¹, the pupil premium (PP)², and the service premium (SP)³.
The criterion would be added immediately *after* the sibling criterion in the Academy's admission arrangements.
3. Introduction of straight-line distance to replace random allocation as an oversubscription criterion.
The decision of who would be offered a place would be decided based upon the distance (proximity) of the home address to the Academy, with those who live closest receiving priority for the place.

Consultation period and comments

The consultation ran from Monday 14 November 2022 until Friday 23 December 2022.

Respondents were asked to tick whether they agreed with the proposed changes. They had the option of stating Yes, No, or Maybe.

	Number of responses
Yes	7
No	9
Maybe	0
Total	16

Respondents were also asked to tick which of the following categories best represented their interest in this consultation.

	Number of responses
Parent	10
School staff	0
Member of the public	0
LA	1
Community or religious organisation	4

¹ EYPP is additional funding paid to support disadvantaged children receiving government-funded early education, as per Section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006.

² PP is additional funding paid annually to schools under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the attainment of disadvantaged children.

³ SP is additional funding paid annually to schools under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the pastoral needs of the children of Armed Services personnel.

Politician	0
Other	1
Total	16

Respondents were also given the opportunity to give a reason/s for their response.

Yes (in favour of introduction)

- I think the changes are transparent and fair, and I agree with the proposed changes.
- Makes perfect sense.
- Kirklees does not have any comments or issues regarding the proposed admission policies.

No (not in favour of introduction)

- Random allocation gives more children a chance to gain a place. And is fairer for all children regardless of the area they live in.
- I feel Dixons music primary is an outstanding school. The new proposed admission does not make sense to make it like other schools. It's done really well the way it has been doing for numerous years and has been effective. I completely disagree!
- If it was based on distance we wouldn't be eligible.
- I think it's unfair to do it on pupil premium. Does this mean places will go to disadvantaged local children only? One of the things I liked about Dixons was that they accept children from all areas. What is the reason for wanting to change? Is it a monetary reason, it sounds more like a business than a school.
- I have a child that is in year 4 and will be in year 6 2024 when my child comes to primary. I also have a year 7 child in McMillan so I would appreciate it if parents with other children attending on the same road can get into the primary.
- My twins are currently in year 3, having been at DMP since 2019 (reception). One twin is on a music place and also DMP's SEN register as he has been provisionally assessed for autism (he doesn't yet have an EHCP). They love the school and I as a parent have been highly engaged with the school so far. We used to live in Queensbury when we made the initial primary application, but moved nearer to Low Moor in 2021. I strongly disagree with moving from random allocation to local catchment.

1. Local catchments would work against current diversity of school. When we applied, we lived in Queensbury. I was excited for my children to attend a school that focused on music and academic excellence, and most of all a school which prioritized diversity and children from different backgrounds learning alongside each other. At the time of application (2018-2019) there was a brilliant video on the DMP website emphasizing the vision to keep the school as distinctively different from the usual Bradford norm of most schools being either almost all South Asian ethnicity or almost all white. This norm I passionately believe should not be acceptable in modern Britain, but is in my view largely driven by local catchments which tend to be segregated due to housing issues and prices.

I moved up to Bradford from London and DMP reflects much more what I was used to – a diverse mix of people all getting on, working together and becoming friends. We desperately need as a country, particularly in the north of England, to have more interaction between different communities. This benefits both/all communities. My twins have benefited hugely through being in a diverse school, and others in their class like knowing them. Whilst abolishing the random allocation admission criteria won't affect my twins, it would mean that no other families like ours could go to DMP. I do believe this is key to broadening horizons and becoming future leaders at a city and national level, not just of one's own local community – building cultural capital and gaining different perspectives. We would be missing a trick to change it to how everyone else does it.

2. There are already other outstanding and good schools serving the local community around DMP. Copthorne primary serves the local area and is rated outstanding. All Saints C of E primary just round the corner is also a very good school serving the local area. There is also a Catholic primary very near. Therefore it is not a situation where the local children in the area are not being already catered for in terms of excellent education. Indeed moving to local catchment away from random allocation may indeed interfere and undermine these schools. That should surely not be the 'most important thing' for DMP to do?

