



## SEND Annual Statement

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An academy within:



Learning together, to be the best we can be

# 1. Context

1.1. Discovery Academy is a special school which offers provision for children and young people (aged 7-16) who have a diagnosis of Autism and associated Social emotional and mental health or specific learning difficulties which could be described as moderate

1.2. **Mission Statement:** Dreamers... Believers...Achievers.

1.3. **The Vision**

Why – *Vision... 'head'*

- **To** improve the life chances of students
- **To** develop their self-worth and self-belief.
- **To** help them learn to respect and build relationships.
- **To** support them to dream along their own path of self-discovery.

How – *Values... 'heart'*

- **Ensure** we build memories today.
- **Ensure** we thank each other today.
- **Ensure** we make the world a better place today.
- **Ensure** we lay our foundations of lifelong learning today.
- **Ensure** we discover our interest and potential today.
- **Ensure** we grow our capacity for happiness today.

What – *Aims... 'hands'*

- **Offer** a global curriculum that is purposeful, relevant and collaborative, where learning is approached by examining the big questions.
- **Offer** an environment that gives a sense of belonging, safety, worth, dignity and hope.
- **Offer** an approach whereby all members of the school community have an entitlement and commitment to their own learning journey and self-discovery.
- **Offer** a community where parents, carers and families act as co-educators.
- **Offer** a culture that is built on curiosity, professional development and a focus on developing and connecting research into classrooms.

## 2. Admissions

- 2.1. As per the school's Admissions Policy, all pupils who attend Discovery Academy will have had a Statutory Assessment of their SEND by the Local Authority. Following this assessment the school will be consulted as part of the Education, Health and Care (EHC) planning process, if it is agreed at panel that it can meet the needs of the child.
- 2.2. Prospective parents/carers are encouraged to visit the school as part of the preparation of their contribution towards their child's special needs assessment.
- 2.3. Subsequent to Discovery Academy being named in the child's (EHC) and the school receiving a copy of this, the school will arrange a home visit to collate the schools Admissions Information.
- 2.4. The child will start their transition into school as soon as is practically possible following the Admissions information being completed and transport arrangements being made. Admissions are usually in July of each year at the end of the academic year.

## 3. Areas Served

- 3.1. Children are admitted from the surrounding Sheffield area and across other Local Authorities such as Rotherham and Barnsley

## 4. Pupil Numbers

- 4.1. The school has planned places for up to 80 pupils. Due to being a new Academy we agreed 60 pupils aged 7-13 opening year September 2022 followed by an agreed 80 place in the 2023-24 academic year that will be 7-14. Actual pupils placed 2023-2024 was 101 pupils.

## 5. School Organisation

- 5.1. For teaching and organisational purposes, the school has four areas:
  - Lower School – Year 3,4,5,6 (Key stage 2)
  - Upper School – Years 7, 8, 9 (Key stage 3) currently.
- 5.2. Staff work in departmental teams. Pupils are in class groups of no more than 12 pupils. On a day-to-day basis parents/carers and other professionals link with the teacher and educational support staff responsible for a child's base group.

5.3. The Assistant Headteachers are accountable for day-to-day matters within their departments. The first point of contact for financial and administrative matters is the School Resource Manager.

## 6. Staffing Structure

### 6.1. Senior Leadership

Level	Number	Full Time Equivalent
Executive Headteacher	1	1.0
Deputy Headteacher	1	1.0
Assistant Headteacher	1	1.0
Behaviour and Safety Lead	1	1.0

### 6.2. Teaching

Level	Number	Full Time Equivalent
Teachers	7	7.0
Unqualified teacher	2	2.0

### 6.3. Teaching Support

Level	Number	Full Time Equivalent
HLTA	1	1.0
Grade 6	2	2.0
Grade 5	7	7.0
Grade 4	7	7.0
Grade 3	2	2.0
Apprentice	3	3.0

### 6.4. Administration

Level	Number	Full Time Equivalent
Band H	1	1.0
Grade 4	1	1.0
Grade 3	1	1.0
Apprentice	1	1.0

## 7. Pedagogy, curriculum and assessment

7.1. We understand that the priority outcomes for individual children and young people will be different dependent upon their needs, learning styles and aspirations.

