



AN OFSTED OUTSTANDING SCHOOL

IMPACT REPORT 2015



CLIMBING THE MOUNTAIN
TO UNIVERSITY

OUR MISSION

“THE ACADEMY ENSURED THAT ALL STUDENTS SUCCEEDED AT UNIVERSITY, THRIVED IN A TOP JOB AND HAD A GREAT LIFE.”

Dixons Trinity Academy opened with 112 Year 7 students on 4th September 2012 and will rise to its full capacity of 720 students by September 2018. In January 2014, we became the first secondary free school to be judged Outstanding by Ofsted. At Trinity, we have tried to take the best ideas from academies, schools, the independent sector and abroad.

No individual element of our practice is revolutionary. Others have said that it is the way in which those ideas have been combined and embedded with rigour and simplicity that has allowed us to make such a strong start. We don't believe in off-the-shelf strategies or practices; there is no silver bullet. It is really about being values driven, having a clear vision, focusing relentlessly on results, operating strict routines, doing the simple things well every day, and building strong relationships at all levels.

At Trinity, 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 learn, behave and are well mannered. Teachers teach with skill and rigour, showing great courtesy. Staff and students enjoy what they do together.

In our achievement-oriented culture, it is cool to be smart, and all students work hard to climb the mountain to university or a real alternative.

This Impact Report is a direct reflection of our commitment to performance transparency and accountability for student results and achievement in our academy.



DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

Learning First

Our three core features of intelligent sequencing, highly tailored learning activities and effective formative assessment shape how our students learn and our teachers teach. Within this framework, our teachers have the autonomy to teach as they best see fit.

Powerful Feedback

We harness the power of feedback to increase student learning by ensuring that regular feedback causes thinking rather than an emotional reaction. Moreover, our whole culture is built on tailored and on-going feedback and how we can all improve, learners and teachers alike. We engineer these feedback opportunities in order for everyone to be able to talk about their development in a reflective way.

Developing Crucial Skills

We begin every day with an EBacc focus at Morning Meeting. We also spend 30 minutes of every day reading during DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) sessions. Our top three literacy strategies are: carrying a reading book (reading); speaking in full sentences (speaking); tracking the speaker/s (listening).

Driven By Data

Teachers and leaders have weekly 'progress meetings' and spend a 'Data Day' after each assessment cycle dedicated to creating data-driven instructional plans that target whole class, small group and one-on-one intervention. Intervention can take place before, during and after the academy day.

Advisory Structure

Advisory groups form the core organisational and pastoral structure of the academy. The advisor is a coach, mentor, teacher and manager. Students within advisories are coached to support one another in a structured programme that advances their autonomy and self-awareness.

Two Simple Questions

To keep motivation that lasts, we focus on two important questions. First, we ask a big question to orient our life toward greater purpose – what's my sentence? In one sentence we state what lasting impression we want to leave on the world. Then we keep asking a small question for day-to-day motivation – was I better today than yesterday?

Stretch Projects

In addition to their more traditional curriculum, Stretch projects allow students to explore an area of interest within a given theme. We aim to develop students' autonomy and grow their love of learning. This project is assessed through a student exhibition at the end of each cycle.

High Expectations, No Excuses

We have very clear rules about homework and equipment because students have to be ready to learn. Our students are expected to wear their uniform with pride and there is a strong attention to detail. Students are also required to be 'on task' and fully engaged in their learning at all times. Over time, our students pick up strong learning habits in order to be better qualified, more successful and happier in the future.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

