

# Discovery Special Academy



## Academy Curriculum Overview

# EYFS Curriculum



## **Reception**

Pupils at Discovery Special Academy access a personalised EYFS curriculum with activities planned to match their developmental stage. Programmes of study are based on Development Matters and differentiated to best meet the needs of learners. This curriculum begins at 0 years and therefore all pupils joining the academy in reception are able to access this. The EYFS curriculum follows the principles of play based, experiential and exploratory learning. Activities in each area are informed by both baseline and continuous assessment and purposefully designed to teach the foundation skills needed to progress. Learning intentions may also be taken from a range of therapeutic sources including but not limited to, sensory integration, speech and language and BLAST, physiotherapy.

The EYFS curriculum at Discovery offers a stimulating, nurturing and safe environment in which pupils can develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. It is focused on the early development of communication and interaction skill and ensuring that pupils are effective communicators. It supports their learning with objects of reference, Makaton, visual cues and communication aids in all areas and activities in the classroom. We recognise and emphasise the importance of developing skills for learning of all pupils with SEND including:

- learning to use their senses;
- learning to develop physical skills for manipulation and mobility;
- developing the 7 areas of engagement
  - responsiveness
  - curiosity
  - discovery
  - anticipation
  - persistence
  - initiation
  - investigation
- developing attention and perceptual skills; and
- developing early communication skills.

These are pupils' tools for learning: they are prerequisites to learning and vital elements of the curriculum for pupils with significant special needs. These 'learning to learn' skills will be developed across the curriculum.

A play based exploratory curriculum allows clear development of these skills with 1:1 and 1:2 teaching alongside small group activities such as sharing books and an introduction to phonics for those who are able. Strategies and interventions such as BLAST also aids communication and language development. Speech and language therapists contribute to the overall planning and development of targets for individual children. The use of photographs and personal interest boxes allows pupils to develop these skills in a familiar context.

To further aid acquisition of communication skills, Discovery Special Academy offers a language rich environment where practitioners are skilled in matching their vocabulary use and level of communication to the pupils' while scaffolding their progress. Using labels in all areas of the classroom alongside symbols and the use of signs ensures all pupils can access their environment and are exposed to a variety of

vocabulary. Additionally, regular sharing of books and discussion of high quality texts (see below) further embed this. All pupils with SEND need processing time and ensuring language and instructions used by adults are clear and concise alongside thinking time will also allow success.

Creating such a language rich environment is likewise important in supporting our pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL). In doing so, the key principles set out in the EAL policy are embedded throughout the curriculum and are a valued aspect of the inclusive Discovery ethos (see EAL policy). As with all pupils, and following the EYFS model of personalised learning, each pupil's tailored educational offer will be co-created with the child through careful assessment to support their development pathway. This fully supports the ethos, vision and values that Discovery engenders in ensuring that all pupils are given the support they need to make progress through appropriate and personalised learning intentions. For EAL pupils, this includes a focus on language acquisition with staff detailing in their planning the activities, interventions and environmental support that will allow the pupil to achieve this.

## **Themes**

Teaching and learning themes are delivered using a range of resources and media, ensuring that pupils are given a breadth of experience at a level that is appropriate to them. They are taught in a creative, practical way, supported in some areas through specialist weeks as well as trips and visits. Each theme incorporates suggested high quality children's literature mapped out in a book spine. Teachers base their 2 – 3 week planning blocks on one of the books of their choice from the spine (or another high quality text of their choosing) linking activities across the day to this and to the overarching theme. Further texts will be introduced to the children through the 5 a day reading approach.

EYFS teachers produce a half termly forecast based on stage appropriate learning intentions from Development Matters using the themes. All planned areas include key therapeutic objectives. Activities to support these are clearly shown on weekly planning overviews.

Across the year, some pupils will begin early phonics teaching using a multisensory approach founded on the principles of Jolly Phonics and Read Write Inc. A whole word approach to reading is also used and emphasised.

