



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

**MINUTES OF Discovery Special Academy LOCAL ACADEMY
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON Monday 9th June 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	26 th June 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 Monday 9th June AT 9.30am
AT Discovery Special Academy**

Present:	
Chair:	Andrew Stogdale
Head Of Academy:	Ann Titchener
Staff Representative:	Sian Lamb
Community Representative	Anne Kelly
In Attendance:	
Clerk	Sally Keane- Business Administrator
Apologies:	
Parent Representative:	Phillipa Booth
	Lisa Casey

NO.	AGENDA ITEM	ACTION
1.	WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND INTRODUCTION	
	Apologies had been received and accepted from Lisa Casey and Phillipa Booth.	
2.	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING	
	Minutes from the previous meeting held on 4 th March 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.	
2b.	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES AND ACTION UPDATES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING LOG (If required)	
	It was confirmed all actions were complete and there were no matters arising that were not covered in the agenda.	
2c	LAC MEMBERSHIP UPDATE	
	There was no membership update.	
3.	WORK PROGRAMME PRIORITIES	
	There was no work programme priority for discussion.	
4.	HEADTEACHER REPORT	
	The Headteacher highlighted the following from the circulated report:	

<p><u>Operational Considerations for Reporting Period</u> Tuesday 17th June – Official opening of Discovery Special Academy.</p> <p>Further staffing appointments to support increases in needs, as well as growth of the academy into Y10 from September 2025.</p> <p>The Executive HT had been supporting a complex HR case at Wilton, which was now resolved.</p> <p>The Executive HT/Deputy CEO was working with the newly appointed DHTs with the DTIS on induction. Continued work with DTIS on curriculum development.</p> <p>There were ongoing complexities and discussions with the LA on the place planning for September 2025. This had required additional resource and capacity from the HoA and EHT. The matter has been escalated to the LA SEND team and the final pupil numbers were awaited, although had the potential to exceed the capacity.</p> <p>Significant number of referrals from Stockton LA, requiring additional capacity from the HoA and DHoA.</p> <p>Two of the cases were progressing to tribunal, requiring additional time from the HoA and costs for legal advice.</p> <p>If admitted, this would have a substantial impact on the academy's physical space capacity and staffing. These two cases have now been resolved.</p> <p>One further tribunal case for was received week commencing 02/06/2025.</p> <p><u>Ongoing Work Onsite:</u> There was continued work on snagging of both buildings across the spring term.</p> <p>Continued development of nursery provision was taking place with Portakabin, the design and finance was complete and now in production.</p> <p>During the Easter holidays, drainage work was completed, and grass seed had been sown. The outside area could start to be developed, once the grass has grown.</p> <p><u>Nursery Development:</u> The build was due to take place over the summer holidays. To allow ground works to start, the nursery children would finish a week early on 9th July for summer holidays. Nursery children would return a week later in September, as is normal practice to allow for a staggered start. This would also allow additional time for the setting up of the new learning spaces.</p>	
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Commented [DA1]: If this has been resolved was the outcome of the tribunal discussed?

<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. Long term plans for IF curriculum ensure a broad, balanced and appropriately sequential curriculum for IF learners is in place for secondary pupils from September 2025.</p> <p>Year 9 curriculum was being enjoyed by pupils and pupils were demonstrating progress (as seen in E4L, books/files and FS tracking).</p> <p>Functional Skills tracking system was being effectively used to monitor and track pupil progress. This had informed SLT actions, including the identification of focus pupils.</p> <p>Year 9 pupils had successfully achieved the Discover Arts Award.</p> <p>Q: Andrew Stogdale asked have the exams been approved? Ann Titchener confirmed that everything for the exams had been approved; Discovery was now an official exam centre. Pupils had achieved their first external qualification, which they are very happy about.</p> <p>Pupil voice about the careers adviser is positive.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>Corridors support transition and emotional regulation. Pupils successfully transition around the whole academy.</p> <p>Staff were skilled at gathering pupil voice across all pathways.</p> <p>Staff confidently deal with distressed behaviours (CPD and staff feedback). Decrease in the number of incidents of distressed behaviours (CPOMS).</p> <p>Ann Titchener advised that pupils were enjoying the environments and the development of the environments would always continue, although this will be not be an academy priority next year, and would be part of the usual development process.</p> <p>Ann Titchener reported that the Academy Improvement Visit (AIV) visit had taken place last week and the report was awaited, although positive feedback had been received during the visit.</p> <p>Q: Andrew Stogdale asked: Who comes in for the visit and does the report?</p>	
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Ann Titchener explained that the AIV was a Trust internal visit and was carried out by different leaders from across the Trust. The recent AIV was led by Joanne Stewart, who would complete the report.