3. There are no other primary schools like DMP in terms of music and performing arts serving Bradford. The only other primary school I'm aware of that uses music in a similar, embedded way as DMP, is Foxhill in Queensbury which is single form entry based on a small local catchment. A DMP move away from random allocation to local catchment would mean families like ours would miss out on such good music and academic provision. Disadvantage takes many forms and there are families across all areas of Bradford and surrounding villages who cannot afford music lessons or to move to a more expensive area near an outstanding school. Although anecdotal and difficult to measure, it is nevertheless my observation. There are also families across Bradford and surrounding villages who feel they don't fit into their local area/local school/local community and who look at DMP and see a school where they would fit in. (We are one such family, and many of my twins' peers I believe are similar). It would be a shame if this would no longer be an option open to such families, some of whom may fall into the pupil premium bracket and receive priority, but not all.



Factors considered:

- The responses received to the consultation.
- The Academy is in an area of deprivation (BD5 and BD7). The number of applicants from these areas in the past 3 years and the number of places allocated was:

Year	Number of children living in BD5 & BD7 area who listed the Academy as a preference	Number of children admitted from BD5 & BD7 areas	Total number of places
2022	163	30	60
2021	180	35	60
2020	186	37	60

By changing to the proposed admission arrangements, this would enable the Academy to admit more children living in this area.

- There are Dixons academies in other parts of the city for whom children living in other postcode areas may qualify for places.
- The changes will not affect siblings of those children who already have a brother / sister attending the Academy.
- The Academy will still offer 6 places for children with an aptitude for music, whose admission will be decided solely on aptitude and not based on the distance of the home address.

Outcome of the consultation

The Board of Trustees decided in favour of the proposed changes. They subsequently determined the admissions arrangements that can be found on the following page.



The admission arrangements are:

- a) There are 60 places in Reception.
- b) Applications for places at the Academy will be made in accordance with the local authorities Coordinated Admission Scheme, as published on Bradford local authority's [website](#) and in the authority's "A guide for parents about admission arrangements for Primary Schools". Where the Academy receives more applications than places available, the oversubscription criteria will apply.
- c) Applications must be made on the Common Application / Preference Form (CAF / CPF) provided by the local authorities by the stated deadline.
- d) If applying for a music specialist place, you must complete and submit a Music Place form. The form can be obtained as a paper copy directly from the Academy or downloaded from the Academy's [website](#) or Bradford Local Authority's [website](#). Children whose forms are submitted by the deadline stated on the form will be considered for these places first.
- e) If applying for a place under eligibility for pupil premium, you must submit proof of eligibility by the deadline for local authority applications (15 January).

Oversubscription criteria

The Academy has an agreed admissions number of 60 children for entry in Reception. The Academy will accordingly admit up to 60 children in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received. All children will be admitted if 60 or fewer apply.

If the Academy is oversubscribed, after the admission of children with an Education, Health, and Care Plan, where the Academy is named, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria in the order set out below:

- a) Looked-after children or children who were previously looked after. See note 1 for a definition of these terms.
- b) Children who have exceptional social or medical need, supported by a written recommendation from the child's paediatrician / consultant or a professional from Children's Services. The recommendation must explain why the Academy is the *only* suitable school to meet the child's needs and why *no other school* could provide the appropriate support for the child.

Prioritisation will be decided based on the information received and parents will be informed if the application meets this criterion before the end of March. See note 2 for how to apply.

- c) Up to 6 places will be awarded to children who show a particular aptitude for Music.

Where possible, parents will be informed if their child's application is being prioritised under this criterion, prior to the local authorities CAF / CPF deadline.

- d) Up to 2 children of staff, who have been in post for at least two years, or to staff recently appointed to a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. See note 3 for how to apply.

If demand exceeds places, the decision of who will be offered the place will be made by using a computerised random number generator programme (see note 4).

