



**TEES VALLEY  
EDUCATION**  
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**TEES VALLEY EDUCATION – MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
(Company No. 09630999)

**MINUTES OF Discovery Special Academy LOCAL ACADEMY**

**COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March AT 9.30am**  
**AT Discovery Special Academy**

Actions from this Meeting

ITEM	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	DUE	STATUS
1.5	To ensure draft minutes are circulated to the PA to the CEO in readiness for Trust Board meeting in Spring term.	Office Manager	24 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Pending

Outstanding Actions from Previous Meetings

DATE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	DUE	STATUS



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**MINUTES OF Discovery Special Academy LOCAL ACADEMY**

**COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March AT 9.30am**  
**AT Discovery Special Academy**

<b>Present:</b>	
Chair:	Andrew Stogdale
Head Of Academy:	Ann Titchener
Staff Representative:	Sian Lamb
<b>In Attendance:</b>	
Community Representative:	Ann Kelly
Other Attendees:	Carole Tonner- Senior Academy Business Manager
	Sally Keane- Business Administrator
<b>Apologies:</b>	
Parent Representative:	Phillipa Booth
	Lisa Casey

NO.	AGENDA ITEM	ACTION
<b>1.</b>	<b>WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND INTRODUCTION</b>	
	Carole received apologies from Lisa Casey and Phillipa Booth.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b>	
	Minutes from previous meeting have been approved and signed off.	
<b>2b.</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES AND ACTION UPDATES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING LOG (If required)</b>	
	All completed.	
<b>2c</b>	<b>LAC MEMBERSHIP UPDATE</b>	
	None	
<b>3.</b>	<b>WORK PROGRAMME PRIORITIES</b>	
	None	

4.	<b>HEADTEACHER REPORT</b>	
	<p><b><u>Operational Considerations For Reporting Period:</u></b>  Discovery secondary moved from temporary into permanent accommodation. This was completed over a weekend and then 2 PD days. Pupils have settled very well, and single site has supported the operational management of the academy. This is particularly in relation to pastoral and behaviour support as well as having a positive impact on the sense of community for pupils and staff. EHT took up post as Deputy CEO, this is a role that continues to evolve. The strong leadership team at Discovery, with HoA leading, has supported the DCEO to attend key trust meetings and be part of key trust developments and work streams, as well as to act as interim EHT at Wilton. Permanent nursery building design ongoing following approval from trust board to use outturn to support with this development. This is planned to be delivered in summer 2025.</p> <p>Ongoing snagging, internally and externally. Internally snagging is complete, externally snagging is continuing to be resolved through Portakabin and AKN. Portakabin project manager and site manager are in attendance when significant works are being undertaken. Communication and relationships continue to be strong and positive between the academy, trust and contractors. The GFA will remain open until October until the final payment following the snagging period is made.</p> <p>The EHT and DSI are working with the LA and Brambles ABM to ensure removal of temps at Easter. Preliminary conversations regarding post 16 provision with the LA. EHT and HoA members of post 16 working party with the LA. Further conversations and exploration with LA SEND leaders will determine whether such provision is viable for commissioning.</p> <p><b><u>Ongoing Work Onsite:</u></b>  During easter holidays drainage work will be completed and the outside area can start to be developed. Spaces have been converted into more teaching space to accommodate current and possible new students, if and where possible more space will be created if required.</p> <p><b><u>Nursery Development:</u></b>  Andrew Stogdale asked: for an update on the new nursery and how things are looking with that?  Ann Titchener replied: the design and planning for the new nursery is almost completed. The build is due to take place over the summer holidays to allow ground works to start. Nursery children will finish a week early July 9 for summer holidays, to allow for the decamp, the Nursey children will return a week later in September to allow the setting up of the learning spaces.</p>	

**Academy Priorities-Tier1****RAD Tier1****Quality Of Education:**

Develop and deliver an outstanding **year 9+ semi-formal curriculum and pedagogy and year 7+ informal curriculum** and pedagogy.