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 have supported the development of character development and cultural passports in the academy. Passports and banner had been created.

A wide range of opportunities were accessed by pupils in spring term to promote character development.

Career wave had been coming into the academy to visit Y9 pupils and provide career guidance.

After school club provision offer had increased and was offered to a range of cohorts and phases.

Discovery also received support from Middlesbrough College and Teesside University, with teaching degrees. Students would come from Teesside University, although a date was not confirmed as the course was still being developed.

Ann Titchner explained that there had been another successful supported internship last term, providing admin work, including supporting office staff and SLT.

Discovery fully supported the internships and would continue to do so. It was hoped businesses would do similar things for DSA pupils in the future also.

Q: Andrew Stogdale asked: Is it a Middlesbrough organisation that run the project?

Ann Titchener confirmed the internship was through Choices College, who were based in Middlesbrough.

Q: Andrew Stogdale queried how long supported interns stay?

Ann Titchener confirmed this all depended on the individual and what they were doing. Some could stay for a whole term doing 1-2 days a week, and others completed shorter periods of time, each one will vary depending on circumstances.

Leadership And Management:

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

<p>Parents/ carers were more aware of the importance of good attendance and the impact absence could have.</p> <p>Whole school academy attendance was 93%, which was higher than national average for special schools.</p> <p>EYFS attendance has improved in the Spring term.</p> <p>Q: Andrew Stogdale asked if the academy had done something to impact this improvement in attendance?</p> <p>Ann Titchener explained that it was about building trust with families and carers and giving them the confidence to send their child to school, even when they are feeling a little unwell. As children get older, parents understood the importance of routine. Building relationships early with families had proven effective in creating trust between the academy and families.</p> <p>Sian Lamb agreed that building strong and supportive relationships was having a positive impact.</p> <p>All parents/ carers know their child's attendance for the year to date.</p> <p>Teacher Educators provide coaching and mentoring, supporting improved outcomes for pupils.</p> <p>A robust monitoring cycle ensures that leaders remain well-informed and able to make timely, evidence-based decisions.</p> <p><u>Curriculum:</u> <u>Foundation Subjects Reporting</u> <u>Key points to Report – implementation and impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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).• STEM & Computing: year 9 pupils continued to work on a robotics project with Dr. Steve Bunce from The Royal Grammar School in Newcastle.• Living Eggs: pupils had the opportunity to observe living eggs, including both chicks and ducks, to learn about the life cycle and the process of new life, helping them develop a deeper understanding of growth alongside understanding responsibility and the importance of caring for living creatures.• Zoo Lab: pupils enjoyed a visit from Zoo Lab, where they learned about exotic animals through hands-on demonstrations.• RE: alongside curriculum learning, pupils have taken part in whole academy celebrations linked to religions, including Holi.	
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- Arts & Creative: this term, pupils have enjoyed a range of drumming experiences, including taking part in African drumming sessions and a workshop led by a professional drummer. Earthbeat Theatre Company have also led a number of drama, dance and performance sessions. The inter-generational project has involved a collaborative art project, developing pupil skills and confidence in a range of mediums. The Junction Project has delivered eight tailored music lessons to primary pupils, enriching their weekly singing assemblies.

- Arts Award: year 9 pupils earned their Discover Arts Award – their first external accreditation – through their successful planning and delivery of an African-themed enterprise event and the creative work in their sketchbooks.

Physical Education: alongside curriculum learning, pupils have taken part in sporting events and competitions, including football matches with another local special school, Boccia competitions, and have taken part in a local Pentathlon.

Ann Titchner advised that the 3-night residential at Carlton for pupils with more complex needs was a great success and the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Q: Andrew Stogdale asked: What activities do the children do at Carlton?