7.2. In order to identify this starting point an individual is assessed academically

and holistically within the first 4 weeks. A baseline record sheet is then produced and fed into the school assessment system.

- 7.3. This identifies the learning priorities for each pupil / young person and covers 3 main areas.
- 7.4. **Core curriculum** means learning the National Curriculum subjects following a linear model of assessment.
- 7.5. **Alternative curriculum** means learning through alternative provision, additional support and intervention within and out of the classroom setting. Discovery Academy does not use alternative providers to place children in for their education.
- 7.6. Each pupil/young person is plotted onto a Venn diagram that shows whether the curriculum input should be focused on academics, enterprise and life skills, wellbeing, sensory or a mixture of all 4 curriculum. Following this baseline and discussions with families and other professionals a curriculum pathway is decided upon.

## 8. Curriculum Content

- 8.1. At Discovery Academy we provide an immersive curriculum that is led by enquiry-based learning opportunities. The curriculum encompasses life skills and prepares pupils for their next steps by valuing childhood and raising aspirations for the world of work and beyond.
- 8.2. We jointly work with families and other professionals to increase the opportunities that our pupils/young people are given.
- 8.3. We promote the moral, cultural, spiritual, mental and physical development of pupils and prepare them for the opportunities and responsibilities of later life. We also acknowledge the importance of developing life skills and that fun and enjoyment is essential to well-being, emotional development and a passion for learning.
- 8.4. In addition, pupils will require a range of opportunities to develop key learning skills. They will need to acquire, develop, practice, apply and extend these skills in a range of contexts across the curriculum. Without the opportunity to practice and apply such skills our pupils would be unable to access their curriculum and participate in meaningful learning experiences.
- 8.5. These skills include:
  - Communication skills (developing signing skills, developing verbal skills and the ability to reason).
  - Physical development (at the level of the child developmentally)

- Personal learning and thinking skills (learning to be independent enquirers, creative thinkers, reflective learners, team workers, self-managers and effective participants).
- Personal, social, emotional development (including self-help, independence, hygiene, self-esteem, working with others, readiness to learn and feeding skills)
- Sensory awareness (making sense of auditory, taste, tactile, visual and olfactory experiences).
- A rich and varied curriculum is offered to all pupils. The whole curriculum includes National Curriculum programmes of study modified to meet individual needs, as well as therapies and planned multi-sensory experiences. Communication and personal, social and emotional development are core areas of the school's curriculum.

#### 8.6. Specialist resources found within the sites:

- Staff with a range of relevant experience and training in SEND.
- Adapted hygiene areas and specialist equipment.
- Horticulture gardens and sensory outdoor spaces.
- Green screen technology and film making equipment
- Computers in every classroom including interactive smartboards and iPads.
- School dinners prepared on-site catering for individual dietary requirements where required.
- An outdoor sports facility
- Specialist Design and Technology room.
- Specialist Food Technology room.
- Specialist Science Lab.
- School Library

8.7. Access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes the National Curriculum, adapted to an appropriate level. The National Curriculum does not constitute the whole of their curriculum – individual pupils will have additional priorities including communication, independence, personal / social identified within their Education, Health and Care Plan and Pupil Premium targets.

8.8. Pupils will be expected to develop understanding of concepts, acquire knowledge and learn skills. They will be provided with opportunities to consolidate, reinforce and transfer knowledge, skills and understanding in preparation for the next stage of learning.

8.9. "I can" statements in pupils electronic learning journals are used to inform next steps and are readily available for all to read.

#### 8.10. **Communication, including AAC, within the school curriculum at Discovery School**

8.11. Pupils who attend Discovery Academy do not typically use Augmentative and Alternative communication (AAC) this refers to any way in which spoken communication is replaced. AAC describes methods of communication which can be used by children, or adults who find

communication difficult, it adds to (augments) or replaces (is an alternative for) spoken communication. AAC can also help the user's understanding, as well as provide a means of communication. There are two types of AAC – aided and unaided, most AAC users combine both methods.

- 8.12. Pupils have access to an NHS speech and language therapist whilst in Discovery Academy; access to which is done through the NHS referral system in co-operation with the family and the professionals educating the child.

