

What are the key benefits of working for Dixons?

- Dixons offers a generous package of benefits which at least meet and/or exceed national terms and conditions, as well as several additional benefits such as a 9-day fortnight for teachers, tailored flexible working options for all staff, and automatic pay progression. Dixons also offer a health cash plan and salary sacrifice schemes. For more details and to hear from staff, please visit their [careers site](#).
- Last year, from over 170 trusts, Edurio placed Dixons placed in the top 10 for creating an environment where staff feel confident in the value of being part of the trust.

Trust value award: <https://home.edurio.com/news/trust-value-award/>

How do the missions, values and principles align between GAET and Dixons?

- Dixons and GAET both share a deep commitment to transforming student life chances through outstanding education and true inclusion. We serve our communities driven by a common mission, shared values, and a culture of high standards, collaboration and kindness.
- The best way to understand an organisation's values is to talk, visit, and see a culture in action. There will be opportunities throughout the merger process to share our values and for the teams in each organisation to visit each other. GAET and Dixons have already worked together closely for some years, with the clear finding of a strong mutual mission alignment for the best outcomes for the students and communities we all serve.
- The process to align on mission and values will be constructive, with the Dixons' mission and values remaining in place across our merged trust and development work happening across each school to reflect the local community and team.

Are there going to be changes to Governance if GAET moves to Dixons?

- There will be availability of board seats for a number of GAET trustees.
- Both GAET and Dixons share a deep and enduring commitment to the communities we serve, and the meaningful contribution of members of local governing bodies and local academy boards. GAET's local governing bodies would evolve to harmonise with Dixons' local academy board model. The priority remains to have local representation for schools serving diverse communities.
- Local academy boards work with a cluster of schools rather than one school. Members of local academy boards serve as ambassadors to and champions of the local community, holding primary responsibility for meaningful stakeholder engagement, acting as 'eyes on the ground' for the board around student, staff, and family experience. The groups meet three times per year to conduct these duties, along with the local principals.

Will there be changes to educational IT systems?

- As with all areas of a school trust, the priorities remain safety and quality of education.
- Any changes to IT tooling will be carefully planned to minimise disruption and full training will be provided where relevant.

What is done to ensure quality and spirit of stakeholder engagement?

- Dixons and GAET teams fully recognise the importance of genuine engagement with all stakeholders as we move through the process and are committed to fully engaging and responding to concerns and feedback. Both our trusts will ensure an ongoing dialogue both leading up to and after any transfer.

What is the plan to support school improvement for the current GAET schools?

Dixons' approach is adaptive and evidence-led: priorities will be refined as they learn more about the GAET schools' contexts. For now, they're concentrating on two key levers:

- **Building on GAET's progress with a focus on great teaching:** Dixons will start by working alongside GAET's school leaders to strengthen instruction – identifying the strongest teachers, developing their expertise, and empowering them to support others. This bottom-up approach will ensure sustainable improvement while respecting what's already working well.
- **Accelerating impact through partnership and scale:** drawing on Dixons' research school, leadership development, academy transformation model, and strategic partners, highly targeted support will help GAET schools improve faster – always grounded in their context and always focused on outcomes for children.

Next steps will evolve as Dixons engages with staff, data, and communities – but these priorities will anchor their early work.

Will our school lose autonomy?

- Dixons operates on an aligned autonomy model, which seeks the perfect balance between consistency and self-determination for individuals and schools. This framework provides clarity on the areas of both alignment and autonomy, all implemented through local context and leadership. Dixons is committed to working closely with GAET leaders ahead of the merger to shape how this applies to each school. Clear communication, realistic timelines, and support will ensure all colleagues understand what to expect in real terms.

What is the difference in Examinations?

- Dixons has alignment with the EBacc to drive outcomes, but there is also flexibility for innovation where the trust has confidence. Below is a summary of the key examination boards Dixons use across the EBacc. There is significant commonality between Dixons and GAET. Any changes post merger would be carefully considered, clearly communicated and focused on improving student outcomes, with sufficient time and support to ensure a smooth transition. Across other subject areas, there is no common alignment, but in some instances, there is natural alignment due to the collaborative working across Dixons.
 - Mathematics – Pearson Edexcel
 - English Language, English Literatures, Languages, Geography, Combined Science, Separate Sciences – AQA
 - History – OCR, AQA and Pearson Edexcel

What is Dixons approach to SEND?

- Dixons' SEND provision is built on true inclusion, with a clear vision and a proven model delivering strong outcomes.
- An evidence-informed, transformative, whole-school approach ensures equity by embedding inclusivity into teaching, routines, and culture.
- The impact of Dixons' work shows the strength of their model:
 - EHCP students achieve nearly double the national average Attainment 8
 - Almost all our secondaries exceed national Progress 8 for students with an EHCP; five have a positive Progress 8 for EHCP students
 - Primary SEND support outcomes in reading, writing, and maths have risen 12% in two years.
- Dixons is fully committed to the proposed ARPs at Silver Springs and Copley – both are key, locally-driven models of SEND excellence.

How is Dixons performing in terms of standards and performance, and how does this compare with GAET?

- This merger is rooted in collaboration – accelerating progress, raising attainment for students, and delivering greater impact.
- Dixons has a proven track record of success. At secondary, their students consistently achieve above nationally expected progress, from a range of schools with historically poor outcomes. Last year, their newest turnaround school was the third most improved in the country. For disadvantaged students, Dixons ranks in the top 5% of trusts nationally for attainment – despite serving two of England's four most deprived communities.
- At primary, Silver Springs holds significant strengths and will join a network that combines deep local commitment with the power of shared expertise. This partnership will provide capacity for development, opportunities to share best practice, and a foundation to grow Dixons' primary phase in Tameside.
- Dixons' commitment to excellence spans all stages. Out of all dedicated 16 – 19 providers nationally, students at Dixons Sixth Form achieved the third highest average grades, and the academy is recognised among the top ten institutions for student choice.

Ofsted:

- Over 40% of Dixons' academies are Outstanding.
- 3 of Dixons' 5 primary schools are Outstanding (including one that joined in special measures).
- All of Dixons' turnaround schools have improved their Ofsted judgements since joining the trust – most by two grades.
- GAET's current headline Ofsted judgements:
 - Copley Academy – Graded Good in all headline judgements
 - Great Academy Ashton – Graded Good in 3 out of 4 headline judgements
 - Middleton Technology School – Graded Good in all headline judgements
 - Silver Springs Primary Academy – Graded Good in all headline judgements
 - GAET/Pioneers SCITT Graded Good in all headline judgements

• Secondary performance comparison:

	Dixons	Dixons	GAET
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	23/24 published data	Most recent turnarounds only (most with Dixons less than 3 years)	23/24 published data
Average grade	4.7	4	3.8
5+ English and maths	46	35	29
Progress	+0.1	-0.3	-0.6
National rank for disadvantaged students	32		193

Continuing to work at the heart of the communities we serve: will this change ?

- **Building on GAET's strong foundations, Dixons will deepen community impact through their award-winning place-based model:** ensuring every city or town has a Citizens UK and Parent Power alliance which amplifies student and family voice, school-based community hubs to enable family support, and convening partnerships with local partners, including the NHS and children's services. Dixons was recognised for this model in winning the 2024 TES Tim Brighouse Award.
- **Expanding opportunities through Dixons' networks:** GAET schools will gain access to the Dixons Cup (cross-subject enrichment), large-scale inter-city sport and arts events, civic engagement activities, and their outdoor education expertise and funding – adding scale and specialist support to existing strengths.