Parents As Partners

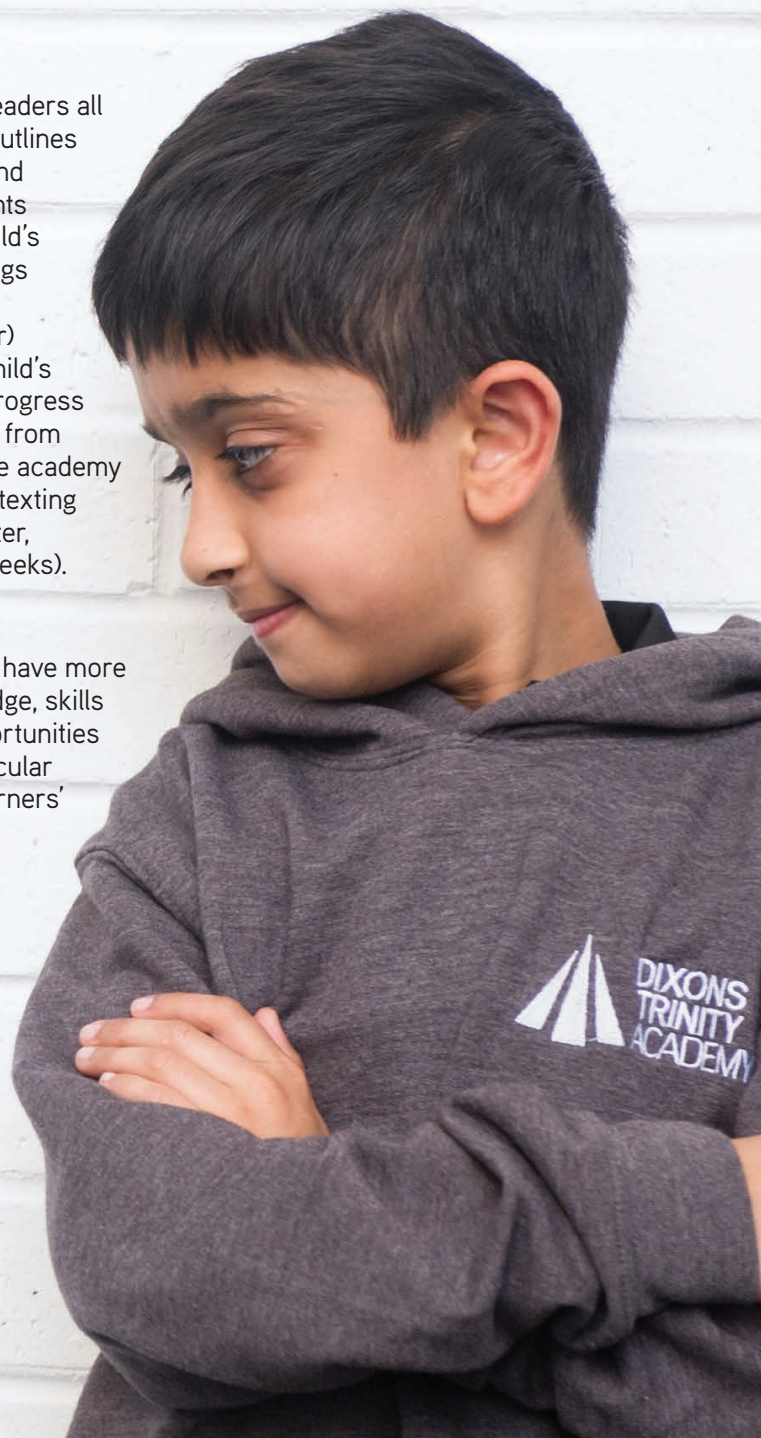
At Trinity, parents, students and school leaders all sign a Home-Academy Agreement that outlines their shared commitment to hard work and consistent support of one another. Parents are given regular information on their child's progress. As well as our parents' evenings (2 per year), advisors also make regular phone calls to parents (at least 2 per year) to provide general information on their child's progress. Parents receive their child's progress grades 3 times a year and a presentation from their child in Cycle 3. Other ways that the academy communicates with parents include: our texting service, academy website and blog, Twitter, Facebook and Newsflash (every 2 to 3 weeks).