## 9. Staff Training and development

- 9.1. All staff have access to a programme of Continuing Professional Development which includes mandatory training in safeguarding, teaching and learning strategies and Team Teach positive behaviour management. Where applicable, staff are supported to access the National Professional qualifications such as NPQH, NPQSL, NPQML. In addition, all staff have annual Professional Development Reviews which identify bespoke training needs. Training needs are a key area of the School Improvement Plan and the school is committed to staff development. The school has a number of staff who have specialist knowledge in specific areas of learning or needs and these staff share best practice and lead elements of the school's work.

- 9.2. Examples of Specialist knowledge and training include:

- Multi-sensory
- Intensive interaction
- Key worker training
- Attachment and Trauma Informed Schools
- Theraplay
- Child Protection
- Medication administration
- Behaviour Management
- National Professional Qualification in (Middle/Senior/Headteacher) Leadership

## 10. Meeting individual need

- 10.1. Teachers and support staff receive training and support to ensure that they are able to meet individual needs within their classroom through Quality First Teaching and personalised learning approaches. However, occasionally these approaches will not be sufficient to address barriers to learning any progress may be affected. The school has implemented a Waves of Intervention model to escalate any issues or concerns to specialist teams at Wave 2 and other Professionals at Wave 3.

## 11. Pupil Voice

- 11.1. The term pupil voice refers to a way of listening to the views of children and young people and/or involving them in decision making; at Discovery Academy we promote the use of modified and adapted devices to ensure ALL pupils are provided with the opportunity to express opinions and to communicate, in all aspects of their own lives.
- 11.2. The aim of Discovery Academy is to ensure that all pupils are given equal opportunities to communicate, in all areas of their school day, that all pupils have access to the school curriculum at the level appropriate to their development.
- 11.3. We aim to provide a communication rich environment where all modes of communication are equally valued and pupils are given opportunities to make choices, initiate conversations, and express their own ideas and opinions. Staff are trained to be confident using a wide range of communication strategies that are often unique and personalised to the child.

## 12. Partnerships with other schools

- 12.1. As a member of a Multi Academy Trust the school has positive partnerships with the other schools within the Trust which enables sharing of practice, knowledge and resources.
- 12.2. We have strong links with other local and regional schools through our Sporting partnerships. We also play a key role within the Nexus Learning Community alongside our local mainstream partner schools.

## 13. Partnerships with families

- 13.1. We believe that pupil's families are key partners in the education of their child. The views of families are actively sought and respected in order that a trusting partnership can be developed in the best interest of the child. Families, with their child, make a significant contribution to the Individual flight path. The Head of School supports and facilitates this through the Person-Centered Review held annually but reviewed each term at the family meetings. The school believes that these meetings form the foundation of the personalised programme for each child and therefore family meetings are arranged to suit the parents /carers and may take place during a home visit if this is requested.
- 13.2. In addition, contact is maintained with families through the home/school diary (daily) and telephone calls / emails / Seesaw.



13.3. Wider school information is sent to families via a text message service or the school website. The school social media pages also contain family-friendly information. It is the policy of this school to actively engage with families and involve them as much as is practical in the life and work of the school and the teaching and learning of their child.

## 14. Collaboration with other agencies

- 14.1. Collaboration with the families is viewed as essential. Families who are involved in the decision-making process are more able to extend use of the school strategies into the child's home and social networks.
- 14.2. Collaboration with other agencies (including SALT) may be required where the scope and experience of the school staff is limited; this collaboration may take the form of a referral for a particular service or an outside agency visiting school to provide support and training.
- 14.3. Provide a collaborative approach to assessing and supporting pupils who systems.
- 14.4. Ensure pupils have a voice for safeguarding policies and procedures.