Ann Titchner confirmed the students took part in a wide range of activities, high ropes, team building, nightline, indoor rock climbing and much more. Students and staff always enjoyed these activities and experiences.

Actions Moving Forward

- Two residentials for older pupils (yr 6-9) would take place during the summer term
- An after-school Boccia club will begin in summer 2.
- The Legacy of the Meadow project will continue in May, with a new initiative where pupils would make wooden outdoor chairs.
- A whole academy summer enterprise fayre was planned.

Q: Andrew Stogdale queried where would the children be staying at Beamish?

Ann Titchener explained that pupils would be indoor camping in the Masonic Hall, taking sleeping bags and blankets. Pupils had also been booked in for a photoshoot in period clothes. Lots of activities had been

planned and pupils will have their supper in the tearoom, before getting settled in the hall for the night.

Ann Titchener stated they were looking for more residential ideas for students, and the next steps with residential would be to find a suitable place to take students with more complex needs. Any ideas would be greatly appreciated.

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, farms, beaches, Butterfly World and Nature's World, broadening their understanding of the world around them.
- Clubs: during the spring term, both the sensory club and sports club have been popular with pupils. Looking ahead to the summer term, a boccia club will also be introduced to further enhance the range of activities on offer. Lunch time clubs offered have also been well attended and enjoyed by pupils, whilst also providing pupils with structure to their lunch times. These include steel drumming, dance and sport.
- The African-themed enterprise event, led by Year 9 pupils, was well attended by parents and families, and celebrated the learning of pupils in years 6 to 9 in a vibrant and engaging way. Pupils showcased their knowledge of African culture and geography, while also impressing parents with their African drumming performances.
- Chinese New Year: we celebrated Chinese New Year with vibrant activities across the academy, giving pupils the chance to learn about Chinese culture and traditions through crafts, food, and engaging experiences.
- World Book Day: we celebrated World Book Day with a unique focus on maths, where pupils enjoyed stories, poems, and a range of fun, creative activities that highlighted our shared love of reading.
- The PCSO has been visiting the academy regularly, working closely with pupils to explore and understand a range of important issues affecting them, such as online safety and anti-social behaviour.
- Cycling proficiency: secondary pupils have taken part in cycling proficiency sessions tailored to their individual needs, helping them build confidence and essential road safety skills
- King's visit to Middlesbrough: two pupils and two staff members had the exciting opportunity to attend Centre Square to see the King and Queen during their visit to Middlesbrough, joining

students and staff from other academies across the Trust for this enjoyable occasion.

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

- Independent Careers Advisor: year 9 pupils continue to receive tailored career guidance from an independent advisor, supporting them in exploring future pathways and opportunities
- Classroom to Careers: pupils in years 7,8 and 9 took part in the Trust wide classroom to careers projects, working together to complete projects to develop their knowledge and understanding of the maritime industry and career opportunities, and visiting 2 maritime employers.
- Visits to Middlesbrough College: year 9 pupils have taken part in visits to Middlesbrough College, where they explored some of the courses on offer and gained valuable insights into student life and the college experience.
- Supported Interns: following a highly successful work placement through a supported internship programme during the spring term, the academy is pleased to be offering another opportunity for a young person with learning difficulties in the summer term.
- Inter-generational project: the intergenerational project has been a rewarding experience for both pupils and the visiting adults with learning difficulties, as they've enjoyed working together, sharing experiences, and building meaningful relationships.
- Autism Awareness Day: pupils and staff marked Autism Awareness Day through assemblies, discussions and creative activities that promoted understanding of Autism.
- Shrek: pupils will be involved in the Trust production of Shrek in various ways, including being part the choir, dancer groups, plus two solo singing performances.
- Trust choir festival: The Discovery choir has grown to include 45 enthusiastic pupils from across the academy. They thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the Trust Easter Choir Festival, proudly representing the academy and sharing their passion for music.

A celebration event was planned to mark the opening of Discovery Special Academy. This would take place in June 2025, joined by the Lord-Lieutenant, to commemorate this important milestone in the academy's journey.

Academy Context: Pupil Numbers:

Ann Titchener reported that DSA now had 172 children, this would rise to 188 in September 2025.

Q: Andrew Stogdale asked if DSA had the extra space required?