More Time

With an extended academy day, students have more time in the classroom to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding, as well as more opportunities to participate in a wide range of co-curricular electives that enrich and broaden the learners' cultural literacy. There are no shortcuts to success.

Co-curricular Electives and the House System

As part of the students' enrichment, they participate in weekly arts and games electives that offer a broad variety of disciplines to choose from. The House System is designed to engender healthy competition within the electives as students strive towards Mastery in any given area of focus.



CASE STUDIES

KHADIJAH'S JOURNEY

"Since joining Dixons Trinity Academy, I have grown in confidence, made lots of friends and made a great deal of progress. Stretch has helped me to learn and conduct research independently, taking part in Stretch Finals has helped me to become confident when speaking to large audiences. I also really enjoyed participating in SUSOMAD (Stand Up, Speak Out and Make a Difference) which helped me communicate with different people and build up a knowledge of history.

My advisor has helped me a lot this year and is a key reason for my success; she offers me advice on selecting the right books to accelerate my reading age and on which extra-curricular activities to join to help me work towards my sentence. I want to be a journalist, I would like to travel the world and tell the stories of others so I chose creative writing, which I have thoroughly enjoyed.

Family dining is great, it has allowed me to make friends with people I wouldn't usually speak to. I have had the opportunity to be an academy representative, where I speak to the visitors who come to school.

I am very proud to be a student here where it is cool to be smart; we focus on education and climbing our mountains."

KHADIJAH - CLASS OF 2022

"I have seen Khadijah excel this year in her journey through Year 7, she has had such a positive start, she gets on with all the students and all the staff.

The academy helps all students to be organised through daily routines and expectations. Families receive regular contact from staff, it is nice to hear how my child is getting on.

The core values, which are embedded in the school, motivate students and help them meet their deadlines; everything is explained to students which makes things fair.

I used to think Khadijah was quite shy, now she has come out of her shell and speaks with confidence and maturity. Khadijah's father and I came to watch her perform, what I saw was just amazing, her dad was so shocked!"

KHADIJAH'S MUM

KASPARS' JOURNEY

"When I first joined Dixons Trinity Academy, I got lots of corrections because of the way I had learnt to behave at primary school. During Cycle 1, all my teachers helped me to improve my behaviour; I found my lessons fun, I was helped to focus, my teachers taught me how to learn.

The residential showed me not to be afraid, I learnt new skills and got to know my teachers' personalities, we got to climb a mountain, this made me understand that I could push myself more. I had more stamina than I knew! I realised it was hard to climb a mountain, just like it was hard to get to university but I could get there!

Everyone has helped me progress this year: teachers, peers and my family. I am progress purple in all my core subjects, I am so happy. I enjoy the autonomy school gives us, to have freedom to be creative! It is a fair school where it just doesn't matter what set you are in, we all learn, I trust my teachers to help me achieve my best.

Dixons Trinity Academy has helped me to become a good person, I know how to be more helpful and considerate to others."

KASPARS - CLASS OF 2021

"I was worried about Kaspars starting secondary school. He is now on the right path for a better future. I am over the moon! Together with the teachers, we talk through problems, we decide what to do and we improve. The strong routines and expectations of the school mean students succeed. It's a firm but fair school and it really works for my child. The corrections correct behaviour and that is what has happened with my son.

He used to get upset about reading every day, now he can do this by himself. I am shocked by his new vocabulary, how much he is learning, I can't believe how grown up he is. His mindset has changed. He is climbing the mountain to a better future."

KASPARS' MUM

MASTERY

MASTERY: THE URGE TO GET BETTER AND BETTER AT SOMETHING THAT MATTERS.