Initial design for the year 10 curriculum is in place, including timetable, long term plan and example knowledge organiser, enabling strategic decisions regarding staffing, groupings etc for September to be made. Ann Titchener and Andy Smyth (assistant head) have the curriculum preparations for year10 Pupils in September on track although this is still ongoing.

DSA has an exam centre number and Ann Titchener noted: DSA is now an Official Exam Centre can deliver and assess Functional Skills qualifications Exam cupboard and secure storage in place.

DSA has ASDAN membership giving us access to their suite of courses. This will support curriculum design for year 10 SF and year 9+ IF curriculum.

Year 7/8/9 IF curriculum development is progressing well, and from September will provide secondary IF pupils with an age and stage appropriate curriculum. Autumn reviews of the year 9 provision and pupil progress indicate the curriculum is successful.

Staff teaching year 9 and SLT are more knowledgeable about the progress and attainment of year 9 pupils studying Functional Skills accreditation. SLT have accessed CPD to enable them to successfully lead and manage accreditations and exams.

**Ann Titchener explained:** Currently our year 9 pupils are semi-formal in September we will have year 9 pupils that are informal- appropriate staffing structures will be made to accommodate the needs of these pupils.

Independent careers advisor is providing bespoke sessions with year 9 pupils in preparation for personal guidance at the point pupils need it.

**Ann Titchener explained** Year 9 pupils have paid job roles within the school, pupils completed a full recruitment process to fill these. Pupils completed application forms, received invite to interview letters, attended interviews and received verbal and written confirmation of their roles within school.

Each pupil completes individual time sheets to receive their wages and understand if they do not complete the time sheet or do not attend a shift, they will not be paid for it, this is providing real life work experience for our pupils.

**Andrew Stogdale asked:** if pupils will remain in these roles in year 10

**Ann Titchener explained:** It is a possibility that pupils will remain in these roles in year 10, although the next step is to look at other opportunities to expand on experience for pupils both internal and externally.

DSA have regular visits for our choir, we are involved in the trust performance of Shreck two of our pupils have singing solos in the performance as well.

We have been having and continue to have lots of visits to school and integrational work, we have had Earth beat in to visit pupils and this will continue.

Pupils are attending the pentathlon- a multi sports event for SEND pupils.

**Behaviours And Attitudes:**

Create academic and therapeutic **environments that empower** all pupils to enhance communication, social skills and emotional regulation (also personal development, behaviour and attitudes, EYFS).

Classrooms and shared spaces in both buildings are welcoming, organised and celebrate pupils and their achievements. Pupils are making progress in all areas of their development. All staff have developed spaces in the academy to reflect CPD delivered, and they are supporting pupils with SLD and ASD to make progress.

Emotional regulation is well supported, and pupils are ready to learn.

Transitions around the academy are easier for pupils to manage, reducing the incidents of distressed behaviour.

Pupils across all pathways are able to share their views using a range of methods, supporting pupil agency.

**Personal Development:**

Develop and deliver an excellent wider curriculum which fully supports careers and character development and supports pupils to be part of a sustainable community (also quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, EYFS).

Staff knowledge of careers for pupils with SEND is developed.

DSA core values have been determined along with definitions of each value.

EHT and HoA, working alongside Director of Trust Improvement, developing both mainstream curriculum and classroom to careers. This will feed into further development of curriculum at DSA.

EHT currently developing sustainability strategy which will include review of curriculum in mainstream and specialist to support the green thread.

**Leadership And Management:**

Develop **leadership and management** to ensure work impacts on standards (**progress, attainment and attendance**) (also quality of education, EYFS).

Parents/ carers are more aware of importance of good attendance and the impact absences can have.

Whole academy attendance is 92.9% which is higher than national average for special school.

Targeted support for families is provided, strengthening family resilience and well-being and enhancing access to opportunities.

Teacher Educators provide coaching and mentoring.

The monitoring cycle has been more efficient and effective.