CONTEXT	SPECIALIST SUPPORT/CONSULTATION	EQUIPMENT/SPECIALIST RESOURCES
<p>Immersive environment set for contextualised learning.</p> <p>A personalised timetable for each pupil.</p> <p>A consistent structured immersive environment with secure and explicit boundaries.</p> <p>Specialist teaching for certain curriculum areas.</p> <p><u>Staffing Ratio</u> 1 teacher 2 TAs per 10/12 pupils</p> <p><u>Teaching Arrangements</u> Whole class, small group or individual teaching. Mixed ability, ability, pupils' self-chosen groupings.</p>	<p>Long term support from visiting specialist NHS services including Speech and Language Therapist, Physiotherapist, Occupational therapist, School Nurse, Educational Psychologist and Social Worker.</p> <p>Multi-professional support may extend outside school in partnership with parents.</p> <p>Direct teaching by teachers with appropriate specialist qualifications or experience, this may be sourced from Mainstream schools.</p>	<p>Supplementary, practical resources for all areas.</p> <p>Community and parental involvement.</p> <p>Resilient furniture and adapted small equipment.</p> <p>Adapted toileting, personal hygiene areas.</p> <p>Specialist input into Autism and associated SEMH/ SPLD.</p>

## 15. Assessment, recording and reporting

### 15.1. Assessment, recording, and reporting will:

- Provide all pupils with opportunities to show what they know, understand and can do and involve them in self-assessment.
- Help pupils to understand what they can do and what they need to develop.
- Recognise that the National Curriculum does not encompass all learning and ensure that the curriculum offer meets needs.
- Advance the learning process.
- Enable Teachers to plan more effectively.
- Support parents to be involved in their children's learning.
- Provide schools with information to evaluate work and set appropriate targets.
- Undertake tasks using specific skills and transfer these in new situations.
- For pupils and young people at Discovery Academy, our key aims are that they:
- Can achieve recognised accreditation based upon their interests and aspirations

- Can be self-regulating learners who challenge themselves in an immersive contextualised environment.
- Can make informed choices and influence their own life beyond 16
- To enter further education and / or employment with self-belief and aspirations.

## 16. Transport Arrangements

- 16.1. Every pupil has offered transport to and from school. The relevant Local Education Authority in which the child lives makes transport arrangements. In practice pupils come to school by variety of means, by taxis and minibuses and independently. Generally, an escort is provided on home-school transport. Some parents/carers choose to bring and collect their child from school.

## 17. Complaints

- 17.1. Discovery Academy offers a high standard of education and support to its pupils. We welcome comments and suggestions about the education and support provided to our children and young people.
- 17.2. All complaints are seen as an opportunity for the school to evaluate its performance. Complaints can about any aspect of the services provided at the school. In the first instance contact is with the child's teacher, unless a parent/carer feels that it should be with the Head of School or Senior Leadership Team.
- 17.3. Pupils are encouraged to speak to any member of staff regarding any concern or complaint. A specific team of staff are designated to deal with pupils' complaints and every pupil has a nominated 'safe person' in which they can speak to. The pupils can also make their complaint known to the school council whereby it will be dealt with by the Executive Headteacher.
- 17.4. Complaints are acknowledged promptly, usually in writing and the appropriate person in school will undertake a full investigation. Generally, parents should expect a response within 5 working days. If school staff are unable to resolve the issue, then parents are urged to contact the Chief Executive Officer using the Trust Complaints Policy found on the school website.

## 18. Transition

- 18.1. As the majority of our pupils are grouped by age, this means most admissions are during the September of a new school year. In order to ease the anxiety of transition, the school has a transition programme each year which allows any pupils moving into a new classroom or new teacher



to spend time in this new class before the long summer break. Transition meetings are held between staff and families where they can meet the new teacher and share any information before the Summer Break.

- 18.2. The school has planned activities for transition year groups which take place over the year to promote familiarity with new staff, routines or areas of school.

## 19. Further information

- 19.1. Sheffield have produced a Local Offer which details services, resources, support, provision and activities for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. This can be found at [Special educational needs and disabilities \(Local Offer\): Support and services for children and young people from 0 to 25 | Sheffield Directory](#)

- 19.2. Sheffield SENDIASS can also give you:

- information and advice about SEN and disability support and provision
- more information about local services, organisations, and resources which might help
- advice and support to get more involved. This can be found at [Local Offer — Sheffield SENDIAS](#)

- 19.3. Sheffield parents and carers forum are a group run by parents for parents and their website can be accessed at [Sheffield Parent Carer Forum](#)