We demonstrate outstanding progress and achievement

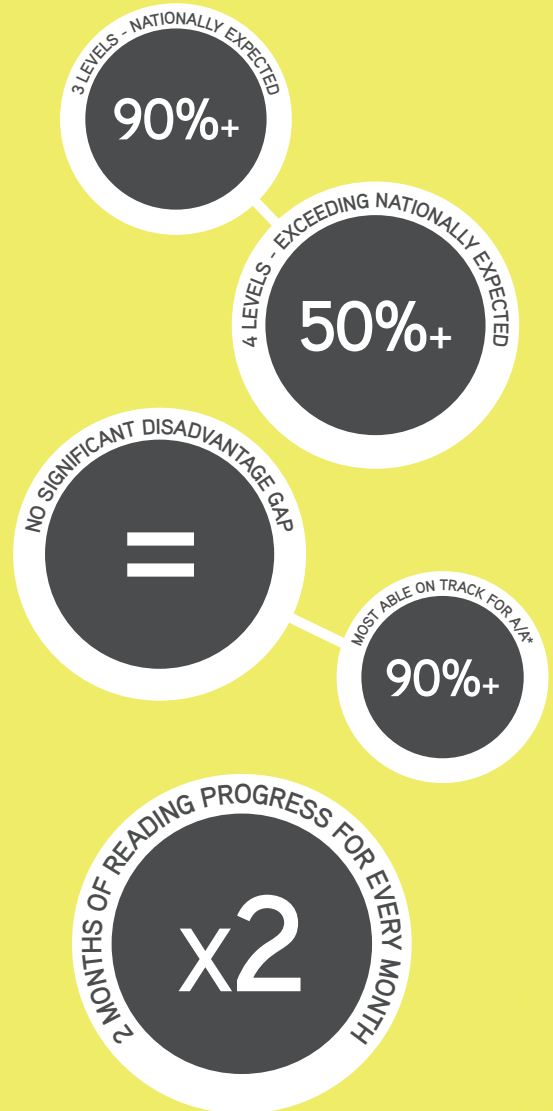
- Over 90% of students are on track to achieve, at least, 3 levels of progress from KS2-4 across the curriculum; over 50% are on track to achieve 4 levels.
- The progress of disadvantaged students matches that of other students and the most able are on track to achieve over 90% A/A* in the core.
- For every month, students make two months of progress in reading.

We ensure learning is rigorous, engaging and underpinned by meaningful feedback

- The three core features of each lesson: intelligent sequencing, highly tailored learning activities and effective formative assessment ensure learning is both systematically planned for and effectively checked. Teachers do the critical work in planning so they are enabled to be highly-responsive in the classroom.

Embed a rich and exciting curriculum that embodies the laws of mastery

- Pain: the grit of excellence in action.
- Flow: forgetting yourself in a function.
- Growth: effort and persistence in learning.



**"I REALLY APPRECIATE EVERYTHING YOU HAVE
DONE FOR MY SON AND HOW QUICKLY YOU
RESPOND TO ALL SITUATIONS."**

WAHAAJ'S FATHER



**"MY CHILDREN FEEL SAFE AND HAPPY AROUND THE ACADEMY,
AND THEY ARE THRILLED AT THE FACT THAT THEY ARE GIVEN
THE AUTONOMY TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN UNIFORM ALONG WITH
THEIR STRETCH PRESENTATIONS. THANK YOU!"**

TAIMOOR'S FATHER



AUTONOMY

AUTONOMY: THE DESIRE TO DIRECT OUR OWN LIVES.

We create a joyful and disciplined school culture

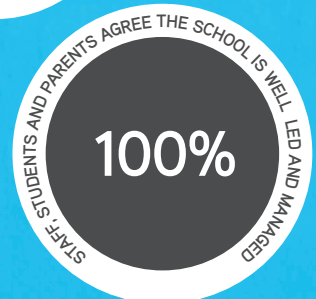
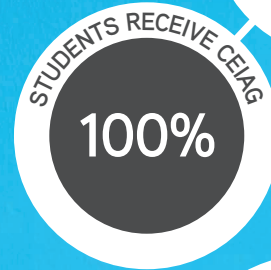
- 100% of lessons are graded good, or better, for behaviour; attendance is 97%; punctuality is 99%.