**Curriculum:****Foundation Subjects Reporting****Key points to Report – implementation and impact**

- A wealth of trips and visits linked to the wider curriculum allow opportunities for pupils to contextualise and understand subjects, bringing them to life (see website)
- **Virtual Viking Experience:** pupils engaged in an online interactive session with Yorvik, exploring the life of a Viking in an immersive and educational virtual environment.
- **STEM & Computing Workshop with Dr. Steve Bunce:** Year 9 students participated in a hands-on STEM and robotics workshop led by Dr. Steve Bunce, learning to control miniature sphere robots via an app.
- RE: alongside curriculum learning, pupils have taken part in whole academy celebrations linked to religions, including Diwali.

- Hens and farm area: pupils have access to the newly developed farm area to support learning in a range of subjects, including science.
- D&T: the Christmas enterprise fayre provided an opportunity for all pupils to design and make items using their cooking, textiles and product design skills. The new cooking and art room in the new building has enabled older pupils to use specialist rooms and facilities.
- Physical Education: Continuing to promote physical wellbeing, and in addition to timetabled PE lessons, Live It and Get Active facilitate weekly sports sessions within the academy. Bike road safety sessions are also taking place for older pupils.

### **Actions Moving Forward**

- Zoolab experience taking place at the academy in spring 1.
- The introduction of guinea pigs to the farm will further enhance the curriculum, including Science.
- A Year 9 led enterprise day is planned for spring 2 to further support development of enterprise skills linked to the year 9 curriculum
- A local SEND choir is being developed and Discovery hope to be involved.
- In the spring term, arrangements have been made for teams of pupils to take part in sporting events with Priory Woods School – boccia and football – including home and away fixtures.
- In addition to the annual residential to Carlton outdoor centre, an overnight stay at Beamish is planned for the summer term.
- Intergenerational creative project planned for the spring term.
- Summer enterprise fayre will have sustainability as a theme.
- Recent links with Earthbeat Theatre Company will lead to drama workshops for pupils in the summer term.
- Discovery is taking part in a Panathlon in spring term.

### **Wider Opportunities Reporting:**

#### **Enrichment & Community Engagement:**

- **Community Engagement through Visits:** Pupils participated in a wide variety of local and regional visits, including horse riding, library visits, visits to museums, parks, beaches and Nature's World, broadening their understanding of the world around them.
- **Legacy of the Meadow Project:** Secondary pupils collaborated with Middlesbrough Art Week staff to use the mini meadows initially created during the project to plant a lasting green space on Discovery land.
- **Live It and Get Active Sports Sessions:** Live It and Get Active deliver an after-school club and lunch time street dance class, encouraging healthy lifestyles.
- **Farm Area Engagement:** Pupils and staff have enjoyed interacting with the hens, with some being actively involved in caring for them, gaining hands-on experience, learning about responsible pet ownership and enjoying the benefits of collecting fresh eggs.
- **Ongoing Partnership with Marske Hall:** The collaboration with Marske Hall remains strong, with pupils visiting the residents and hosting joint events, such as Christmas celebrations.
- **Botten Village Community Link:** The school's connection with Botten Village continues, offering opportunities for pupils to interact with adults with learning difficulties and engage in community activities.