- e) Children whose siblings live at the same address, who currently attend the Academy, and will still be attending on the date of admission. See note 5 for a definition of sibling.
- f) Children eligible for the early years' pupil premium, the pupil premium, and the service premium (see note 6).
- g) All other children based on proximity of the home address to the Academy (see note 7).

If demand exceeds places at points e), f) or g), places will be decided based upon the distance (proximity) of the home address (see note 7) to the Academy, with those who live closest receiving priority for the place/s. If there are two or more children from equidistant addresses but only one place remains, the decision of who will be offered the place will be made by using a computerised random number generator programme (see note 4).

Where twins, triplets, or siblings (brothers or sisters) are applying for the same year group, and only one place is available the sibling/s will also be offered a place/s above the admission number.

Notes

1. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

A previously looked-after child is a child who, immediately after being looked-after, became subject to adoption, child arrangements order or a special guardianship order and includes those who appear (to the Governing Body) to have been in state care outside of England⁴ and ceased to be so because of being adopted.

⁴ A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.



2. Exceptional need applications must be in the form of a letter or e-mail to the Governing Body of the Academy, sent via the Admissions Officer, and accompanied by the recommendation described above.

The e-mail or letter is required in addition to the submission of a completed local authority application form.

3. Children of staff applications must be in the form of a letter or e-mail to the Governing Body of the Academy, sent via the Admissions Officer stating the name, post, and length of service of the member of staff, the name of the Academy, and the child's name and date of birth.

The e-mail or letter is required in addition to the submission of a completed local authority application form.

4. All applications will be allocated a random number of between 1 and 8 that contains up to 7 decimal places. The numbers will be allocated by a computer programme and ranked from the smallest number at the top to the biggest number at the bottom.

The randomisation process will be supervised by an independent clerk of the independent appeals panel.

5. In addition to brothers and sisters, the term sibling includes half, adopted, step, or foster brothers or sisters living at the same address. It does not include cousins or other family members sharing a house.

6. Proof of eligibility should be sent in writing via the Admissions Office for the Academy.

7. Straight line measurement is taken from the Ordnance Survey reference point for the home address to the main entrance of the Academy. 'Home address' refers to the child's permanent home at the time of admission. Where the child lives with split parents who have shared responsibility, it is for the parents to determine which address to use when applying for a school. Proof of residency may be required at any time during or after the allocation process.

Deferred entry

Children are entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents who do not feel that their child is ready for full-time education then, should speak to the Principal about whether starting their schooling on a part-time basis, or deferring the start until their child reaches compulsory school age, would be beneficial to their child.

Where entry is deferred, the Academy will hold the place and not offer it to another child during the remainder of the school year for which the application was made. Parents cannot defer entry beyond the point at which the child reaches their fifth birthday, nor beyond the beginning of the summer term (in April) of the school year for which a place was offered.

Requests to offset

Information on off-setting can be found in the School Admissions section of Bradford local authority's [website](#) and in the document '[Summer Born Children – Starting School: Advice for parents](#)'.

Where parents feel that their summer born child's needs are such that they would benefit from starting school later, they should first discuss with the Academy what is available in school to meet the needs of the youngest children.

If parents wish to apply for off-setting at this Academy, they should use the 'Request to start school out of the chronological year group form'. Parents will still need to apply to the local authority by the deadline for a place in the child's normal age group in case the request is not successful.

Music specialist places

There are up to 6 places (10% of our intake) available each year. These places are aimed at children who demonstrate a gifted musical aptitude and children will be required to actively participate in the musical workshop to be considered for a place.

To apply for a music place, parents must complete the Dixons Music Primary supplementary form (SIF) and return it to the Academy by the deadline stated on the form. All applicants for these places will be required to attend a musical workshop to be considered for one of these places.

Children will be given a score based on their performance in each element of the workshop. Children will be ranked in the order of their total combined scores, with those children who score the highest being ranked from 1 to 6. A reserve list of up to 2 children will then operate should any of those ranked in the top 6 not require a place. If there are insufficient applicants who demonstrate the required aptitude, then fewer than 6 places will be offered.

Children who are unsuccessful in gaining a music place will still be considered for one of the remaining places, along with all other applicants.