In EYFS, pupils work in the same environment and all academic, therapeutic and social learning is overseen by the lead EYFS teacher. Learning intentions are carefully planned using knowledge of the pupils' current abilities with regular assessments at the end of each unit or theme (see ARR policy for more detail). Pupils work both on a 1:1 level, in small groups and on activities designed to promote independence according to need and individual learning intentions. This is a fluid approach dependent on the pupils' prior attainment and learning profiles.

## **Therapeutic Curriculum**

### **Sensory Curriculum**

A sensory curriculum plays a crucial role in the early years. We recognise that young children are active learners and that they learn through all their senses, through exploration, investigation, experimentation, listening and watching, as well as through play. It is important that the children have opportunities to interpret their environment, to learn to make choices for themselves and to grow in confidence, understanding their value within the academy community.

Children engage in a range of movement activities based on the principles of Madeline Portwood, Sensory Integration, dough disco, TAC PAC and write dance to develop their gross motor skills. Fine motor skills are also a focus through a variety of activities developing hand eye coordination such as threading, working with large tweezers, posting objects and using large pegs and boards. Sensory Diets and Sensory Circuits (Jane Horwood) will form an integral part of everyday teaching.

Suggested sensory diet/integration activities:

- Outdoor obstacle courses
- Wall push ups – calming, strengthening, prepares hands for handwriting
- Trampoline, rebound.
- Textures – have a variety of different textured fabrics and items – 2 of each. Place one of the items in a bag, place that item and at least one other (increase the number of choices over time) on the table, children feel inside the box and guess which item on the table is in the box. Encourage them to describe the item while they are feeling it, is it rough, smooth, round, long etc.
- Straw games – improves posture, facilitates divergence of the eyes, rests eyes after an extended period of reading/computer work.
- Following a piece of work where children have had to concentrate use a variety of straws, wide, narrow, curly, aquarium tubing. Children blow a variety of objects across the table such as ping pong balls, cotton balls, Styrofoam peanuts etc.
- Dough – calming, provides proprioceptive input, strengthens hands and fingers for handwriting. Hide items in the dough such as everyday objects, letters, numbers etc.
- Dough – describe a simple object to the child, they must make the object using the dough. E.g. a long red snake, a short green snake, make a spider with a round red body and eight yellow legs, model this if children are struggling to interpret to begin with, over time reduce this support. Good for comparative and descriptive language.
- Ball bath – use a pop up tent or small ball pool area. Hide objects of reference, numbers, letters, target words or name. Hide shapes and sort into shapes that are the same.
- Brushes and water on the floor and walls to aid formation. Large chalks on the wall and floor, write numbers as far as they can.
- Threading/tweezer activities

Where appropriate letter formation and handwriting is taught using a multi-sensory approach in the early years and KS1. More formal handwriting is introduced as children make progress and at a developmentally appropriate stage.

Outdoor education is vital in the development of all pupils at the academy and therefore, is an integral day to day learning space. Children are able to access this through free flow in the early years with specific areas and activities designed to further their physical development. Activities supported by occupational and physiotherapists are evident both indoors and outdoors. All areas have sensory spaces and a range of resources.