- **Remembrance Day Commemoration:** The academy marked Remembrance Day, including a group of pupils attending the Cenotaph ceremony.
- **Harvest assembly:** A whole academy harvest celebration took place, with a collection of food items for Middlesbrough Food Bank. Staff members from the food bank attended the assembly and spoke to pupils about the work they do and how the collection would benefit others.
- **National Poetry Day:** Pupils participated in activities and learning linked to poetry, including sensory activities.
- **Children in Need:** Pupils and staff took part in a range of activities to mark Children in Need day, including an assembly about kindness.
- **Weekly whole school celebration assemblies:** Classes showcase their learning and achievements by leading a segment of the weekly celebration assembly that celebrates pupil achievements and learning, including 'Explorer of the Week' certificates.
- **Weekly singing and themed assemblies:** Teachers lead assemblies within their key stage, focusing on specific themes to promote inclusivity and communication, with singing assemblies on alternate weeks.
- **Christmas Pantomime Experiences:** All pupils enjoyed a memorable Christmas pantomime experience, with 100 attending a performance at The Arc, while others enjoyed a visiting sensory pantomime performance within the academy.
- **Christmas Enterprise Fayre:** All pupils participated in a successful Christmas enterprise event, with the wider community and parents invited, raising nearly £2000 for school projects and initiatives.
- **Trust production of Shrek:** Pupils were invited to audition for parts in the upcoming trust production of Shrek. 15 pupils auditioned and all successfully secured a part, including the parts of young Fiona and young Shrek which involve a solo song.
- **Choir:** Discovery continues to take a full part in all Trust concerts.
- **Nature Park Grant:** a successful application for the Nature Park top up grant has enabled the purchase of additional seating and planters for the outdoor area. Pupils have been involved in choosing and shopping for seeds and plants.
- **PCSO:** links have been established with the new PCSO for the area and opportunities for them to engage with pupils are being developed.

**Trust Specialisms (Arts & Culture, Social Justice and Equity, SEND & Inclusion and Classroom to Careers (BIE))**

- **Independent Careers Advisor:** Year 9 pupils received tailored career guidance from an independent advisor, helping them explore future pathways and opportunities. Our careers advisor attends the academy half termly to enable her to develop her understanding of our pupils and their specific needs, ensuring sessions are relevant and have impact.
- **Year 9 recruitment experience and job roles:** Year 9 pupils took part in a real-world recruitment process, applying for and securing various paid job roles within the academy, such as yard supervisors, personal assistants to SLT, art technicians, and librarians. Pupils have begun their jobs and are taking responsibility very seriously. Pupils received their first wage packet during the end of term assembly.
- **Visits to further education colleges for year 9 during the spring term.**
- **SEND choir:** involvement in the newly developing SEND choir will further develop opportunities for pupils.

- Priory Woods work experiences: DSA continues to offer weekly work experience opportunities for post 16 pupils from Priory Woods Special School.
- **Supported interns:** the academy is once again offering a work placement for a young person with learning difficulties through the supported internship programme.
- **TASC:** Links with Teesside Ability Support Centre (TASC), a centre providing care and life skills for the enablement of adults with disabilities, offer further intergenerational opportunities for pupils and staff.
- DSA has Flagship status with the Inclusion Quality Mark. DSA is hosting an IQM cluster meeting in the summer term to share our good practice with staff from other settings.
- **Arts and culture:** music and the arts continue to be important aspects of the Discovery offer. The choir is growing and there are many other opportunities for pupils to be involved in singing and music as part of their everyday curriculum. Pupils have successfully auditioned for parts in the trust production. An intergenerational creative project is planned for the spring term working with Middlesbrough First and groups of adults with learning difficulties.

Teen Life course: the academy now offers the full range of National Autistic Society parenting courses (Early Bird, Early Bird+, Teen Life), providing all academy parents the opportunity to access support and networking opportunities, which are often challenging for families of children with SEN. During the spring term the academy is delivering Teen Life to the first cohort of parents of secondary aged pupils. Discovery is the only local school offering these opportunities.

#### **Academy Context: Pupil Numbers:**

Ann Titchener reported DSA now have 172 pupils in total, from Nursery through to year 9

#### **Pupil Attendance:**

Whole academy attendance is 92.9% which is higher than national average for special school.

Ann Titchener clarified DSA attendance remains above average and close to mainstream, but this remains a focus.

#### **Pastoral And Welfare:**

DSA now offers all 3 National Autistic Parenting Courses (Early Bird, Early Bird+ and Teen Life).

The team continue to be relentless in their support of families, offering professional challenge when required to ensure the best support.

The pastoral team collaborates closely with a wide range of agencies and professionals to ensure pupils receive the tailored support they need to effectively address their SEN requirements, including LD CAMHS, Educational Psychologist, social workers and health professionals.