Calendar for admission

November 2023

Local authority booklet and common application / preference form (CAF / CPF) is made available.



November 2023 – December 2023

- Mid-November – open event; for details of this, please see the Academy website.
- Late November – deadline for Dixons Music place supplementary information form (SIF); deadline date is as stated on the SIF.
- Early December - workshops for Music place applicants.

Early January 2024

Open event: for details of this, please see the Academy website.

15 January 2024

Deadline for receipt of:

- local authorities' common application / preference form (CAF / CPF)
- letters or e-mails and any supporting documentation in relation to applications under exceptional need
- letters or e-mails in relation to applications under children of staff oversubscription criteria
- proof of eligibility for applications under pupil premium criterion
- request to start school out of the chronological year group form and any documentation relating to the request.

16 April 2024

Local authorities write with offers made to parents for all schools in their schemes.

In the event of oversubscription, those children who cannot be offered a place will automatically remain on the waiting list at the Academy until the end of December that year.

In-year admissions

There are 60 places in each of the year groups (Reception to Year 6).

Where vacancies occur, places are not offered based on the length of time children have been on the list but are filled in coordination with the local authorities and in line with the oversubscription criteria stated above. It is, therefore, possible that a child may be added to the list who qualifies more highly within the criteria than children already on the list because each time a child is added, the list will be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Looked after children, previously looked after children, and those allocated a place at the Academy in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol (explained below) take precedence over those on a waiting list.

Applications should be made on Bradford local authority's 'In Year Common Application Form' (ICAF) which is available from the [website](#). Once completed, the form needs to be returned directly to the local authority. On receipt of an ICAF the local authority will send a copy of this to the Academy, and then respond to advise if a place is available or not.

Fair access protocol

All local authorities must have a Fair Access Protocol, which the Academy is required to be part of, to ensure that access to education is secured quickly for children who have no school place. Children who are dealt with under the protocol are likely to be the most vulnerable or present challenging behaviour and who cannot reasonably be managed through the normal admissions process. Children admitted through the protocol may be placed into a year group which is full and will take precedence over other children on the waiting list. It is the local authority's decision to determine which children are dealt with by the protocol and the Academy is obliged, as are other schools within the district, to admit a proportion of these children.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group, for instance, where a child is gifted or talented or where a child has suffered from learning, social or medical issues impacting his or her schooling.

When such a request is made, the Governing Body will decide based on the circumstances of the case and in the best interest of the child concerned, considering the view of the Principal and any supporting evidence provided by the parent. The process for requesting such an admission is as follows:

Parents should submit an e-mail or letter to the Governing Body, via the Admissions Officer, to request that the child is admitted to another year group (stating which year group) and the reasons for their application. Included with the e-mail or letter should be any evidence in support of their case; some of the evidence a parent might submit could include:



- information about the child’s academic, social, and emotional development
- where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

The Governing Body will advise the parent whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed or the reason for any refusal. Where the Governing Body refuses such a request, there is no right of appeal against a refusal to offer a place in the preferred age group. The right of appeal only applies against a refusal of a place at the Academy.

Waiting lists and appeals

Waiting lists

If your child is not offered a place at the Academy for Reception, your child’s details will automatically remain on the waiting list until the end of December i.e., one term after the start of the year. You will need to make a fresh application in January for your child’s details to remain on the waiting list (see In Year Admissions section for how to apply).

For in-year applications, the details will remain on the waiting list until the end of the academic year in which you apply (July). You will need to make a new application if you wish to apply for a place for the next academic year.

Where places become available, they will be filled in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Appeals

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. This is a legal process and places are not ‘reserved’ for appeal panels to offer.

The Government has set a limit on the size of infant classes, and this means that no Key Stage 1 (Reception, Year 1, or Year 2) class can have more than 30 children with one teacher. Because of this law very few appeals are successful for Key Stage 1.

Further information about the appeals process can be found on the Academy’s [website](#).

If you are considering an appeal, please contact the Appeals Coordinator for further information.

Tel: 01274 089780 – option 7

E-mail: appeals@dixonsacademies.com