## Discovery Special Academy EYFS Themes

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Theme	All about me	How many colours in a rainbow?	Weather- Where does snow go?	Plants and growing	How do buildings stay up?	Traditional tales
<b>Personal, Social, Emotional Development</b>	Classroom routines Simple signs Birthdays Celebrations My name Labelling me (Velcro/symbols) I like – food and snacks/toys/colours	Expressing own preference- What colours would you use? What materials do you want to use to decorate your rainbow? Likes/ dislikes Sharing	Talk about photos taken of snowy weather Take a winter walk- plan what to wear to keep warm Play / make marks/ build in snow	Helping a plant to grow Provide a range of spring plants/ flowers/ bulbs and hand lenses for sensory exploration.	Working in pairs to build- sharing with support Friendly behaviour Likes/dislikes- Talk about home/ community	Tasting porridge Learning to share toys and stories Learning to take turns in simple games Working together in the role play Safe people How do characters feel?
<b>Communication and Language</b>	Body parts Simple signs (hello, goodbye, please etc) Symbols (PECS) Food Colours Toys	Role play- home corner- coloured clothes Rainbow reading den- colourful fabrics/ cushions/fairy lights	Role play- warm clothing for dressing up- hats/ gloves/scarves	Parts of a flower Rainy day words shaped as raindrops from an umbrella- drip/drop/splash/splish/puddle/pitter patter	Builders yard reading area Role play- construction site- hard hats/ high visibility jackets/tools/clip boards Foam bricks	Story language – repeating Rhymes Continue food Symbols (PECS) Simple topic signs
<b>Physical Development</b>	I can – obstacle courses linked to sensory integration Dough disco Threading Tweezers Bikes	Sensory- cook spaghetti in a range of different food dyes- can you mix the spaghetti?	Sensory- cover tuff spot with silver paper- add shaving foam for mark making/ snow doodling	Plant lacing cards Obstacle courses linked to sensory integration Parachute games Movement in different ways	Large trucks/ wheelbarrows/ sand/ soil to dig with Giant Jenga blocks Joining construction pieces together	Cut and stick/sequence sizes Large equipment – balancing, climbing over and under (Billy Goats) Large construction – building (Little Pigs)
<b>Literacy</b>	Each two/three week block linked to book from spine	Each two/three week block linked to book from spine	Each two/three week block linked to book from spine	Each two/three week block linked to book from spine	Each two/three week block linked to book from spine	Each two/three week block linked to book from spine
<b>Mathematics</b>	Number rhymes with signs	Sorting objects by colour-put them into coloured trays Colourful beads to thread Washing line- coloured socks/pegs-matching pairs	Snowflakes from white card Numbers on washing line-numbers on hats. Snowmen picture cards- putting number of buttons	Flower pots- 1-5 brightly coloured beans for counting	Tall/ short towers Measuring	Number recognition Numbers to 5 Sizes linked to billy goats/goldilocks
<b>Understanding the World</b>	Naming parts of the body (heads, Shoulders/Simple Simon) Small world- dolls house with people from a range of cultures and ethnicity Make homes from boxes of different sizes	Kaleidoscopes/ torches/prisms to explore light/ colour Coloured clear plastics to look through to see how colour can be changed	Ice cubes in water tray- how does it feel? What happens when it gets warm? Tuff spot- small world animals that live in cold climates- add ice/ artificial snow Bird feeders	Growing seeds/beans/cress	Tuff spot- small diggers and trucks, sand, pebbles, blocks and figures. Construction sets Guttering/ pipes- pouring water down pipes Wet sand- sandcastles/ tunnels	Sorting materials linked to three little pigs Houses and homes Making porridge Story maps
<b>Expressive Arts and Design</b>	Handprints Footprints Make birthday/celebration cards Singing and signing Looking in a mirror looking closely at their own faces- talk about what they see- self portrait iPads to take photos of themselves	Coloured translucent materials Bubble pictures Pour paint into freezer bags- seal- tape to windows for children to manipulate Painting/ printing	Black paper/ white chalk/ paint for snowy mark making Cold colours-blue/ purple/grey/white/silver White/silver papers with different textures- snowy collage Chime bars- snow music	Printing – fruit and veg Collage flowers Sensory garden Clay – decorate with natural materials Painting leaves/ printing leaves/Threading leaves	Mark making in soil/ sand/ gravel Junk modelling- making houses Mud bricks- fill small containers with mud/ water	Role play stories Paint characters Messy play porridge Costumes Crowns Making puppets and masks Songs and rhymes
<b>RE</b>	Families and belonging – link to classroom community	Diwali Bonfire night Christmas	Belonging to the academy community – how we help each other	Chinese New Year	Caring for plants/ local environment	Stories from different cultures Eid

# Discovery Special Academy Example EYFS Book Spine



<p>Autumn</p>	
<p>Spring</p>	
<p>Summer</p>	