We develop gritty, confident and self-directed learners

- 100% of students arrive at lessons on time.
- 100% of students present an exhibition of their Stretch project at the end of each cycle.
- 100% of students received CEIAG.

We cultivate effective, autonomous leaders at every level of the organisation

- 100% of staff, students and parents agree that the school is well led and managed.



PURPOSE

PURPOSE: THE YEARNING TO DO WHAT WE DO IN THE SERVICE OF SOMETHING LARGER THAN OURSELVES.

We establish a genuine three-way partnership between families, students and staff

- 100% of parents attend consultation events and would recommend Dixons Trinity Academy to another parent.



We work with the Dixons Academies to replicate best practice and to contribute to continuous improvement

- Dixons Trinity Academy has worked with all the Dixons Academies and supported over 40 schools nationally this year alone.



We establish a strong reputation for Dixons Trinity Academy

- Dixons Trinity Academy is heavily oversubscribed – nine students apply for every place.



**"WE HAVE RECOMMENDED
THE ACADEMY TO FOUR
OR FIVE OF OUR FAMILY
MEMBERS, AND THEY HAVE
ALREADY APPLIED BASED ON
HOW MUCH OUR CHILDREN
LOVE ATTENDING TRINITY."**

SAHER'S FATHER



WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

Ofsted, January 2014

We are delighted to be the first secondary free school to be judged Outstanding by Ofsted. Highlights from the report include:

"In this academy, only excellence will do."

"Students make rapid progress from their starting points and after only one year their attainment is high."

"Teachers are passionate about teaching and highly committed to ensuring that students achieve their full potential."

"Behaviour is exemplary and learning time is never wasted."

"Exceptional leadership, from the headteacher and other senior leaders, has driven forward the academy's mission."

Bradford Partnership, December 2014

"Students' learning is outstanding because they receive a consistently high quality of teaching. There is a serious, purposeful approach to teaching... Students achieve exceptionally well in this academy for a wide variety of reasons. These include the academy's high expectations for them, the consistently high quality teaching they receive, the rigorous systems in place to monitor their progress, the detailed information teachers receive as a result to help them plan to meet students' needs and the attitudes and aspirations of students and of staff on their behalf... data about their attainment and progress, their work in books and their learning in lessons shows rapid and sustained progress for students of all ages with little or no gaps between different groups. From broadly average starting points attainment rises impressively quickly."

Robert Hawke (Principal, AF Greenfield, New Haven, CT, US)

"I have visited dozens of top-performing schools, and Dixons Trinity Academy stands out as the clear leader in terms of student motivation. I've never seen students so invested in their learning, nor have I seen students so clearly articulate the connection between their day-to-day school experience and their overall purpose in life, as I saw on my visit to Dixons Trinity."

Dacia Toll (Co-CEO and President, Achievement First, US)

"Dixons Trinity is a truly outstanding school. They have the hallmarks of many of the top schools – rigorous instruction, a very positive school community, a well-balanced curriculum, and operational attention to detail. What makes them really stand out amongst this top group is their intentional and successful efforts to cultivate intrinsic motivation in their young leaders. I was blown away by the clear sense of purpose and autonomy every young person had and the way this committed them even more to their studies and to truly becoming their best selves."

Brian Sims (Director of Education, Ark)

"Dixons Trinity has created an incredible foundation for its students and staff to flourish. They have built their community around an ethos that blends high expectations and no excuses with compassion and joy – a rare combination in schools today. We brought twenty of our school leaders to visit last year and every one of us left motivated and inspired. It is truly impressive, and we look forward to watching the school continue to grow in the years ahead."

Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP (Secretary of State for Education)

"It is free schools like Dixons Trinity Academy in Bradford, providing an outstanding and innovative education to some of the country's most deprived children... These are the modern engines of social justice."

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