

Careers at Discovery:

Preparing for adulthood:

The themes of preparing for adulthood underpin all aspects of the curriculum as we advocate equal life chances for all pupils as they move into adulthood.

Preparing for adulthood means preparing for:

- Higher education and/or employment – including exploring different employment options such as volunteering, enterprise activities and supported employment, alongside opportunities for paid employment and self-employment.
- Independent living – this means young people having choice, control and freedom over their lives and the support they have, their accommodation and living arrangements, including supported living.
- Community inclusion – having friends, participating in and contributing to the local community.
- Good health – being as healthy as possible, including physical health and mental well-being.

We recognise that preparing for adulthood should begin as early as possible to support pupils and families to have high aspirations for the future. Therefore, the curriculum at Discovery Special Academy is designed to develop skills for adulthood throughout all pathways in ways that are relevant to the stage of development of each pupil.

The table in the downloads shows some of the ways the preparing for adulthood themes are approached within the academy.

Careers

At Discovery Special Academy we believe that ‘Through Discovery we Grow’. This is at the heart of everything we do and so we believe that Preparation for Adulthood begins through exploration and investigation and the development of focus and attention. With this in mind, we introduce our students, from EYFS onwards, to a range of activities designed to stimulate intrigue and interest into the world of work and develop the communication skills, confidence, resilience and problem-solving skills needed to be successful. This builds to incorporate a wide-ranging careers programme to guide our students through their choices in life.

We believe in equipping students with the tools they need to navigate their future careers and engage in activities that allow our learners to engage in a range of experiences to suit their needs. Our career curriculum is designed ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to meet different professionals within our local communities – whether that be meeting Fire officers and exploring their Fire Engine within school, or taking a trip to the local Fire station to explore where they work, we offer a range of experiences that suit the needs of every individual pupil.

We provide our older learners with opportunities for our learners to connect with local colleges and further educational inputs, where they can learn about the options and pathways available to them.

In Years 9 and 10, we offer onsite job opportunities that give students a taste of the working world. These experiences are invaluable, as they help pupils understand workplace expectations and develop essential skills for their future career choices. We have Careers Advisors available to support students in making informed decisions about their futures, ensuring they feel confident and prepared for the next steps in their educational journey.

So what have we been up to?

For two years now our older learners have been lucky to take part in Tees Valley Careers Enterprise Challenge Week. The children participated in a competition against other SEND schools across Teesside to create the best wind turbine in 2024 and in 2025 we had to make a crane mechanism that could travel an item from one side of the stage to the other all using only recycled materials. The classes worked really hard all week trying their best to meet the specification – this involved lots of trial and error. Pupils got to meet some engineers who supported them in school on day 1 of the task.

Both events Discovery have won awards – in 2024 we won the award for the school who has shown the best teamwork skills and two of our students also won special awards too, and in 2025 we won the award for the ‘Most enthusiastic Class’. The pupils really do enjoy this experience and value the interaction with other schools and professionals.

2024 –



2025 –





We have had lots of visitors to our School which allow us to explore different career options and learn about what different professionals do for work.

Hartlepool PowerStation:

Staff from Hartlepool PowerStation came to visit our Year 7, 8 and 9 learners. They taught us about the role of a Powerplant in the local community and what it allows all of us to do in our everyday lives. We then looked at different Pylons, and we had to design one that allowed the electricity to travel well but couldn't be blown over by the wind and bad weather. We used Knex in teams to build a design, when we had finished the staff from the Powerplant fanned the designs to see if they would fall over.

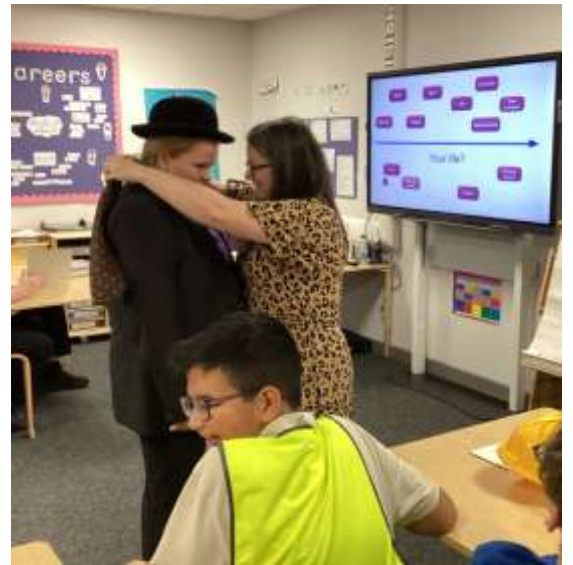




The Power of Women

Our Secondary pupils over the past years have been treated to a presentation about the impact of women in the workplace – focusing on equality, the pay gap and life milestones in the fight for women to have equal opportunities in their jobs/career choices.





Fire Officers Visit to school:

Our Informal classes enjoyed a visit from our local Fire Officers who were on hand to support learners to explore their Fire Engine and played the sirens.

Carls Class:



Laura's class:



Michelle's Class:



Morgan's Class:



Year 9 and 10 jobs:

Our Year 9 and 10 pupils have applied for jobs on site around the school. We have offered 9 different roles with varying focuses and skills needed for each, from working within classes with younger pupils, supporting staff to take care of the chickens on the farm, being art room and cooking room and PE technicians keeping the shared spaces clean and organised. These roles and responsibilities help to engage our learners in a variety of roles they are interested in and develop skills that will allow them to bring the learnt knowledge to whatever they choose to do in their future roles and careers.

All our pupils applied for a range of jobs offered and then were interviewed for them in a similar setting to what they may encounter in adulthood. They were expected to dress up smart for the occasion before presenting their skills and why they should be chosen for the roles they applied for.





Pupils are then awarded their roles and given lanyards to symbolise their important job within the academy, they wear these lanyards during their shifts.



Experience in the work place:

2 of our Year 10 pupils have been to complete some on the job work experience at Dormanstown Primary Academy Eco Shop where they have been taught to stock check, restock shelves, serve in the shop, make sure the produce is fresh and serve customers. They have really enjoyed doing this and both pupils have said it has interested them to explore roles like this in the future.



We love to be able to link in with our local emergency services so we invited Annabel our PCSO to come and give our Year 9 and 10 pupils the opportunity to be put through the paces of a Police Office in training – completing the Bleep Test to the specification of the Police Force.

Pupils were given ‘Police’ vests and asked to run when they heard the beep, the distance in time between one beep and another got shorter and shorter meaning pupils had to get faster and faster. They really enjoyed the experience and came away with a new understanding of the fitness required to join the Police Force.



We even had a sneaky look in the back of her Police Vehicle.