Ann Titchner explained that Discovery did have the space, classrooms would be completed ready to use for September 2025. This would accommodate the year 10 students, although from September 2026 they would be at capacity having students through to year 11.

Pupil Attendance:

Whole school academy attendance was at 93%, which was higher than national average for special schools.

Ann Titchner clarified that DSA attendance remained above average and close to mainstream, but attendance continued remains a focus.

Q: Andrew Stogdale noted that PA for pupils under 5 had reduced by 7 pupils, which was impressive, what was successful in doing this?

Ann Titchner confirmed the success had been from following the Trust's graduated responses and carrying out consistent home visits. The academy had also sent out a booklet with information as to when to keep your children off school and when it was still ok to send them into school. A constant flow of information to parents about attendance was having a positive impact.

Q: Andrew Stogdale questioned if the student had returned from temporary visit overseas?

Ann Titchner confirmed the student was supposed to return to school last week, although had not. This was now being followed up and appropriate steps would be followed.

Pastoral And Welfare:

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

The pastoral team collaborated 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.

The academy continued to support a significant number of families on a day-to-day basis, including practical and emotional family support.

Amazon multi bank had provided families with a range of home resources to support them.

The academy offered secondary pupils activities to partake in over lunchtime, to enable their break to be a positive experience, supporting their afternoon sessions.

The academy offers after school clubs to all pathways and year groups in the academy.

Teen Life sessions had taken place with parents of pupils in KS3 to develop their understanding of supporting pupils with ASD, as they get older.

Sian Lamb explained that Early Birds Plus was currently taking place, the team were also successful in helping families in need, securing white goods and other items families needed with the Greggs grant.

Actions Moving Forward:

- Continue to develop parent coffee mornings by offering focused sessions with guest speakers from external agencies on topics such as mental health, autism, and family support.
- Broaden the range of after-school clubs available to pupils to cater to diverse interests and needs.

Contribution To The Trust And Wider Network

Leaders Have Supported The Development Of Other Academies and Trust Throughout:

- Continued SEND leadership group supporting all SENDCOs and unit provision leaders across the trust.
 - 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.
 - DHoA is part of the SEMH development group.
 - TVED leading SENDCO mentoring programme with Whole Education.
 - Middlesbrough SENDCo network continues to be led by TVEd and hosted at DSA.
 - HoA assessor for NAS assessment/accreditation at a local special school.
 - EHT on interview panels for key leadership posts.
 - DSA leading trust SEND teacher network meetings.
 - EHT/DCEO supporting DTI with ongoing curriculum review and development.
 - HoA strategic member of Classroom to Careers working party.
 - 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.
 - DHoA represented on Senior Trust development group for standards and DSL group.
 - HoA/DHoA shared good practice on SEND data use/pupil progress with Extol Trust.
 - Lead Trust wide SEND moderation.
 - EHT leading a two-day Whole Education visit to the Trust.
- The EHT, HoA, and DHoA are active members of various Trust task and finish groups.

5.	<u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u>	
	<p>Anne Kelly advised that volunteers would be involved with surveys carried out by Middlesbrough Environmental City (MEC). Anne was hoping to show MEC representative around next time she visited, to show her what work needs to be carried out in the area.</p> <p>Anne Kelly advised that Thursday was the better day for children to visit Natures World, as it gave staff more notice to ensure everything was ready for the children. An email had been received that day regarding t booking a visit with some children.</p> <p>Q: Andrew Stogdale requested an update on the farm area and what animals will be joining next?</p> <p>Ann Titchener informed members that the hens were now allowed out of the coup, following their isolation due to Avian Flu. One hen had been lost overnight, a local pet crematorium come to collect the hen for a cremation as hens are not currently allowed to be buried.</p> <p>Children were still not allowed in the area, although once all restrictions had been lifted and the area was opened to the school again, the next animals were planned to be guinea pigs.</p>	
6.	PARENT AND PUPIL VOICE	
	There was no parent or pupil voice to share.	
7.	POLICY REVISIONS INCLUDING PROPOSED CHANGES	
	There were no policies for consideration.	
8.	DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING	
	The date and time of the next meeting would be confirmed in due course.	

Meeting ended at 10:15am