

**Tees Valley Education – Multi Academy Trust**

**(Company No: 09630999)**

**LOCAL ACADEMY COMMITTEE – DISCOVERY SPECIAL ACADEMY**

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024 09:30 AM**

**FACE TO FACE MEETING**

**ATTENDEES:**

**Deputy CEO: Executive Head Teacher** Jennifer Duncan

**Head of Academy** Ann Titchener

**Chair** Andrew Stogdale

**Staff Representative** Sian Lamb

**Parent Representatives** Phillipa Booth

Lisa Casey

**Community Representative** Anne Kelly

**OTHER ATTENDEES** Susan Chapman Business Administrator

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. **Apologies :** No apologies given
3. **Minutes of last meeting: Matters of fact and for approval**  
Approved
4. **Matters arising from the Minutes not on the Agenda**  
Previous Minutes were approved and agreed as a true reflection of the meeting.
5. **Headteacher's Report**

**Context Statement**

- First half of the autumn term was still on split sites whilst building work was completed.
- Move happened 11<sup>th</sup> October with all children on site 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024.
- A ribbon cutting ceremony took place as was requested by the young people.

- Drainage on the back field is now being sorted and this is happening over the Easter holidays due to the machinery that is needed. It is being funded through the secondary development grant agreement with the LA (circa 150k)
- AT updated on the farm: The chickens are now well established and the pupils are enjoying being with them. At the time of the meeting bio-security measures were in place due to Avian Flu that is in the UK. The children are still able to enjoy looking at them through the fencing.
- The rabbit hutch has now been built and they will be arriving in the spring.
- All of these developments will link with the secondary curriculum and accreditation routes.

### **Academy Priorities**

### **Curriculum and Wider Opportunities**

JD and AT gave a summary of how the following are being implemented and achieved, highlighting key points.

- Y9 curriculum is being implemented well and the current focus is on functional skills and arts awards.
- Functional Skills are completed on demand when pupils are ready, they are very personalised to the pupil.
- The Arts Award is assessed by a portfolio of evidence which could include paper based or photographic/video evidence
- Y9 pupils applied for jobs within the academy, they went through the process of applying, interviewing and being recruited. They will receive a small wage. Some of the jobs applied for were Art Technician, Dinner Supervisor and Playground Supervisor. The students were fully engaged in the process.
- Next phase will be Y10 curriculum developments and accreditations.
- Live it and Get Active, a sport provider, has been re-employed as this was really successful last academic year.
- Zoolab is being bought in to enhance the children's learning,
- History resources and talks are being used more widely across the academy.
- African Drums session is also planned.
- AT is also looking into an overnight visit/stay at Beamish for Y9 pupils.
- The residential at Carlton is happening again this academic year in May.
- The Trust show this year has been announced as Shrek and more details will follow.
- The academy is continuing to engage with Every Voice Matters as it is felt that is really important.
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- Discovery has the Flagship Status for the Inclusion Quality Mark. JD commented on a quote from the assessor.

### **Trust Specialisms**

(Arts & Culture, Social Justice and Equality, Send & Inclusion and Business, Industry and Enterprise

- The academy has gained the Gatsby Benchmark and more updates will be available from AT and AS.
- JD and AT are continuing to network and are on various working parties.

### **Academy Context:**

- School is continuing to grow we now have 169 pupils from nursery to Y9.

### **Attendance, exclusions and suspensions**

- Attendance was at 92.9% at the last academic year, this is above the national average.
- The academy has no permanent exclusions and a very low number of short suspensions.
- Staff are still working closely with Middlesbrough Transport to mitigate the impact of cancelled buses

### **Pastoral and Welfare**

- Early Bird Plus and Teen Life training has been completed by SL and MA to enable them to support all of our families.

6. The academy is looking at October 2025 to be assessed by the Autism Association for accreditation, this will recognise our excellence in provision for pupils with Autism.

### **Community Garden**

- Natures World Visits are going well and they would like more visits if possible.
- Is there a possibility for Y9's to volunteer at Nature's world? AT to liaise. Thursday mornings were better for this to happen.

### **7. Nursery Development**

- Nursery planning is going in at the end of November and the Ecological Survey needs to go in with this. There is a meeting planned for Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November to discuss this.
- Planning should be in the process hopefully by Christmas.
- It is a Titan Building that will be used for Nursery. Everything is built in the factory and then delivered to the site. It will be a bigger space for the

children with toilets, a sensory space, shower etc and will be flush to the floor and not need a ramp. Work will start at the beginning of the summer holidays with completion before the end of August.

#### **8. Secondary**

- The children are all settled and working hard.
- An age-appropriate sensory integration room has been added to the building.
- JD/CT are working with Portakabin to get the snagging list completed. Most of these works are external.

#### **AOB**

- PB mentioned workshops that are available through Daisy Chain, these include workshops on Autism and finance. PB to get more information and we can put them on the blog.
- CT and EL have found a good robust hedge to go around the fence to give more coverage. This will be explored in the spring term.

#### **Date of next meetings**

- 4<sup>th</sup> March 2025
- 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025