



TEES VALLEY EDUCATION – MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

(Company No: 09630999)

LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE – DISCOVERY SPECIAL ACADEMY

1.30pm Wednesday 18th September 2019

AT THE ACADEMY

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ATTENDEES:

Head Teacher - Jennifer Duncan (Chair)
Parent representative - Lesley May
Staff Representative - Eilidh Mietelska
Community Representative – Anne Kelly

OTHER ATTENDEES: Clerks – Susan Taylor

1. Apologies

Carol White

2. Welcome

3. Minutes of LAC meeting 25.03.19 for approval and matters arising

Previous minutes were approved and agreed as a true reflection of the meeting.

4. Temporary accommodation update

The site is now occupied by Discovery and classrooms in working order. Some small outstanding works are to be completed in the coming weeks as well as the electricity supply from generators to mains power.

JD commended Premier Modular for their extremely hard work toward providing the temporary accommodation in such a short space of time. Both staff and children are settling in to the new build very well and are still exploring ways to make the most of the space we now have.

The committee will be given a tour at the end of the meeting.

5. Permanent accommodation update

Surveys are ongoing at Nature's World – MACE to be informed that surveyors left holes in the grounds around Nature's World that were a potential hazard. It will be requested that all works are made safe and good following any further surveys. Bat survey is currently ongoing and DSA hope to be able to work with any bats found to be inhabiting the area. No category A trees. Discovery have also expressed their offer of a replanting project for any trees that may need to be removed to make the site feasible for the permanent build.

It is hoped that further detail, including a site plan, will be available for the next meeting.

6. Headteacher report

The last academic year was entirely successful in terms of provision etc.

JD attended the Interim Management Board and TVE head office yesterday and the feedback from the Board was extremely positive with the children's progress being rated exceptional!

Funding was granted last year for one 'Safe Space' and DSA have purchased another. The 'Safe Space' is a small sensory area for children to retreat to within the classroom and is a very valuable piece of equipment for our children – they are also transportable to the permanent build.

DSA's 'Total communication' system is now being shared around the Trust and the area and all children are involved and using PECS, Makaton etc. to communicate.

Training and development is ongoing, both internal and external, and the academy remain committed to ensuring all staff are involved and therefore equipped to assist colleagues and pupils, where possible, during the academy day and beyond.

Staff meet regularly to ensure curriculum provision is up to date and appropriate. Jen explained the introduction of different development stages within the curriculum – pre-formal, informal, semi-formal and formal teaching intervention. Handout was circulated and content was discussed. Currently DSA is working mostly within the informal curriculum and the PPA unit provision a more semi-formal approach however both will continue to amend curriculums to suit its pupils and their progress.

Half termly parent/carer workshops last year were very well received (subjects included BSL, sensory etc.). Sensory feedback was highly rated by LM. Plans are ongoing for this year's workshops, including timetables and structuring content to parent/carer requests.

Discovery takes pride in enrichment and British values and has celebrated events such as purple day, Easter, Eid and Chinese New Year. The academy also hosted a 'Me and my family week' which saw staff and pupils celebrate the diversity of their peers and parents/carers got involved by bringing in homemade foods. The children took part in a 'story session' – this was an end of year celebration where all classes acted out a favourite story from the year for parents. All children also received a certificate celebrating their achievements from the year. This was very well received by parents. The Trust also hosted their first Diamond Standards Award Ceremony which celebrated the standards to which each academy works toward (care, commitment, courage and curiosity). Each term four awards are given out, representing each 'C', within each academy, these winners were then nominated to win the overall award for their category. A judging panel met to select the winners and were so overwhelmed by two nominees that an extra two awards were created, the overall adult diamond and overall child diamond, with one of Discovery's own winning the child award.

Discovery's new website has gone live today and the link will be shared with the committee with any feedback being gratefully received.

The visit to Nature's World was very well received by both staff and pupils. AK/JD/EM discussed plans to arrange a further visit on 14th or 21st of October for either PHK's class or PSH's class. AK will check dates with NW. It was discussed that Priory Woods have visited NW recently and were keen to organise weekly visits. Circumstances around DBS certificates for volunteers was discussed for Nature's World voluntary staff. JD would like to discuss with ECh to ensure absolute compliance and has agreed that, as there is a relationship between Priory Woods and DSA, will communicate feedback to them.

Discovery are hoping to build links with Marske Hall this year and JD will organise this.

Currently we have one reception class, three Y1/2 classes and one Y3/4 class.

SMSC & British Values document was circulated with the paperwork and was discussed. ST to add to website. 37% of DSA children have English as an additional language (EAL) and DSA make certain to celebrate the religions/ethnicity of their pupils and more.

7. Focus of the committee for the autumn term/next academic year. What would we like to achieve/see on offer for pupils?

The committee were asked for suggestions/opinions on what the academy can offer pupils in the coming academic year. EM suggested after school clubs and JD informed the committee that DSA's HLTA is soon to commence the organisation of after school sessions that both parents/carers and children can attend.

EM also proposed holiday play schemes and, with the new accommodation, this is now an option for DSA as we have the space to accommodate this. Staffing levels may be an issue due to the pupil/staff ratio required for DSA's pupils. Term time only staff will be offered additional hours to support this and LM expressed her wish to be involved. EM suggested the academy may be entitled to some funding towards this from the short breaks entitlement. JD would like to explore potential collaboration with the Paul Hamlyn work ongoing across the Trust.

9 Any other business

No other business.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Next meeting will be planned for November - date and time TBC.

Tour of temporary accommodation

- Gates/doors are awaiting installation of fob access systems.
- Currently still accommodating 2 BPA classrooms as well as the new building.
- LM/AK had the opportunity to see the Safe Space currently set up in one of the classrooms.
- Dining room/hall was occupied by a class enjoying a music lesson.
- Plans to create a playground area on disused grassed area were shared with the committee. Quotes have been received for play equipment and work is ongoing.