

November 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

### Principal's Message

As you are aware, we had another set of great results last year. The government has now released some initial national data. We expect that our **KS4 results will put us in the top 15% of the country** for progress, with students getting an additional half a grade above predicted in all their subjects. Yet again, we have seen strong results in English, math and science.

Although we are still waiting for our KS5 results to be confirmed against national data, early indicators suggest that we have done exceptionally well. We believe that our **KS5 results should put us in the top 20% of the country for both Academic subjects and Applied General** (vocational). We are so proud of our Year 13 scholars who achieved such outstanding results. Year 13 scholars recorded an unprecedented **100% overall pass-rate** in all Academic and Applied General qualifications. Our Value Added for Academic is 0.54, with an increase of nearly one grade from the previous year. Our Applied General results have remained excellent, despite the changes to the courses. Our average grade is Distinction, which is one grade above the national average. Feedback from our scholar voice stated that 100% of Year 13 scholars would recommend DAA Post 16 to other students. We are delighted that 85% of our scholars are attending university, higher education or degree level apprenticeship; 13% of those at a Russell group university, an increase of 8% from 2016/2017. Our focus is to continue to deliver an outstanding Post 16 curriculum and wider programme of study to a larger cohort of scholars. We aim to do this by increasing the number of scholars attending a 'top' university and to continue to achieve positive value-added scores through our relentless focus on improving teaching, learning and assessment.

Apart from qualifications, all other indicators are positive, and we believe that right across the Academy, **behaviour, equipment, uniform, attendance and punctuality are now outstanding**. Every day, 96% of scholars complete their set homework.

With the considerable investment in musical instruments, including a new piano, the number of scholars learning a musical instrument has increased dramatically. For the first time in many years, it is so lovely to hear woodwind instruments being played in the Academy. The intention is that over the next few years we slowly create a DAA orchestra. Despite a little delay with the order, all Year 7 scholars have now received their own Ukulele. I believe that all scholars should get a rounded education and have every opportunity given to them to develop character.

I am very proud of the large number of scholars who have attended a residential, have taken part in an educational visit or have done something that goes beyond typical school life. In particular, the way the current Year 11 scholars are working after school and during holiday revision sessions is so impressive.



Despite this success, we are not complacent, and we continue to strive for excellence by listening to what our 'customers' and employees think. In the recent **scholar, staff and parental survey** it was great to see an **overwhelmingly positive response** to questions, especially in terms of scholars feeling happy, safe and being well educated at the Academy. As Principal, I recognise that we are not perfect, however it is such a lovely feeling when the majority of those involved with the school recognise the positive changes to the Academy. With the same intention, we have also done extensive face-to-face interviews with random groups of scholars and their heart-warming feedback has been genuinely, overwhelmingly positive. As ever, there is always room for improvement and we will be working hard to ensure scholars fully understand the rationale behind our homework policy and that we make the process of reporting progress to parents even better.

Apart from questionnaires and other surveys, I firmly believe in external scrutiny. Luke Sparkes, our Executive Principal, now spends a day a week at Allerton, ensuring that many aspects of the Dixons Trinity model are properly embedded in the Academy. I commissioned an independent review of safeguarding and the outcome of the review shows that safeguarding continues to be robust and effective. I have also had an Ofsted trained inspector spend several days at the school, looking at systems, results, speaking to scholars, interviewing school leaders and examining scholar work. From his findings, the excellent external results and with the support of our Governing Body, I strongly believe that the school no longer requires improvement and we are at least good. **All indicators suggest that the Primary, Secondary and Post 16 phases could be graded as 'Outstanding' at the next inspection.** Word of our success is spreading, and we are now getting other schools visiting the Academy to see how we have managed to make such changes - our last visitors came all the way from New Zealand.

Over the last 3 years I have made over 80 changes to the Academy, including removing the House system, extending the school day, P1 whole-school teaching, employing good teachers and constantly focusing on improving systems and structures. None of this could have happened without your continuing support and faith in me and my staff. I am proud that Dixons Allerton Academy continues to be a school that serves the local community and over the coming year my job is to ensure that your child fulfils their potential.

Yours sincerely



Gary Dreher  
Principal