In line with Trust guidelines, Academy Family Support category has been redefined as pupils who have closed to social care within the last 12 months.

The academy continues to support a significant number of families on a day-to-day basis including practical and emotional family support. Hampers and vouchers are regularly provided for families in need, and at Christmas every family received either a shopping voucher or hamper to help alleviate financial stress and ensure pupils and their families felt supported and cared for.



	<p><b><u>Actions Moving Forward:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This year, DSA are participating in a new HeadStart initiative, <i>Super You</i>, designed to promote and enhance self-esteem.</li> <li>• Ensure the pastoral team has ongoing access to relevant CPD.</li> <li>• Following the SSIM leaving the academy, consider staffing structure of the pastoral team and recruitment needed.</li> <li>• A member of the pastoral team will support the delivery of Teen life.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Contribution To The Trust And Wider Network</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Leaders Have Supported The Development Of Other Academies and Trust Throughout:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued SEND leadership group supporting all SENDCOs and unit provision leaders across the trust.</li> <li>• Continued SEMH development group focused on ensuring consistency across the trust and embedding the trauma informed approach currently being delivered. Also ensuring a graduated approach to SEMH needs that aligns with the approach for cognition and learning.</li> <li>• DHoA is part of the SEMH development group.</li> <li>• Working with SEND leaders and trust English lead to ensure consistency in early/pre-phonics and to develop a reading/comprehension pathway including focus on fluency and what this means for some pupils with SEND.</li> <li>• Continued engagement from EHT and HoA on various strategic boards across the LA.</li> <li>• EHT part of LA leadership group for delivering better value including organisation and delivery of rapid improvement sessions for all Middlesbrough SENDCOs.</li> <li>• TVED leading SENDCO mentoring programme with Whole Education.</li> <li>• Middlesbrough SENDCo network continues to be led by TVEd and hosted at DSA.</li> <li>• HoA assessor for NAS assessment/accreditation at a local special school.</li> <li>• EHT on interview panels for key leadership posts.</li> <li>• HoA/DHoA delivered trust training session on communication.</li> <li>• EHT delivered trust training on Oracy alongside DTI.</li> <li>• DSA leading trust SEND teacher network meetings.</li> <li>• EHT/DCEO supporting DTI with ongoing curriculum review and development.</li> <li>• HoA strategic member of Classroom to Careers working party.</li> <li>• Successfully delivered two school buildings, circa 18 million local investment, job opportunities and contributed significantly to local SEND sufficiency with improved life chances for vulnerable children and young people.</li> <li>• DHoA represented on Senior Trust development group for standards and DSL group.</li> <li>• HoA/DHoA shared good practice on SEND data use/pupil progress with GMAT school.</li> <li>• EHT/HoA shared good practice on development of SEND provision with Bradford trust group of SENDCOs</li> <li>• HoA/DHoA shared good practice on environments and early phonics with Extol Trust.</li> <li>• Lead Trust wide SEND moderation.</li> <li>• DHoA is part of the Trust STDT.</li> </ul>	
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	<p><b><u>Any Other Business:</u></b></p> <p>Ann Kelly shared with the group - Middlesbrough Environmental City (MEC) steak holders are trying to arrange a meeting to create a larger force to stop damages to the property over at Natures World due to the many break-ins encountered over that last few months as they are on the increase.</p> <p>It was agreed that a representative from the academy would be part of this group.</p> <p>Ann Kelly advised Thursday is the better day for children to visit Natures World as it gives staff more notice to ensure everything is ready for the children and on Thursdays there is more staff onsite to help with the visit.</p>	
5.	<b>PARENT AND PUPIL VOICE</b>	
	NA	
6.	<b>POLICY REVISIONS INCLUDING PROPOSED CHANGES</b>	
	NA	
7.	<b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b>	
	10 <sup>th</sup> June	
	<b>PART B CONFIDENTIAL SECTION</b>	

Meeting ended at TIME